



Associate Information Pack

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Introduction

Hello! You're reading this because you've expressed interest in becoming an AlphaPlus associate. This document aims to give you a concise guide to:

1. Who AlphaPlus are
2. What is our associate community and how it works
3. The next steps for you to take if you want to join the community including how to get in touch for more information

About AlphaPlus

Education and skills matter to individuals and society alike. [AlphaPlus](#) works with governments, regulators, certification bodies and publishers to develop innovative education and assessment services that help improve life chances for learners. Our work is evidence-led and focused on transformation – through technology, innovative curricula and approaches that work for all educators and the learners they serve. We are passionate about making “opportunities for all” a reality.

AlphaPlus is part of [AQA Education](#) – a global leader in school standards and assessment.

More information about what AlphaPlus do and the areas we work across can be found [here](#).

The AlphaPlus Associate Community

91%

of associates would
recommend AlphaPlus to a
friend or colleague who is
considering registering as an
associate

For more info please visit [Annex A](#)

The AlphaPlus Associate Community is a group of around 700 educational specialists who we rely on to provide both project capacity and specialist expertise on a subcontract basis. Some organisations call these “consultants”. We engage associates to undertake specialist tasks like writing assessments or learning materials based on their expert knowledge of a particular subject. We also engage associates to help with more general tasks like delivering training, helping with project management, etc.

We typically spend over £1m a year with our associate community – they play an important part in many of our projects.

We communicate with our associates as follows:

1. When we have a tender or a confirmed project where we are looking for specific expertise, we will

- a. Search our associate database to see if the expertise exists within the community
 - b. Write to either the whole associate community or those identified in (a) above, to invite them to contact us to discuss the project
2. We send out a newsletter roughly twice a year to update you on what's new at AlphaPlus
3. We communicate regularly on social media and invite you to follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).
4. We run an annual survey of associates to ask how you are finding working with AlphaPlus. A summary of the findings from the most recent survey are included in [Annex A](#).

When you become an associate, we ask you to register on our database – submitting a profile and a CV, as well as administrative information so we can contact you. We ask you periodically to update your database entry (uploading a new CV, etc.).

Working for AlphaPlus

All associates are asked to sign a Framework Contract. The Framework Contract is a generic set of contractual terms which provides the legal framework for all work that you do for AlphaPlus. All associates work on the same framework terms – being completely fair is an important part of managing a successful associate community.

AlphaPlus may require a DBS check for certain projects. If this is required we will be in contact with you in due course to complete the DBS checks. Please do let us know if your DBS certification is on the Update Service.

For specific projects, we will provide a specific schedule of work which details the work to be undertaken, the timescales, the fees etc. As part of signing up to be an associate, we will share all this documentation with you.

Our approach is based on the following principles:

1. We will generally not ask you to work solo on a project for a customer. You will be working as part of a team – with AlphaPlus staff members and directors, and possibly with other associates.

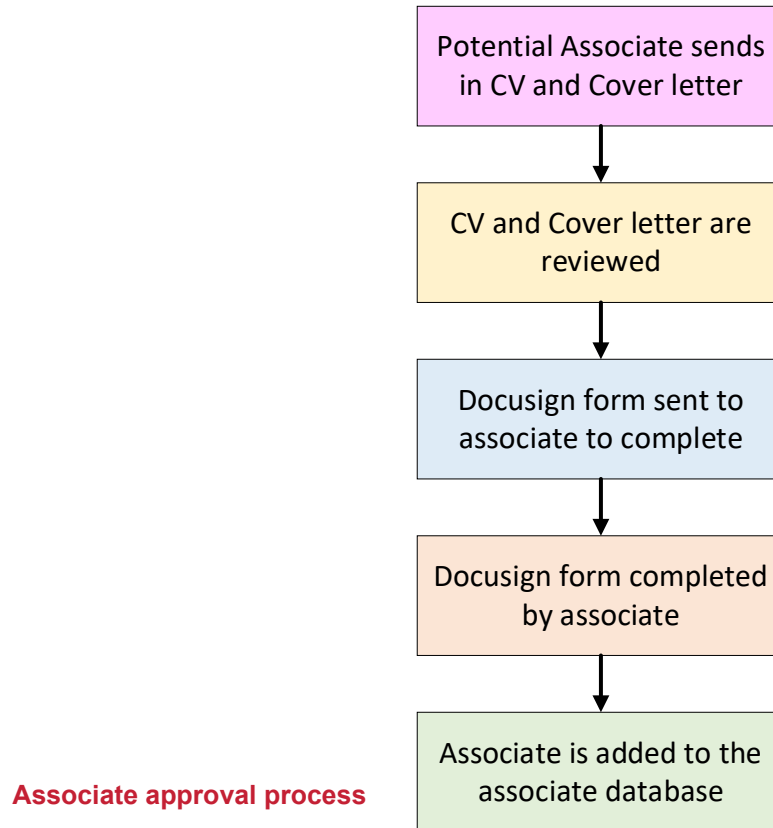
2. We provide you with the necessary project management and support to allow you to bring your specialist knowledge to bear – you will not be burdened by administration tasks or other non-specialist activity. More information about how we work with associates can be found in our Associate Charter – See [Annex B](#).
3. The fees are determined by the work being undertaken – we work to a schedule of different rates. Fees are generally agreed on a fixed price basis, based on an agreement between the project manager and the associate as to how much work is required. We aim to pay higher than the median rate for a typical task in the education sector. We settle 97% of our invoices within 30 days.



