



# Delivery Partner Management Framework

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## The Realise Delivery Partner Management Framework

Welcome to the Realise Delivery Partner and Sub-Contractor Management Framework. This document is intended as an overview for all Delivery Partners covering the lifecycle of your journey with us and what you and we should expect from the relationship. It is our intention to work closely alongside our Delivery Partners and Sub-Contractors to assist with capacity building, offer appropriate support when required and manage the contracts in an effective manner. We aim to ensure every aspect of our learners and customers' requirements are not just complied with but that the highest levels of performance and quality are also achieved and we can only do this together.

The benefits of working with Realise are:

- A clear set of behaviours, which are embedded in our working practices
- A desire to invest in and support our Delivery Partners to deliver long and sustainable relationships
- A clear working methodology for us both to be clear on what needs to be achieved, understand how we will do this and enables us to flexibly adapt those plans as things change
- Provide opportunities for mutual growth
- Assist in networking to organically grow your business with Realise and other Sub-Contractors and Delivery Partners
- Support in preparing for external audits, visits, assessments and inspections

We welcome any feedback on this document via your Delivery Partner Manager and will be updating and improving it frequently to ensure we are continuously improving our services and reflecting industry best practice.

The key benefits that we hope this framework brings are:

- An appreciation of (Realise) and its strategy and behaviours
- A fair and unbiased Procurement and Selection approach that meets the requirements of our employers, learners and meets our rationale.
- A structured and consistent approach to Performance Management & Quality Monitoring
- A clear expectation in terms of behaviour, conduct and values
- Overview of Communication and Expectation
- Sharing of best practice
- Clarity on the approach to dealing with under performance in an open and collaborative way

### 1. An Introduction to Realise

Realise is one of the UK's largest private sector providers of publically funded training.

Realise has built a strong delivery base with its supply chain, invested significantly in its core capabilities and developed an effective large employer strategy alongside its services for SMEs, whilst strengthening Realise's own position in the delivery of front-line services, contributing to:

- A right learner, right programme approach to Apprenticeship Delivery
- An extended range of services in the skills, education, training and employment sectors.
- Enhanced capabilities and investment.
- Improved opportunities to work across the skills sector, providing a more integrated service offer and maximising the outcomes for learners, customers, employers, key stakeholders and funders.
- Access to new opportunities, opened up by Realise's extensive network and supply chain.

A strong emphasis has been placed around our embedded right learner, right programme approach as well as improving the learning experience for all learners and meeting employer needs. Realise is well respected as a large employer, as well as a capacity builder in SME supply chains, and with an increasing number of large employers welcoming apprenticeships due to the Levy, there are more opportunities than ever to work in partnership with some of the most exciting and innovative companies in the country.

Our ambition is to ensure that we fully support all our employers to ensure they receive the right advice and guidance to build, train and succession plan with their workforce, receiving tailored information, advice and guidance and effective development and training solutions for the future of their workforce.

In addition, we have strong networks with the third sector, voluntary and community groups, helping to strengthen our impact on the local communities within which we operate and aiming to improve opportunities for people from disadvantaged backgrounds, a key pillar 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 mission and 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.

The impact that Realise has is inextricably linked to the impact of our Delivery Partners. For this reason, all of Realise's Delivery Partners are expected to contribute to achieving our vision and values below:

- By pledging themselves to uphold this code of conduct.
- Act with honesty, 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 201.
- 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 agreements 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.

## **Delivery Partner Team**

Alongside the Delivery Partner Managers our Head Office Support Team consists of:

- Quality, Audit and Assurance
- Curriculum development
- Claims Management; processing and compliance
- Health & Safety
- Safeguarding including Prevent
- Information Security
- Operations
- Finance

They will liaise with you and with the Delivery Partner Manager 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:

- Ensure a right learner, right programme is always at the forefront of programme delivery
- 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 requirements
- 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 employers or adult education budget (AEB). 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. On some occasions, the large employer may also be the sub-contractor.

### **3.3 Adult Education 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.

## **4. Procurement and Selection**

As part of our values we are committed to ensure that all Delivery Partner contracts are awarded fairly and openly to the organisation(s) which best fits the Realise requirements.

