

# P66 Partnership and Supply Chain Management Framework Policy

TCHC GROUP Ltd have reviewed this policy in line with COVID-19 requirements and are satisfied that these have been met.

## 1 Policy Statement

TCHC GROUP Ltd is committed to:

- Providing independent, high quality training, advice, and guidance relevant to the needs of any business in any sector
- Complement and add value to other business support services in the region
- Evaluate and improve on our own practice and learning from the good practice of others
- Equality, diversity and inclusion for all Clients, Partners, and the Public. We expect all staff and Supply Chain Partners to share this commitment
- Grow and diversify the range of courses and services we deliver to widen participation, deliver to niche markets, engage in new and emerging markets, and meet the regional and local economic development agenda.
- Support the infrastructure with best placed Supply Chain Partner organisations to sustain, develop and grow with our support to Merlin standards

To achieve this, TCHC GROUP Ltd has taken the strategic decision to sub-contract part of its provision to Supply Chain Partner organisations who can demonstrate high quality delivery.

TCHCs Board is fully committed to ensuring our plans and rationale for subcontracting fits with the overall objectives of TCHC and our curriculum strategy.

## 2 Scope

This policy applies to all Supply Chain Partner activity supported by funding received from the Skills Funding Agency, the Education Funding Agency, Jobcentre Plus, Local Authority, National Lottery Community Fund, Ministry of Justice, Department of Work and Pensions, Local Authorities, Devolved Combined Authorities including Greater London Authority, Her Majesty's Prison and Probation service as well as any successor organisations.

This strategy covers two key areas of sub-contracting:

1. Provision sub-contracting where there is the delivery of full programmes or frameworks by the Supply Chain Partner (end-to-end contracts)
2. Service sub-contracting where the delivery of a service is part of the delivery of a programme and the prime contractor purchases a specialism of that programme (e.g. a specific type of training or outreach support).



### 3 Overarching Principle

In line with the Common Accord, TCHC GROUP commits to the overarching principle ‘that our Supply Chain is to optimise the impact and effectiveness of service delivery to the end user’ by:

- We aim to align our processes with the Merlin Principles to support, procure and maintain effective and positive relationships with Supply Chain Partners in a creative and innovative way ensuring open and flexible approaches.
- Recognise and promote sustainable excellence and Partnership working to provide the guidance to those seeking to achieve it.
- Undertaking fair and transparent procurement activities, conducting robust due diligence procedures including a review of a Supply Chain Partners self-assessment and work with them to embed them within our own SAR where relevant.
- Relating the management fee to the costs of the services provided that are in line with funding rules.
- TCHC will ensure Supply Chain Terms meet the requirements as set out in funding rules and our contracts with commissioning bodies including ESFA, GLA, ESF and DWP.

### 4 Sub-contracting Rationale

Upon commencement of the sub-contracting process, TCHC GROUP will consider a Business Case Proposal or Expression of Interest (EOI) to ensure that the subcontracting will be in the best interests of all parties.

TCHC will follow our Procurement Policy and process for the identification and selection of Sub-Contractors to ensure we are following Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and procurement requirements around threshold levels as detailed in the Procurement Policy note 04/17. We will follow European Parliament public procurement including directive 2014/24/EU where required. We will initiate Expression of Interest for new opportunities by aiming to utilise our Expression of Interest form, published on the ‘Partner with Us’ page on the TCHC website.

When entering into new Sub-Contracts, we will adhere to the following specific rationale for Sub-Contracting; TCHC commit to enhancing the quality of our learner/student offer and have an educational rationale for subcontracting position which will include one or more of the following aims:

1. Enhance the opportunities available to learners
2. Fill gaps in niche or expert provision, or provide better access to training facilities
3. Support better geographical access for learners
4. Offer an entry point for disadvantaged groups
5. Consider the impact on individuals who share protected characteristics

TCHC are committed to not subcontracting delivery to meet short-term funding objectives and will solely use delivery Sub-Contractors.

We will ensure that:

1. The proposed delivery is in the best interests of learners and employers
2. The proposed delivery has a clear strategic fit with our mission, objectives, and values
3. There is sufficient expertise within TCHC GROUP to quality assure the provision
4. There is sufficient staff resource within TCHC GROUP to administer the processes
5. The Supply Chain Partner is approved by our due-diligence process
6. There is sufficient funding available within our funding contract
7. The Supply Chain Partner agrees to work within the terms of our contract



8. The Supply Chain Partner can demonstrate alignment to the commissioner's strategic and at times localised agenda

## 5 Operational Process

### Forecasting

TCHC GROUP Partnership and Supply Chain Manager will provide the Supply Chain Partner with a forecasting document that will need to be completed monthly and returned to the TCHC GROUP Partnership and Supply Chain Manager by the date set each month by TCHC. This will be fully completed, with actual progress against targets and deliverables and pipeline of the next month expected performance. This document will be discussed between TCHC GROUPs Partnership and Supply Chain Manager and the Supply Chain Partner in an informal matter either via telephone or video conferencing. These discussions may feed into the formal review process.