Testimonial from an AlphaPlus associate

Next Steps

The approval process is described in the diagram below –



To join our associate database, or for further information about what is involved, please contact the associate administration team (associates@alphaplus.co.uk). Please do let us know if your DBS certification is on the Update Service.

Associate Survey 2023 – Results

Introduction

Almost every project we do is undertaken with support of the AlphaPlus' associates. We're aware that the strength and depth of capability at AlphaPlus relies in no small part on our associates - on your expertise and diligence, and your understanding of the complex education world in which we work.

We want to ensure we are offering sufficient support and that the AlphaPlus associate network is working as effectively as possible. With this in mind, we recently asked our associates to fill in a survey, so that we could better understand your experience of being an AlphaPlus associate.

The survey responses were anonymous. In total, 138 associates filled out the survey (19% of the database at the time).

This report contains a summary of key highlights from the survey and how we will be taking your feedback on board.

Please note that these findings are confidential to you - our associate community, and the team at AQA and AlphaPlus.

Overview

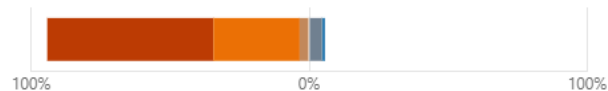
We're delighted that overall, the results of this year's survey are very positive, and broadly similar to the previous survey we ran in March 2022.

Approximately 90-95% of associates who have worked with us (and responded) were either very satisfied or satisfied with project management, work culture, work compensation and appreciation of work carried out, and replied that they would be very likely to work with us on another project.

This is excellent news. We rely on associates to be integral parts of the teams that carry out large projects, and it is good to hear that associates have such a positive view of AlphaPlus.

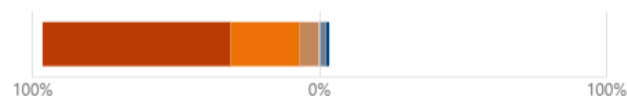
Very satisfied Satisfied Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied Dissatisfied Very dissatisfied Prefer not to say

Satisfaction with project management



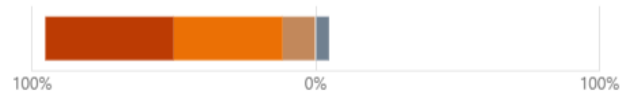
Very good Good Fair Poor Very poor Prefer not to say

Work culture at AlphaPlus



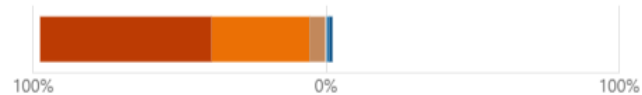
Very good Good Neither good nor bad Poor Very poor Prefer not to say

Work compensation



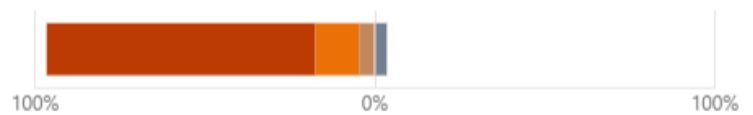
Very appreciated Appreciated Neutral Unappreciated Very unappreciated Prefer not to say

Appreciation of your work carried out for AlphaPlus



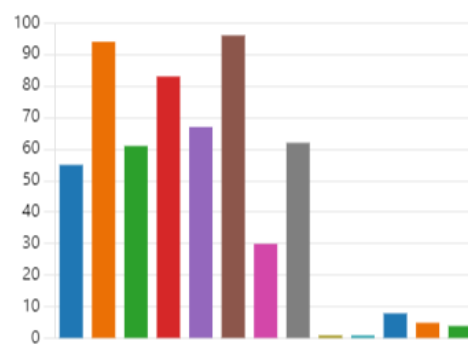
Very likely Likely Neutral Unlikely Very unlikely Prefer not to say

Likelihood of accepting work on another AlphaPlus project



View of AlphaPlus

Innovative	55
Collaborative	94
Engaging	61
Fair	83
Honest	67
Committed to improving education	96
Commercially driven	30
Academically rigorous	62
Overly practical	1
Unsupportive	1
Inconsistent	8
Disorganised	5
Other	4



The vast majority of associates responding would describe AlphaPlus positively. The three most common descriptions were collaborative committed to improving education, collaborative, and fair (the same as in previous years).

