



# Auntie's Cookery Academy

## Partner Selection & Management Policy

### 1. Purpose

Auntie's Cookery Academy (ACA) recognises that working with trusted local employers and partner organisations enhances opportunities for learners to build employability, confidence, and practical skills.

This policy sets out how ACA identifies, selects, and manages partnerships with local employers, placement providers, and other stakeholders — ensuring fairness, transparency, and compliance with charity law, safeguarding, and employment standards.

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### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all external partners, including:

- Local employers offering work placements or employment opportunities
  - Community organisations supporting ACA learners or programmes
  - Training or education delivery partners
  - Suppliers involved in employability or skills initiatives
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### 3. Principles

ACA is committed to:

- **Fairness and Transparency:** All partners are assessed against clear, objective criteria.
  - **Safeguarding and Risk Management:** Partnerships must protect the welfare of learners and beneficiaries.  
**Quality and Alignment:** Partnerships must align with ACA's charitable purpose — improving confidence, life skills, and employability through food and hospitality education.
  - **Legal and Ethical Compliance:** All partners must adhere to UK employment, equality, and safeguarding laws.
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<b>Approval Date</b>	7.11.25
<b>Next Review Due</b>	7.11.26
<b>Version Number</b>	1.0



## 4. Partner Identification

Potential partners may be identified through:

- Existing community networks and referrals
- Local authorities, voluntary sector networks, and employer forums
- Partner proposals or expressions of interest
- Strategic approaches to businesses within hospitality, food production, or service sectors

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## 5. Selection Criteria

Each potential partner will be assessed against the following criteria:

Criteria	Description
<b>Alignment with ACA Values</b>	Commitment to inclusion, equity, and supporting disadvantaged or care-experienced young people.
<b>Safeguarding Standards</b>	Has an up-to-date safeguarding policy and DBS processes if working directly with learners.
<b>Health &amp; Safety Compliance</b>	Demonstrates a safe working environment, with risk assessments in place for placements.
<b>Fair Recruitment &amp; Employment Practices</b>	Complies with equality, diversity, and anti-discrimination legislation.
<b>Sustainability &amp; Ethical Practices</b>	Operates responsibly with regard to environmental and ethical standards.
<b>Capacity to Support Learners</b>	Has suitable supervision, facilities, and willingness to provide feedback and guidance.
<b>Data Protection</b>	Can meet ACA's standards for handling personal data securely.

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## 6. Partner Vetting & Risk Assessment

Before approval, ACA will:

- Review the partner's policies (Health & Safety, Safeguarding, Equality, Modern Slavery, etc.)
- Conduct a risk assessment for the activity or placement proposed
- Verify references or reputational standing where appropriate
  
- Confirm insurance coverage (employers' liability, public liability, etc.)
- Record all findings in the **Partner Vetting Record Form**

If risks are identified, mitigation measures will be agreed before any partnership proceeds.

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## 7. Partnership Approval & Agreements

- Final approval of new partners rests with the **CEO** or delegated **Trustee Lead**.
  - All partnerships will be governed by a **written agreement or Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** that outlines:
    - Objectives and scope of the partnership
    - Responsibilities of each party
    - Safeguarding and data protection arrangements
    - Reporting, supervision, and review processes
    - Termination and review clauses
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## 8. Ongoing Management and Review

Partnerships will be monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure compliance, quality, and learner safety.

Reviews may include:

- Feedback from learners and staff
- Site visits or check-ins
- Review of risk assessments and incident logs
- Reassessment of partner policies and insurance annually

Any concerns or breaches will trigger an immediate review and may result in suspension or termination of the partnership.

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## 9. Record-Keeping

All records of partner vetting, agreements, risk assessments, and monitoring will be securely stored and maintained in accordance with ACA's **Data Protection Policy**.


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## 10. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed **at least once every 12 months**, or sooner if:

- Relevant laws, regulations, or guidance change;
- A serious incident, complaint, or near miss occurs;
- Feedback from learners, staff, or partners suggests improvements; or
- Operational changes make an update necessary.

This policy will be reviewed at least once a year, or sooner if there are significant changes in legislation, funding requirements, or partnership arrangements. Reviews will also take place following any incident, feedback, or risk escalation involving a partner, or when new categories of partnership are introduced to ensure the process remains fair, safe, and effective.

Signed: 

**Printed Name:** Emily-Jane Dale

**Job Title:** CEO and Chair

**Date:** 7th November 2025

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