Realise



Delivery Partner Management Framework

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The Realise Delivery Partner Management Framework

This document provides a summary for all our Delivery Partners, outlining what to expect throughout our collaboration. We aim to work closely with our Delivery Partners and Sub-Contractors to provide the necessary support and manage contracts effectively. Our goal is to not only meet the needs of our learners and customers but also to achieve the highest levels of performance and quality.

Benefits of Partnering with Realise:

- Clear guidelines and behaviors embedded in our practices
- Commitment to long-term, supportive relationships with our Delivery Partners
- A clear working method that defines our goals, explains how we'll achieve them, and allows for flexibility as needed
- Opportunities for mutual growth
- Support with external audits, assessments, and inspections

Key Benefits of This Framework:

- Fair and unbiased procurement and selection process that meets the needs of employers, learners, and our goals
- Consistent and structured approach to performance management and quality monitoring
- Clear expectations for behavior, conduct, and values
- Guidance on communication and expectations
- Sharing of best practices
- Transparent approach to addressing underperformance in a collaborative manner

1. An Introduction to Realise

Realise is one of the UK's largest private providers of publicly funded training. We have built a strong network with our partners and invested heavily in our capabilities, allowing us to develop effective strategies for both large employers and SMEs. This has strengthened our ability to deliver frontline services and has contributed to:

- Matching the right learners with the right apprenticeship programs
- Expanding our services in skills, education, training, and employment
- Enhancing our capabilities and making significant investments
- Providing integrated services across the skills sector, maximizing outcomes for learners, customers, employers, and stakeholders
- Creating new opportunities through our extensive network and partnerships

We emphasise our "right learner, right program" approach, aiming to fully support employers with tailored advice and training solutions. Our goal is to help employers build, train, and plan for the future of their workforce.

Additionally, we have strong connections with third-sector, voluntary, and community groups, which helps us make a positive impact in local communities. We focus on improving opportunities for people from disadvantaged backgrounds, which is a key part of Realise's strategic plans.

Overall, across our services we aim to:

- Ensure a right learner, right programme approach is at the core of everything we do.

- Put the needs of every learner at the center of our values using a learner centred approach.
- Always provide a high quality teaching, learning, and assessment experience
- Strongly focus our interactions with learners on progression and employability
- Improve learner skills and knowledge and increase participation through challenging and stretching learners
- Provide relevant and inclusive resources which are accessible to learners wherever they are.
- Support learners by offering high quality information, advice and guidance.
- Provide innovative and motivational learning environments.
- Ensure an open and motivating culture that is aligned to employer needs.
- Strive to be acknowledged as a partner of choice by employers nationally.

Realise's Delivery Partners are expected to contribute to achieving values by:

- Act with honestly, ethically and with integrity at all times.
- Focus on improving our service users' wellbeing; improving their capabilities and future prospects.
- Oppose the exploitation of child labour, and not knowingly make purchases, or enter into agreements with organisations which do not comply fully with the labour, safety and other relevant laws of their respective country as per Modern Slavery Act 2015.
- Not knowingly make purchases or enter into agreements with organisations where workers, of any age, are expected to work in unreasonable conditions.
- Support and promote universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion; as stated in Article 55 of the United Nations Charter Chapter IX.
- Ensure that Prevent and British Values are imbedded to all Delivery.
- Ensure that Safeguarding measures are in place for the safety of our Delivery Partners and Learners.
- Ensure you do not enter into agreeements with organisation that have links to or fund extremist organisations.
- Not knowingly place service users, deliver apprenticeships or source job opportunities, with organisation that do not cohere with this code of conduct.

Realise recognises the important role delivery partners play in supporting the successful delivery and achievement of contracts, with specialist local expertise and knowledge. Our pledge to the environment and sustainability continues through to our partners as we seek to ensure an appropriate commitment to the challenges. As part of this approach Realise ensures that during on-boarding and regular monitoring that each organisation involved in the delivery of DFE or devolved region funded programmes:

- Has their own environmental and or sustainability policy in place;
- Disposes of its waste using a registered waste collector; and
- Observes and complies with the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) regulations, in particular, ensuring that WEEE is not mixed with general waste and is disposed of legally

Delivery Partner Team

In addition to a dedicated partnership manager, there are a variety of roles within Realise that will support delivery partners that include:

- Funding, audit and assurance team
- Curriculum development

- Administration
- Health & Safety
- Safeguarding including Prevent
- Information Security
- Operations
- Finance

They will liaise with you to ensure the specialist expertise are available to assist with every part of the learning journey.

