

Department for Education (DfE)

Key Statistics

- **total** (central) **estate running cost** (annual, net) = £32.4 million
- **holdings** (number) = 15
- **floorspace** (offices) = 58,000 sq.m
- **staff number** (headcount) = 5,800 (including Education & Skills Funding Agency)
- **locations** = London + other (UK)

Our Business

The Department for Education (DfE) exists to provide world-class education and care that allows every child and young person to reach his or her potential, regardless of background.

Following the Machinery of Government (MOG) changes in July 2016, DfE gained a number of additional public bodies including the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and the Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), which both own significant estates.

The current SAMP focuses on those DfE properties held prior to MOG as we are still in the process of fully integrating the new arm's length bodies (ALB) into the DfE estate.

DfE is committed to delivering core activity by working closely with partners across the government to manage, maintain and support the day-to-day running of a highly complex and diverse estate¹.

Our Estate

The DfE central estate is made up of 15 buildings, covering a collective floor area of over 58,000 square metres. This includes 16 property interests; 7 leaseholds, 1 freehold, and 4 MOTOs (Memorandum of Terms of Occupation) with other government departments.

In 2017, net running costs were £32.4 million. The department continues to increase its headcount which is now over 5,800 including ex-Skills Funding Agency properties.

Aligning to the strategic priorities outlined below, DfE will continue to reduce its footprint from current levels and deliver further savings through a combination of regionalisation, smarter working and reduction in the costs of facilities management. An objective is to reduce the number of jobs in London and increase the number in regional locations, reducing overall estates costs. The aim is to consolidate functions into 1-2 locations in London, whilst regional-facing functions will continue to be based around customers and stakeholders. DfE estate strategy is heavily influenced by the department's future resourcing plans, which are currently being developed.

DfE aims to create a decent working environment for all staff, with modern workplaces, enabling flexible working, substantially improving IT tools and streamlining security requirements that are less burdensome. DfE is doing this through the "Building our Department Together" programme, which includes looking at all aspects of how the department works, including the working environment.

¹ Further information is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/department-for-education-single-departmental-plan/may-2018-department-for-education-single-departmental-plan>

DfE will continue to work on providing flexible office environments consistent with government space targets, increasing utilisation and reducing the size and cost of the estate. As a facilitator, the Estates Cluster continues to collaborate with the IT function who are delivering a radical transformation of technology across DfE employees, to enable staff to work more remotely and freely. Surplus space will be released or sub-let providing value for money both for the department and its sub-tenants.

The department is working in collaboration with partner organisations and is committed to supporting activity to deliver One Public Estate (OPE) agenda and the Government Hubs Programme, working with the Government Property Agency. In doing so, DfE is committed to placing these wider government objectives at the core of its Departmental Strategy. We are developing four core strategic estate priorities to deliver the strategy vision:

1. **Provide estate solutions to support business operations.** Transitioning to the new Estates Cluster FM contracting model, enhancing reliability of data for decision-making, and developing a strong account management function.
2. **Continue to build and buy expert capability to deliver estate priorities.** Recruiting and retaining expert staff from diverse backgrounds. Engaging with staff to make the Estates Cluster a better place to work, promoting inclusive line management, development opportunities, staff engagement sessions.
3. **Make the estate affordable by effectively prioritising investments.** On-track performance of Greening Government Commitments and reduction of property running costs, whilst maintaining our estate and ensuring business operations continue to be supported.
4. **Modernise the estate to current and future standards.** Monitoring estates efficiency metrics, as well as the delivery of projects to targets set out in the government's construction strategy.

These core priorities are designed to support the Government Estate Strategy and Departmental Strategies within the Estates Cluster. To ensure they are met, the department is working to improve data management, ways of working and delivering greater value through our estate and facilities management supply chain contracts, so that DfE operates from an affordable, fit-for-purpose and efficient estate, capable of supporting a modern education system.

Our Capability

In April 2017 DfE became part of the Ministry of Justice Shared Service Estates Cluster. The MoJ Cluster provides an array of estates and facilities management services, with DfE operating an Intelligent Client Function (ICF) to ensure that the department's property requirements are detailed adequately met in full, so commissioning services that are fit for purpose and represent value for money. The Estates Cluster focuses on delivering customer business needs and the wider pan-government strategic property objectives of reducing the size of the Civil Estate and improving the utilisation of retained properties.

We will invest in our people to develop inclusive, valued and high performing teams empowered by inspiring leaders. We will build on our investment in learning and development by supporting professional development in property, project delivery, facilities management and health and safety disciplines. We will also strengthen our entry level jobs offer with apprenticeships, internships and Fast Stream opportunities.

The Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP) provides a strategic vision to complement the department's property plan, and identifies opportunities to further align our operational assets with current and future business need.