

Adult Learning

Policy for subcontracting (incl. fees and charges) 2023-24



1. Introduction

West Sussex County Council's Adult Learning Service (WSCC ALS) contracts with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) for the provision of:

- Adult Education Budget (AEB) accredited and non-accredited learning opportunities for adults (an adult is an individual aged 19 and over on 1st August of the given academic year).
- National Skills Fund qualifications for adults at level 3.
- 16-19 Study Programmes (up to 25 for Young People with an EHCP)

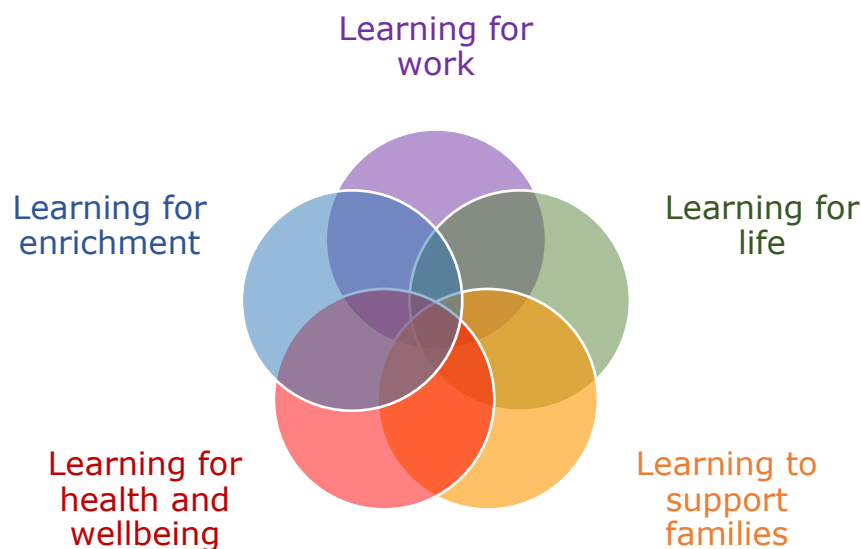
The ESFA Funding Rules¹ define how the funding can be used.

Statement of purpose

WSCC ALS provides learning opportunities that improve the lives and outcomes for individuals, families and communities and support economic growth, improved employment, social inclusion, community cohesion, health and wellbeing.

Our vision

The overarching vision is to maximise adult participation in high quality, accessible and impactful learning and training which supports individuals to reach their potential through a curriculum offer that supports five inter-related outcomes:



¹ ESFA Funding Rules can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/sfa-funding-rates>

WSCC AL sets the strategic direction, curriculum and delivery priorities; these are detailed in our Accountability Agreement², Mission Statement and tender specifications as appropriate. In particular, we ensure our curriculum aligns with:

- ✚ The Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP), the most recent version of which was published March 2023. The priorities, notably the sectors with identified labour / workforce concerns, and 'roadmap for change' have informed the new Adult Learning curriculum, notably the development of the "Routes into..." programme.
- ✚ West Sussex County Council's "[Our Council Plan 2021-25](#)" identifies four priorities, all of which are underpinned by a cross-cutting theme of tackling climate change. Adult Learning contributes to all of the priorities:
 - Keeping people safe from vulnerable situations
 - A sustainable prosperous economy
 - Helping people and communities to fulfil their potential
 - Making the best use of resources.
- ✚ The priorities within the [Children and Young People's Plan 2022 to 2025](#).
- ✚ The [West Sussex Education and Learning Strategy 2023- 2025](#) has Adult Learning as a specific priority and key workstream, whilst also recognising the contribution adult learning can make to many of the other priorities.

2. Our approach

From March 2023 the Council has evolved the delivery model, taking responsibility for the development and delivery of three key curriculum:

- ✚ English for Speakers of Other Languages,
- ✚ Programmes for Adults with mild to moderate Learning Disabilities
- ✚ Family Learning and Parenting.

