

WBTC**HIGH QUALITY
APPRENTICESHIPS
AND TRAINING****Decreasing Subcontracting Provision 2021-22****1. Subcontracting Overview**

West Berkshire Training Consortium have been a successful main provider with subcontracting relationships for over 30 years. This has been an extended service to those of our in-house provision and as such has seen good feedback from Inspectors over our last 2 inspections.

2. Review of Existing Subcontracted Activity in 2020-21

WBTC has reviewed its existing subcontracted activity in 2020-21. This is part of a purposeful reduction in subcontracting and especially that which resembles whole provision subcontracting. The figures below demonstrate the decline in subcontracted numbers.

- 2018-19 Subcontracted 57% of learners
- 2019-20 Subcontracted 70% of learners
- 2020-21 Subcontracted 67% of learners
- 2021-22 Subcontracted 63% of learners
- 2022-23 Subcontracted 30% of learners
- 2023-24 Subcontracted 32% of learners

Owing to the Covid Pandemic our enrolments to WBTC's in house programmes, such as Business Administration, Customer Service and Management fell sharply. Meanwhile falls were less severe in our programmes involving Subcontractors and Suppliers. This has resulted in a relative temporary increase in subcontracted activity for 2020-21.

We have reviewed our subcontracting relationships in line with our Supply Chain Funding Policy and published rationale, as part of our review. The main content of which include;

WBTC Board of Directors has approved subcontracting for the purposes of quality and the promoting of our charitable principles. We have two types of subcontracting relationship. Supplier relationships go back 30 years and are a key strategic part of our provision for employers. Subcontracting resembling whole provision is being successfully wound down and will not meaningfully exist beyond August 2021.

- **'Suppliers'** is the term we shall apply to colleges and other providers that offer specific services to WBTC's direct learners. This was previously referred to as a Service Subcontractor. With a supplier we recruit, enrol learners directly with employers and then purchase parts of an apprenticeship from a subcontractor and deliver the rest. We have a long-term strategic plan to continue this type of provision as we have for over 30 years.
- **'Subcontractors'** refer to partner provides who deliver on WBTC contracts. Subcontractors provide a wider service i.e. recruitment, training and quality assurance to their learners. This was previously referred to as a *Provision Subcontractor*. These arrangements are supplemented by WBTC having direct input to programmes through training, on-programme assessment, internal verification and other relevant activity. This type of provision will represent less than 5% of our total provision by August 2021 as existing learners finish. We ceased all new enrolments for this type of provision in April 2019.

West Berkshire Training Consortium procures subcontracted delivery where the following principles below are met. The calculation of the retained funding is informed by recognised business practice and in accordance with the National Audit Office guidance on determining value for money (VFM). The model used to evaluate the sub-contract VFM is a framework criterion for Economy, Efficiency, and Effectiveness. The VFM framework is considered as being met when it:

- a) Responds to the customer's requirement and delivers quality outputs and is necessary to: engage external expertise, provide geographical access, provide the best return on the funding invested and equity for all engaged in the programme.
- b) Demonstrates the strategic benefit of sub-contracting to an external organisation, meets priority areas of need, indicated by external representatives, such as Government Agencies, LEPs or other appropriate interests, including the customers.
- c) Compliments, rather than displaces, our own provision and the subcontracting organisation has a proven track record in the delivery of publicly funded training provision.
- d) Assesses and quality assures, monitors for cost, efficiency and effectiveness and complies with all the funding requirements.

In 2019, West Berkshire Training Consortium took the decision to start reducing our full subcontracted provision and concentrate more on our direct in-house provision. With this decision, and due to the changes in the sector in relation to the Apprenticeship Service offering funding directly to all employers, whether they are levy or non-levy, this also saw a reduction in WBTC's subcontracted provision.

3. Forward Planning

As we go into 2021-22, we have combined all subcontracted learner provision within our forecast. This includes full subcontracted provision and learners with our Suppliers. In 2021-22, our overall subcontracted learner numbers will be 152. By the end of the 2021-22 year, we will have reduced this to 72 apprentices with subcontractors on programme. This will have seen a reduction in full subcontracting of 32% by the end of 2021-22 compared to the start of August 2021.

By October 2023, WBTC will have ended our full subcontracting provision, with the exception of Tigers Training Centre, who may remain with WBTC as a Supporting Provider.

Revised subcontractor and supplier plans are in place in line with the reduction of quality activities required for each subcontractor to reflect these learner numbers, but still ensuring that we maintain a strong oversight of provision, with a high focus on quality, support to learners and outcomes.

Tigers Training Centre will remain the only subcontractor who will continue to start learners in this contractual year. This is due to Tigers Training being a Supporting Provider and do not have their own contract with the ESFA. Tigers Training is within 5 miles of WBTC offices and we have a long and successful relationship with them.

WBTC Suppliers

WBTC will still have supplier relationships (where we purchase a part of the programme and directly deliver the rest) focusing on particular technical programmes, however our network of suppliers will reduce as we become more focused on specific suppliers or programmes. We will still have learners with 'carry in' suppliers who will be on programme in 2021-22. Our focus for working with suppliers continues to ensure that WBTC are meeting the needs to employers and to enrich the learners' programmes. Some of our employer relationships are with technical apprenticeships and it is necessary to purchase specialist provision from another quality provider.

Long-term relationships going beyond 2021 are requested with the following strategic subcontracting partners:

- Basingstoke College – continue to offer technical occupations engineering etc
- First Intuition Reading – Accounting Apprenticeships
- Activate Learning – Furniture Making only
- Basingstoke ITEC – ICT programmes only
- Tigers Training – Childcare & Education only

4. Governance

WBTC's Board of Trustees reviews and approves all subcontracting relationships. In addition, subcontracting relationships and partnership arrangements are discussed every month as part of our Executive Leadership Team meeting. Feedback on performance, quality and outcomes are shared with the Board of Governors at bi-monthly Board Meetings by the Director of Training, who leads these partnerships.

The rationale to reduce subcontracting relationships, prior to the proposal from the ESFA was agreed with by the Board.

5. Quality Assurance

This Policy shall stay in force until any alterations are formally agreed.

The Policy will be reviewed every year by the ELT and Board, in line with the funding rules requirements or other circumstances indicate this is necessary.

6. Document Control

Document Name	WBTC Decreasing Subcontracting Policy 2021-22
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SIGNED  DocuSigned by: A008DD16090A4D2...	Matt Garvey – Managing Director
SIGNED  DocuSigned by: 809140264FD4C4...	Anthony Bravo – Chairman
Last Review/Approval	September 2020
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WBTC

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Version Control

Revision #	Date	Revision summary	Reviewed by
V2	27.5.2021	Updating policy for 2021-22 and publishing in new format	MC, MG, HLH
V3	28/05/2021	KA edits	KA
Final	11/06/2021	Removed Review and finalised	KA