

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to establish guidance and assistance on the correct and responsible usage of a University of Brighton Academies Trust's (UoBAT) Business Charge Card.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 UoBAT is committed to ensuring that its systems of financial governance conform to the requirements of both propriety and comprehensive financial management.
- 2.2 This includes ensuring there are suitable controls in place over the use of business charge cards.
- 2.3 The use of business charge cards is permitted to enable the academies/authorised personnel to purchase goods/services whereby the supplier represents the best value for money and the purchase cannot be administered via standard procurement processes.
- 2.4 Card usage will be monitored and regulated by the Central Finance Team. It is the responsibility of the cardholder to review and authorise the transactions on a monthly basis, ensuring completeness of backing documentation.
- 2.5 No changes to arrangements listed below will take place without further consultation with the Finance and Resources Committee.

3. Eligibility

- 3.1 Card purchases are only permitted when it is not possible to procure in the normal way using electronic BACs (i.e. raising a purchase order and paying on receipt of an invoice).
- 3.2 Cards will only be issued to Academy Principals and Senior Central Trust staff, in order to ensure compliance with budgetary controls. Additional cards may be requested via the Central Finance Team. These requests will require adequate business justification, and approval by the Head of Finance.
- 3.3 Limits to spend per month are determined according to need, but are typically:

Secondary Academies	£5,000
Central Trust	£5,000
Primary Academies	£2,000

4. Procedures: Card Issue

- 4.1 For new starters and additional card requests a Charge Card application form must be completed and submitted to the Head of Finance. Application forms are to be obtained from the Central Finance Team.
- 4.2 The cards are in connection with our banking provider, NatWest, and will be issued by NatWest Card Services Department.
- 4.3 Each card issued will be in the name of the individual, on behalf of the academy the member of staff is attached to, or to the trust if they are linked to the central team.
- 4.4 Each member of staff who has a card issued to them will be made aware of their monthly spend limit. Prior to being permitted to use their card, they must sign and return the 'Business Charge Card Acceptance Certificate' (appendix 1), this is to acknowledge understanding and agreement with the terms and conditions of use.
- 4.5 Cardholders must ensure they are aware of their current balance before undertaking a purchase. Where a cardholder thinks spend limits are not appropriate an adequately supported business case can be made to the Head of Finance for review.
- 4.6 Any staff member who is found to be in breach of the terms and conditions of use will have their card confiscated and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.
- 4.7 Use of the card is at the discretion of the cardholder and must be done so only in accordance with the terms and conditions of use, as outlined in this policy. Where purchases are made on behalf of another budget holder, it is the responsibility of the cardholder to ensure the purchase is compliant with the terms and conditions of use and to obtain the appropriate approval(s).
- 4.8 Any staff member who has been issued with a card and subsequently terminates their employment with UoBAT must return their card, which will be destroyed on receipt. The Central Finance Team must also be informed of this so that the card can be cancelled with the provider.
- 4.9 Below sets out some specific limitations on the use of the charge card:
 - No cash withdrawals are allowed.
 - No personal purchases are to be made on the card.
 - A PIN number will be issued to the individual cardholder for their exclusive use.
 - Lost or stolen cards must be reported immediately to the Central Finance Team

5. Procedures: Card Repayments

- 5.1 All business charge cards are linked to NatWest Bank. As per ESFA regulations these are payment cards, not credit cards. They are paid in full monthly by a direct debit charge to the current account.
- 5.2 Statements will be distributed by the Central Finance Team to the related cardholder, which must be reconciled with receipts, signed off and passed back to the Central Finance Team.

6. Review

- 6.1 Any discrepancy in the account will be investigated by the UoBAT Central Finance team in the first instance and then escalated appropriately if necessary.
- 6.2 Copies of signed statements should be retained with financial records for 6 financial years.

7. Policy status and review

Written by:	Head of Finance
Owner:	Head of Finance
Status:	V2 = approved
Approval date:	02-12-19 Finance and Resources Committee
Review Date:	Dec 2021

Appendix 1

Business Charge Card Acceptance Certificate

I hereby acknowledge receipt of Business Charge Card Number:

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Monthly transaction limit:

£

I confirm that I have read and understood the Business Charge Card policy.

I agree to comply with the procedures outlined in the Business Charge Card policy and I understand that any misuse of the card will be subject to UoBAT's disciplinary procedures.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Job Title: _____

Academy/Central Trust Department: _____

Date: _____