



Sub-contracting **Policy and Procedure**

DEPARTMENT	APPRENTICESHIPS AND WBL
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VERSION	1

Bringing talent to life...



Walsall College Mission Statement



“Walsall College is uniquely and proudly vocational. Our greatest passion is unleashing the potential of individuals, communities and businesses; our greatest legacy is the talent of our students: skilled, professional and enterprising.”

The Supply Chain Fees and Charges Policy and Partnership and Education Sub-contractor Strategy has been developed to ensure that Walsall College contributes to the achievement of economic success for Walsall, the Black Country and the UK. This will be achieved by expanding and growing provision, through forging strategic partnerships with public bodies, other providers and employer groups from the public, private and voluntary sectors.

This document contains three policies which apply to subcontracting:

- Supply Chain Fees and Charges Policy
 - Partnership and Education Sub-contractor Strategy
 - Contract Monitoring and Review Procedure
- Walsall College will also consider gaining market share by introducing innovative products to meet new market needs. Critical to the Colleges Partnership strategy is the growth and diversification of provision, reduction and over reliance of wholesale traditional sub-contracting and only selecting partners who compliment and add value to the curriculum offer.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Sharma'.

Jatinder Sharma OBE
Principal & Chief Executive

Supply Chain Fees and Charges

The purpose of this policy is to define the basis on which any partnership or sub-contracting arrangements will be managed and read in conjunction with the College's Contract Monitoring and Review Procedure and Partnership and Education Sub-contractor Strategy.

Where appropriate Walsall College will work in partnership with employers and training providers, or subcontract with training providers, to deliver programmes funded via the College's Government allocations. Partners will be required to adhere to the following:

Key Performance Indicators Performance Data

All delivery whether in partnership or on a subcontract basis will be expected to return outstanding success rates, both overall and timely, or retention and achievement.

On-going performance data will be discussed at regular Contract Reviews and termly Quality Summits. Performance indicators are in line with the overall College KPIs.

Apprenticeships

	2025/26 KPIs					
	Term 1		Term 2		Term 3	
Quality of Education	Target	KPI	Target	KPI	Target	KPI
Best Case Achievement - Apprentices (ProAchieve)	86%		82%		76%	
Achievement - Apprentices (ProAchieve)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	67%	
Apprentice Satisfaction (ER)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	90%	
Destinations (positive destinations) Apprentices	N/A	N/A	93%		N/A	N/A

Leadership and Management	Target	KPI	Target	KPI	Target	KPI
Employer Feedback (would recommend to others)	N/A		N/A		90%	
Apprentices past planned end	15%		15%		10%	
Apprentices past practical end	15%		15%		10%	

Adult Learning

	2025/26 KPIs					
	Term 1		Term 2		Term 3	
	Target	KPI	Target	KPI	Target	KPI
Quality of Education						
Retention - Adult (ProAchieve) (Vocational)	99%		97%		96%	
Achievement - Adults (ProAchieve) Vocational	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	89%	
Destinations (positive destinations) Adults	N/A	N/A	83%		N/A	N/A

Delivery Quality

Quality Assurance Arrangements

The College's Quality Assurance Team will require access to IQA/IV records, evidence of standardisation meetings and student records for quality assurance purposes.

Staff delivering for Walsall College should also expect to receive one formal Developmental Observation each academic year, lasting approximately 45 minutes in duration. These observations will not be graded.

All efforts will be made to speak to students during the observation, to gain feedback on how they are progressing. Once the Developmental Observation has taken place, a feedback meeting will be arranged within five working days, or ideally as soon as possible. The feedback meeting should take the form of a two-way discussion, where staff are encouraged to self-reflect and identify their own strengths and development areas, along with an exchange of ideas on what went well and what did not go so well.

This discussion will be recorded on the Developmental Observation Form, and actions discussed and agreed, which will form part of the Developmental Observation Report. Staff should expect to receive this written feedback within five working days of the feedback meeting. The observer will then be responsible for taking ownership of their agreed actions and adding updates and reflective feedback upon completion of the agreed actions and by the agreed date(s).

