

# Education and Skills Funding Agency calls for views on subcontracting

Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) has [launched a 6-week consultation](#) with post-16 education and skills institutions about future arrangements for post-16 education and training delivered under a subcontracting arrangement.

The purpose of the consultation is to understand the sector's views about proposed reforms to eliminate poor subcontracting arrangements, and better monitor subcontracts to ensure the best possible outcome for learners.

## **Eileen Milner, ESFA Chief Executive said:**

"Where subcontracting is done well and for the right reasons, it can fill gaps in niche or expert provision, provide greater access to training facilities or offer an entry point for disadvantaged groups.

"However, as highlighted in my letter to the sector in October which announced ESFA's subcontracting review, despite tightening arrangements, there is still room to improve. We continue to receive information and investigate cases where subcontracted provision is not appropriately controlled, overseen or managed by the lead provider, this is a concern. We expect consistently high quality provision of education and training in the post 16 space."

The consultation will enable ESFA to understand the impact of the proposed reforms, and help the agency to assess any implications for providers or learners. ESFA will take into account providers' contractual commitments and use this insight to shape the pace and scope of change for subcontracting rules from 2020 to 2021 onwards.

The subcontracting review and the consultation aim to:

- ensure public funds are properly spent, maximising the benefit for learners
- work with Ofsted to strengthen inspection arrangements for subcontracting
- clarify the rules and requirements across post-16 funding streams
- improve oversight of subcontracted activity in the sector and improve the outcomes and experience for students
- eliminate subcontracting that is undertaken for purely financial reasons
- retain subcontracting that meets niche or specialised needs, improves access and provides opportunities for disadvantaged learners

The consultation will run from 4 February to 17 March.