



Internal Scrutiny Services for Single and Multi-Academy Trusts

Delivered by Romero Services

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Romero's Core Objectives

Romero believes in providing the best quality service at an affordable price for schools. We know each school is different and its uniqueness is what makes it special. This is why we offer bespoke packages so the service is completely tailored to your needs.

Internal Scrutiny Background

The Academies Financial Handbook (AFH) requires all trusts to have a programme of internal scrutiny to provide independent assurance to the board, that its financial and non-financial controls and risk management procedures are operating effectively.

The internal scrutineer will:

- Give assurance
- Help the trust improve governance, risk and control arrangements
- Provide comfort that the leadership team are operating in the correct way

Who can carry out this process for an Academy?

The AFH provides four options for trusts to conduct the Internal Scrutiny process. These are:

1. Employing an in-house internal auditor
2. A bought-in internal audit service from an organisation or individual with professional indemnity insurance
3. The appointment of a non-employed trustee
4. A peer review performed by the CFOO of another Academy Trust

The Internal Scrutiny team at Romero can undertake this process for your Academy Trust in the capacity of **option 2**, an organisation with professional indemnity insurance.

Who's on our Internal Scrutiny team?

A horizontal row of five overlapping circles in shades of purple and pink. Each circle contains the name and title of a team member.

Helen Peace
CFOO

Sharon Chapman
Financial Controller

Nikki White
Finance Manager

Mark Fleet
Snr IT,
Operations &
Compliance
Manager

Karen Wilkinson
Snr H.R. Manager
and Deputy
CFOO

Helen Peace - Chief Financial Operating Officer:

Helen has 24 years' experience working in the education sector. Helen holds the position of Chair for the Wiltshire NASBM group and has been part of the steering group for the Academies Financial Handbook since 2015. Helen is a qualified accountant (FCCA) and along with her MA in Educational Leadership and Management, she has been able to support a number of schools as a Business Manager, Executive Business Manager, Director of Finance and Operations and has also performed the role of Responsible Officer for some of our feeder schools.

Sharon Chapman - Financial Controller:

Sharon is a qualified accountant (FCCA) with over 20 years' experience in both the education and private sector. In 2012 Sharon joined the Romero team, providing both financial and non-financial support to the CFOO and has built up a wealth of knowledge across education, working with a number of secondary and primary schools and academies. Sharon is keen to ensure that all schools are able to maximise their resources whilst complying with robust financial procedures in accordance with the AFH.

Nikki White - Finance Manager:

Nikki has over 15 years' experience in the finance sector, working with corporate companies, schools and charities. Nikki joined the Romero team in 2017 and has been with the College ever since. As a former Governor and Chair of Finance at a local primary school, Nikki has a solid understanding of issues from various aspects. Nikki's strengths lie in reviewing and streamlining processes to improve efficiency whilst ensuring compliance with the AFH.

Karen Wilkinson H.R. Manager and Deputy CFOO:

Karen has over 18 years' experience working in the Education sector. Karen is both CIPD qualified and a GDPR practitioner and through Romero has spent many years supporting schools with a wide range of H.R. and Data Protection matters. She has also spent over 13 years working with the Swindon Safeguarding Partnership, amongst others, to deliver Safer Recruitment training across the Children's Workforce. In addition to this Karen leads our Business Managers Forum on all employment law and H.R. related updates, and has extensive experience training staff in a variety of other areas, ranging from H.R. issues to Data Protection updates, she regularly receives exemplary feedback from organisations that partake in her training sessions.

Mark Fleet - Senior IT, Operations and Compliance Manager:

Mark has worked in the education sector for over 14 years and currently manages the IT Support & Data function for the College and supported sites, and is responsible for Health & Safety Compliance throughout the Trust. Mark has a wealth of experience in providing IT support across multiple educational sites in addition to facilities management and Health & Safety Compliance. Mark is also a Governor at St. Joseph's Catholic College.

Core Internal Scrutiny Requirements

An internal scrutiny programme will consider all aspects of the school's financial and non-financial operations. The AFH suggested areas of coverage are listed below, but please note this list is not intended to be exhaustive or exclusive.

- Cash and Bank
- Payroll and H,R.
- Funding, Budgeting and Forecasting
- Safeguarding and Whistleblowing
- Management Information and Reporting
- Capital
- Disaster Recovery and BCP Processes
- Fraud, Theft and Bribery
- Governance
- Health & Safety Systems and Processes
- I.T. Systems and Security
- Month-End Processes
- Procurement
- Data Protection

Service Delivery Model

Determine the Internal Scrutiny Strategy:

It is the responsibility of the Academy's Audit and Risk Committee to develop a cyclical programme or work, tailored to the trust and its risks. It may cover some or all of the areas listed above.

Delivery and Scope of Work:

The Academy's Audit and Risk Committee would advise Romero of the areas to be covered by the review, the relevant contacts, and the date of the Audit and Risk meeting at which the final report would be reviewed.

Reporting:

Risks, including potential fraud and emerging issues, would be identified and recommendations would be given on each area review. This would be delivered along with an overall opinion on the effectiveness of internal control.

Internal Scrutiny Costings

Section	Details	Days	Annual Total
Scope	Scope and document the review.	0.5	
Audit	Audit and review of the identified areas	4.5	
Report	Report on review, including findings and recommendations	1	
Total		6	£1,950.00



Contact us

If there's anything else you'd like to discuss about our services that is not listed in this document, please don't hesitate to contact us.

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