2. Rational for sub-contracting

Realise will only enter in to a sub-contract agreement where it will meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Enhance our curriculum for learners by partnering with technical industry experts
- Meet employer and learner needs in terms of geographical access
- Response to government priorities
- Response to local and regional priorities
- Maintain niche and expert provision in line with employer and learner requriements
- Supports and compliments our directly delivered provision

3. Types of Delivery Partners

Realise operate a variety of delivery partner/sub-contractor arrangements to complement our own delivery as detailed in section 2 above. Funding for this is through the Apprenticeship Levy for large employters or adulteducation budget (AEB) via the DFE or devolved regions.
Realise do not sub-contract non-levy SME Apprenticeship funding.

These arrangements include the following:

3.1 'End-to-End' Partners

These are partners that delivery Apprenticeships that are levy funded by our large employers. In these instances, Realise will deliver a substantial amount of all Apprenticeships for that employer and act as a main provider, but do not possess all of the technical skills required to meet the employers requirements.

3.1 Joint Delivery Partners

These are partners that deliver part of an Apprenticeship programme, for example a module, unit or professional qualification that is within the Apprenticeship and requires technical or niche expertise.

3.3 Adult Skills Fund Partners

Training Providers or Colleges that can enhance our curriculum offer as per the points in section 2. Typically these organisations will deliver full aims and work in partnership with Realise on a joint referral model. Where this is within a devolved region, permission is sought form the relevant authority to sub-contract.

3.4 Employer Providers

Employer Provider arrangements are established where Realise partners with an organisation that is both the employer of the apprentice and an approved employer-provider or supporting provider, possessing specialist technical expertise and resources to deliver specific elements of the programme. Under this model, the programme is collaboratively designed and delivered, with Realise retaining responsibility as the lead

provider and accountable body. Fees and charges are agreed on a case-by-case basis and reflect the respective contributions, delivery responsibilities, resources provided, and contractual obligations of each party.

4. Delivery Partner Procurement, Selection and Approval Process

4.1 Purpose

The purpose of this process is to ensure that all subcontracting opportunities are identified, procured, evaluated and approved in a transparent, fair and robust manner.
This process applies to Adult Skills Fund and other grant-funded subcontracting opportunities where Realise is allocating contract value to a delivery partner.
This process does not apply to employer-led partnership arrangements where an employer-provider is engaged as part of a jointly designed delivery model.
All procurement activity will be conducted in accordance with the principles of transparency, fairness, value for money, quality improvement, learner benefit and effective governance.

4.2 Procurement Principles

Realise will only subcontract provision where there is a clear strategic rationale and demonstrable benefit to learners, employers and stakeholders.
Before any procurement activity commences, Realise must be satisfied that:

- The subcontracting arrangement aligns with the rationale outlined within the Delivery Partner Management Framework.
- The arrangement enhances learner outcomes, curriculum breadth, specialist expertise or geographical reach.
- The provision cannot be delivered as effectively through direct delivery.
- The arrangement represents value for money.
- Appropriate governance and oversight arrangements are in place.

4.3 Identification of Subcontracting Opportunity

Where a Business Unit identifies a requirement for subcontracted delivery, a formal business case must be developed.
The business case will include:

- Strategic rationale for subcontracting.
- Alignment to organisational, regional and funding priorities.
- Curriculum area and delivery requirements.
- Expected learner volumes.
- Contract value and funding source.
- Geographical coverage.
- Risk assessment.
- Expected learner, employer and community impact.
- Value-for-money assessment.
- Explanation of why direct delivery is not the preferred option.

The proposal will be presented to the relevant Business Unit Trading Meeting for scrutiny and challenge.

Approval Required

The Realise Board must approve the subcontracting opportunity before any procurement activity can commence.
The Board may:

- Approve the opportunity.
- Request further information.
- Reject the proposal.

4.4 Publication of Expression of Interest (EOI)

Following Board approval, an Expression of Interest (EOI) document will be issued.
The EOI will normally include:

- Overview of the opportunity.
- Funding stream and indicative contract value.
- Delivery requirements.
- Geographical requirements.
- Procurement timetable.
- Evaluation criteria.
- Submission requirements.
- Minimum eligibility requirements.

The EOI will be advertised through one or more of the following channels:

- Realise website.
- Learning provider networks.
- Existing delivery partner networks.
- LinkedIn.
- Sector-specific forums and networks.
- Other appropriate procurement channels.

4.5 Submission of Expressions of Interest
Interested organisations must submit their EOI by the published deadline.
Submissions should include:

- Organisation profile.
- Relevant delivery experience.
- Quality and performance information.
- Financial information.
- Curriculum expertise.
- Geographical reach.
- Evidence of capacity and capability.
- Rationale for suitability.
- Any additional information requested by Realise.

