

# Adult Learning Services (ALS) Fees & Charges Policy

Academic Year 2017-18

## **1. Policy Statement**

This fees & charges policy is updated and published annually and is in accordance with the funding requirements of Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). Fees and charges refers to those fees which Hackney Council retains to manage delivery subcontractors of adult education programmes, which the Council funds using the grant received from the ESFA.

Hackney Council's education department is called Hackney Learning Trust (HLT) and is a department within the Children's, Adult & Community Health directorate. HLT's Adult Learning Service (ALS) is responsible for the education offering to Hackney residents aged 19 and over. ALS is committed to delivering adult education in partnership with community organisations specifically to reach those communities, groups and individuals deemed hardest to reach and furthest from the labour market with low level or no qualifications.

At the time of writing, the Council does not generate any income through fees & charges. The Council reserves the right to use the discretion it has to charge fees at a later date in accordance with the ESFA grant conditions.

The financial management & control infrastructure is consistent with other departments of Hackney Learning Trust. ALS is also subject to a specific sub-contractor audit undertaken by external auditors as per ESFA requirements.

## **2. Scope**

ALS works in partnership with a range of Hackney based community providers of diverse specialisms and sizes to deliver around 5,000 learning places. The delivery of adult education is primarily subcontracted to community organisations. Frameworks usually lasting for four years are established to procure organisations which meet local requirements. This model enables strategic planning and capacity building of small providers and there is some certainty and longevity for subcontractors provided performance standards are maintained. The process minimises costs for both HLT and community organisations by limiting full tenders to once every four years and it enables flexibility for efficient reallocation of any unused funds.

Funding is apportioned between providers depending on curriculum, location, learner need, local, national and funders' requirements etc. Mini competitions are held between framework providers for Festival of Adult Learning and Family Learning Festival enrichment courses. Continuous assessment and quality assurance monitoring is undertaken to help inform the following years commissioning of courses and programmes.

Procurements are fully compliant with Council policies.

## **3. Overarching Principles**

HLT is committed to optimising the impact and effectiveness of service delivery to the end user by:

- Aligning our processes with The Common Accord & Supply Chain Management document.
- Ensuring rigorous quality assurance of all subcontracted provision
- Ensuring funding is appropriate to course type and adequate to enable employment of qualified and subject specialist tutors as required.
- Ensuring outcomes for learners are relevant and positive and achievement rates are high.
- Maximising funding for front-line delivery
- Providing excellent value for money

#### 4. Subcontracting Rationale

Subcontracting arrangements are rigorously tied to performance and outcome. ALS is committed to retaining this subcontracting model and is committed to supporting and capacity building new providers to enable them to deliver high outcomes for learners within local priorities.

In partnership with other Hackney Council departments ALS has a role to bridge the gap between local generic grant funded programmes and employment programmes aimed at those who are 'job ready'. This, alongside broader community partnerships ensures resources are maximised, expertise is shared and opportunities for adults are increased. It enables information sharing which allows for a joint approach to local, regional and national initiatives.

Through subcontracting ALS is able to:

- improve the quality and quantity of adult learning community provision in Hackney
- provide a varied curriculum
- ensure a broad geographical range
- engage the most disadvantaged residents
- ensure access to learning for all
- ensure relevant progression pathways for learners
- develop sustainable teaching and learning capability within the voluntary sector

HLT will ensure that:

- The proposed delivery is in the best interests of learners;
- The proposed delivery has a clear strategic fit with HLT's mission and corporate objectives;
- There is sufficient expertise within ALS to quality assure the provision;
- There is sufficient staff resource in support areas;
- Commissioning and contract management processes are robust and constantly reviewed;
- All subcontractors are approved through due-diligence processes;
- There is sufficient funding available for the proposed delivery in any one year;
- All subcontractors have signed contracts and are fully aware of the expectations and duties incumbent on them as signatories (e.g. safeguarding and preventing extremism);
- Provider compliance is continually monitored against contract terms and conditions;
- Provider performance is continually monitored against KPIs, targets and quality assurance processes.