In addition, Partners and Sub-contractors will be required to undertake their own internal observations and submit these reports to the College's Quality Assurance Team – qualityteam@walsallcollege.ac.uk

Course Documentation

All courses unless otherwise agreed, will have their content defined within a Scheme of Work. All sessions within a course will be planned using an appropriate lesson/session plan. All sessions should be evaluated in writing by the tutor.

Initial Assessment

All courses should include an initial assessment process that enables students to identify what they want to achieve from the course and which enables tutors to modify delivery to suit both student and employer requirements. This should include basic skills assessments and diagnostic tests where applicable.

Student Progress

Student progress records must be maintained at an appropriate level of detail, in relation to the context and length of the course. All apprentices are required to have a Learner Review every 8-12 weeks throughout their apprenticeship programme.

All partners and sub-contractors will be required to utilise the Colleges on-line Portal. Sub-contractors can use their own in-house tracking systems if approved by the College in advance of delivery. It is essential that every apprentice's progress is tracked and risk rated using a Red, Amber, Green (RAG) system.

Service Standards

Health and Safety

Partners and sub-contractors must provide all details of how they ensure that facilities used to deliver learning meet all health and safety regulatory and legislative requirements, including where required, specific health and safety reports, audits and risk assessments.

Partner and sub-contractor staff must be capable of, and must undertake, activity and facility risk assessments before both learning commences and at a frequency consistent with the type of activity and the nature of the facility being used. As a minimum, health and safety assessments will be required on an annual basis.

Walsall College personnel will undertake health and safety visits at provider premises to ensure legal compliance and that systems and processes are to a high standard. Action plans will be produced following the visits and these will be monitored closely until all actions have been completed.

Facilities and Resources

All facilities and resources used must be 'fit for purpose' and comply with all current Health and Safety Legislation.

Safeguarding

All Partners and sub-contractors must have:

- A named lead who is accountable for safeguarding policy and practice within the organisation.
- Clear priorities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of students, explicitly stated in strategic policy documents.
- A clear commitment by senior management to the importance of safeguarding.
- A clear line of accountability and defined roles and responsibilities within the organisation for safeguarding.
- Recruitment and human resources management procedures that take account of the need to safeguard students, including safer recruitment processes for staff and volunteers.
- Procedures to deal with allegations against staff, including a named senior manager to whom allegations are to be reported.
- Arrangements to ensure that all staff undertake appropriate training or complete the eLearning package provided by the College. This must be kept up to date by refresher training at regular intervals.
- All staff working with students are made aware of the arrangements for safeguarding including their own responsibilities and knowing the named lead and process for referrals.
- Safeguarding policy and related policies and procedures that as a minimum cover all aspects of those required by the Local Safeguarding Partnership and the College. They must also adhere to relevant statutory guidance, such as, Keeping Children Safe in Education, Working Together to Safeguard Children.

- Arrangements to work effectively with the Local Safeguarding Partnership, the College and other organisations to develop safeguarding practice, including the sharing of best practice.
- Appropriate whistle-blowing procedures which enable issues about safeguarding to be addressed.
- Procedures to ensure that the Prevent Duty is fulfilled and that students/staff are protected from the risks of being radicalised.

Equity, Diversity, Inclusivity and Belonging (EDI-B)

All partners and sub-contractors must have:

- Named lead for equity, diversity and inclusivity and belonging who is accountable for policy and practice within the workplace/training environment.
- Information available to trainees/apprentices on their rights and responsibilities in the workplace.
- Effective policies and procedure to deal with bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- Working/Learning environments that are free from images, language or activity which may impact negatively on people who share any of the following characteristics which are protected under the law – age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sex.
- Key members of staff who have either attended equity, diversity and inclusivity and belonging training, or completed the eLearning package provided by the College.

Performance data will be analysed to monitor any gaps in recruitment or success. The provider will be required to implement an action plan to address any gaps identified. Both data and action plans will be discussed within contract reviews and quality summits.

Information, Advice and Guidance

All partners and sub-contractors must be able to demonstrate that:

- They provide impartial information, advice and guidance to a standard consistent with that provided by Walsall College.
- All students are able to make a well-informed judgement on the suitability of a programme, before they undertake it.
- All students receive timely IAG as they approach the end of their training programme.
- They support students who require specialist or higher levels of IAG to receive it.

