



University of Plymouth Sub Contracting Policy for Apprenticeship Provision

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1. Purpose

This policy sets out the University of Plymouth's approach to subcontracting in the context of apprenticeship delivery.

The purpose of this policy is to provide accurate and comprehensive information to external agencies, potential apprenticeship sub-contractors and employers on how the University procures its subcontracted services, the applicable supply chain fees and charges used and how quality will be managed and monitored. The policy aims to ensure transparency and equitability around subcontracting and the associated retained fees.

2. Definitions

Subcontracting within this policy refers to providers delivering education or training on behalf of the University. This encompasses subcontractors listed on the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) 'Declaration of Subcontractors', together with any updates or subsequent listings from the ESFA or the relevant funding authority.

3. Introduction

The University of Plymouth offers higher and degree level apprenticeships to employers covering a range of subject and sector areas. The University undertakes subcontracting agreements as part of its apprenticeship offer where a subcontracting arrangement will have an impact and add value to the quality of its apprenticeship delivery. The University operates its apprenticeship subcontracting arrangements in-line with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) apprenticeship funding rules and associated guidance for subcontracting with delivery partners.

The University operates apprenticeship subcontracting in one of two ways;

1. The University acts as the prime provider and sub contracts specialist training to partner institutes for delivery.
2. The University acts as a subcontractor to an employer provider for parts of the training. The employer provider retains oversight of the whole apprenticeship.

4. Responsibilities

The University's Apprenticeship Strategic Board is responsible for the sign off of this Subcontracting Policy. The Central Apprenticeship Hub who are responsible for the coordination of contract compliance under the guidance and support of the Finance Directorate and Legal Services. The quality management of the subcontracting provision of education or training is provided through the relevant faculty.

This policy will be updated to reflect in year amendments to ESFA regulations with any significant changes submitted to the Strategic Apprenticeship Board for consideration.

5. Rationale

The main reason that the University uses subcontractors within its higher and degree apprenticeship provision is to enhance the scope, reach and quality to our apprenticeship offer.

6. Reasons for choosing a subcontractor

The specific reasons for choosing to subcontract would be one or more of the following;

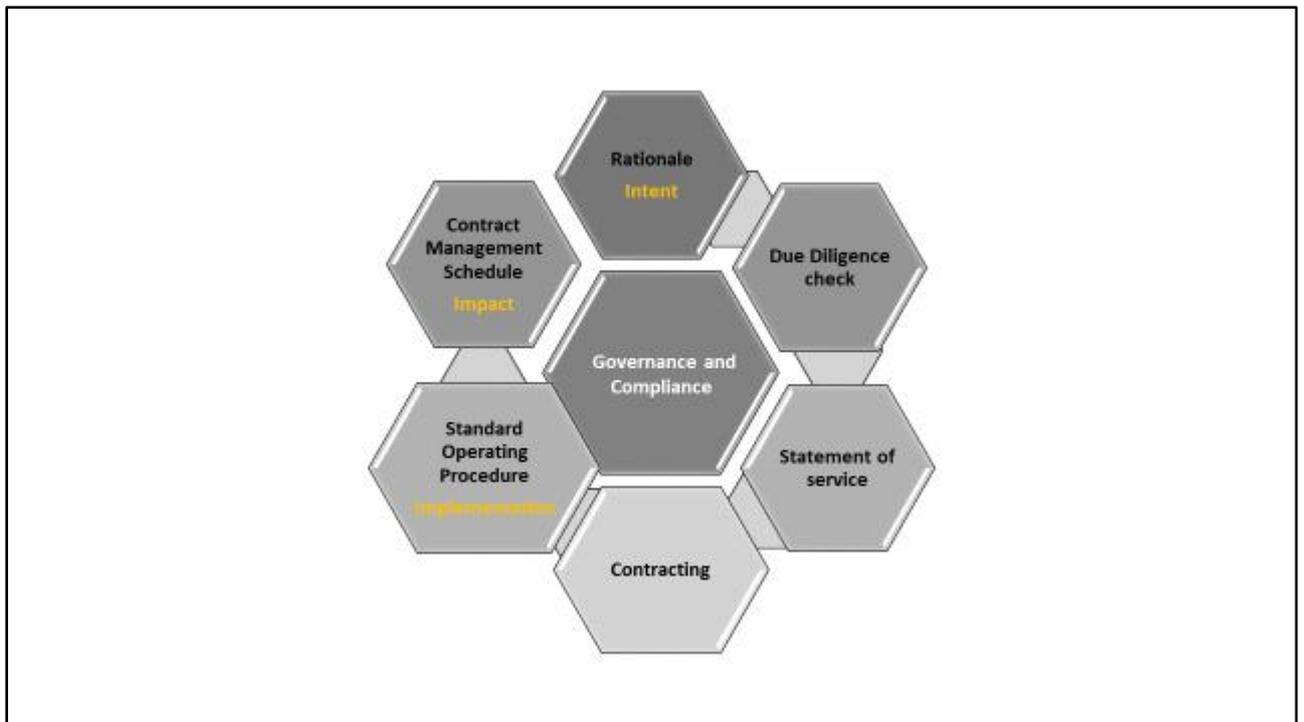
- The subcontractor can widen access, participation and progression with groups that are hard to engage or geographically removed from the University
- The subcontractor would be able to provide access to specialist staff or other resources that would otherwise not be available
- To satisfy the particular needs of employers and meet their expectations

7. Selection

The selection of subcontractors will be informed by the criteria outlined in the above section.