### **4.1 Current funding streams**

Realise offers a wide range of programmes using various funding routes including:

- Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) for Apprenticeship provision including Levy
- Adult Education Budget (AEB) for classroom delivery and Traineeships (including Devolved Local Authorities)
- Locally funded programmes through Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and Local Authorities

In order to ensure we are operating an open, honest and transparent process we have designed a framework to embrace the following procurement process. These processes will be used for the funding streams outlined above as well as any new funders. There are some situations when a Delivery Partner/Sub-Contractor may be deemed to be exempt from this process. For example, niche specialist partners and employer led provision.

### **4.2 Bid and Tender Opportunities/Expressions of Interest and Due Diligence Process**

Realise aims to apply a consistent and considered approach to the sourcing and on-boarding of Delivery Partners. This is to ensure we have a robust procedures in place and high performance across all of our contracts. We are equally committed to ensuring that our chosen delivery partners are high performing and will deliver an excellent service to our customers and achieve contracted commitments.

When identifying additional 'high performing' Delivery Partners we consider a number of key criteria to ensure we are on-boarding those who will compliment and improve our existing offer.

These considerations are as follows:

- A minimum Ofsted Grade 2 delivery for the area we are proposing to sub-contract or partner you in delivering, or Equivalent evidence where OFSTED is not appropriate.
- Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP), from August 2019, it is a funding rule requirement for all subcontractors. This is not applicable for AEB funded programmes.
- A clear commitment to delivering high levels of quality such as:
  - A clear Quality Monitoring Processes or Framework in place which covers, but is not limited to observations of teaching, learning and assessment, learner and employer feedback, information, advice and guidance, reviews of the quality of all aspects of the learning journey (as appropriate).
  - Understanding of Self-Assessment Processes
  - A demonstrable history of performance on previous contracts, ideally delivering similar contract outcomes to similar target customer groups.
  - Relevant experience, qualified staff in the occupational area.

- Existing Geographical coverage, both in terms of people and estate to support a timely and positive mobilisation in to delivery.
- Specialisms that align to local geographical labour market or priority sector needs that cannot be met through existing Supply Chain partners.

### 4.3 ESFA specific contract compliance requirements

The ESFA auditors (external) are required to assess our Delivery Partner arrangements on an annual basis. This includes our processes for selection, due diligence, contracting and management. We also check any conflicts of interest and ensure providers are registered on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers as required by our ESFA contract. As part of our on-going review we make sure that any provider appointed continues to meet the ROTAP requirements. All documents supplied will need to be refreshed / reviewed annually.

## 5. Fee's and Charges

Management fees charged by Realise for legitimate management overheads for quality and contractual compliance aspects will not exceed 20% for and 'end-to-end' service. This is as per industry best practice and governance code.

Where the partnership is that of a joint delivery model, fees will be agreed based on the proportion of the delivery and actual costs.

The management fee will vary dependant on (but not limited to) the following factors and will consider the level of risk following due diligence and historical performance:

- 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 and learning
- Delivery costs of the partner

In line with the ESFA funding rules, and the principles of honest and fair procurement practice, Realise will publish the fees received and paid on an annual basis, this can be found on our website <https://realisetraining.com/>

## 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:

- Weekly communication to set targets and discuss performance 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 Visit is completed in addition to the monthly performance meetings. This is completed on a quarterly 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
- Diagnosis of underlying causes of poor performance and presentation of recommendations for 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. Delivery Partner Managers set weekly targets on a range of key performance measures with our Delivery Partners for non-levy contracts. 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.

In addition the above, a monthly progress report is returned by the sub-contractor or delivery partner detailing Apprentices progress made on their learning journey, at risk status, attendance and general feedback which is analysed and reported to the employers via the Employer Portal and review meetings conducted by Delivery Partner Manager as required when it has been identified that there are learners deemed to be "at risk" of leaving their Apprenticeship early or behind progress with their qualification. The purpose of this is to ensure that all action is taken in a timely manner by all parties to find a solution to



ensure that learners are engaged, achieve their Apprenticeship in a timely manner and that learner satisfaction is high.

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.