Student/Employer Voice

Partners and sub-contractors will be required to capture formalised student and employer feedback when prompted to continually review and improve delivery ensuring both student and employer satisfaction. The College

will provide the feedback questionnaires and will analyse the results periodically and will share any best practice identified. Action plans will be agreed and monitored to ensure that all areas for improvement identified are addressed.

Continuous Professional Development

Walsall College will offer training sessions and updates to partner and sub-contractor staff. Although attendance will not be mandatory at all sessions, all staff working with students on the College's contract will be expected to attend at least one session each year.

Self-Assessment

All Partners and sub-contractors will be required to undertake a self-assessment process in relation to the Education Inspection Framework and produce a SAR (Self-Assessment Report) which clearly and specifically identifies and evaluates the courses or programmes which they are contracted to deliver. The SAR and resulting QIP (Quality Improvement Plan) must be submitted to the College annually in a timely manner to allow the overall College SAR to be produced.

Policy and Procedures

Partners and sub-contractors will be required to demonstrate that they have robust quality audit arrangements, consistent with the requirements related to audit activities undertaken by the College as specified above. They will also be required to maintain, review and update policies and procedures, as appropriate to the nature of their contract, in the following areas:

- Equity, Diversity, Inclusivity and Belonging
- Safeguarding
- Health and Safety
- Quality Assurance, including performance monitoring and development of:
 - Teaching practice
 - Initial assessment
 - Additional support
 - Information, advice and guidance
 - Self-assessment
- Performance management information
- GDPR Data protection
- Staff safer recruitment and development
- Financial management

Audit Procedures

Walsall College staff will conduct audits of Partners and Sub-contractors. The scope of this audit activity will include (dependent upon the nature of the contract):

- Enrolment forms
- Individual Learning Plans
- Class registers and/or contact logs
- Student Progress Reviews
- Developmental Observation records
- Tutor feedback
- Schemes of work and lesson plans
- Accident and injury records
- Initial Assessment/Diagnostic documentation
- Health and Safety policy and procedure
- Equity, Diversity, Inclusivity and Belonging Policy and Procedure
- Safeguarding policy and procedure
- Appeals Procedures

- EV/EQA reports
- Organisational Chart
- Staff CVs and qualifications
- DBS records
- Complaints records
- Student and Employer survey data
- Financial records, including records relating to the deployment of funds paid for the activities specified in the contract
- Internal controls
- Use of the Sub-contractor portal
- Any other documentation not specified above which demonstrates how the Partner or Sub-contractor meets the requirements of Walsall College.

Walsall College will audit all the above as part of due diligence activity.

Should a contract be agreed then regular audits will take place in line with the audit calendar and quality cycle.

Full due diligence activity will be undertaken with all new partners and sub-contractors.

Existing partners and sub-contractors will be required to complete a Business Environment Questionnaire annually.

Performance Review

Performance monitoring and review will take place in line with our Monitoring Framework and External Provision procedure, please refer to this document for full details.

Risk Scores

Risk scores will be calculated using the data discussed at the contract reviews and Quality Summits and will categorise the provider into one of four categories.

- Green – Grade 1 – Outstanding – Quarterly contract reviews and quality summits
- Amber – Grade 2 – Good – Two contract reviews and one quality summit per quarter
- Red – Grade 3 – Inadequate – Monthly contract reviews and monthly quality summits

Fees and Charges

Base rate fees will be set in line with the risk score category for each partner or sub-contractor.

Risk Rating	Management Fee
Green	18%
Amber	≥18%
Red	20%

The differing rates will reflect the amount of support or intervention required by each partner or sub-contractor to ensure that improvements are made. The College reserves the right to negotiate fees outside of this depending on individual partner performance. There may however, on occasion, be other costs associated in addition to these rates which will be negotiated prior to the contract sign off.

- Registration and Exam Fees
- Internal Verification
- Equipment
- Bespoke or accredited staff training

Partnership activity, in line with ESFA Apprenticeship funding rules, will require detailed costings of delivery and management fee to be approved by the employer prior to start date.