4.6 Evaluation and Scoring
All compliant submissions will be independently evaluated.
The lead evaluator will normally be the relevant Business Unit Director.
A second independent evaluator will normally be the Chief Learning Officer or nominated senior leader.
Conflict of Interest
All individuals involved in the evaluation and approval process must declare any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest.
Any conflicts will be recorded and managed in accordance with Realise governance arrangements. Individuals with a material conflict may be excluded from the evaluation process.
Scoring Methodology
Each evaluator will independently score submissions against the published criteria using a score out of 10.
Evaluation criteria may include:

- Quality of provision.
- Ofsted performance.
- Delivery experience.
- Capacity and capability.
- Financial sustainability.
- Learner outcomes.
- Geographic reach.
- Strategic fit.
- Value for money.

- Risk profile.

Following independent evaluation, scores will be compared and moderated where required to ensure consistency and fairness.

Minimum Quality Threshold

Realise reserves the right not to appoint a provider where submissions fail to meet the required quality standard.

As a minimum:

- Providers must achieve an overall score of at least 7 out of 10.
- Providers must achieve a satisfactory assessment in safeguarding and quality.
- Providers must meet all mandatory eligibility requirements.

The highest-scoring provider will not automatically be appointed if the required quality threshold has not been achieved.

4.7 Recommendation and Board Approval

Following evaluation, a recommendation paper will be prepared detailing:

- Evaluation outcomes.
- Scoring results.
- Strengths and risks identified.
- Recommended provider(s).
- Proposed contract value.

The recommendation will be presented to the Realise Board.

The Board will determine whether:

- The recommendation should proceed to Due Diligence.
- Additional information is required.
- The procurement process should be repeated.
- No provider should be appointed.

Only providers approved by the Board may proceed to the Due Diligence stage.

4.8 Due Diligence and Risk Assessment

Successful organisations will be subject to a comprehensive Due Diligence process.

Financial Due Diligence

Approved by:

- Chief Financial Officer

Areas reviewed:

- Financial health.
- Accounts and solvency.
- Insurance arrangements.
- Financial controls.
- Financial sustainability.

Curriculum, Quality and Safeguarding Due Diligence

Approved by:

- Chief Learning Officer

Areas reviewed:

- Quality assurance arrangements.
- Ofsted reports and performance.
- Learner outcomes.
- Self-assessment and quality improvement arrangements.
- Safeguarding and Prevent arrangements.
- Staffing and curriculum expertise.

Information Security Due Diligence

Approved by:

- IT Manager

Areas reviewed:

- Cyber security arrangements.

- GDPR compliance.
- Data handling procedures.
- Information security controls.

4.9 Contract Award and Mobilisation
Where due diligence has been successfully completed and approved, Realise will:

- Issue the subcontract agreement.
- Agree contract values and delivery profiles.
- Confirm key performance indicators.
- Complete onboarding activities.
- Deliver mobilisation and induction activities.
- Provide access to relevant systems.
- Confirm reporting requirements.
- Confirm governance and monitoring arrangements.

Delivery may only commence once all contractual documentation has been completed and mobilisation activities have been signed off.

DFE specific contract compliance requirements

Realise holds the Department for Education (DfE) Subcontracting Standard, which sets high expectations for quality and compliance in our partnerships. As part of this commitment, all subcontractors are required to adhere to the standards set by the DfE, ensuring that our collaborative efforts meet the highest levels of performance and accountability. This adherence is crucial for maintaining our certification and delivering exceptional service to learners and employers.

In addition, devolved mayoral combined authorities will conduct their own sub-contractor supply chain audits as per the rules adopted for the specific regi9on.

As part of our on-going review we make sure that any provider appointed continues to meet the APAR requirements. All documents supplied will need to be refreshed / reviewed annually.

5. Fees and Charges

For subcontracting arrangements where Realise allocates funding to a Delivery Partner to deliver provision on its behalf, management fees charged by Realise for legitimate management, quality assurance, audit, compliance, contractual oversight and support activities will not normally exceed 20% of the contract value. This reflects sector best practice and the principles of the DfE Subcontracting Standard.
Management fees are designed to recover the reasonable costs incurred by Realise in managing and assuring the subcontracted provision and will be proportionate to the level of oversight, support and risk associated with the arrangement.
For Joint Delivery Partner and Employer Provider arrangements, where the partner delivers a defined element of a programme rather than receiving a contract allocation to manage and spend, fees and funding allocations will be negotiated and agreed on an individual basis.
In these arrangements, the funding retained by Realise and the funding paid to the partner will reflect:

- The proportion of the programme being delivered by each party.
- The roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of each organisation.
- The delivery costs incurred by each party.
- The specialist expertise, resources and facilities provided.

- The quality assurance, compliance and contract management requirements.
- The level of risk associated with the delivery model.