The meetings schedule formalises the support available to each Sub-Contractor/Delivery Partner in the delivery of contract requirements, as seen in the table below -

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

| Frequency                    | Responsibility                               | Action required  |
|------------------------------|--|--|
| Weekly                       | Delivery Partner<br>Delivery Partner Manager | Review Apprentices deemed to be classed as at risk or behind expected progress to ensure all action is being take to rectify the situation.<br><br>Monitor all learners on programme and to cover Starts/Completions/PED/BIL/Withdrawals   |
| Monthly/Bi-Monthly/Quarterly | Delivery Partner<br>Delivery Partner Manager | Partner data to be produced and sent to all partners (montly)<br><br>Claims Histories to be sent to all partners (montly)<br><br>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)<br><br>Completion and return of monthly progress tracker detailing learners progress, attendance, risk status and feedback.<br><br>Risk areas identified through monthly performance meeting or completed tracker. 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/ Sub-Contractor team**

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 Delivery Partner 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 Director of Quality and Compliance and is supported by:

- Quality Assurance Business Partner who leads the Quality Assurance Teams
- Audit and Assurance Manager who leads the Contract Auditors
- Safeguarding and Welfare Manager
- Delivery Partner Managers

A Quality Assurance Business Partner will be allocated to the Delivery Partner. The Quality Assurance Business Partner will take a risk based approach when visits are planned and these are based on contract value, total learners in learning, learners past funding end date, outstanding reviews and review of latest due diligence. The Quality Assurance Business Partner will carry out a range of quality monitoring visits; the process for which is available from your QABP and complete review of observations of teaching and learning process to review and assess all aspects of the Delivery Partner delivery. They will risk / RAG rate each provider following the visit and produce a quality monitoring report with an associated action plan for required improvements to include follow up visits.

### **7.2.3 Audit Team**

The Audit and Compliance Team will conduct regular compliance and financial audits across all provision which will include Delivery Partners within the network.

Once audits are completed, reports will be made available to the Head of Quality Assurance, Delivery Partner Management, Data & Compliance Manager/Team Leader and the Delivery Partner Manager. Feedback calls will take place between all parties and the Delivery Partner 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/Sub-Contractor 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” resource that can be shared with staff and learners.

The Quality Monitoring Officer will review, assess and check all aspects of Safeguarding and Welfare are being met during quality monitoring visits.

#### **7.2.5 Claims Management Team**

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

#### **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 the funding and ensure any impact on the learner is minimised. Throughout the process the learners must remain the focus and be kept informed of the situation and the actions being undertaken to ensure the continuity of the training where possible and Realise will be ready to answer any and all learner questions throughout this process.

## 7.9 Call off Contracts

We recognise that certain elements of the Contract Management Framework may not fully apply to any call off contractors due to the nature of their specific contract with Realise. We therefore tailor our approach to contract management based on the key principles of any call off contract.

The contents of the Contract Management Framework are all applicable; however, the frequency and application may be adjusted to ensure that the call off contract is monitored effectively and appropriately.

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

| Frequency   | Subject                                       | Contract | Responsibility           |
|-------------|---|----------|--------------------------|
| Immediate   | Any changes to contract or procedures         | All      | Delivery Partner Manager |
|             | Any issues identified with performance levels |          |                          |
| Daily       | Access to contract advice and guidance        | All      | Delivery Partner Manager |
| Fortnightly | Updates on monthly performance review actions | All      | Delivery Partner         |
|             |   |          | Delivery Partner Manager |

|                                  |   |     |   |
|----------------------------------|---|-----|---|
| <b>Monthly</b>                   | Monthly Performance reviews               | All | Delivery Partner<br>Manager                                   |
|                                  | Sending claims data                       |     | Delivery Partner  |
|                                  | Sending partner data                      |     |   |
|                                  | Good news and best practice sharing       |     |   |
|                                  | Compliance and quality assurance feedback |     |   |
| <b>Quarterly (Based on risk)</b> | Quality Monitoring                        | All | Quality Assurance<br>Business Partner<br><br>Delivery Partner |
| <b>Annually</b>                  | DBS update                                | All | Delivery Partner  |
|                                  | Policies and procedures refresh           |     | Delivery Partner<br>Manager                                   |
| <b>Ad-hoc</b>                    | Changes to funders requirements           | All | Delivery Partner<br>Manager                                   |
|                                  | Information requests from funders         |     |   |

## 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, as detailed in the Standard Operating Procedure. This will be issued when mobilizing a new Delivery Partner or available on request from the QBP.