### Reviews

TCHC GROUP Partnership and Supply Chain Manager will complete a minimum of quarterly performance and compliance monitoring review with the Supply Chain Partner Organisation, either in person or via video conferencing software. During this meeting key aspects of the programme will be discussed including: safeguarding (including modern slavery where relevant), GDPR, equality and diversity, health and safety, quality and compliance, as well as performance against targets for finance as well as learner starts, engagements and outcomes. Action points from previous meetings will also be discussed and signed off as appropriate. Where actions have not been completed by the due date or satisfactorily these may affect the risk rating given for that review.

During the review, each party will have the opportunity to discuss any potential or actual issues or concerns, with any support that is required. Each section of the review will be given a risk rating, these risk ratings will form the overall risk rating for the Supply Chain Partner on that individual contract.

The overall risk rating will determine the frequency of the next formal review, those deemed as low risk or no risk at the end of the formal review will be booked for another Formal review in three months' time, those deemed as medium risk will be booked for another formal review in six weeks' time and those that are high risk will be booked for another review in one month and may also lead to the Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) process being initiated.

## Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) Process

### Stage 1 Pre-PIP

Where under performance of a Supply Chain Partner has been recorded over any performance month this will be raised in the performance review. In the review actions will be set to resolve the issue(s) or behaviours that are identified as being the reason(s) for the underperformance. Performance against profile and any additional targets over the coming month will be monitored by the Partnership and Supply Chain Manager for the contract.

### Notice of PIP

Where performance has not improved as agreed in the previous months review, TCHC will notify the Supply Chain Partner in writing, (that can be via email), of the intention to place them on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) and a date for a performance improvement plan meeting will be scheduled. The written notification will outline all next steps and potential outcomes.



At the PIP meeting TCHC will agree with the Supply Chain Partner an action plan to bring performance back in line with the agreed profile. The Partner will be asked to adopt and own this plan and further develop the actions as they progress towards agreed profiles/outcomes and periodic meetings.

## **Stage 2**

### **Month 1**

In month 1 the Supply Chain Partner will start working to the agreed targets set at the PIP meeting. The TCHC Partnership and Supply Chain Manager will work with the Supply Chain Partner to support in whatever way(s) were agreed in the PIP meeting and any additional support identified within the PIP process.

The TCHC Partnership and Supply Chain Manager will review progress against the set targets and agreed actions in regular review meetings that can be weekly if required. These meetings can take place face to face, through video conferencing or over the phone. These meetings may be recorded.

### **Month 2**

In Month 2, a review of month 1 against target will be conducted and progress against target will be reviewed by the TCHC Partnership and Supply Chain Manager and Supply Chain Partner. Where there is continued under performance targets and actions need to be achieved in month and progress will be monitored through weekly meetings where carried out and additional progress calls.

### **Month 3**

A review of months 1 and 2 against target will be conducted and progress against target will be reviewed by the TCHC Partnership and Supply Chain Manager. Where there is continued under performance targets and actions need to be achieved in month and progress will be monitored through weekly meetings if required and additional progress calls.

The TCHC Partnership and Supply Chain Manager will need at the start of month 3 to assess the feasibility of the targets set being achieved.

## **Stage 3 Potential Outcomes**

1. Where the performance has improved to the required levels and the Supply Chain Partner has evidenced that measures are in place to prevent future underperformance, no further action will be taken.
2. In some circumstances it may be agreed to extend the PIP for a further month.
3. Where performance has not been brought back in line with the agreed profile TCHC may remove any deficit and re-distribute, as necessary.
4. In situations where performance gets worse, or the Supply Chain Partner fails to engage fully with the PIP process TCHC may deem it necessary to remove the Supply Chain Partner from the Supply Chain.

## **6 Joint Strategic Group**

The Joint Strategic Group (JSG) where required on a project, will provide strategic governance for the Project, led (chaired) and administered by TCHC GROUP Partnership and Supply Chain Manager. Membership comprises representatives of all Supply Chain Partner Organisations and others co-opted for specific purposes. Supply chain Partners are expected to be represented at all meetings, however, are required to attend at least three meetings in each calendar year where four JSG meetings have been carried out (75% attendance).

This JSG group, tasked with delivering the strategic direction for project delivery, will review project and individual performance of the project in quarterly meetings. They will also plan future activities/developments up to the next JSG



meeting and share best practice. The Chair will be responsible for reporting overall Supply Chain Partner performance against key targets and updates to any guidance, regulatory, legislation, process, or policy changes.