Documentation

All student start and end documentation, including evidence of first/last date in learning, must be submitted to the College in line with the table contained in the formal contract document. In the majority of cases this is on or around the 23rd of each calendar month, unless this is a weekend or holiday.

Ongoing participation evidence for all students must be uploaded to the sub-contractor portal prior to 15th of the following month. The College will carry out regular and on-going reviews and or audits of the evidence provided.

Payments

Once the ILR has been returned a funding summary will be produced and reconciled. This will be sent to each provider usually on or around the 11th of the following month.

The College will also highlight at this point any missing participation evidence.

An invoice request will be sent to each delivery partner on or around 20th of the month. A date will be stated on this request for the return of the invoice to ensure payment is made within two weeks of invoice. Payments will only be authorised where all evidence has been provided.

If the invoice is received after the date stipulated then payment will be made within 14 days of receipt.

Payments will be made by BACS.

Retention

10% retention will be withheld from each monthly payment. This will be released following a complete audit of all student records relating to the contract.

N.B. This only applies to apprenticeship provision.

The policy will be discussed with new partners during due diligence and then be readily available to all current partners at <http://www.walsallcollege.ac.uk/corporate/show/partners-and-working-with-walsall-college>

Name of Subcontractor	UKPRN	Contract Start	Contract End	Type of Provision	Funding Drawdown	% Retained	Management Fee	Partner Funding	Success Rates
Learning Curve Group	10008935	01/08/2024	31/03/2025	WMCA Free Courses For Jobs	£156,256	18%	£28,126	£128,130	70%
Environmental Excellence Education	10031554	01/08/2024	31/07/2025	WMCA Delivery	£247,827	18%	£44,609	£203,218	100%
Embark	10040909	01/08/2024	31/07/2026	WMCA Delivery	£686,688	18%	£123,604	£563,084	97.3%
Total					£1,090,771		£196,339	£894,433	93%

Partnership and Education Sub-contractor Strategy

Introduction

This strategy needs to be read in conjunction with the Walsall College Curriculum Strategy, Supply Chain Fees and Charges Policy, and takes account of Education and Skills Funding Agency Funding Rules 2025/26.

Both this document and the Curriculum Strategy are underpinned by robust and up-to-date local and regional market research and labour market intelligence. Similarly, both documents draw on key reports that have informed and driven national policy.

This strategy covers the following areas:

- Employer demand leading to sub-contractor or partnerships delivery interventions.
- Business development and diversification adding value to the Colleges core Employer Responsive or Learner Responsive provision.
- Higher Education/Apprenticeship development which requires external expertise provided by an education subcontractor or partner employer.

The purpose of the strategy is to signpost the College's aspirations and plans to work with education sub-contractors and Employer Delivery partners. Underpinning this document is a series of Key Performance Indicators that each education sub-contractor and/or employer delivery partner will be measured against. These KPIs will be issued in advance of any contract.

Walsall College Mission Statement:

“Walsall College is uniquely and proudly vocational, delivering technical, professional and community education. Our greatest passion is unleashing the potential of individuals, communities and businesses; our greatest legacy is the talent of our students: skilled, professional and enterprising.”

The Partnership and Education Sub-contractor Strategy has been developed to ensure that Walsall College contributes to the achievement of economic success for Walsall, the Black Country and the UK. This will be achieved by expanding and growing provision, through forging strategic partnerships with public bodies, other training providers and employer groups from the public, private and voluntary sectors. Walsall College will also consider gaining market share by introducing innovative products to meet new market needs. Critical to the College's Partnership strategy is the growth and diversification of provision, reduction and over reliance of wholesale traditional sub-contracting and only selecting partners who compliment and add value to the curriculum offer.

Our 7 Strategic Pledges

We are committed to 7 Strategic Pledges, which outlines our intent to ensure Walsall College is at the forefront of providing innovative, high quality education and skills for a modern Britain

Pledge 1 - Work with an employer and business connection in every curriculum area to endorse and enhance provision and provide a line of sight to work.