#### 5. Improving the Quality of Teaching and Learning

Subcontracted partners will be expected to meet HLT's quality assurance standards in line with Ofsted's Common Inspection Framework. HLT's Adult Learning Services is committed to supporting, developing and sharing good practice and to the professional development of staff through regular training, rigorous quality assurance checks, operational meetings, observations of teaching, learning and assessment, and learner/tutor/sub-contractor feedback. ALS continuous professional development for its in-house staff as well as externally commissioned providers ensures the experience and outcomes for learners meet national benchmark, ESFA's minimum standards and any new requirements or challenges.

Compliance and outcomes are monitored against KPIs, targets, learning goals and qualification achievement rates. The QA process is underpinned by annual self-assessment and quality improvement planning to ensure continuous improvement in all aspects of the learner journey.

## 6. Fees and charging

No compulsory charges are made relating to the direct costs of delivering a learning aim to learners fully funded by the ESFA, including those with a statutory entitlement to be fully funded for their learning. There are no direct costs to fully funded learners for any essential activities or materials without which the learner could not complete their learning.

If fully-funded learners need a Disclosure and Barring Service check to participate in employment related learning, their employer is responsible for carrying out and paying for this check.

## 7. Costing of programmes

Adult learning programmes are commissioned on an annual basis. Each course is costed using a standard funding formula that calculates learner number, course/s, weeks, hours per week, tutor hourly pay, room hire, admin per learner & accreditation cost (where relevant).

## 8. Support

ALS provides the following services to providers at no cost

- Initial assessment of learners on accredited courses.
- Management of waiting lists and placement of learners on skills courses.
- Registration with awarding bodies, management of exams and certification as required.
- IAG (MATRIX accredited)
  - outreach
  - 1-1 appointments
- MIS
  - Collection and validation of all documents
  - Inputting and processing of all data\*
  - ILR returns
  - Individual data reports
  - Storage of all documentary evidence
- Quality Assurance
  - Observations of teaching, learning and assessment
  - Tutor handbook with all necessary documents/pro forma (annually)
  - Provider handbook with all policies/procedures and proforma (annually)
  - Curriculum development, training and resources
- CPD
  - annual programme of inset days
  - ad hoc training
  - teacher training
  - assessor training
  - induction days each September - 1 for tutors and 1 for managers
  - tutor mentoring, coaching and professional dialogue

All subcontractors have access to:

- The contract manager who will respond promptly to any queries
- A designated MIS officer
- A designated curriculum manager
- Exemplars in areas including:
  - Safeguarding
  - Equality and Diversity
  - Health and Safety compliance
  - Regular national updates appropriate to the sector

\*New City College (previously Hackney Community College) is the only provider which manages its own data and ILR. The provider delivers a significant amount of the community learning programmes.

### 9. Payment Arrangements

Payments to externally commissioned subcontractors are normally made on a quarterly basis and are laid out in sub-contractors contract and the Provider Handbook. Payments are profiled at set dates with the last being at the end of the contract term. Payments will only be made following successful quality reviews linked to compliant programme delivery and receipt of related MIS documentation ensuring successful processing of uploads to the ESFA by HLT's Adult Learning Service.

HLT's Adult Learning Service operates an invoicing process and payments are made by BACS. Eligible payments are normally paid within a corporate policy period of 30 days.

HLT's Adult Learning Service expects that subcontractors will fully assess the accuracy of payments and they therefore have the responsibility to review the remittance advices sent to them to identify any inaccuracies.

### 10. Policy Communication

This Fees and Charges Policy is available on-line at:

<https://www.learningtrust.co.uk/TPG/ALP/Pages/AdultLearningProviders.aspx>

This policy can be made available in alternative format upon request.

The policy is published in the Provider Handbook and discussed with all current and future subcontractors during contract negotiation meetings and reviewed annually in July of each year. Any changes will be notified to subcontractors as part of their regular performance review or via separate correspondence.

### 11. Actual End-of-Year Supply Chain Fees & Charges

All our subcontractors are formally recognised as delivering a contractual service. The ALS maintains a list that displays all the individual subcontractors by name, UKPRN registration number, contract year, commissioned provision, ESFA funding provided and the value of payments made to the subcontractor.

The subcontractors are required to be registered with the UK Register of Learning Providers. Their details can be found by using the link as follows; <https://www.ukrlp.co.uk>

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Signature:



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22 DECEMBER 2017.