Recommending AlphaPlus

15. Would you recommend AlphaPlus to a friend or colleague who was considering registering as an associate?

[More Details](#)

Yes	123
No	5
Prefer not to say	7



91% of respondents would recommend us to a friend or a colleague who was considering registering as an associate.

This is excellent to hear as we often rely on our associates to pass on information about upcoming work to people in your circle.

Keeping profile up to date

12. I have kept my associate record profile up to date and complete.

[More Details](#)

Yes	79
No	26
Prefer not to say	9



62% of associates responding have told us that they keep their [associate database profile](#) up to date and complete (compared to 52% in 2022). However, as of 5th May 2023, of the 732 associates on our database:

- 38% of associates have a pen portrait as part of their database profile compared to 42% from 2022.
- 47% of associates have uploaded a CV compared to 39% in 2022.
- Of associates who joined the database before 1st January 2022, only 5% have updated their profile since 1st January 2022.
- 29% of associates in our database haven't updated their profile in the last 5 years.

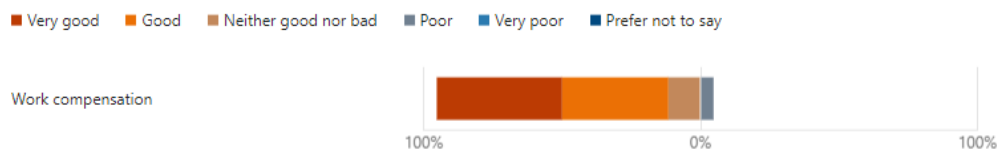
We recommend that you regularly update the information in your Associate Database profile. If you have all your details filled in and a recent copy of your CV uploaded as a .docx file, we'll be more likely to be able to offer you work, particularly if the project is on a tight deadline.

Noting the point below about many associates wanting more work from AlphaPlus, we cannot stress strongly enough that maintaining an accurate and complete profile is the single most important thing you can do to increase the chance of work being offered.

We will shortly be sending out an email containing detailed instructions on how to update and maintain your database profile.

AlphaPlus fees

We are delighted to hear that 83.7% of associates responding find AlphaPlus' compensation for work to be good or very good.



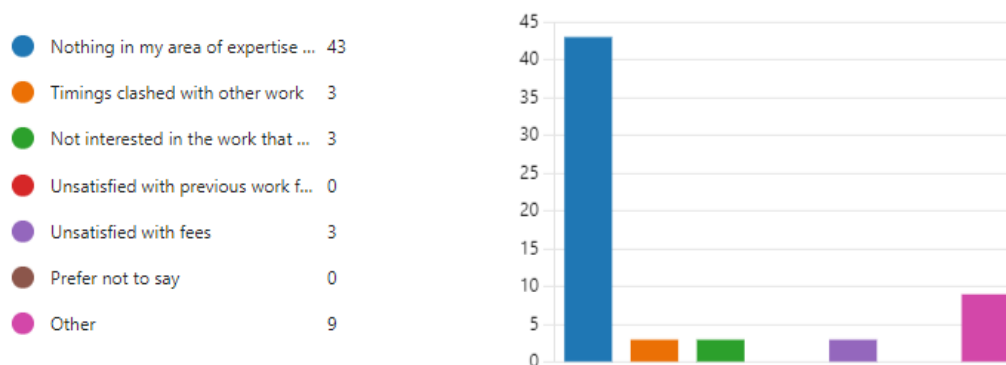
However, we would like to clarify one thing. When you are offered work with AlphaPlus, you will be told the number of days the work is expected to take, as well as the daily rate. If the work is taking much longer than anticipated to complete (for example because it is much more complicated than we originally thought), please get in contact with your project manager – we will consider extensions to the work and the associated fees.

Receiving more work

When asked what one thing they would change about working with AlphaPlus, 33% of associates wrote that they would like to receive more work.

9. Why have you not worked with AlphaPlus in the past two years? Select all that apply

[More Details](#)



The most common reason respondents gave for not working with us was that nothing in their area of expertise had come up (70% of respondents gave that as a reason).

As a consultancy, we are often forced to be very reactive, which means we are often unable to plan what sort of work we will be doing (i.e. one year we may be contracted to do a lot of

test item writing, the next we might be asked to provide FE trainers for multiple projects – the work we do relies on what our customers want us to do).

This means that we have no practical way of controlling the nature and scale of work we are able to offer associates.

