Adult Skills Fund and Tailored Learning: Collaboration, Quality and Fees Policy

(Updated 25.08.26)

Adult Learning Kirklees is committed to enabling inclusive, high-quality adult and tailored learning that supports residents to take positive first steps into learning. Working in partnership across West Yorkshire and aligning with regional and national strategies, we use devolved funding and decision-making to respond to local need, reduce inequality and strengthen communities. Our mission is to collaborate with trusted local partners to remove barriers to learning, build confidence and skills, and create pathways to further learning, employment and improved wellbeing for those who need it most.

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1. Partnership Approach and Governance

Information, advice and guidance services, including C+K Careers, form part of a wider partnership working approach. This includes representatives from the voluntary and third sector, libraries, the University of Huddersfield, Jobcentre Plus and other local and regional partners.

This collaboration is formalised through the Kirklees Community Learning Trust and the Kirklees Adult Learning Partnership and enables joined-up planning and delivery of adult and community learning, ensuring provision responds effectively to local need while complementing wider skills, employment and inclusion activity.

2. Devolution, Integrated Settlement and Strategic Context

West Yorkshire now operates within a strengthened devolved framework, supported by an integrated settlement that brings together greater local control over skills, employment and inclusive growth funding. This enables the West Yorkshire Mayor and Combined Authority to align investment more closely with regional priorities, local labour market needs and inclusive growth ambitions.

Kirklees Council works in partnership with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and local stakeholders to deliver adult and tailored learning that contributes to regional and national priorities, while remaining rooted in local communities and supporting the ambitions of the local Employment and Skills Framework.

At a regional level, Kirklees plays an important role within the West Yorkshire economy. Residents regularly access employment, training and education opportunities across district boundaries, and businesses draw talent from a wider

regional labour market. This plan aligns with the ambitions set out in the West Yorkshire Local Growth Plan, the Region of Learning and Creativity, and wider priorities led by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority, while working alongside the Kirklees Employment and Skills Framework to respond to local needs and opportunities. Through these shared ambitions, learning provision will contribute to a stronger, more productive and inclusive economy, supporting economic resilience, social mobility and inclusive growth across Kirklees and the wider region.

3. Tailored Learning and First Steps Provision

Kirklees Council's contribution to the local adult learning system is focused on tailored, community-based learning that supports first steps into learning. All Tailored Learning provision commissioned through the Council must align with the Department for Education's (DfE) seven purposes of Adult Tailored Learning and support learners to achieve measurable progress across the eleven DfE Adult Tailored Learning outcome categories. Delivery partners are expected to

demonstrate how provision enables learners to progress towards their personal, social, educational and employment-related goals through improved confidence, wellbeing, skills development, community participation, progression into further learning, volunteering and, where appropriate, employment.

The approach emphasises trusted, community-rooted delivery. Learning is commissioned from organisations with strong relationships with residents experiencing disadvantage, including those affected by:

- Low income or insecure employment
- Low or no qualifications
- Health challenges or disability
- Housing instability or social isolation
- Other complex personal or structural barriers.

This model strengthens community capacity by:

- Supporting partners to design and deliver responsive provision
- Building skills, systems and leadership within organisations
- Encouraging self-organised learning activity and volunteering
- Leveraging additional funding and in-kind contributions.

Subcontractors must be able to evidence learner progress and outcomes, demonstrate the wider social value and community impact of their provision, and show how delivery contributes to local priorities whilst remaining responsive to learner need.

The needs of learners remain the primary driver in commissioning and subcontracting decisions.

Learner Centred Quality Improvement

4. Quality Expectations:

Adult Learning Kirklees (ALK) is committed to securing high-quality adult and community learning that:

- Meets the needs of local residents and communities
- Contributes to agreed local and regional outcomes
- Aligns with Ofsted's Further Education and Skills Framework
- Demonstrates value for money
- Complies with funding, data and accountability requirements.

5. Partner Requirements

All organisations delivering learning on behalf of ALK must demonstrate their ability to meet the standards set out in ALK's quality guidance, policies and processes.

6. Contracting and Support

Each partner receives a clear contract setting out expectations, performance measures, outcomes and payment arrangements. Supply chain management arrangements are agreed at this stage.
Partners are also supported through:

- A provider handbook for managers and tutors
- Ongoing relationship management
- Capacity-building support focused on learner needs and quality improvement.

7. Quality Improvement Support

ALK supports continuous improvement in teaching, learning and assessment with a strong focus on intent, implementation and impact. Support includes:

- Annual quality improvement cycle
- Support with self-assessment and quality improvement planning
- Manager, staff and volunteer development
- Planned CPD programmes
- Curriculum and quality development, including peer activity
- RARPA moderation
- Performance data analysis and reporting
- Regular monitoring and support meetings
- External observation of teaching, learning and assessment
- Teaching and learning reviews
- Safeguarding and Prevent training and updates
- Review of partner policies and procedures
- Partner meetings and sharing of best practice
- Support for external scrutiny and inspection
- Bespoke development and peer support where appropriate

8. Additional Programme Support

Partners also receive support with:

- Health and Safety compliance
- Data management and monitoring
- ILR processing and submission
- Management Information Systems and funding returns

Payment Arrangements

9. Management and Support Costs

Up to a maximum of 20% of Adult Skills Funding may be retained to contribute to the costs of programme management, quality assurance and support described above. The level of retention reflects the resource required to:

- Manage subcontracting relationships

- Ensure funding compliance and assurance
- Meet audit and accountability requirements
- Maintain high-quality learning delivery.

10. Additional Charges

Additional costs may be retained for services provided by the Council, where applicable. These may include:

- Registration and certification
- Learner or learning support
- Childcare or crèche provision.

11. Contractual Arrangements

Each partner's fees and payment arrangements are clearly set out in their contract.

12. Payment Conditions

Payments are linked to agreed learner start and completion milestones and are made on condition that:

- Services are delivered on time
- Quality standards are met
- Required evidence is provided
- Invoices are received and validated by ALK.

13. Payment Timescales

Kirklees Council will normally release payment within 30 working days of receipt and validation of all required documentation.

Fee Remission and Access

14. Fee Remission Policy

Tailored learning in Kirklees is designed to support residents taking their first steps into learning. As such, learning is offered fully funded to residents facing barriers to participation, including:

- Unemployment or low wages
- Low or no formal qualifications
- Mental or physical health challenges
- Other circumstances that limit access to learning.

Learners without significant barriers who are able to pay are supported through signposting to other suitable provision available across the district and the wider West Yorkshire partnership.

Communication and Review

15. Communication

This policy is shared with all potential subcontractors as part of the procurement and contracting process.

16. Publication

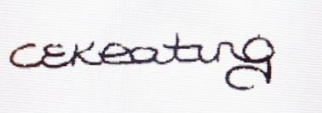
The policy is published on the Council's website and is accessible to partners and stakeholders.

17. Review

This policy is reviewed annually and may be updated sooner in response to changes in:

- Devolution arrangements
- Funding conditions
- Regional or national skills policy

Signed by:



Date: September 2026
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