As these arrangements are not based on the allocation of a standalone contract value, the 20% management fee cap does not apply. Instead, the funding distribution will be agreed through a transparent value-for-money assessment and documented within the contractual agreement between both parties.
The fees and funding allocations applied to any delivery partner arrangement will vary depending on, but not be limited to, the following factors:

- Size of provision to be delivered.
- Proportion of the overall programme being delivered.
- Type of provision.
- Level of support required to ensure high-quality teaching, learning and assessment.
- Delivery costs of the partner.
- Specialist expertise or resources required.
- Outcomes of due diligence and risk assessment.
- Historical performance and quality indicators.

In line with DfE funding rules and the principles of honest, fair and transparent procurement practice, Realise will publish subcontracting fees received and paid on an annual basis. This information is available on the Realise website.

6. Mobilisation

The purpose of Mobilisation is to ensure that new Delivery Partners are provided with the relevant information and assistance required to enable them to begin and ensure success throughout the duration of the contract. Mobilisation meetings will include:

- Walk through programme delivery model (if relevant)
- Clarify performance expectations and monitoring timescales
- Outline quality and compliance expectations
- Discuss contractual obligations, roles and responsibilities
- Deliver System and Paperwork training
- Cover all policies and procedures including security requirements
- Outline management fee services and support available.

Where there are multiple new Delivery Partners on a contract relevant induction events and follow up meetings will be held. It will be ensured that all Delivery Partners have a copy of and understand the relevant funding rules.

7. Delivery Partner Management and Monitoring

Realise aims to apply a consistent and considered approach to the management of all relationships. This is achieved through regular and systematic monitoring of contract performance.

Each contract will be assigned a dedicated Manager as a single point of contact. This person will be the key point of contact for the Delivery Partner on all aspects of the operational delivery of the contract.

Managers are responsible for managing our Delivery Partners to ensure that they provide a high quality service for Realise customers, meet the required performance levels and do not expose the business or our network of Delivery Partners to unnecessary risk. Through regular contact and

ongoing assessment, they will support Delivery Partners to perform against a range of Key Performance Indicators (KPI's), driving a continuous improvement approach to delivery.

In addition to the dedicated Manager, Delivery Partners will also be allocated a Quality Manager, who will carry out quality monitoring of all aspects of your delivery across the learner journey to ensure the highest standards of quality are being delivered to our learners.

Monitoring Activity includes:

- Regular contact to track and monitor performance against forecasts and to discuss any areas of risk or highlights of best practice where required
- Monthly/Bi-Monthly/Quarterly performance meetings, where business priority targets are set and performance against target is monitored, measured and reported
- Quality Monitoring is completed in addition to the performance meetings. This is completed on a twice per year basis as a minimum, however the occurrence of these meetings is determined by the outcome as recommended on the Quality Monitoring report and volume of provision delivered
- Creating a partner quality improvement plan to encourage continuous improvement
- Training and coaching of Delivery Partner staff and managers
- Sharing best practice and capacity building where required
- Providing support to continuously develop actions required in Areas for Improvement.

Realise also provide a range of management information reports to assist providers to monitor and manage their own performance. Where the agreement is funded with the Apprenticeship Levy, the KPI's are set in conjunction with the Employer and detailed in the contract issued at the start of the process. Performance is then monitored each month within the contract performance review meeting or monthly performance monitoring meeting.

If performance is identified as below expected levels through the above monitoring, Delivery Partner Managers will support Delivery Partners to understand why and what measures can be put in place to ensure improvements happen. We will start to assist and capacity build Delivery Partners at the earliest possible point to prevent long term issues.

7.1 Performance Reviews

Performance profiles (where applicable) are shared with Delivery Partners pre and post contract signing. These are subject to regular reviews during the life of the contract and are shared at the earliest opportunity. High levels of engagement between Delivery Partner Managers and Delivery Partners enables a proactive and active dialogue, which leads to high performance and the delivery of key performance indicators.

Frequency of Delivery Partner Activity in seen in the table below -

Frequency	Responsibility	Action required
Regular contact throughout the month	Dedicated manager	Monitor all learners on programme and to cover Starts/Completions/PED/BIL/Withdrawals Performance against forecasted budgets

Monthly/Bi-Monthly/Quarterly	Dedicated manager	Data to be produced and sent to all partners Claims Histories and pro-forma invoices to be issued to enable accurate payments to be made Standard agenda and dialogue between Delivery Partner Manager and Delivery Partner to review performance against KPI's (Monthly/Bi-Monthly/Quarterly based on learner numbers/risk) Risk areas identified through monthly performance meeting. Under performance to be addressed through the creation of performance improvement plans.

After each review is completed, minutes will be issued by the Delivery Partner Manager including actions required for continuous improvement with clear expected completion dates.