We understand that this can be very frustrating for our associates. We try to mitigate this as much as possible by:

- Giving associates as much warning as possible for upcoming work (often difficult as our customers often give us tight timescales)
- Trying to lower the burden for associates e.g. trying to make our database as easy to use as possible, avoiding sending unnecessary emails

Plans

We will be taking your feedback on board, and have made the following plans to improve the database and how it works for us and you:

- We have created an associate information pack which has all the joining information which we will update regularly. We will be sharing this pack with all associates shortly.
- We are creating a tutorial on using the associate database to make sure that you are all aware of how to make the most of your profile. We will also be sharing this shortly.
- We are reintroducing our associate newsletter to keep you updated on what we're up to.

Conclusion

We are pleased with the results of this survey; it's great to hear such a positive response from our associates.

We plan on running this survey annually. However, if you have any comments or suggestions, please feel free to [get in contact](#) at any point throughout the year.

Thanks again for responding to this survey and for all of your hard work for AlphaPlus.

Annex B Associate Charter

The following code sets out guidance about how AlphaPlus seeks to work together successfully with AlphaPlus Associates:

1. AlphaPlus greatly appreciates the skills, experience and commitment of the large number of AlphaPlus Associates who work on AlphaPlus projects.
2. AlphaPlus Associates are recognised as a critical part of the AlphaPlus workforce, and their work contributes directly to AlphaPlus's ability to tender for and undertake a diverse range of projects in a way that enhances the reputation of AlphaPlus nationally and internationally.
3. As well as inviting individual AlphaPlus Associates to participate in specific projects, AlphaPlus also seeks to keep AlphaPlus Associates informed about wider AlphaPlus developments, projects and initiatives through the biannual newsletter and our social media channels.
4. Where we see them, AlphaPlus will also share opportunities for work with other organisations with Associates, for example, projects that are too small for AlphaPlus to tender for.
5. Where AlphaPlus Associates are involved in discussions about participating in new projects at the stage of tendering, AlphaPlus undertakes to keep them informed about the outcome of that tendering process.
6. AlphaPlus will respond to all Associates who respond to opportunities to take part in projects, whether or not they are selected. To ensure that, emails requesting Associates for projects will CC associates@alphaplus.co.uk.
7. Where AlphaPlus Associates contribute to work on a specific project, that contribution will be acknowledged in project reports (except where the client demands that we waive our moral rights), and they will have the right on request to be (a) kept informed about the development of the project and (b) sent information about the final report and conclusion of that project (subject to any confidentiality requirements placed upon us by the client).
8. On occasions where AlphaPlus Associates identify new project opportunities, and/or through their own contacts broker opportunities for AlphaPlus to bid for new work, this role will be recognised in a way agreed upon with the specific AlphaPlus Associate. AlphaPlus welcomes associates bringing potential opportunities for us to explore together. We provide arrangements to reward associates financially for projects won by AlphaPlus that it would not otherwise know about, in addition to providing the associate with the opportunity to work on the project.
9. AlphaPlus appreciates the role that many AlphaPlus Associates play in building the reputation of AlphaPlus through their own activities, contacts and associations. Where specific reports or publicity materials are needed for this

type of marketing AlphaPlus Associates are encouraged to request them from the AlphaPlus Office in Manchester by emailing associates@alphaplus.co.uk¹.

10. Similarly, AlphaPlus are happy to provide references for Associates seeking work from other organisations. AlphaPlus is happy to respond to requests for support from Associates more generally. The contact in the first instance for this is associates@alphaplus.co.uk.
11. AlphaPlus seeks to maintain a current and complete database of AlphaPlus Associate CVs and main areas of expertise/experience. AlphaPlus Associates are asked to review this information on an annual basis and update it as seems necessary. Changes in contact details need of course to be notified as and when they occur. The first contact for this information is associates@alphaplus.co.uk.
12. AlphaPlus attempts to select Associates for particular projects/tenders on as fair a basis as is feasible within the time and other constraints of the process. For this to work effectively it is the responsibility of AlphaPlus Associates to provide up-to-date information about their experience and expertise.
13. Associates can request to be permanently removed from the database at any time, and we will formally confirm the deletion. However financial data regarding payments (which are held on our separate accounts system) must be kept for seven years.
14. AlphaPlus does not have (or seek to have) an exclusive relationship with any of its Associates and recognises that many Associates undertake work for other organisations/consultancies etc. Where any potential conflicts of interest may occur, AlphaPlus Associates are asked to make that clear to one of the AlphaPlus Directors.
15. AlphaPlus has had an excellent relationship with its Associates over several years and it is hoped that this Code can be developed in a way that enhances that relationship even further in the years ahead. AlphaPlus will periodically survey Associates to gather information about the quality of its relationships with the associate community.
16. AlphaPlus sets day rates (including for fixed price contracts where prices are based on an estimate of days involved multiplied by a day rate) based on as objective a set of criteria as possible. AlphaPlus aims to pay consistently based on the role, not the individual undertaking the role, although at times, rates for a task may change due to market factors.

¹ This email account is monitored on a weekly basis.