Students who choose to study at Walsall College receive a holistic education that supports their personal development, confidence, health and wellbeing, and prepares them for their next steps into work or higher levels of study. We engage and work proactively with employers and wider business sector bodies to ensure our curriculum is fit for the future; we develop strategic partnerships to support the local and regional skills agenda and productivity growth. Whether through industry placement, work-experience or project-based-learning, we aim to continue to strengthen our employer partnership network to best support our students' career potential and progression.

- We will provide clear and trusted information, advice and guidance for careers and education choices.
- We will work with our business partners to co-design and shape our provision by strategically developing a 3-year Local Skills Improvement Plan.
- All young people will experience employer master classes.
- All students will have the opportunity to contribute positively to their communities.
- We will support employers to drive business change, innovation and workforce planning.

Pledge 2 - Build a culture that celebrates and prioritises excellence and innovation in Teaching, Learning & Assessment.

We understand that to deliver Our Corporate Strategy successfully and offer an excellent experience for students, parents, employers and our communities requires a culture of excellence in teaching, learning and assessment. We aim to ensure that our students are confident, ambitious and innovative, effectively supported and well prepared for the future

- We will create a network of Advanced Practitioners for all subject areas.
- Every member of our network of Advanced Practitioners will achieve Advanced Teacher Status (ATS).
- We will become a Nationally recognised teaching and learning centre of excellence.
- We will develop networks of teaching, learning and assessment best practice.
- We will be recognised for our excellence in providing innovative online synchronous and asynchronous teaching, learning and assessment.
- Our College becomes increasingly dynamic and effective as it develops and innovates in response to student feedback. The Student Voice not only helps our College develop, but supports students in becoming Walsall College Graduates.

Pledge 3 - Develop the maths, English and digital skills of all our students in order to prepare them for the world of work by embedding skills seamlessly into every programme

Success in modern Britain requires students to be highly skilled in the use of maths, English and digital working. Our pledge to every student is that Walsall College will continually develop these essential skills through the study of qualifications such as GCSE and Functional Skills but also, more importantly, through the continual development of these skills within every aspect of their studies. We are fully committed to ensuring our students are confident and competent in their use of maths, English and digital skills.

- Our teachers and assessors will give corrective and meaningful feedback to ensure all students develop these essential skills.
- All teachers and assessors will consistently and relentlessly embrace and embed the importance of maths accuracy and competency in all elements of delivery.
- We will support and develop our teachers and assessors through staff development and a training hub to ensure our staff are appropriately skilled to support our students in English, maths and digital skills.
- We will introduce a student digital passport for all provision types and all ages.

Pledge 4 - Become a truly innovative digital college.

We believe digital skills are the golden thread across all industries. Industry is being transformed by the power of digital technology, from advanced manufacturing, automotive and finance through to education, health care and public services. Walsall College will be at the forefront of technological change in both computer science and digital skills in all other sectors. The College will deliver high-level skills to the regional workforce. We aim to be renowned for our expertise in the digital sector by giving students real career pathways into professions such as cyber security, robotics, computer sciences, artificial intelligence and working with big data. • We will be a leading provider of skills

- and training for the digital sector.
- All students, whatever their subject, will have the opportunity to upskill their digital competencies.
- All staff will be appropriately digitally skilled, with the skills and knowledge to effectively support students.
- We will ensure effective use of digital technology to deliver highly efficient processes and services that support our staff and students in their day-to-day activity.
- We will ensure we meet the demands of a changing world by being agile, innovative and creative with the skills for a modern economy.

Pledge 5 - Proactively engage to upskill the regional workforce by helping people learn throughout their lives.

Working proactively together with employers, our Local Authorities (LAs), Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and both public and private sectors our aim is to provide the skills necessary to increase regional and national economic prosperity and contribute to the success of our communities. The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has massively accelerated changes within the economy, for example in the digital, retail or hospitality sectors and there is an increased need to reskill and upskill the regional workforce to support our rapidly changing economy.

- Adult reskilling or upskilling will require ability to access a range of flexible courses through different modes of delivery.
- We will offer opportunities for people who have been affected by the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, particularly around re-employment, re-skilling and up-skilling.
- We will ensure we are connected and work closely with all stakeholders to align funding and provision types for adults, whereby projects are mapped together for the benefit of the individual.
- We aim to maximise our adult provision at all levels and in all types of provision, including HE.