These actions will be reviewed on weekly calls where there is a risk or issue, with a full review taking place at each monthly/bi-monthly/quarterly review meeting.

7.2 Roles within and supporting the Delivery Partner

The Delivery Partner Management Team consists of the following groups of individuals who are available to support the Delivery Partner on a day to day basis:

7.2.1 Dedicated Manager

The main point of contact for the Delivery Partner-responsible for contract performance management.

7.2.2 Quality and Assurance Teams

Realise Quality and Assurance Teams monitor and evaluate the quality of service that we provide to customers and stakeholders, across all of our contracts. They facilitate internal and external inspections, provide training, assist in the improvement of systems and processes and help the organisation to self–assess.

The Quality team is led by the Chief Learning Officer and is supported by:

- Head of QUality who leads the Quality Assurance Teams
- Audit and Assurance Manager who leads the Contract Auditors
- Safeguarding and Welfare Manager

7.2.3 Funding and Assurance Team

The Funding and assurance team will conduct regular compliance and financial audits across all provision which will include Delivery Partners within the network.

Feedback calls will take place between all parties to discuss the results of the audit and to agree any improvements needed. Training and support will be provided as required.

7.2.4 Safeguarding and Welfare

The Safeguarding and Welfare Manager will assess, as part of the due diligence process, all procedures and processes in place that the Delivery Partner has for their delivery. They will check that the procedures and policies meet all our statutory requirements and Realise's internal standards and operating procedures. If any concerns are raised they will discuss this with the partner and put in place relevant action plans and support to ensure improvements are made. Additionally, Realise will provide a monthly Safeguarding and Welfare "hot topic" and newletter resource that can be shared with staff and learners.

7.2.5 Administration Team

Validation of claims, submission of claims to funding bodies including DFE.

7.2.6 Finance Team

- Management of claims and payment to Delivery Partners.
- Management of contracting and variations.

7.3 Performance Management and Performance Improvement Process

Performance profiles (where applicable) are shared with Delivery Partners pre and post contract signing. These are subject to regular reviews during the life of the contract.

High levels of engagement between Delivery Partners enable a proactive and active dialogue, which leads to high performance and the delivery of key performance indicators. The meetings schedule formalises the support available to each Delivery Partner in the delivery of contract requirements as referenced in point 7.1.

7.3.1 Performance Management Process

Where performance is not at an acceptable level, a level of support will be agreed with the Delivery Partner including capacity building, sharing best practice and MI analysis. Performance will then be reviewed at subsequent meetings. Should the Delivery Partner performance fail to improve they will be taken through a formal performance improvement regime as outlined below, which could ultimately, as a last resort, result in the contract being terminated.

7.3.2 Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs)

Those not meeting contractual requirements will be asked to agree to a Performance
Improvement Plan. These may be set for any reasonable period of time. Realise will direct providers on areas to focus on within the Improvement Plan. Once an Improvement Plan is accepted, Realise will review performance against key performance measures throughout the timescales agreed in the plan

7.3.3 Remedial actions

Realise may determine that alongside a PIP, other remedial actions are required in order to assist performance improvement. These may include:

- Diversion of some or all referral flows or funding allocations for a period of time to another provider.
- Secondment of Realise staff into provider delivery, at provider's cost.
- Changes to the scope of the provision e.g. customer groups or courses.
- Removal of one or more areas from the provider's direct delivery.

This may be for a defined period of time or for the remainder of the contract period.

7.3.4 Performance Improvement Notice (PIN)

If performance has not improved sufficiently once the period of an initial PIP has expired or where the level of performance is deemed to be either significantly below expectations or there are performance issues in a number of areas then a PIN will be issued.

A PIN is a formal, contractual, letter highlighting the area of underperformance, referring to the PIP in place to address those issues and setting out the potential consequences of failure to improve over a defined term. At this stage, a member of Realise Senior Management Team (SMT) will be involved in discussions, using the following topics as agenda items:

- Identify the causes of underperformance
- Identify additional support that can be given to the Delivery Partner/Sub-Contractor to improve performance
- Agree improvement measures
- Indicate the consequences of failing to reach the required performance levels
- Set out the performance levels that must be reached over the next quarter
- Complete Performance Improvement Plan with agreed actions and timescales

All of these details will be recorded and agreed between both parties. Realise will have the right to review, and if necessary, adjust profile targets, in line with business needs at that time and the results of the PIN and PIP review.

Where a Delivery Partner achieves the indicated performance levels set out in the PIP in the relevant timeframe they will be removed from a Performance Improvement Notice but may still be required to complete an Improvement Plan. If however, the Delivery Partner/Sub-Contractor fails to meet agreed performance levels the PIN will be extended.

