Sub-Contracting Policy
26/27

August 2026

Department for Education

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY

METRO MAYOR LIVERPOOL CITY REGION

Contents

Table of Contents

Introduction 3
Scope 3
Rationale for Sub contracting 3
Identification of Sub Contractors 4
Due Diligence Process 5
Decision Making 5
Partner Support 6
Payment Terms 6
Safeguarding 6
Contract termination 7
Communication and publication of policy 7
Review of policy 7

Introduction

Northwest Education and Training was established in 2013 to support skills development and apprenticeship delivery in the Northwest of England. At Northwest Education and Training we pride ourselves on delivering training through an experienced and passionate team of individual assessors who's overriding aim is success for all. Northwest Education and Training aim to match the quality of training and employer needs, resulting in suitable employment for the learner and trained employees for the employer. We achieve this through an efficient and commercially beneficial service.

We ensure that all provision funded through our contracts with the Department for Education (and their delivery agencies the Department for Education) provide good value for money for both the Funding Organisation as well as the organisation delivering the programme as a partner to us. We expect and maintain a high standard of delivery for all learners using our provision, and those organisations who contract services from us are termed (and henceforth described as) 'Partners' to indicate that in partnership we share a responsibility to deliver the contract to Northwest Education and Training standards and expectations.

The purpose of this policy is to provide transparency for all Partners, Funding Organisations and other associated parties or individuals regarding the procurement, due diligence process, support and charging rationale related to sub-contracted provision using Northwest Education and Training's direct contract with any Funding Organisation.

Scope

This policy applies to all activity funded through the Department for Education (DfE) and Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) where Northwest Education and Training (NWEAT) enters into any subcontract agreement for subcontracted partnership delivery for Apprenticeship or Adult Skills Fund.

Rationale for Subcontracting

Northwest Education and Training (NWEAT) uses subcontracting only where there is a clear educational rationale and demonstrable benefit to learners. For 2026/27, subcontracted provision is used to complement NWEAT's directly delivered Warehouse and Storage qualifications through specialist Forklift Truck (FLT) training. FLT training requires specialist instructors, equipment and practical training facilities and provides learners with an additional industry-recognised skill that improves access to employment within warehousing and logistics. NWEAT recognises the DfE expectation that providers should reduce reliance on subcontracted provision; subcontracting is therefore kept to a minimum, reviewed annually

and used only where specialist provision adds clear value to the learner journey. We will consider subcontracting funded provision to:

- Enhance learner opportunities and progression into employment by providing additional industry-relevant skills and qualifications.
- Fill gaps in niche or expert provision, including access to specialist FLT instructors, equipment and training facilities that NWEAT does not duplicate internally.
- Support appropriate geographical access to specialist training facilities and minimise barriers to participation for learners.
- Support disadvantaged learners and those who may not otherwise be able to access or fund specialist occupational training, while considering equality, diversity, inclusion and reasonable adjustments.
- The Partner has a proven and demonstrable track record in the delivery of the kind of provision being sought for by the Funding Organisation
- The provision is suitably located to enable effective monitoring in terms of performance and continuous improvement by Northwest Education and Training
- The Partner is a registered provider of services on the UK Register of Learning Providers
- Where apprenticeship provision is subcontracted, NWEAT will ensure that the subcontractor meets the applicable DfE apprenticeship funding rules and any registration requirements in force for 2026/27.

Identification of Subcontractors

The need for a subcontractor will arise from an approved educational rationale/business case, for example where specialist delivery is required to complement NWEAT programmes. NWEAT will select subcontractors fairly, transparently and without discrimination, in line with applicable procurement requirements.

- Where appropriate, NWEAT will use an Invitation to Tender (ITT) and/or Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ). The documentation will set out the scope, delivery requirements, quality expectations, pricing, funding compliance requirements and evaluation criteria.

- The ITT/PQQ would collect sufficient information to assess organisational identity and ownership, parent organisation where applicable, background, principal activities, organisational structure, subcontracting approach, professional/commercial affiliations, legal and financial standing, capability and capacity, quality management systems, relevant Ofsted reports, experience and track

record. Existing subcontractors will not be automatically reappointed and will remain subject to review and due diligence.

Due Diligence Process

All potential partners must progress through our due diligence process before entering into any formal sub contract with Northwest Education and Training.

Discussions will take place before due diligence commences.