Pledge 6 - Create a high quality and seamless experience for all stakeholders, which is sustainable and accelerates the way to a greener future.

Our passion is to achieve excellence in high quality customer service, from website to graduation, ensuring all of our customers are highly satisfied with all aspects of their College experience. We aim to ensure our investments are sustainable for future years while accelerating our environmental commitment to a greener future.

Achieving financial stability for the future in the current COVID-19 situation presents a significant challenge. However, we are committed to effectively managing our resources to deliver on financial health and generate an operating surplus to reinvest in facilities for the benefit of students and the communities we serve.

- We will provide high quality services, from first contact through to graduation.
- We will achieve all funding contracts.
- Students will develop their wider personal skills through impartial careers advice, the delivery of the core curriculum and the provision of a comprehensive tutorial and enrichment offer.
- We will invest in our buildings and resources to minimise environmental impact and support the College's net zero carbon reduction goal.
- The College intends to firmly embed environmental sustainability issues within all aspects of the College Curriculum.

Pledge 7 - Promote rapid progression between levels and settings with an aim to increase numbers at Levels 3, 4 and 5.

Our curriculum will be designed to promote a student-centred and flexible offer that ensures the best education and skills route for an individual, whatever their level and career aspirations. We believe a high quality vocational, technical and professional education should fit together coherently to allow individuals to transition and progress easily between levels and types of education, such as from classroom to apprenticeship, moving within the system.

- All students will be offered a coherent and flexible pathway that meets the needs of each individual.
- We will grow our Level 3, 4 and 5 provision to supply the regional skills gap.
- We will offer flexible curriculum pathways from entry level courses through to Higher Education (HE).
- We will provide an easy transition for students progressing from Level 2 to Level 3.
- We will provide an easy transition for students progressing to Levels 4 and 5.
- There will be a seamless transition between provision types, for example classroom to apprenticeship.

Partnership strategy key aims:

To develop a whole organisation approach to partnership engagement, in which a responsive culture is embedded at all levels, and in which corporately adopted systems & processes are routinely utilised as a means of continuously improving our services to employers and learners.

- To correctly position Walsall College in appropriate chosen markets
- Higher Level Skills/Apprenticeships
- Alternative Provision
- Employability provision
- Apprenticeships
- Workplace learning
- To ensure that the College's funded provision is delivered to a high standard, thus achieving excellent success rates and quality outcomes.

Partnership Objectives:

1. To provide training solutions to employers in alternative curriculum areas based on defined market research and analysis, focusing on identified sector priorities.
2. To build and maintain strategic partnerships with key partners locally, regionally and nationally.
3. To offer strong progression routes.
4. To develop a structure that will allow the College to deliver growth in quality and responsive employer engagement activity.
5. To continually review and evaluate results, relationships and performance in order to develop and improve services and products for employers.

Partnership Working with Employers and Delivery Partners to meet the needs of individual learners via Learner Responsive Funding:

Throughout the academic year 2024/25 the College will work with selected employer and education subcontractor partners in order to meet the specific needs of learners in specialist sectors the College does not currently offer or needs to develop capacity to meet demand. The College will also work with partners in order to share best practice in order to enhance its own internal provision. Areas for collaboration could include but are not restricted to:

- Meeting the needs of hard to reach groups.
- Specialist Construction requiring workshop space or equipment.
- Partnering with organisations to meet specialist provision the College does not offer in order to meet employer demand and job creation.

