



Adult Learning Service Supply-chain Fees and Charges Policy for Subcontracting 2020-21

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea's Adult Learning Service aims to "deliver accessible, high quality adult and community learning that enables learners to improve their wellbeing, widen their horizons and achieve their personal, social or economic aspirations".

The service achieves this by fostering partnerships with local, Council, Education and Skills Funding Agency [ESFA] and Greater London Authority [GLA] approved, subcontracted delivery partners to encourage participation from across the community, particularly with learners from disadvantaged areas or communities, providing them with the skills and confidence to make progress in their lives towards further learning and employment.

Scope

This policy applies to all supply chain activity supported by funds supplied by the ESFA and GLA, and any successor organisation.

Context

It is a mandatory requirement from the Education and Skills Funding Agency, effective from 1st August 2013, that Providers publish a supply-chain fees and charges policy on their website before entering into any subcontracting arrangements. The policy is reviewed and updated annually. The content of this policy was developed in line with the Association of Colleges and the Association of Employment and Learning Providers Common Accord, the ESFA Funding Rules and Learning Skills Improvement Service Supply Chain Management document.

Overarching Principle

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea's Adult Learning Service will use supply chains to optimise the impact and effectiveness of service delivery to learners. The Service ensures that:

- Supply chain management activities comply with the principles of best practice in the skills sector. In particular they will be guided by the principles given in the LSIS publication "Supply Chain Management – a good practice guide for the post-16 skills sector".
- It will use fair and transparent procurement processes, conduct robust due diligence procedures on potential subcontractors to ensure compliance with the Common Accord, and to ensure the highest quality of learning is made available, which demonstrates value for money, and makes a positive impact on learners' lives.
- Funding retained by the Service to cover management costs relates to the costs of services provided. The level of funding retained will be clearly documented and the rates of funding provided will be commercially viable for both the prime and subcontracted partner. Any funding retained will be proportionate to the services being provided.

Rationale for Subcontracting

The Service engages with subcontractors to better meet learner needs. This is seen as advantageous for a number of reasons, which include:

- Providing flexibility to temporarily expand provision to meet a new short term need.
- Providing access to, or engagement with, new ranges of learners.
- Ensuring that the delivery intention is met, minimising any threat from recognised risks to direct provision.
- Supporting the development of capacity and quality of local providers
- Enabling delivery of niche provision where the cost of developing direct delivery would be prohibitive.

In addition to formal subcontracting, ALES retains £170,000 to deliver a programme of Family Learning through direct-delivery (direct oversight and management) and service level agreements with a number of council departments to deliver learning within their remits (libraries, troubled families team, schools, SEND team and environment & community gardening delivering a range of programmes).

Quality Assurance

Subcontracted activity is a fundamental part of Service delivery. The quality of the provision is monitored and managed through existing Service quality assurance processes and procedures, amended to fully encompass all subcontracted activity.

This policy positions subcontracted partners at the core of the Service's activity designed to bring about continuous improvement to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment for the Service, its subcontracted delivery partners and our learners. At the heart of this activity is the sharing of good practice across the supply chain, for example, through the moderated Self-Assessment processes which leads to a common quality improvement action plan and an associated continuous professional development programme for teaching staff.

The Service supports and facilitates the development of subcontracted partners' staff to improve the quality of provision delivered.

The Supply Chain Fees and Charges

80 per cent of the funding received is paid to subcontracted partners for delivery, with the service typically retaining 20 per cent of funding received to manage the subcontracted delivery. The 20 per cent management fee that is retained represents the cost incurred by the Service to effectively identify, select, manage, monitor, support quality improvement and report on all subcontracted provision. It covers the cost to the Service of:

- Providing any additional support necessary to ensure the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and success rates of subcontracted provision, continually improve and remain high.
- Promoting the sharing of good practice across the local partnership of subcontracted providers to improve delivery to learners with up to four meetings annually.
- Providing monthly performance monitoring data to providers, including the actions needed to ensure complete and accurate data returns.
- Holding regular review meetings with delivery partners to monitor the action points identified during formal monitoring (undertaken three times a year). Formal monitoring meetings will be undertaken with each sub-contracted organisation not less than 6 times

each year, some of these will be unannounced meetings. Meetings result in reports to the provider about maintaining or improving standards and levels of on-going support available from the officers of the service.

- Providing frequent informal contact with subcontractors by telephone, email and informal visits.
- Providing access to a suitable management information system for inputting learner data to those who do not have one of their own – about 80% of providers.
- Providing data management and submission services to subcontracted delivery partners to ensure compliance with Education and Skills Funding Agency funding rules and requirements, including a member of staff who is suitably experienced and trained to undertake such work.
- Providing a comprehensive range of Continuous Professional Development [CPD] activities for all tutors, and other staff, who are engaged in the delivery of Adult and Family Learning on behalf of the Service. The service commits to providing approximately 6 CPD sessions per year. Subcontracted organisations are reimbursed for attendance by their tutors so that they can provide cover enabling sessional tutors to attend CPD sessions and sharing good practice meetings.
- Capacity building subcontract partners by providing training and development for their staff to carry out observations of teaching, learning and assessment to Ofsted standards, including paying trained staff to undertake a number of OTLAs per year on behalf of the Service.
- Supporting the writing and standardisation of self-assessment reports by subcontractors each year, including their attendance at a moderation meeting.
- Planning and facilitating at least three opportunities for subcontractors to discuss strategic and policy updates through the Adult Learning Forum each year.

Payment terms of the Service are detailed in the contract agreement but will not exceed 30 days following the receipt of an approved (as defined in the contract) invoice from the subcontracted delivery partner. The payment schedule identifies three payment points during the academic year – the first payment point will allow an advance payment of the first third of the contract allocation, second and third payments are made in arrears following reconciliation of delivery – providers can claim further funding earned over and above the first third payment and any subsequent payments following this reconciliation.

Publication of Information Relating to Subcontracting

In compliance with Greater London Authority and other funding rules that apply the Service publishes its subcontracting fees and charging policy and end-of-year subcontracting fees and charges on its website as required. The service makes a Declaration of Subcontractors return to the GLA twice a year, as required.

The Service will ensure all actual and potential subcontractors have sight of this policy and other relevant documentation during the procurement and contracting process, with a link to the policy included in the contract itself.

This policy is published on the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea website and is reviewed annually.

Policy last reviewed in August 2020.