- An initial discussion will be held between a Senior Manager of the potential Partner and the Operations Manager for the programme to ascertain provision type
- Agreement to progress onto the due diligence stage confirmed by a follow up meeting and/or discussion with a Director for Northwest Education and Training

The due diligence and appraisal process will review the completed PQQ/ITT response and supporting documents to ensure that the potential subcontractor is legally, financially and educationally sound and has the capacity and capability to control quality, delivery, learner volumes, price, compliance and all other requirements contained within the proposed subcontract.

Due diligence will be refreshed at least annually and will include financial reassessment, quality and performance information, relevant policies and procedures, safeguarding and Prevent, health and safety, insurance, staffing competence, facilities and resources, and compliance with applicable funding rules. Following a successful appraisal, the subcontractor will be added to NWEAT's Approved Subcontractor List, subject to ongoing monitoring and review.

A review will take place of all documents and further information requested if a situation arises where further checks need to be carried out.

Decision Making

The due diligence, procurement evaluation and educational rationale/business case will be reviewed by the Operations Team and Managing Director. A subcontract will only be recommended where the proposed arrangement meets NWEAT requirements and provides clear educational value.
A recommendation will be made by the Director to the Governors Board based on the educational rationale, capacity, capability, quality, value for money, compliance, risk, added value and reputational considerations. Board approval will be recorded.
Following approval, the subcontractor will be informed and a written subcontract agreement will be entered into before delivery begins. The agreement will clearly, comprehensively and unambiguously set

out the obligations of both parties, including scope, funding and payment, quality, performance, safeguarding, data, audit access, monitoring, compliance, change control and termination arrangements.

Partner Support

Northwest Education and Training will provide appropriate support to all partners according to their needs. A maximum of 20% management fee will be set for sub-contractors for the support provided.
We will provide services covering Management & monitoring, Quality support and Data Services administration which will be agreed with each partner at contract agreement stage with exact costs, however the support may need to be increased based on the needs of each partner.

- A dedicated Contract Manager will be allocated to manage the relationship and take responsibility for the contract. Performance will be monitored monthly and will include Contract Performance review meetings scheduled at regular intervals throughout the year.

- SAR and QIP review with feedback provided following the review. Further guidance and support can be given where required.

- A regular and substantial programme of quality assurance checks will be completed, including review of delivery materials, spot checks, observations/learning walks, direct observation of initial guidance, assessment and delivery where applicable, and face-to-face interviews with learners and staff. Checks will verify learner existence, eligibility, progress, quality of delivery and consistency with subcontractor records.

- ILR recording and processing of learner data using our Management Information system and submission of data to submit the funding claim to the DfE / LCRCA. Quality Compliance audit of all documentation to ensure it meets funding and audit requirements.

Payment Terms

Payments will be made monthly following submission of data to DfE / LCRCA. Validation of data in reports from DfE / LCRCA will be carried out following receipt of funding reports from DfE / LCRCA and the value calculated to be paid to the partner. Value to be sent to partner for invoice to be sent to Northwest Education & Training. Payment terms are 30 days from the date of the invoice

Safeguarding

Partners will be required to have appropriate Safeguarding & Prevent policies in place to fulfil all Safeguarding obligations and PREVENT. The management of safeguarding will be monitored via the Sub contractor Management meetings.

All partners will be required to ensure they report all Safeguarding / Prevent incidents to the allocated contact for Northwest Education and Training to be discussed and recorded as part of the Monitoring meeting.

Contract termination

If Northwest Education and Training withdraw from the contract or the partner decides to terminate the contract agreement for any reason or the partner goes into liquidation or administration, then contingency plans will be followed to ensure that the learners programme can continue to ensure continuity of their learning programme.

Plans will be put in place to either continue delivery of provision internally by NWEAT, deliver through a current partner agreement or look to procuring a new partner and entering into a new sub-contracting agreement.

Communication and publication of policy

Northwest Education and Training update the policy annually and inform all new and current partners that the updated policy has been published. We will publish the policy on their website under the policy section.

Review of policy

The subcontracting policy will be reviewed annually against the current DfE and LCRCA funding rules and contractual requirements for each funding year. The educational rationale for each subcontract will also be reviewed at least annually and approved through NWEAT governance arrangements to ensure it remains relevant, proportionate and in learners' best interests.

Author:	Angela Owens	Version:	3
Edit Date:	July 26	Review Date:	28/7/26
Director Approval:	Tom Woolf	Sign off Date:	2/8/26
		Next annual review due:	August 27