## 7 Funding

Funding will only be provided where paperwork is submitted in a timely manner, is fully complete and eligible, where errors are found or TCHC does not feel that the paperwork is supplied to an appropriate standard, actions and directions will be given to bring the paperwork up to standard. These must be actioned immediately to qualify for drawing down the funding and the paperwork to qualify against target profiles. This may also affect the Supply Chains risk ratings for review.

Supply Chain Partners must complete due diligence checks in full supplying TCHC Group with all relevant policies as required before the start of the contract and thereafter on an annual basis. This will include all policies and documents requested and required as part of our annual due diligence checks. Non-compliance with these requests may result in funding being withheld.

We have no responsibility to pay any amount over a Supply Chain Partners allocated funding for the funding year or financial year. If a Supply Chain Partner delivers more than their contract value, they do so at their own risk, unless agreed in advance and in writing with TCHC GROUP Partnership and Supply Chain Manager.

## 8 Administration

Submission dates are set out within the Supply Chain Partners Service Level Agreement (SLA) to ensure that compliant learner paperwork is received and processed in a timely manner to be uploaded for the monthly claim. Supply Chain Partners must upload paperwork directly to TCHC's SharePoint or by posting original paperwork to the Stansted office.

Paperwork is checked according to ESF/ESFA requirements and other funders to ensure that all claims that are submitted are eligible for funding. If learners are found to not be eligible for the programme, they have been signed up for then the paperwork will be referred to the sub-contractor to correct any errors.

Should eligible paperwork be deemed as non-compliant, TCHC administrators will notify the sub-contractor of what is needed to complete the claim and the learner will be kept on hold until all missing evidence has been received.

The Partnership and Supply Chain Manager must be copied into all communication to Supply Chain Partners regarding administrative errors and monthly occupancy reports. This will assist TCHC in effective monitoring of contracts.

Processed learners are uploaded onto our MI system so that TCHC can make monthly submissions to our funders. Error reports are run on a regular basis to ensure all details are correct and compliant for a valid claim.

A sample of learner file checks will be undertaken on a regular basis by the Project Coordinator to ensure that quality is kept to the highest standards.

Following each compliant submission to our funders, TCHC will produce a full occupancy report to be distributed to Supply Chain Partners. This will detail the status of all compliant learners that are on our systems. A financial hub report if relevant will follow confirming the value of funding claimed for each learner as at the last claim period.



Payment dates for compliant claims are set out within the Supply Chain Partners SLA and purchase orders are sent out accordingly.

## 9 Quality of Education

Supply Chain Partners are expected to meet TCHC GROUP's quality assurance standards. TCHC GROUP and our Partners are required to be committed to support, develop, share good practice and continuous professional development of staff through quality and monitoring activities, operational meetings, observations of teaching and learning, as well as evidence gathering of learner feedback.

The Quality of Education for our learners is extremely important to us. We use the Supply Chain and Partner Risk Register to record all Supply Chain Partners we work with and the quality assurance activities undertaken.

We aim to provide a minimum of three quality assurance phases as detailed below per Supply Chain Partner to ensure that learners receive the best possible learning experience. A random selection of Supply Chain Partners will receive ALL four quality assurance interventions as well as those Supply Chain Partners where we have any concerns.

The Supply Chain Partner is responsible for ensuring that all learner / employer contact information is always up to date.

### Phase 1:

The Partnership and Supply Chain Manager will:

- Ensure a video conference meeting is held between the Supply Chain Partner, the TCHC Partnership and Supply Chain Manager and a member of the TCHC Quality Team to discuss key topics such as safeguarding, curriculum, quality assurance, profiles, targets, and income.
- This should take place within the first 4 weeks of being on programme.

### Phase 2:

The Partnership and Supply Chain Manager will:

- Send a spreadsheet containing learner information to the Partner to populate regarding current learner progress against all aims
- This activity will be triggered after Phase 1 and can also take place at any stage of the learner journey.

The TCHC Quality Team will:

- Undertake learner interviews
- This activity will be triggered after Phase 1 and can also take place at any stage of the learner journey.

### Phase 3:

The TCHC Quality Team will:

- Undertake desktop audits where critical documents are securitised such as the Organisational Chart, Learner Portfolios, Standardisation Minutes, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) records, Lesson Observation Reports, and Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) Reports.
- This activity will be triggered according to the Supply Chain and Partner Risk Register and can also take place at any stage of the learner journey.

### Phase 4:

The TCHC Quality Team will:

- Carry out joint observations, where TCHC will observe a Partners Lesson Observer who will observe a live lesson.
- This activity will be triggered after Phase 2 or 3 and can also take place at any stage of the learner journey.