The remaining provision will be commissioned and delivered through specialist external partners. Provision will include:

- ✚ English and maths (including Multiply)
- ✚ Essential Digital Skills Qualifications
- ✚ "Routes into..." a broad range of employment sectors
- ✚ Community Learning Grants.

² [Adult Learning - Accountability Agreement 2023-2024 \(westsussex.gov.uk\)](#)

The mixed economy model enables WSCC to design and deliver aspects of the curriculum which best serve the most vulnerable residents, working in partnership with Council teams and departments including Adult Services, Economic Development and Communities. Our position in Children, Young People and Learning enables wider and more efficient distribution of funding and resource for Family Learning and Parenting programmes which will enrich the opportunities, widen participation in adult learning and allow for increasingly coordinated intervention which will positively impact for our most vulnerable families.

The mixed economy model recognises the breadth and depth of the post-16 learning and training sector and the specialisms, expertise and knowledge external organisations have. This will complement our direct delivery, enrich the curriculum offer and enable the best use of our resource in meeting local and national priorities.

Rationale for subcontracting

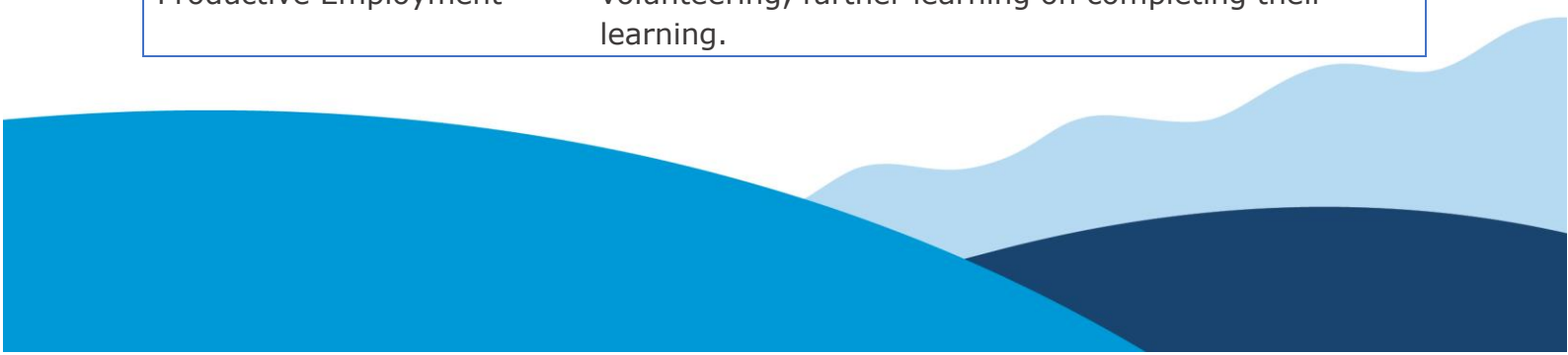
WSCC has chosen to operate a commissioning model to secure high-quality learning provision which:

- Provides specialist programmes in key employment sectors aligned to local and regional priorities.
- Strengthens links with local community organisations for the benefit of adult learners and their families and communities.
- Promotes more effective collaboration with other adult learning providers to reduce perceived or actual competition and minimise duplication of offer across the county.
- Supports better geographical access for learners, especially those from marginalised communities.
- Supports an entry point for disadvantaged groups.
- Supports individuals who share protected characteristics, where there might otherwise be gaps in provision.
- Maximises “social value” by generating benefits to society, the economy and positive impacts to the environment and local communities.

How we will measure the success of our strategy:

High level measures are summarised in the following table.

Benefit	Evidence
Sustainable and Productive Employment	➤ No. of learners that move into work, apprenticeships, volunteering, further learning on completing their learning.



	➤ Feedback from DWP and LSIP on the 'health' of the workforce's skills needs in relevant sectors and job roles.
Skills for life	➤ No. of learners improving their skills and confidence with English and communication; Maths; Digital.
Social Inclusion & Community Cohesion	➤ No. of learners who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ feel a heightened sense of belonging in their community, ▪ want to improve their local area after participating in adult learning, ▪ take a more active role or volunteer in the community (e.g., schools).
Health and Wellbeing	➤ Learner's report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ fewer visits to their GP / health service, ▪ improved mental wellbeing and increased self-confidence.

