



East Coast College

Supply Chain Fees and Charges Policy 2024/25

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Supply Chain Fees and Charges Policy

1. Introduction and Purpose

The Supply Chain Fees and Charges Policy (the Policy) is a mandatory requirement of the Educational and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) funding rules for all Lead Providers (i.e. those who hold a direct funding contract with the ESFA) who subcontract government funded activity to a third party, partner provider. This relates to the ESFA's definition of Provision Subcontracting. The ESFA imposes guidance in this area and as such the Policy is directly influenced by this guidance which is contained in the Funding Rules 2024/25 document.

The Policy is required to set out the College rationale for subcontracting funding to Partner providers and the approach taken to determine the fees and charges made for this area of work.

The ESFA further require the Policy to outline how its terms will support the raising of standards in teaching and learning as well as the typical fees charged for this and the services provided by the College in return for such fees. Within this, the Policy is required to outline payment terms and how these operate.

The Policy must detail how, when and where the Policy is communicated to the College's subcontracted Partners and the schedule for the Policy review.

2. Scope

Following approval by the Corporation, the Policy will be communicated via the Deputy Chief Executive to all relevant staff at the College and to all subcontracted Partners as part of the planning and contracting process for the new academic year.

The Policy will be available to Partners via the Assistant Principals in their position of contract management and published on the College website

3. Definitions

The Policy relates to Provision Subcontracting, which is the subcontracting of the delivery of full qualifications and or frameworks/ standards by the College to a third party delivery partner.

For the purposes of the Policy the following definitions shall apply

- The College shall mean East Coast College
- The subcontractor shall mean a legal entity that the College has subcontracted its provision to
- The partner shall mean the subcontractor
- The learner shall mean anyone undertaking learning on a programme that is delivered under a subcontract with the College
- The parties shall mean the College and the subcontractor

4. Requirements and Responsibilities

The College is required to provide clear and accurate details on the list of services it will provide to the subcontractor and the associated costs for doing so.

Within each subcontracting contract, there will be a list of individually itemised, specific costs for managing the subcontractor, specific costs for quality-monitoring activities and specific costs for any other support activities offered to the subcontractor. The contract will also highlight how each of the costs will in turn provide a positive impact on high quality delivery of learning.

Responsibility for the Policy is described below:

4.1. The Corporation

- Approval of the Supply Chain Fees and Charges Policy on an annual basis
- Approval of the annual subcontracting plan

4.2. The Senior Management Group

- Deputy Chief Executive, writing and reviewing the Supply Chain Fees and Charges Policy
- Deputy Chief Executive and Deputy Principal, ensuring the application of the Policy and overseeing the delivery of the services to partners for the fees charged

4.3. Assistant Principals

- Contract managing the College's partners and partnership provision, including the assessment of quality and the delivery of quality support services
- Maintaining a due diligence review of partners which informs partner selection processes and the exposure/ risk per partner

4.4. MIS Team

- Maintaining records of partner delivery on the College's student record system in relation to evidence provided
- Reporting partner outturns to the ESFA and internally to inform contract management and Partner payments

4.5. Finance Team

- Agreeing a payment timetable to partners
- Making accurate payments to partners that are timely in accordance with the funding rules

5. Strategy

In line with the College's Partnership Strategy, the College will partner with a group of select external training organisations to optimise the impact and effectiveness of service delivery to learners. The College will therefore ensure that supply chain management activities comply with the principles of best practice in the skills sector.

The College will at all times undertake fair and transparent procurement activities, conducting robust due diligence procedures on subcontractors to ensure the highest quality of learning delivery is made available, demonstrating value for money and a positive impact on learners lives.

Selected partners will share the College's educational aspirations and outcomes will benefit learners, employers, the College and the partner. Partner relationships will be collaborative and the parties will work together to contribute to the College strategic developments in the long term. .

6. Rationale for Subcontracting

The College will reduce/expand its partner base within year and on an annual basis to meet these strategic objectives and in line with ESFA guidance.

The College engages with sub-contractors in order to:

- Enhance the opportunities available to young people and adults
- Fill gaps in niche or expert provision, or provide better access to training facilities
- Support better geographical access for learners
- Offer an entry point for disadvantaged groups
- Provide consideration for the impact on individuals who share protected characteristics

Provision that meets one or more of the following criteria will be prioritised:

- It meets the needs of residents and employers of Great Yarmouth, Lowestoft and immediate regional adjacencies
- It supplements and does not duplicate the College's curriculum offer
- It offers progression opportunities into the College

Formal subcontracting will be reviewed annually, and revised in line with government guidance and governing body approval.

7. ESFA Guidance and Review on Sub-contracting

The ESFA sub-contracting standard operates from the 2022/23 funding year and effectively acts as a license to sub-contract.

The subcontracting standard provides an oversight and management of public funds and ensuring that these are used to best effect, to maximise the value of those funds to benefit the learner.