Contract Monitoring and Review Procedure

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that Walsall College can effectively manage partnership or subcontracting arrangements. The aims of this procedure are to ensure that:

- The contract performance of all partners and subcontractors is monitored effectively
- High performing partners are identified and celebrated
- Underperforming partners are given appropriate support and opportunity to enhance their performance

The activities included in this procedure are:

- Risk Banding
- Weekly monitoring
- Preparation of success rate reports
- Contract Reviews
- Quality Summits ○ Quality Reviews ○ Deep Dives ○ Performance Reports
- Allocation Review
- Contract Management Annual Review

Monthly Monitoring

Key data for all partners will be identified, these elements will include:

- Health and Safety Compliance
- Health and Safety Management
- Safeguarding
- Financial Health Assessment
- Contract Allocation
- Profile Management
- Audit Compliance – use of funds
- Audit Compliance – internal controls
- Claim Procedures
- Verification Management
- Staff Management
- Success Rates
- Equity, Diversity, Inclusivity and Belonging
- Learner Journey Management
- Observations of the Learner Journey

If a slight risk is identified, for any of the above key elements, the Contract Manager will within 7 days:

- Investigate to determine exactly what aspects of performance are responsible.
- If there has been a recent quality of compliance audit which has been responsible for the changed risk rating – contact the relevant person to discuss the details of the audit.
- Based on the outcome of the enquiries, formulate and record questions linked to performance and improvement action that should help to identify:
- The causes of the problems underlying and the changed risk level, where these are not obvious
 - How the identified issues can be rectified
 - What, if any, support will be required
 - Contact the designated partner contact to arrange a face to face / teleconference / webinar performance review meeting, which should take place within 2 weeks, ensuring the purpose of the meeting is clear to the partner.
- Ensure that at this meeting:
- There is clear agreement on the action that is to be taken to rectify the causes of the changed risk level
 - The nature and scope of any support agreed
 - The agreed action includes precise and time bound targets
 - Confirm what has been agreed verbally in writing and ensure that a confirmation is received.
- Liaise with anyone who will be providing support to the partner, and ensure they understand what has been agreed and the nature of the improvement required.

Where the risk increases greatly, for any of the key elements, the Contract Manager will within 24 hours:

- Notify the Assistant Principal – Commercial Development
- Contact the designate partner contact to arrange a face to face / teleconference / webinar performance review meeting, which should take place within 3 days, ensuring the purpose of the meeting is clear to the partner.
- Complete all actions specified in 2 above where they are relevant.
- Agree a schedule of face to face meetings, at a frequency and over a period of time consistent with the seriousness of the situation, to ensure agreed performance improvement action is put in place and is effective.
- Ensure that the Assistant Principal – Commercial Development is briefed regularly about the situation and whether improvement is happening.
- Arrange monthly Quality Summits in addition to contract reviews.
- If improvements are not happening as agreed, restrict or stop the partner recruiting learners to programmes affected by the underperformance issue, until the agreed improvements have been achieved.

Where the risk for specified key data elements has not improved over an agreed period, the Contract Manager will:

- Prepare and issue a formal Notice to Improve, if not already done so.
- Ensure that the partner understands the:
 - Seriousness of the situation
 - Timescales within which improvement must now happen
 - Consequences of improvement to the required level not happening.

Underperformance by a partner may be due to financial instability. To anticipate this eventuality, where the risk score for more than two specified key data elements increase, then the Contract Manager will:

- Request a Financial Health Check.
- Report the outcomes, if significant issues are identified, to the Assistant Principal – Commercial Development.

Success Rate Reports

Success rate reports will be produced monthly, which summarises the performance across all areas of delivery. These reports will be discussed at contract reviews and quality summits.

Contract Reviews

The purpose of a contract review is mainly to maintain contacts and build and develop relationships with partner contacts. The frequency of contract reviews will be scheduled dependent upon the risk score of each partner. Green – Quarterly contract reviews; Amber – Contract review every 2 months; Red – Monthly contract reviews.

The focus of the discussions will depend upon individual partners, however typical conversation topics will include:

- Progress with outstanding actions
- Learner progress on the range of programmes delivered – how many learners are not where they should be
- Completion of documentation / information returns
- Preparation for forthcoming compliance or quality audits
- Progress in production of the SAR
- Other Partnerships
- Support requirements
- Key elements identified above in section 1

The Contract Manager prepares for each contract review by reviewing the actions from the previous meeting. The Contract Manager then reviews the partners previous contract review and runs a selection of reports for the review including learner list (particularly identifying those learners who are approaching their planned end date) and success rates reports (including the breakdown of gender, ethnicity and disability).