8. Approval

The University has a robust process it applies when selecting and managing subcontractors for apprenticeship provision as outlined in the following diagram;



9. Due diligence

The University will undertake a robust process of due diligence when selecting potential subcontractors to ensure the highest quality of learning delivery is made available, which demonstrates value for money and has a positive impact on the experience of both Employers and Learners.

In line with ESFA Guidance, the University will only procure the service of subcontractors who are registered on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP) to deliver services to employers.

The University will also conduct further due diligence checks if there is any material change in the subcontracted provider that has the potential to impact on its ability to deliver subcontracted services.

10. Contracting

The University has a standard legal agreement template for apprenticeship subcontracting and this is used/adapted for all subcontracting agreements. Agreements are signed after approval has taken place, and before the subcontracting arrangement commences. The requirements of this policy form part of that contractual agreement. It will be signed by the subcontractor and the University. Terms and conditions will be agreed and included in the contract.

The University, Ofsted and the ESFA are granted full permission and rights to monitor the quality of training being provided and visit the subcontractor at their premises, training sites or employer's premises from which they operate.

The University shall only use delivery subcontractors who satisfy one of the following two criteria:

- a. they are on the published Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP) and have applied by the main or supporting application routes.
- b. they are either the apprentice's employer, a connected company or charity as defined by HMRC and are on the published Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP), having applied through the employer-provider application route.

11. Monitoring

In order to allow for appropriate oversight and support of quality of delivery, the following measures are currently in place to monitor subcontractors:

- Regular performance management review meetings between the University and its subcontractors
- Quality Assurance Meetings
- Regular planned and unplanned observation visits to check on the quality of Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) teaching, learning, assessment and progress
- Other ad hoc meetings, visits and discussions take place for general issues as they arise but these also form part of our relationship management and support for subcontractors and give rise to actions and interventions where appropriate

Performance Management meetings ensure data and statutory compliance is upheld to ensure accuracy and transparency of ILR data, whilst monitoring quality assurance relating to the delivery programme(s).

The Performance Management meetings are scheduled quarterly. The UoP will take a risk management approach to subcontractor management to ensure that appropriate levels of contract monitoring are maintained, therefore additional visits as required may be discussed where appropriate.

In order to enable Performance Management meetings to be conducted effectively and efficiently, the subcontractor will be asked to provide the required information prior to any scheduled meetings. Specific details will be communicated accordingly.

12. Quality Assurance

The University is committed to delivering high quality teaching and learning for the Apprentice and Employer across its provision and will work with subcontractors to review progress and manage the quality of external provision.

All new subcontractors will be subject to an initial visit to confirm approval of appointment as a subcontractor.

Quality Assurance meetings support subcontractors to implement and maintain high quality teaching, learning and assessment. Its focus is to ensure students have a positive learning experience, allowing individuals to make individualised progress to achieve their career goals.

The scheduled Quality Assurance meetings will be held over each academic year in negotiation with the subcontractor.

Where Performance Management Meetings or QA meetings highlight areas of concern, an action plan will be drawn up by the subcontractor, and agreed by the University, to address the areas of concern. Additional meetings and QA visits will be scheduled as required by the University until the issues have been resolved.

13. Support

The support provided by the UoP to sub-contractors will vary and will be dependent on the arrangement agreed on a case by case basis. Aspects of support will include:

- Undertaking the employer and apprentice sign up process
- Input of data onto the ILR
- Managing payments to the subcontractor
- Collecting co-investment payment from the employer
- Sampling of subcontractor learners
- Due diligence and quality assurance monitoring
- Sharing good practice
- Account management meetings
- Observations and learning
- Support during Ofsted inspections and audit
- Monitoring completion data and KPIs
- Providing on programme support and skills training to the apprentice
- Carrying out progress reviews and monitoring progress of apprentices
- Reporting to employers on progress
- Support in passing through the Gateway and in preparing for the End Point Assessment

14. Fees and Charges

The University will normally apply standard fees for the management of the apprenticeship and for supporting any academic provision. Further additional charges may be negotiated between the subcontractor and the University to reflect particular additional services or support the University is providing to apprentices. These fees will reflect the University's costs in procuring and managing subcontracts and associated academic provision.

The fees charged will be agreed on a case by case basis depending on the extent of services provided. This will include business factors such as:

- The level and type of professional training provided
- The level of on programme support provided to the apprentice and the employer
- The level of support provided to the subcontractor
- The commercial relationship between the parties
- The number of apprentices

Publication

This policy is available on the UoP Apprenticeship website