Appropriate data collection and recording processes will be developed and implemented during 2023-24 in partnership with our partners, drawing in data both quantitative and qualitative, from a breadth of sources; this will create a baseline for future performance measures / targets to be set.

Adult Learning Scrutiny and Advisory Board (ALSAB)

The scope of the Adult Learning Scrutiny and Advisory Board (ALSAB) encompasses:

- all activity within the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) contract for Adult Education Budget (AEB) and 16-19 programmes.
- Multiply, funded by the Department for Education (DfE)

Other relevant activity will be considered for inclusion as appropriate.

ALSAB provides strategic direction and challenge to the Adult Learning Service, ensuring:

- the effective use of resources,
- alignment of provision to West Sussex County Council's priorities,
- alignment to relevant regional and national priorities,
- provision meet the needs of West Sussex residents, particularly the most vulnerable,
- compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements, including safeguarding and Prevent duty,
- that provision is high quality, accessible and impactful.

In addition, the Board acts as a 'champion for adult learning' with members proactively seeking to promote the service and develop opportunities, relationships and partnerships for the mutual benefit of all parties involved.

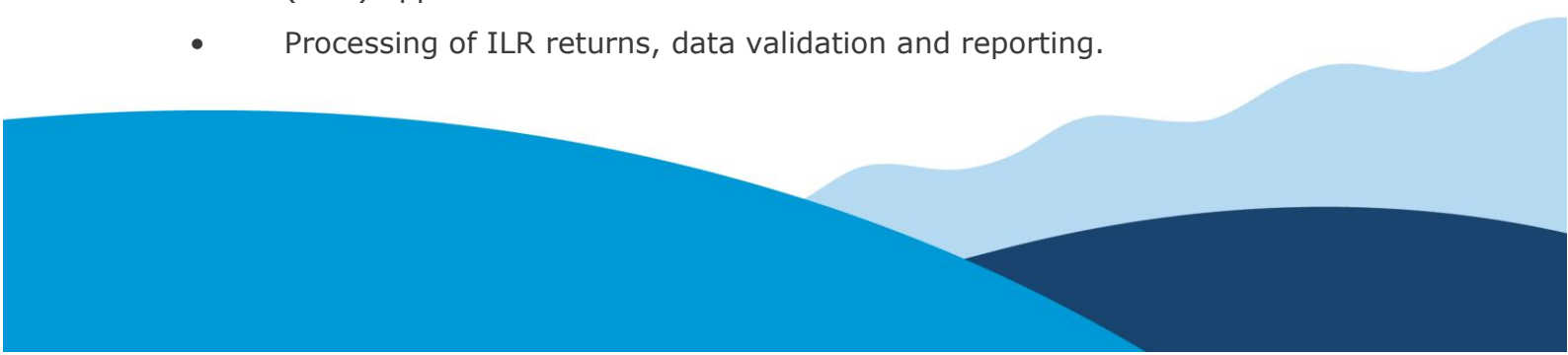
Through membership of the board, Adult Learning will report through and into other relevant boards and partnership forums across the County Council to ensure breadth of service and response to identified needs and priorities in a changing climate.

The performance of all commissioned provision falls within the remit of ALSAB and will be reported to the Board accordingly.

3. Management and assurance

WSCC is ultimately responsible for, and monitors, the quality, performance and impact of all provision delivered.

