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Guidance

# Request approval to subcontract 16 to 19 distance learning

How lead providers of post-16 education and training should request approval to subcontract 16 to 19 provision which involves distance learning.

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From: [Department for Education](#)

Published 6 September 2023

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Lead providers should only make subcontracting arrangements for distance learning in exceptional circumstances. If you subcontract 16 to 19 provision and your subcontractor will use distance learning, you need to get our approval.

You must get approval to continue with distance learning subcontracting each year.

## What counts as distance learning

You should make your own assessment about what constitutes distance. You will need to have documentary evidence of how you will recruit, manage, and oversee that provision through the life of each learner's programme of study.

We may ask to see evidence of approval and your oversight arrangements as part of our audits.

## What your request should include

Your request should include:

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[Subcontracting post-16 education and training](#)

- details of similar provision available via other lead providers in the area and why this is not meeting the learners' needs
- details of your involvement in delivery (for example, providing financial and quality assurance)
- the amount of funding you will keep to cover the costs for managing the contract
- information on gaps in provision this subcontract will fill and if your local authority or an employer supports this
- the location of delivery and the nature of travel to learn and travel to work patterns
- details of how much contact the learner will have with you during their course
- how you will manage and oversee the subcontracted provision

## **Get approval for distance learning subcontracting**

Submit requests for new arrangements at least 12 weeks before you plan to start subcontracting the provision.

To get approval to continue with existing 16 to 19 distance subcontracting, submit a request by 31 March.

Email [Enquiries.ESFA@education.gov.uk](mailto:Enquiries.ESFA@education.gov.uk) for a copy of the form you need to complete.

## **Decision to approve your request**

We may ask for additional information to help us decide if we will approve your request.

Once we agree your request, you will need to make

sure your oversight and management arrangements are in line with:

- the [subcontracting standard](#)
- the [subcontracting funding rules](#)

If we do not approve your request to continue with existing 16 to 19 distance subcontracting, we will give you time to wind down your provision. This is to ensure that existing learners are able to complete their programmes.

Published 6 September 2023

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