

Partnership Sub-contracting Policy

Rationale for Sub-contracting

The College enters into sub-contracting arrangements for the following reasons:

1. To meet the skills and training needs of Wolverhampton and its region by providing training and education which complements the College's offer
2. To support the College in meeting the needs of priority sectors, where specialist provision is required

Sub-contracting Agreements

Sub-contracting Agreements comply with current ESFA Funding Rules.

Authorisation of Sub-contracting Agreements

Sub-contracting Agreements and any subsequent variations are authorised by the Principal or an individual to whom the Principal gives specific delegated authority.

Sub-contracting Management Fees

The range of fees for managing sub-contracted delivery is 10% - 20%. A full annual risk-assessment is undertaken to establish the appropriate management fee for each sub-contracted partner, which includes:

- Previous track record of delivering Government funded programmes
- Financial stability including review of company reports and director evaluation (including reference to ESFA guidance on High Risk subcontracted provision).
- Overall and timely success rates (where applicable).
- Outcomes of compliance monitoring audits and visits (where applicable)
- Outcomes of Learner and Employer surveys and monitoring (where applicable)
- CVs for delivery staff
- Quality Assurance Arrangements, including teaching and learning
- Qualification Assessment Centre Status
- Timely submission of records (where applicable)
- Insurance cover and all required legal kite marks
- DBS and safeguarding monitoring

In the case of specific compliance concerns arising which necessitate external audit activity, these costs are chargeable to the sub-contractor.

Sub-contractor Management Activities

The contracts team is responsible for the management of all sub-contracted provision. The team provides the following services:

- Due diligence and risk assessment for existing and potential sub-contactors

- Monitoring of quality and compliance, including planned audits together with unannounced visits throughout the year
- Sub-contractor review meetings
- Access to a named monitoring officer for all data and ILR processing/queries
- Policy, funding, quality and compliance advice.
- Capacity building including the development of teaching, learning and assessment and Observation and grading of subcontractor staff (teaching, learning and assessment)
- Opportunities to bid for joint projects where these meet College priorities.
- Administration of internal and ESFA learner and employer surveys
- Awarding body registration (where applicable)
- Processing of apprenticeship AGE Grant applications and other employer incentives
- MIS data entry and enrolment procedures
- Learner eligibility checks and funding rules guidance
- Employer registration identification numbers
- Access to ALS specialists
- Access to a Teaching and Learning Advisor for CPD purposes
- Access to Marketing and Employer Engagement specialists
- Development through professional activities, self-assessment reviews and quality improvement plans
- Learner identification badges to enable access to College facilities including VL platforms

Timescales for Payment of Invoices

The College will pay to sub-contractors the agreed proportion of funding, relating to valid funding claims, within 30 days of the invoices being authorised by the College.

Publishing of Data

An annual statement of key data will be published within 30 days of the ILR year end close. This data will include for each sub-contractor:

- The name of the sub-contractor
- The UKPRN number
- Their Agreement start and end date
- The type of provision: programme; age range
- The amount of funding received from the ESFA
- The amount of funding paid to the sub-contractor
- The amount of funding retained by the College

Contribution to improving sub-contractors' quality of teaching and learning

The College offers the full range of teaching, learning and assessment delivery qualifications, which partner providers can access. The College's teaching, learning and assessment criteria is shared with sub-contracted partners to be used as a minimum standard. Meetings are brokered between the sub-contractors and College schools with responsibility for delivering in the same sector, in order to facilitate the sharing of best practice.

Communication of the Sub-contractor Policy

The Sub-contractor Policy is reviewed on an annual basis in May each year and amended to reflect changes to funding guidance and College policy for the next contract year. The policy is reported to the Resources Committee for approval, discussed with partners at the Steering Group and published on the College's website.

Contingency Planning

In compliance with Skills Funding Agency and other agency funding rules that apply, if a subcontractor withdraws from the arrangement, or if a sub-contractor goes into liquidation or administration, the College undertakes to directly manage and deliver the remainder of the agreed provision already being delivered. This delivery will be either through its existing structure or by retaining tutor expertise and/or specialist equipment, whichever is more cost-effective. Any provision planned but not yet started will be cancelled and the project closed.

If the College needs to withdraw from a subcontracting arrangement, sufficient notice will be provided to allow sub-contractors to complete delivery of immediate provision. The College will provide support to enable sub-contractors to identify other sources of funding if possible, or take appropriate action to complete the project; or close the project at the earliest opportunity, without prejudice to currently enrolled learners or staff.

Contracts will clearly state conditions for termination and recovery of ESFA funding grants in case of non-delivery.