Where a Delivery Partner fails to meet the performance levels agreed for two consecutive PIPs performance will again be reviewed by the Delivery Partner Management Team and the desired performance levels and timeframes will be agreed.

The consequences of continual underperformance will be discussed and we will inform the Delivery Partner/Sub-Contractor that failure to meet the required standard may result in a formal notification of contract termination being issued in accordance with our contract terms and conditions or an extended PIN Process.

7.4 Dispute Resolution and Complaints

Delivery Partners will be made aware of the funder dispute resolution processes to ensure that they are equipped with the knowledge and tools to make a complaint, if they think it is appropriate to do so.

However, we will work with Delivery Partners ensure that issues are resolved between ourselves, wherever possible, and ensure that our complaints process is fully exhausted prior to the Delivery Partner having to approach a funding organisation. Please refer to section 7.

7.5 Contract termination

If, following a Performance Improvement Notice period, provider performance does not improve and is not meeting one or more contractual requirements, Realise may move to terminate its contract with the provider in line with the contractual termination provisions.

This is not a process that is undertaken lightly by Realise and will only be instigated if, in the opinion of the Realise board, the provider is showing no willingness to invest in its performance improvement or has no ability to improve within the required timescales.

7.6 Exit / Contract Closure Strategy

An exit strategy will be instigated if the contract is approaching expiry or notice is served by either party and that the exit strategy will be unique to the delivery Partner. Please refer to the Realise Contract Closure Strategy as and when this is required.

7.7 Contingency Planning

Where a Delivery Partner ceases trading and/or enters Administration, Realise will implement the Contingency Plan (see Annex 1) to safeguard funding and ensure any impact on learners is minimised. Throughout the process, learners will remain the primary focus and will be kept informed of the situation, the actions being undertaken and any arrangements put in place to ensure continuity of learning wherever possible. Realise will ensure that learners, employers and other stakeholders have access to appropriate support and communication throughout the process.

Realise also maintains contingency arrangements to ensure continuity of contract management and oversight should the designated Contract Manager or Delivery Partner Manager leave the organisation, be absent for an extended period, or otherwise become unavailable.

For Adult Skills Fund, the relevant Business Unit Director will appoint the Operations Manager as the interim Contract Manager. The Operations Manager is the primary contact with the relevant funding authority and is responsible for reporting subcontractor performance, contract delivery and compliance matters. This ensures continuity of oversight, stakeholder relationships and contract performance management whilst a permanent replacement is recruited.

For Joint Delivery Partner and Employer Provider arrangements, the relevant Business Unit Director will appoint the Partnership Manager responsible for the employer relationship as the interim Contract Manager. As this individual already works closely with the employer and delivery partner, they possess detailed knowledge of the programme, contractual arrangements, performance expectations and operational delivery requirements, ensuring continuity of support and management.

In all cases, the Business Unit Director will ensure that:

- A suitably qualified interim lead is appointed without delay.

- All relevant contract documentation, performance information and correspondence are transferred to the interim lead.
- The delivery partner and any relevant funding authority are informed of the change in contact arrangements.
- Scheduled performance reviews, quality monitoring activities and reporting requirements continue without interruption.
- Learners, employers and stakeholders experience no adverse impact as a result of the staffing change.
- Recruitment of a permanent replacement is commenced where required.

These arrangements ensure that delivery partners continue to receive effective support, oversight and communication, and that contractual, quality and compliance responsibilities are maintained at all times.

7.8 Joint Communication to support Performance Management we have the following in place:

Frequency	Subject	Contract	Responsibility
Immediate	Any changes to contract or procedures Any issues identified with performance levels	All	Dedicated Manager
Daily	Access to contract advice and guidance	All	Dedicated Manager
Monthly	Monthly Performance reviews Sending claims data Sending partner data Good news and best practice sharing Compliance and quality assurance feedback	All	Dedicated Manager Delivery Partner
Twice per year (Based on risk)	Quality Monitoring	All	Head of Quality Delivery Partner
Annually	DBS update Policies and procedures refresh Financial health check	All	Delivery Partner Dedicated Manager
Ad-hoc	Changes to funders requirements Information requests from funders	All	Delivery Partner Manager

8. Quality and Assurance Framework

8.1 Quality Monitoring Process

The purpose of the Quality Monitoring Process is to ensure that the standard of delivery and the learner journey by all our Delivery Partners adhere to the standards with the Realise Quality Monitoring Framework.

Delivery Partners

- Are measured against the same criteria, which ensures a fair evaluation in line with Realise's own quality expectations.
- Have a responsibility to ensure that they co-operate and are prepared for the planned quality monitoring visits and support our Head of Quality when planning and carrying out Quality monitoring visits.

