Introduction

Aims and objectives

1.1 This policy outlines the University's approach to subcontracting its provision for apprenticeships. This applies to apprenticeships at all levels (Levels 4, 5, 6 and 7) both Higher and Degree Apprenticeships and to the delivery of Functional Skills (maths and English).

1.2 It outlines the University's framework for selecting, approving and monitoring subcontractors in accordance with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) regulation and guidance[1], the QAA Quality Code for Higher Education[2] and the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework[3].

1.3 The Objectives of the policy are to outline a standardised approach to subcontracting apprenticeship provision including:

To ensure a standard due diligence process is carried out on all new subcontractors so that the University can satisfy itself that the subcontractor has been selected fairly, within our procurement policies, and has the capability, capacity and quality to deliver the apprenticeship and a good financial standing.
To ensure there is transparency in regards to our subcontracted provision, including the selection process and the charges and fees associated with the provision.
To meet the diverse needs of the employer.
To set out a framework for collaborative approaches to monitoring and enhancing the quality of teaching and learning.
To ensure high rates of achievement and to underpin the co-management of client relationships.

Rationale for subcontracting

1.4 The University recognises the value of subcontracting apprenticeship provision, in some circumstances, in order to enhance the scope, reach and quality of our apprenticeship offer and to provide employers with a high quality apprenticeship programme(s) that is cost-effective, integrated and complements our own delivery.

Specific rationale for subcontracting includes:

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	Reporting to the Apprenticeship Management Group monthly and the BoSSE.
Periodic review of the subcontractor	CQSD and the School

Approval Processes

Tender Process

2.1 All subcontracting arrangements for apprenticeship provision will be subject to the University's procurement policies and processes[6] and in line with the ESFA regulations for subcontracting. Schools will draft their specifications and develop key service levels which will inform the evaluation criteria for choosing a provider.

Potential sub-contractors will be expected to complete the Supplier Questionnaire (templates held by Procurement) which, for this purpose, will include additional queries in regards to T&L due diligence.
(Examples of the types of evidence which might be requested for T&L due diligence can be found in Annex 1).

Due Diligence

2.2 Potential subcontractors will be subject to relevant and adequate due diligence processes to satisfy the University that they have the capability to deliver the apprenticeship provision to the expected academic standards and T&L quality.

2.3 Due diligence process may include, but are not limited to:

- 2.3.1 Completion of the Supplier Questionnaire and any additional due diligence information requests including:
  Copies of Ofsted report, where available;
  Copies of Self Assessment Reports (SARs) and Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs);
  Copies of any other external audit reports (eg: ESFA, QAA, PSRB)
- 2.3.2 Curriculum mapping and development
- 2.3.3 Checks on appropriate policies in place
- 2.3.4 Details on internal QA and QE mechanisms
- 2.3.5 Observations of learning
- 2.3.6 A site visit to any planned learning environment
- 2.3.7 A review of existing student work/portfolios
- 2.3.8 A list of staff CVs and relevant experience (academic and support staff where necessary)
- 2.3.9 Meetings with Senior Leaders
- 2.3.10 Investigations on any other aspect which may affect a provider's ability to deliver.

3.6 Unsatisfactory reviews will be reported to the Apprenticeship Management Group, who will support the subcontractor to put in place an Action Plan to address the necessary improvements and who will monitor progress made against the Action Plan.

3.7 The Apprenticeship Management Group will report all compliance and quality issues, including progress against Action Plans, to the Apprenticeship Board (currently convened within the Henley Business School). Where timely progress is not being made, the Apprenticeship Board will work with Legal Services and CQSD to manage and intervene in subcontractor provision, including terminating a contract where necessary. At all stages the students' rights will be protected in accordance with the University's Student Protection Plan.
Any such changes in subcontracted provision will be reported to the University's Programme Board.

Support and Development

3.8 The University will support all subcontractors to ensure the provision of a high-quality delivery. Support and development will be determined through discussions with the subcontractor and by identifying any developmental needs with them. In addition to the quality monitoring highlighted above, this might include support for:

- Programme set-up and curriculum design
- Development of course materials
- Embedding Mathematics, English, Safeguarding and Prevent into delivery
- Self-assessment and quality improvement
- Student voice - feedback and implementation
- Funding compliance guidance, monitoring and support
- Workshops and staff training to support delivery and compliance

Funding and Payments/Fees and Charges

4.1 The University's statement on subcontractor fees and charging can be found on the University's webpages here: _____

ANNEX 1: Examples of T&L Due Diligence

Details of assessment arrangements including policies relating to:

- Assessment setting
- Marking and feedback to students
- Moderation
- Exceptional circumstances
- Academic Misconduct
- Appeals against results

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