A proportion of ESFA funding is retained by WSCC as a "management fee" in order that WSCC can fulfil our obligations to both the ESFA and our subcontractors. This includes:

- Commissioning through Standing Order compliant procurements managed and assured by the County Council's Procurement Team and operational processes and standards; this includes due diligence to ensure that subcontractors have the financial ability to deliver the requirements of the subcontract and which ensure subcontracting does not lead to the inadvertent funding of extremist organisations.
 - Administration of all contractual requirements and processes.
 - A designated contact within the Adult Learning team as the first point of contact who will respond promptly to any queries and monitor the performance against the contract throughout the year.
 - Regular contact, dialogue and professional support with key subcontractor contacts.
 - Information, advice, guidance and support to ensure delivery is compliant with ESFA Funding Rules.
 - Quality assurance and improvement support, as detailed in the Quality Assurance Framework (available on request / included in all tender packs).
 - Regular (usually every 2-3 months) contract monitoring meetings where provider performance against contract and the quality of delivery against the Quality Framework are discussed with action plans for improvement agreed.
 - Access to applicable WSCC training and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) opportunities.
 - Processing of ILR returns, data validation and reporting.
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- Business support processing of paperwork, invoices, regular finance payments and inputting of data.
- Support from WSCC's Marketing and Communication team who will: advise providers on how to correctly display the County Council's logo; support the promotion of provision, appropriate events, news stories and case studies.

Quality assurance and improving teaching, learning and assessment

The Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF) and the Handbook for the Inspection of Further Education and Skills are the key national documents which outline the quality requirements for provision funded by the ESFA. WSCC ALS has developed a Quality Assurance Framework which is aligned to these key documents.

Improving the 'learner journey' and particularly the quality of the learning, teaching and assessment will always be a target for WSCC. WSCC sets aspirational targets and works on the premise that whatever is done well today can be improved upon tomorrow.

This Quality Framework supplements any contracts and grant agreements and sets out the process by which we assure quality, monitor performance and support improvement. It outlines clearly the roles, responsibilities and expectations WSCC ALS and its subcontractors have in the relationship.

4. Fees, charges and payments

The funding retained by WSCC reflects the need to cover the full costs associated with the management of subcontracted provision; these costs vary depending on the type of provision being subcontracted, the risks associated with the provision and a proportion of costs relating to the overheads incurred by WSCC's management of the contract with the ESFA.

The breakdown and apportionment of the management fee for each provider is detailed in their individual contract with WSCC.

WSCC standard terms and conditions apply for all payments.

Adult Skills contracts

The Adult Skills contract values and associated management fees for 2022-23 are:

Subcontractor	Contract Value	Management Fee retained by WSCC	Management fee %
Chichester College Group (UKPRN: 10007817)	£188,400	£20,933	10%
Creative Process Digital (UKPRN: 10047679)	£120,000	£13,333	10%

Free To Learn (UKPRN: 10030935)	£50,000	£5,556	10%
Functional Skills UK (UKPRN: 10047090)	£234,945	£26,105	10%
London Learning Consortium (UKPRN: 10021684)	£12,000	£1,333	10%
Runway Apprenticeships (UKPRN: 10049149)	£345,056	£38,340	10%
Tempus Training (UKPRN: 10011159)	£99,600	£11,067	10%
Twin Training (UKPRN: 10007091)	£149,999	£16,667	10%
TOTALS	£1,200,000	£133,333	

Subcontractors are paid monthly (unless they request otherwise and this is agreed by WSCC) based on delivery. Payment values follow the 'actual delivery value to date', from ESFA ILR reports, cross referenced with WSCC MIS reports and satisfactory performance to the requirements laid out in the contract.

Payments will be up to the maximum value specified.

Any financial over-delivery is at the subcontractor's discretion and risk. Reconciliation and forecasting activity will be undertaken throughout the delivery period. Any under or over delivery will be discussed with the subcontractor and, in the event of any potential under delivery, WSCC will consider how to make best use of any unspent funds.

Should a subcontractor be found to have over claimed at any point (e.g. through ILR error / incorrect data returns to WSCC), any funding paid over in excess of the final, reconciled delivery value will be clawed-back by WSCC through an agreed repayment plan. Any such claw-back funding reclaimed by WSCC will be reinvested in provision where possible. If a subcontractor's under delivery were to result in the ESFA clawing back funds from WSCC, the value of the ESFA clawback would be passed on to the subcontractor in full.

Community Learning Grants

The commissioning of Community Learning grant funded programmes is due to commence November 2023 with contract start dates, March 2024.

