**INVITATION TO TENDER**

The purpose of this document is to invite tenders for the Central Apprenticeship Hub Additional Learning and Health Support Provision.

**BACKGROUND AND SCOPE OF THE PROJECT: WORK TO BE UNDERTAKEN**

The University of Plymouth offer Level 5 to Level 7 Higher and Degree Apprenticeships on a local and national level, delivered via blended and distance learning, covering a wide variety of subject areas including a large Health portfolio.

The University of Plymouth Central Apprenticeship Hub (CAH) is responsible for arranging support and putting in place reasonable adjustments for apprentices with a suspected or confirmed additional learning and/or health need.

The CAH are responsible for all stages of the support process from the point of application through to EPA including arranging suitable diagnostic and needs assessments as well as accessing learning support funding to meet the costs of putting in place reasonable adjustments for apprentices, as set out in section 20 of the Equality Act 2010, for apprentices that:

* have a learning difficulty or disability as defined in Section 15ZA(6) of the

Education Act 1996 (as amended by section 41 of the Apprenticeships,

Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009); and

* as a result of this learning difficulty or disability, require reasonable

adjustments in order to be able to complete their apprenticeship,

including any reasonable adjustments to complete English and maths

requirements and end point assessment.

The CAH work in conjunction with a variety of stakeholders including University academic and support teams as well as employers to ensure apprentices are effectively supported in both their academic and work environments throughout their apprenticeship journey.

The University of Plymouth CAH invites tenders for the provision of high quality and timely support to Apprentices with additional learning and/or health needs that meets the following criteria:

**SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE**

Potential suppliers must be able to provide support across the following areas:

* Manual Note Takers
* Practical Support Assistants
* Study Assistants
* Specialist Mentor Mental health conditions (MH)
* Specialist Mentor (Autism Spectrum Conditions - AS)
* Specialist one-to-one study skills support (Specific Learning Difficulties - SpLD) Specialist one-to-one study skills support (AS)(MH)
* Specialist Access and Learning Facilitators: Assistive Technology Trainers (AST)
* Specialist support professional for students with sensory impairment - deaf or visually impaired students
* Specialist Note Taker (for Deaf / Hard of Hearing students) including electronic note taking and Speech To Text Reporter
* Specialist Note taker for Visually Impaired (VI) students including Braille

Those delivering NMH support must be professionally qualified, trained, experienced and screened for suitability to work in the support role. Potential suppliers must have a proven track record of providing disability support services to apprentices ideally in HE (for the purposes of funded Non-Medical Helpers).

The supplier should be able to…..

**Pre-Programme**

Essential

* Support the University in preparing apprentices for their apprenticeship journey, to include contributing to our online on-boarding workshop with information and resources on topics such as time management and stress management techniques that all apprentices can benefit from.
* Support the academic and apprentice support teams by providing annual workshops to help staff better understand learners needs, ways to support apprentices in the classroom and by providing online resources that can be accessed as and when needed.

Desirable

* Provide learning and development opportunities for apprentices that do not have a SpLD but are working below a Level 2 in their initial diagnostic assessments, this can include drop-in sessions, online workshops, study guides, free resources.
* Provide 1-1 discussion opportunities with a qualified assessor to ascertain whether a full diagnostic assessment would be required for individuals who have been highlighted as having a possible SpLD.
* Offer full SpLD diagnostic assessments and provide reports for apprentices that do not have a confirmed diagnosis.
* Complete and provide Apprenticeship Specific Needs Assessment Reports documenting details of:
* the reasonable adjustments necessary to enable the apprentice to complete their apprenticeship and
* how progress towards completion of the apprenticeship would be directly impacted without the reasonable adjustments being put in place.

**On-Programme**

Essential

* Provide support to our apprentices both in-person and remotely on a national scale.
* Offer flexibility with support hours, availability to include evenings and weekends.
* Match a apprentice with a support worker who is right for them. This support may be needed on a regular basis throughout the apprentices’ studies (e.g. daily or monthly) and for the duration of their apprenticeship.
* Provide a secure portal for support requests by the University.
* Understand the apprenticeship journey and terminology used which should be reflected during support sessions and recorded on any relevant documentation including support plans. To include EPA, OTJ, Maths and English requirements.
* Understand the funding differences between apprentices and students studying via a traditional route and ensure correct guidance is given to apprentices when appropriate. To include ESFA, DSA and Access to Work funding.
* Be knowledgeable and offer guidance to apprentices on additional funding streams such as grants from charitable organisations for software or equipment recommendations that fall outside of the ESFA/Access to Work funding.
* Build and keep knowledge up-to-date on University support services/resources and ensure apprentices are appropriately signposted and/or supported to access them in a timely manner.
* Understand and react appropriately should apprentices cancel or not attend booked sessions due to work commitments.
* Offer an easy way for the University and apprentices to contact the provider to discuss their support.
* Have a procedure in place for apprentices to request a change to the individual providing the NMH support should the relationship not be working.
* Have a procedure in place to ensure all data recorded during support sessions is confidential and GDPR compliant.
* Have a procedure in place to ensure the University is notified in a timely manner should there be any difficulties with the NMH support, to include if an apprentice stops engaging, or an apprentice cannot be contacted.
* Have a robust complaints procedure.
* Have an effective system in place for recording support hours and ensuring apprentices do not exceed their allocated hours without prior discussion with the University.
* Provide monthly timesheets confirming support hours accessed.
* Provide evidence of apprentice action plans and quarterly reviews in a secure manner via an online portal/database that confirm:
* the reasonable adjustments are necessary,
* the effectiveness of the reasonable adjustments and
* how these have been adapted where necessary

Desirable

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* the reasonable adjustments necessary to enable the apprentice to complete their apprenticeship and
* how progress towards completion of the apprenticeship would be directly impacted without the reasonable adjustments being put in place.

**Key Account Management**

Essential

* Have a dedicated Key Account Manager to lead on the delivery and support as well as participating in Bi-monthly update meetings.
* Work with the University to meet the EIF Framework for Ofsted and ensure the provision and support is in line with this.