## 10 Quality of Services

Whilst not all Supply Chain Partner deliver qualifications, they are still expected to meet TCHC GROUP's quality assurance standards. TCHC GROUP is committed to support, develop, and share good practice and professional development of staff with Supply Chain Partners through quality and monitoring activities, operational meetings, observations, as well as learner feedback.

The Quality of services provided to our learners, participants and service users is extremely important to us. We will also use the Supply Chain and Partner Risk Register to record all Supply Chain Partner we work with and the quality assurance activities undertaken.

### Phase 1:

The Partnerships and Supply Chain Manager will carry out caseload reviews with Supply Chain Partner and ask for a progress update for each learner and that all contact details are up to date. They will support the Supply Chain Partner by offering advice and guidance on moving learners, participants, and service users on in their journey towards outcome. This activity can happen at any stage of the learner journey.

### Phase 2:

Compliance checks are undertaken by the TCHC Partnership and Supply Chain Manager where critical documents are securitised such as: Organisational Chart, learners, participants and service user's paperwork, Marketing requirements, GDPR, safeguarding (including modern slavery), cross cutting themes and finance.

## 11 Support and Challenge

The mix and level of support for each Supply Chain Partner will vary depending on the needs of the individual organisation.

Supply Chain Partners will receive support and guidance, including:

- Audit of management systems and delivery and observation of teaching, learning and assessment
- Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults procedures
- Health and Safety compliance process
- CPD Opportunities and planned training and development
- Support with Funding Rules compliance
- Support with ESFA's and other funders Due Diligence process
- Equality and diversity support
- National/regional, DWP, BIES, MoJ and DfE policy changes
- LEP, LA and devolved Authority updates
- Guidance updates and changes
- Advice and guidance for learners, participants, and service users' progressions

## 12 Management Fees

TCHC GROUP retains a management fee from all Supply Chain Partner Organisations where agreed within the service level agreement. The management fee charged reflects the cost of the procurement process, the management of the contracts and will be applied to individual Supply Chain Partners depending on the following:

- The level of support required from TCHC GROUP to implement the programme (e.g. in terms of procurement, Supply Chain Partner management, marketing)



- The contract's/funding stream's requirements (e.g. on reporting, monitoring, publicity)
- The contract's target group
- Any stipulation by the commissioning/funding organisation
- Payment model and complexity of deliverables

TCHC will determine list of our specific costs for managing Supply Chain Partners including specific costs for quality monitoring activities and specific costs for any other support activities offered to the Supply Chain Partners. TCHC will ensure that each cost is reasonable and proportionate to delivery of teaching or learning and how each cost contributes to delivering high quality learning.

The management fee will be deducted at the point of payment (see below) but applied to the unit for each deliverable. It will be agreed with each sub-contractor on contract award.

### 13 Payment Arrangements

Payments are made monthly by the end of the following month in which the activity is successfully processed and uploaded to the funding organisation by TCHC GROUP. TCHC have a commitment to pay Supply Chain Partners within 60 days of invoice where appropriate and eligible learner paperwork has been submitted and claimed for without errors.

Following payment by the funding authority, TCHC GROUP will make the appropriate payment to the sub-contractor based on the level of performance and calculated against agreed unit costs for each contracted deliverable.

TCHC GROUP expects that the Supply Chain Partners will fully engage in reporting to TCHC any inaccuracy of payments.

### 14 Policy Communication

This Policy is published on TCHC's website.

The Policy will be discussed with all current and future Supply Chain Partners during contract award meetings and reviewed at least annually. Any changes will be notified to Supply Chain Partners as part of their regular performance review or via separate correspondence.

### 15 Standards

TCHC Group aspire and adhere to certain standards, where able we would like our Supply Chain Partner to adhere to the following standards:

- a) DWP Provider Assurance Team (PAT)
- b) DWP Provider Self-Assessment Tool
- c) The Merlin Standard
- d) The Matrix IAG Standard
- e) Ofsted, Estyn & Education Scotland
- f) Funding Authority Audits
- g) ISO9001
- h) ISO27001
- i) Cyber Essentials
- j) Cyber Essentials Plus



## 16 Contract End and Exit

Towards the end of our Supply Chain Partners contract with TCHC Group the Partnership and Supply Chain Manager will discuss exit strategies and conduct end of contract reviews. We will also help Supply Chain Partners to identify additional contract opportunities with ourselves through the Partnership and Supply Chain Manager and discuss consistent understanding of the company's strategic approach to its own development.



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Courtney Grinham, Managing Director – TCHC GROUP LTD

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### Document History

Reference No	Version	Date	Author	Classification	Review Date
P88	1	05/092013	Michael Schneider	Unclassified	18/07/2020
P88	1.1	03/11/2020	Claire Jeens Nicola March	Unclassified	03/11/2021
P88	1.2	12/11/2020	Claire Jeens Nicola March	Unclassified	12/11/2021