Use of the framework will ensure that there is a clear and consistent approach for the contract management of subcontractors by the College and that there are robust assurance review arrangements.

It will assist in mitigating the risk of:

- inadequate (contract) management of subcontractors
- non-compliance with ESFA funding rules by subcontractors; and

- fraudulent and incorrect funding claims

The detail of how the College will comply with the requirements of the sub-contracting standard can be found in the College's Sub-contracting Policy.:

8. Contribution to Improving Teaching and Learning

The quality of subcontracted provision will be monitored and managed in line with existing College quality assurance processes, standards and expectations that cover selection, contracting, monitoring, intervention and review of all subcontracting arrangements in the College. To enable the continuous improvement of the quality of teaching and learning for both the College and its sub-contractors, the College will seek to promote the sharing of effective practice across the supply chain

Sub-contracted partners will be directly supported through contract managers who are linked specifically to curriculum to support the development of teaching and learning. The partnership management framework enables links into wider departments within College bringing other areas of on-going support to help improve policy and practice in such as administration, organisation and finance.

The Policy defines the range of associated College services that contribute towards the improving of teaching and learning of subcontracted provision and relates these to the fees and payment terms by:

- defining the standard fees charged and the agreed minimum levels of service provided by the College which shall be set by the College to support improvements in teaching and learning and which shall be proportionate to the nature, content, distribution and standard of the subcontracted delivery to enable the College to provide such services
- defining the range of additional services that shall be available from the College in support of the continuous improvement of the provision but which shall be additional to the agreed minimum services provided within the standard fee
- enabling the direct linkage of fees and payment to the meeting of contractual targets in teaching and learning/ learner outcomes which may be deemed necessary by the College to promote the continuous improvement of these standards

9. Providing Support for Subcontractors

As part of the initial and on-going due diligence quality assessment mechanisms, the College will undertake an assessment of the subcontracted provision and will share the results to inform opportunities for development of standards.

Throughout the term of the contract, as an agreed minimum standard, the College will provide the following services to the subcontracted provision:

- Access to a designated partner link
- Access to existing College expertise, as appropriate

- A contract management service to include the regular monitoring and reporting of progress
- Access to guidance on the application of funding methodologies and funding policy
- Access to guidance on the development and application of a robust funding audit trail
- A regular quality performance monitoring visit service that includes the sampling and development support in:
 - Individual standards of delivery in teaching and learning
 - Standards of resourcing
 - Standards of learner work
 - Learner attendance and progression levels
 - Learner retention, pass rates and achievement levels
 - Learner voice – and , where appropriate, employer
 - Assessment and moderation mechanisms
- Access to guidance and the sharing of best practice to address areas of improvement in teaching, learning and key quality management processes
- Access to College in house face to face or digital CPD
- Access to learner support
- A full compliance management service for the collation, verification and processing of evidence in relation funding claims for the subcontracted provision

Additional services that may be available to the subcontractor that are additional to the agreed minimum level of service may include but are not limited to:

- Sampling and development support services that are over and above the normal level of support and require additional resourcing for the College
- Awarding organisation fees and charges for learner registration and certification
- The provision of Internal Quality Assurance services by College staff
- The delivery of externally charged staff CPD
- The hiring of facilities / equipment within/ from the College
- The provision of marketing services
- The provision of recruitment services

10. Fees and Payments

The fees charged by the College shall be agreed in the contracts between the parties and shall be determined by the following:

- The fee structure shall include a standard management fee for the agreed minimum level of service by the College and shall be at a standard proportion of the funding earned for the programmes delivered by the Partner.
- For programme of study where the College delivers the English and Maths elements the associated costs in terms of delivery hours as a proportion of the whole programme hours will be deducted from the funding to the partner at the full ESFA rate.
- The fee structure will allow the College to reduce or increase the standard management fee in proportion to the risk as determined by the nature, content, distribution and outcomes of the subcontracted delivery as determined by the College
- The fee structure shall enable the College to increase the standard management fee in relation to the failure by the subcontractor to hit the agreed standards and targets as given in the contract
- The fee structure shall enable the College to increase the fee to cover any additional non-specific support to improve the standards of teaching and learning that are deemed necessary by the College and over and above the agreed minimum level of service
- The fee structure will enable the College to be competitive when dealing with subcontractors who have provision in highly competitive market areas
- The fee structure will enable the subcontractor to purchase specific additional services from the College that are so required by the subcontractor and over and above the agreed minimum services

The fee charged will be agreed with individual subcontractors within the following guidelines:

Provision of services by the College	Standard fee as a proportion of the funding earned	Possible range of fee as a proportion of funding earned	Direct charge for additional service
Agreed minimum standard	20% (15% Princes Trust provision)	20-25%	N/A
Additional non-specific services	N/A	20%	N/A
Additional specific services	N/A	N/A	Charged in accordance with costs of specific service to the College