Any appropriate information from the previous review, or the reports, is then written up in the contract review along with any other relevant information including notifications of available CPD, changes to the funding requirements, changes to the contract such as contract variations (this is supported by a formal written variation), finance queries and any other information relevant for the partner.

The Contract Manager also records the risk score so that they can see the current score and explain the overall score given and the contributing factor, particularly those factors that the partner needs to focus on to improve their risk score.

The Contract Manager conducts the contract review with the nominated partner contact and any other appropriate team members; in some instances, this could include administrators, assessors, reviewers etc.

The contract reviews take on average 1 hour to discuss all appropriate aspects but this is can vary dependent on the partner and their particular contract. At the end of the review the Contract Manager and the partner agree any actions that have arisen from the contract review to agree who will be responsible for the action and a proposed deadline for completion.

Following the meeting the Contract Manager will undertake any immediate actions raised within the review, where appropriate, and write up the remaining review, updating the risk score where necessary, and ensuring that a completed copy is available on the portal for the partner to review.

Quality Summits

The Assistant Principal - Commercial Development convenes a termly Quality Summit with partners and College Quality staff.

The Quality summits give an increased focus to teaching learning and assessments, whilst contract reviews continue to provide rigor and scrutiny to all aspects of partnership delivery and performance.

Discussions are around a set agenda and include learners on the right qualification, identification of learners at risk, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and support for assessors, EV reports, assessor qualifications and DBS.

Areas for improvement are identified and are used to inform the self-assessment process and any emerging issues are monitored through the learner journey observations and Quality Review themes.

Any partner who has a high-risk score (Red) will be expected to attend Quality Summit meetings on a monthly basis until the required improvements have been evidenced.

Deep Dives

Deep Dive activity takes place with all partners on an annual basis. This activity is scheduled over the period of a week, where a high volume of observation activity along with quality audits, learner and employer view surveys will be undertaken.

This is to ensure that partner provision is monitored closely to ensure the quality of delivery and learner satisfaction mirrors the standards of the College.

In addition, the College Performance Management process is enforced with partner provision with them taking developmental responsibilities with any staff that continually receive reoccurring/unresolved actions/themes arising from their Learning Walks.

Performance Review

The Contract Manager should prepare regular reports, which summarises the performance of each partner, for senior management. These reports will be circulated in the Learning & Quality Committee and Finance & Resources Committee.

Allocation Review

A review meeting will take place regularly, with Assistant Principal – Commercial Development and Operations Manager, in line with the ESFA quarterly reconciliations. All partners will be reviewed with regards to their profile management, success rates and any other contributing factors.

The reasons for any underperformance will be discussed and a decision made with regards to the allocation moving forward. If a partner is failing to utilise their allocation in line with the ESFA targets, then the contract value may be reduced by the percentage of underperformance and potentially the same percentage of any future funding remaining.

At this point any requests for increases to contract values or potential new partnership opportunities may be considered. Any required adjustment to contract values will be notified to partners in writing.

Annual Review

The College will complete a full review on each partner annually. This information is collated from a number of different sources and is used to gain a full overview of the partner over the past 12 months. This review will take place prior to contracts being allocated for the next contract year.

The review will take in to account feedback regarding:

- Health and Safety
- Safeguarding
- Quality
- Observations of the learner journey
- Learner and Employer feedback
- Self-Assessment and Quality Improvement
- Financial Health
- Profile Management
- Accuracy and timeliness of claims submitted
- Audit and Financial Controls
- Success Rates

Partners may be invited in to a contract negotiation meeting following this review to discuss continuing programmes and new initiatives. The offer must be adding value to the College's curriculum offer.

Contingency Planning

In compliance with ESFA and WMCA Skills funding rules apply, if a subcontractor withdraws from the arrangement, or if a subcontractor 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 not yet started will be cancelled and the project closed.

For apprenticeship delivery, failure by a subcontractor to successfully join the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers will automatically result in termination of contracts with the College

If the College needs to withdraw from a subcontracting arrangement, sufficient notice will be provided to allow subcontractors to complete delivery of immediate provision. The College will provide support to enable subcontractors 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 learner or staff.

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