Realise:

- Has a responsibility to carry out quality monitoring visits to review all areas of the provision and make an evaluative judgement. A risk based approach is taken when planning quality monitoring review visits.
- Will provide verbal feedback identifying key strengths and areas for improvement and a detailed visit report will be within 7 days after the visit confirming the feedback.
- Will use the outcomes to form a quality improvement plan.

The Quality monitoring reports are moderated by the Head of Quality at their monthly meetings with the Chief Learning Officer prior to being sent to the Delivery Partner.

If the Delivery Partner is not happy with the report the Delivery Partner has 14 days to appeal the report. A copy of the appeals procedure is available on request.

The evaluation of evidence of the learner journey helps to inform Realise on the best way to support Delivery Partners with their own areas of development.

8.2 Audit

Funding and assurance team are responsible for undertaking audits of the learner/customer records on a regular basis.

Checks are robust and comprehensive and typically cover the areas that would be externally audited by DFE.

For Apprenticeships, these audits will take the two approaches, account based and theme based. Account based is specifically looking at the account, for example Realise , and will cover the full customer journey for the current contract year. Delivery partner provision will not be audited separately but as part of an overall audit.

A theme based audit will look at specific elements within the programme delivery such as Off the Job, Functional Skills, recognised prior learning etc. and again, Delivery Partner provision will form a part of the sample and will not be audited independently.

For ASF, the approach will differ in that audits will be conducted by region. Again, Delivery Partners will be included in the overall sample and the audit will focus on starts/leavers/achievers. Match funded audits will also be conducted to ensure ESF co-funding requirements are in place and being followed.

A report is produced detailing the findings, funding errors and risks for each learner/customer record. The report is supplied to the dedicated manager, Head of Claims and the relevant Operational Manager/Director for remedial action.

If the Delivery Partner is not happy with the report the Delivery Partner has 2 weeks to appeal the report.

The results of the audit and areas for improvement are discussed with the Delivery Partner at the monthly meetings and as part of the Risk, Change and Audit Committee Meeting.

8.3 Safeguarding

In order to be sure that procedures and policies meet all our statutory requirements and Realise's internal standards and operating procedures checks will be made on the following:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Safer Recruitment and DBS check process
- Equality & Diversity policy
- Prevent Policy
- DBS Evidence (DBS reference number) for all staff who will be involved in delivery with
Realise Learners e.g. Name/role/DBS code number/date of disclosure
- Evidence of staff training for Prevent Duty (Workshop to Raise Awareness of Prevent/Education Training Foundation) and Safeguarding

8.4 Information Security

The protection of any data that we process under our contract(s) is paramount. With this in mind Realise must ensure that we meet our own internal security requirements and those imposed upon us contractually and legislatively. We will carry out a rigorous due diligence process with all Delivery Partners/Sub-Contractors entering into agreements with us to ensure their compliance with these standards.

We will also perform continuous security compliance checks through our Annual Delivery Partner Policy Review throughout the duration of any contract with all our Delivery Partners. There will be a requirement for the Delivery Partner to submit a comprehensive security plan to our information security department prior to contract commencement and we and you should review these at least annually. We will undertake physical compliance checks to provide assurance that your security plans are accurate, meet industry best practice and your organisation and staff have a full understanding of the security requirements of the contract.

9. Claims and Payment

Compliance with government claims and funding rules are of paramount importance to us and failure to comply with them or with our policies and procedures around claims and validations will constitute a breach of your contract with us.

Failure to comply exposes us all to risks of fraud, reputation, financial and commercial risk and ultimately puts the contract at risk for all partners.

We will operate robust controls to check all information submitted for claim and validate claims where appropriate. Our teams have the final say on whether a submission meets the criteria for claim. However, you should not rely on these checks, it is your responsibility to ensure that what you submit is correct and valid.

Incorrect information that is submitted will be returned to Delivery Partners for correction.

9.1 Claims and Invoicing

Realise will send a pro-forma self-bill invoice and the appropriate backing data for you to review and confirm on a monthly basis. Once the value has been agreed you must raise an invoice and send it to realise.purchaseledger@realisetraining .com.

9.2 Payments

We commit to paying all received undisputed invoices by the end of the month following the month of delivery (unless there are specific alternative payment terms agreed within the contract).

10. Policies and Procedures

A Sub-Contractor/Partner's policies will be subjected to initial review during the Due Diligence checking process prior to contract award and thereafter in the Quality Monitoring Visits, and these include but are not limited to:

- Information Security
- Whistleblowing
- Health and Safety
- Sustainable Development
- Equality and Diversity including any Equal Ops and Gender Pay Gap information
- Safeguarding including Prevent
- Pre-employment checks (Safer Recruitment Policy) including DBS
- Quality Assurance and Monitoring procedures
- Self-Assessment Report and Quality Development Planning
- Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy
- Complaints
- Data Protection – including any updates relating to GDPR and Modern Slavery

Compliance with these requirements will be tested as part of the quality monitoring and assurance process.