Delivery Partners

- Are measured against the same criteria, which ensures a fair evaluation in line with Realise's own quality framework.
- Have a responsibility to ensure that they co-operate and are prepared for the planned quality monitoring visits and support our Quality Assurance Business Partner 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 28 days after the visit confirming the feedback.

The Quality monitoring reports are moderated by the Quality Assurance Business Partners at their monthly meetings with the Head of Quality Assurance and Delivery Partner Management prior to being sent to the Delivery Partner and the Delivery Partner Manager.

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**

The Quality Assurance Officers/Auditors are responsible for undertaking independent compliance audit 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 ESFA.

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 AEB, 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 Delivery Partner 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.

Results matrix are produced, maintained and analysed to inform future/ad-hoc targeted audits.

The results of the audit and areas for improvement are discussed with the Delivery Partner at the monthly/quarterly meetings and as part of the 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.

## 8.5 Best Practise and Capacity Building

We will share our practice and best practice between Delivery Partners through a variety of forums. These will take the form of newsletters, regular email updates, verbal updates at monthly and quarterly contract review meetings and regular ‘Sharing Best Practise’ development events.

Realise has created an environment for the development of and sharing of best practice between members of its provider network.

| Mechanism                                   | Purpose   |
|---|---|
| Monthly/Bi Monthly contract review meetings | Review performance, share information, provide ideas and support for continuous improvement.                                    |
| Best Practice meetings and workshops        | Designed to share performance and best practice information and processes relating to how each other works and what works well. |
| Ah-hoc all contract Partner Events          | Designed to gather feedback on our services and share cross contract best practice and capacity building opportunities          |

## 9. Claims and Payment

It is essential that you familiarise yourself with the relevant claims and validation processes applicable to the contract you are operating. These can be found in the Delivery Partner Portal for non-levy agreements and within the contract for levy, you should read and understand key relevant funding rules. These include DWP provider guidance and ESFA funding rules applicable to your contract.

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 [ile.purchaseledger@realisetraining.com](mailto:ile.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.

Additionally, approved Delivery Partners who support our AEB and Traineeships contracts will be given access to Realise Policies via the Extranet, if required, to support the development of their own procedures.

## **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 <https://realisetraining.com/>

## Annex 1 Delivery Partner Contingency Plan

Delivery Partner Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_


Deliver Partner Manager \_\_\_\_\_

Head of Sector \_\_\_\_\_

| Ref | Action   | Additional Information  | By who  | Deadline | Comments |
|-----|--|---|---|----------|----------|
|     | 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 & Delivery Partnership.  | If not, ensure that Head of Quality Assurance & Delivery Partnerships 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:<br><a href="https://www.gov.uk/find-out-if-a-company-is-in-financialtrouble">https://www.gov.uk/find-out-if-a-company-is-in-financialtrouble</a><br><a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/companieshouse">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/companieshouse</a><br><a href="https://www.gov.uk/search-bankruptcy-insolvency-register">https://www.gov.uk/search-bankruptcy-insolvency-register</a> | 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/Contract Team            |          |          |
|     | If confirmation is received, contract termination notice to be issued  | DPM to liaise with Head of Quality Assurance & Delivery Partnerships and Contracts Team to ensure termination notice issued.  | Delivery Partner Manager                          |          |          |
|     | Has the ESFA been notified?  | Head of Quality Assurance & Delivery Partnerships to ensure ESFA are aware of the situation and work being undertaken to mitigate the impact on the learners where possible.  | Head of Quality Assurance & Delivery Partnerships |          |          |
|     | 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 ESFA 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 ESFA 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 learners that have moved to another Delivery Partner/DD to resume training. |  | Delivery Partner Manager/SST |  |  |

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Version Control Number      | Realise-21-PD-27   |
| Version                     | 6  |
| Last Review Date            | 21/06/2021   |
| Next Review Date            | 21/06/2022   |
| Policy Owner                | Lesley Rimmington Director of Quality and Compliance   |
| Signed by Managing Director | <br>Gregg Scott Realise Managing Director |