

## **Sub-contracting on Northumbria University Apprenticeship Programmes**

Northumbria University uses subcontractors in certain subject areas where enhancements to teaching and learning for apprentices can be achieved by partnering with specialist providers. The University will also subcontract the delivery of English and Maths functional skills where an individual does not already hold or cannot demonstrate that they hold the qualifications in these subjects required by the ESFA funding rules.

Selection and procurement of subcontractors will be carried out in accordance with the University's Procurement Guidelines. Where any element of the programme, including English and Maths, is subcontracted to the employer or another provider, they must be either a Main or Supporting Provider on ESFA's register of Apprentice Training Providers or a registered Employer Provider.

The use of delivery subcontractors is agreed with employers prior to the commencement of the apprenticeship programme.

As the main provider of an apprenticeship, the University will provide governance and quality assurance for all delivery under the apprenticeship, including delivery by subcontractors. The approval and oversight of any apprenticeship subcontractors is managed via the University's existing quality processes and in accordance with the University's sub-contracting policy.

All subcontractors have a contractual relationship with the University and are required to take part in an annual due diligence process and remain compliant with the ESFA Apprenticeship Funding Rules. The contract between the University and the subcontractor provides transparency as to the costs of the subcontracted delivery and is available for review by the ESFA as required.

The University declares subcontractor arrangements to the ESFA as required and due to subcontracting activity exceeding £100,000 annually, the University will obtain an independent auditors' report.

The following rationales have undergone the following scrutiny and endorsement within the University's governance processes:

- Apprenticeship Sub-Committee: 19 October 2023
- University Executive: 1 February 2024
- Employment and Finance Committee: 6 November 2023

## **1. Rationale for Sub-contracting**

### **1.1 Police Constable Degree Apprenticeship**

**Partial Delivery sub-contracted to Northumbria Police and Durham Constabulary (3 year programme)**

**ESFA Criteria:** *fill gaps in niche or expert provision, or provide better access to training facilities*

**Rationale:** The University's delivery follows the collaborative Police Force/Provider model as defined by the College of Policing (CoP) where:

- The HEI is the Awarding Body, the Main Training Provider, and the principal provider of final summative assessment.
- In England, the HEI needs to be on the [Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers](#) (RoATP) - Northumbria University (UKPRN 1001282) was accepted onto the Register in April 2017. Please note RoATP was replaced by the Apprenticeship Provider and Assessment Register (APAR) in August 2023.
- Programmes jointly developed with forces and delivered by both academic and police personnel.
- Programmes approved/validated and recognised through HEI processes and linked to the College of Policing QSA.
- Assessment conducted by force and HEI.
- For England, Independent end point assessment conducted by an organisation that is on the Register of End Point Assessment Organisations.
- Quality Assurance managed under HEI processes (QAA and internal) and in line with IfATE/ESFA and Welsh Government requirements for apprenticeships.

The subcontracted elements of the programme are those which are identified as 'reserved' by the CoP. These are the areas of the curriculum which are suitable only for delivery by the police service due to the specific professional nature of the learning.

All police service delivery is managed by professional trainers within the employer force, supported by the HE provider as appropriate.

## **1.2     BSc (Hons) Nursing Science, Registered Nurse (Adult) Degree Apprenticeship**

**Partial delivery sub-contracted to Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (18 month programme)**

**ESFA Criteria:** *fill gaps in niche or expert provision, or provide better access to training facilities*

**Rationale:** The Nursing Apprenticeship provided Lancashire NHS Trust with an opportunity to address their shortage of nursing staff by taking Nurse Associates and Assistant Practitioners to qualified nurse status in a shortened timescale. The plan was supported by South Cumbria Local Workforce Action Board (LWAB) as it aligned to their strategy to work with Universities and Colleges to create opportunities and pathways for local students to study and work in the area (LWAB – Our Workforce Strategy 2019).

At that time Northumbria University was the only provider who could offer the programme over 18 months rather than 2 years. As time was a critical factor, Northumbria was the chosen partner for the initiative and a co-delivery model was developed between the two organisations.

**ESFA Criteria:** *offer an entry point for disadvantaged groups*

**Rationale:** The Lancashire Trust 18 month Degree Apprenticeship programme provides an opportunity for existing staff to upskill and progress to Qualified Nurse status within the Trust. Many of the staff who undertake the programme are mature learners with dependant families. They have the desire to become a qualified nurse but are disadvantaged in that they do not have the financial means to embark on a traditional 3-year Nursing programme. The apprenticeship provides continuity of income and employment with the Trust.

## **1.3     Level 2 Mathematics and English Provision**

**ESFA Criteria:** *fill gaps in niche or expert provision, or provide better access to training facilities*

**Rationale:** The University is not an approved level 2 testing centre therefore level 2 Mathematics and English provision is sub-contracted to an appropriate organisation. A new level 2 provider has been sourced via the approved tender process and contracts are currently being drafted. Once the process is completed this rationale will be updated.

## 2. Fees Retained for the administration and management of sub-contracting

The University retains responsibility for the quality assurance, administration and management of sub-contracted provision. This includes:

- Initial due diligence of proposed subcontractors
- Annual quality monitoring audit including observations, visits (where appropriate and possible), apprentice progress review and action planning.
- Support for Sub-Contractors, co-ordination of activity (e.g. referral and tracking of learners (level 2 maths and English)) and facilitation of and attendance at, joint steering group meetings.
- Administration of funding and payments in relation to sub-contracting.

For each of those activities a number of hours are allocated against each, against a staff category, to come up with a cost. This is then totalled up by cohort and then divided by number of students in that cohort (a standard number is used to account for variability in cohort size) to arrive at a cost per student.

<b>Subcontractor</b>	<b>Funds retained per student over duration of programme</b>
<b>Northumbria Police</b>	£503
<b>Durham Constabulary</b>	£503
<b>Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust</b>	£380
<b>Functional Skills Provider</b>	TBC