10.1 Complaints Process

Should we disagree on any matter and are unable to resolve it between us then your contract will outline the formal Dispute Resolution Process. In the first instance this would be to contact Delivery Partner Manager.

If your dispute cannot be resolved satisfactorily, please refer to our complaints process, This can be found on our website at Contact - Realise (realisetraining.com)

Annex 1 Delivery Partner Contingency Plan

Delivery Partner Name_____ Date_____

Deliver Partner Manager_____

Action	Additional Information	By who	Deadline
Have Realise been notified the Partner has ceased trading?	Confirm who provided this information. Is this official?	Delivery Partner Manager	
Has the Head of Quality Assurance been made aware?	If not, ensure that Head of Quality is made aware of the current situation.	Delivery Partner Manager	
Make contact with the Deliver Partner to confirm this. If this is not possible, use the resources available to confirm this.	Possible resources to use are: https://www.gov.uk/find-out-if-a-company-is-in-financialhttps://www.gov.uk/find-out-if-a-company-is-in-financial-troubletrouble https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/companieshttps://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/companies-househouse https://www.gov.uk/search-bankruptcy-insolvency-register	Delivery Partner Manager	
If contact is made with the Delivery Partner, confirm if the Administrators have been engaged.	If so, have they already taken possession of assets?	Delivery Partner Manager	
If confirmation is received, contract termination notice to be issued	DPM to liaise with Head of Quality and Contracts Team to ensure termination notice issued.	Delivery Partner Manager	
Has the DFE been notified?	Head of Quality Assurance & Delivery Partnerships to ensure DFE are aware of the situation and work being undertaken to mitigate the impact on the learners where possible.	Head of Quality	

Confirm number of learners in learning.	Include PED learners		Delivery Partner Manager		
	Confirm funding remaining per learner.	This can be taken from the PFR. Need to know what funding is remaining for current learners on programme	Delivery Partner Manager		
	Confirm if any funding needs to be taken back based on last evidence date and current date.	This is necessary as we may need to be added to the list of creditors should we have overpaid the Delivery Partner	Delivery Partner Manager		
	Confirm programmes learners are following	This is needed to ascertain who can continue the delivery of the programme within the Realise DP network or via Realise Direct Delivery	Delivery Partner Manager		
	Place all learners on BIL from last evidence date.	All funding needs to be suspended with immediate effect	Delivery Partner Manager /SST		Request confirmation from DFE that is acceptable prior to action
	Request full progression update on aims for all learners currently on.	This is needed to ascertain where the learners are and would be required by any potential new partner looking to re-engage with learners	Delivery Partner Manager		
	Confirm if Learner evidence is paper based or electronic?	If paper based, is this with the learner or with the Delivery Partner? If electronic, can the evidence be downloaded to paper copies or can the data be migrated?	Delivery Partner Manager		
	If paper based, organise immediate collection of evidence from partner premises.	Can be done by courier or van hire	Lead Manager		
	Send communication to all affected learners confirming the current situation.	All learners need to be made aware of the situation reference the delivery partner and next steps	Delivery Partner Manager /SST		

	Liaise with internal and external colleagues to confirm if programme can be continued in house or with a different Partner.	Can any partner or DD continue the delivery of the apprenticeship?	Delivery Partner Manager		Liaise with DFE Account Manager to assist where we do not have the specialisms or Delivery Partners to support continued learning.
	Confirm learners that can be re-engaged and send	Arrange for shipping of portfolio evidence for IQA prior to re-engagement	Delivery Partner Manager		Realise to speak to learners to confirm consent to pass personal information to a new
	information to relevant partner.				Delivery Partner and confirm the learner still wants to remain on programme
	Confirm learners that cannot be re-engaged and withdraw these.	Will need to send communication to learners informing them that their programme has been terminated. This is only in cases where it has been confirmed that all avenues have been exhausted.	Delivery Partner Manager/SST		Arrange for shipping of portfolio evidence to these learners as they may need it should they find an alternative Training Provider
	Liaise with replacement partner and confirm when learners will be re-engaged.	Need clear timescales for this in order to ensure we maximise the number of learners that can be retained	Delivery Partner Manager		
	Transfer and re-instate leaners that have moved to another Delivery Partner/DD to resume training.		Delivery Partner Manager/SST		

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Policy Owner	Lesley Rimmington Director of Quality and Compliance
Signed by Managing Director	 Gregg Scott Realise Managing Director