Grants are to be awarded in four lots:

- Learning for Work £130,000
- Learning for Life £107,500
- Learning to Support Families £107,500

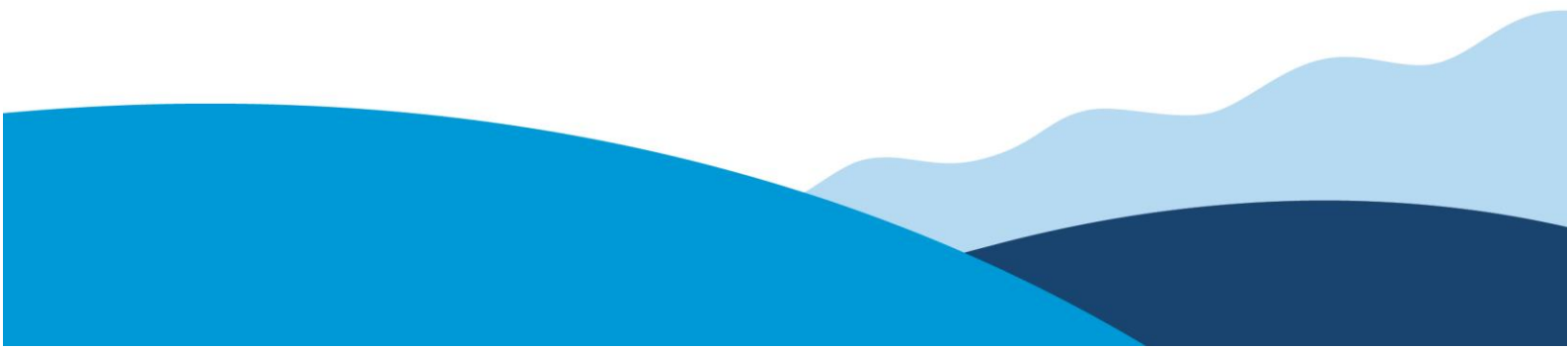
- Learning for Health & Wellbeing £130,000

Grants will be between £10k and £40k per lot, with no single organisation receiving more than £60k in total (e.g. if they bid successfully for multiple lots). To allocate the grant funding in a methodical and transparent process:

- Providers will be scored and ranked accordingly within each lot. Highest scoring provider is awarded funding (as per the value requested), then 2nd place, 3rd place etc until all funding is allocated from that lot.
- Providers will be asked to preference their lots so, where they might bid for more than one lot and score suitably in each lot with the total value exceeding the £60k cap, they receive the full amount for their top preference and the balance up to the £60k total for their lower preferences.
- Where a provider is to be offered a proportion of the funding applied for (e.g. if they are the lowest scoring provider in a lot and / or if they have been successful in their higher preference and have hit the overall £60k cap), targets and deliverables will be pro-rata'd.

No management fee will be applied to the Community Learning Grants awarded. The Adult Learning Service has ensured suitable core staffing and infrastructure is in place to administer, manage, assure and support quality improvement activity for this programme.

Payments will be up to the maximum value specified in the grant agreements and, unless formally requested and approved by WSCC ALS, paid in two equal instalments in the academic year; the first on signing of the grant agreement and receipt of all required documentation by WSCC and the second based on satisfactory performance to key deliverables derived from each organisations' application.



5. Corporation statement and agreement of policy

On behalf of West Sussex County Council, it is hereby confirmed that this Policy for Subcontracting reflects an agreed statement of purpose, aims and objectives as approved by the Cabinet Member for Learning and Skills in the [Key Decision Report](#), 13 March 2023.

This policy is openly available at [Adult Learning Service - West Sussex County Council](#)

Supporting documentation

- [✚ Education and Learning Strategy - West Sussex County Council](#)
- [✚ Children and Young People's Plan 2022 to 2025 - West Sussex County Council](#)
- [✚ Our Council Plan - West Sussex County Council](#)
- [✚ Key Decision Report](#)
- [✚ The Local Skills Improvement Plan \(LSIP\) | Sussex Chamber of Commerce](#)

End of Document

