

Apprenticeships and Workbased Learning Steering Group

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Rationale for subcontracting for Apprenticeships: August 2020 version 1.1

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1. Background

In August 2020 the ESFA introduced a new requirement¹ for providers to publish a rationale for subcontracting by **31 October 2020**.²

Earlier in 2020 a small task group in SHU had developed a set of *principles for subcontracting* apprenticeship provision and these were considered and approved by the SHU *Apprenticeship Delivery Group* (March 2020) and the SHU *Apprenticeships Work Based Learning Steering Group (AWBLG)*.

This paper describes an update to SHU's rationale for subcontracting ready for publication (on the SHU website and other appropriate media) prior to the October 20 deadline.

This paper was considered by the SHU Degree Apprenticeships Delivery group and has now progressed to AWBL for approval.

2. The Apprenticeships and Work based learning Group is asked to:

- i) **approve** the statement for publication in line with ESFA requirements.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apprenticeship-funding-rules#history>

² The statement should be published in such a way that it easily accessed from SHU's "front page" of SHU "education and training pages".

3. SHU's rationale for subcontracting

The following statement is proposed for publication:

"Apprenticeships at Sheffield Hallam University"

Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) is a large modern university committed to applied education and the development of high level skills. The university's aim is to work with learners, employers and other stakeholders to design and deliver innovative and high quality apprenticeship programmes.

Apprenticeships are integral to the delivery of the university's Transforming Lives strategy. They facilitate the development of innovative and coherent curriculum and enable the university to work with a range of stakeholders to enhance economic growth, educational health and quality of life.

In most cases SHU will deliver all aspects of any apprenticeship programme; however in certain circumstances the university may consider subcontracting some elements of the provision to other suitable approved organisations. The university will carefully assess any proposal for subcontracting and will require the educational, and other, advantages to learners, employers and other stakeholders to be clearly articulated.

The university has developed a set of principles for subcontracting and these are used (as part of SHU's normal governance/decision making processes) to inform the consideration of any proposal for subcontracting any elements of apprenticeship provision - where SHU is the main provider³.

SHU's principles for subcontracting

SHU's default position is to meet learner and employer need using institutional resource, through direct delivery. Where that is not possible a partnership and/or subcontracting approach may be considered.

In all cases any subcontracting arrangements will aim to enhance the opportunities available to learners by one or more of the following:

- widening access, participation and progression for groups that are hard to engage or geographically removed from the University*
- enabling access to specialist staff or other resources that would otherwise not be available*
- bringing benefits to the region in terms of business innovation and knowledge transfer with the university and its stakeholders*
- accessing funding as a result of a joint bid or similar for higher and degree apprenticeship funding in which the university is the main provider (for example to meet the needs of particular learners/employers/ sectors)*
- satisfying particular needs (of learners/employers/main provider) including the consideration of impact on individuals with shared protected characteristics*

³ The principles do not relate to circumstances where SHU might be a subcontractor for another main provider.

To ensure the quality of apprenticeship delivery, and compliance with ESFA requirements, the university will ensure that:

- *all subcontractors are on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers*
- *as a main provider we maintain a direct relationship with employers*
- *we deliver a substantial element of an employer's apprenticeship provision*
- *any arrangements using subcontractors comply with all appropriate professional and regulatory frameworks, including ESFA funding guidance.*
- *provision delivered via subcontracting is approved/ monitored via the university's processes and procedures (including internal arrangements for academic standards and quality / partner approval/ due diligence (initial and annual) and external arrangements such as compliance audit.*
- *second tier/ serial subcontracting is not used*
- *any proposal for subcontracting receives agreement in principle through the appropriate university governance (currently the Apprenticeship and Work-based Learning Steering Group).*
- *any proposal for subcontracting demonstrates alignment with the SHU's published principles and rationale*
- *we will not enter into any agreement for brokerage*