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Education & Skills
Funding Agency

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1. Information: academies financial returns 2016 to 2017 update

Thank you to all trusts that have submitted their land and buildings collection tool returns by the 31 October 2017. Any returns not submitted are now late and should be submitted as soon as possible. Your financial statements submission deadline is 31 December 2017.

You can [register now](#) for our accounts return webinar at 2pm on Thursday, 9 November which will cover the most challenging aspects of the accounts return. ESFA also hosts a weekly Q&A session and this week we'll cover the accounts return. Use this link to [Join the Skype Meeting](#) or join by phone: 02033 215238 using conference ID: 2081 9375.

We've updated the [academies accounts return guidance](#) by clarifying that trusts should only use full time equivalents when calculating the staff gender analysis. Your auditors need to submit your academy trust's return to ESFA by 19 January 2018. Please make contact with your auditors to arrange a sign-off timetable.

The accounts return online form will not be available from 2pm until the end of the day on Wednesday, 8 November. This is for routine maintenance.

If you have any questions about the accounts return or the land and buildings collection tool, please contact us using our [enquiry form](#).

2. Information: school financial benchmarking tool - new release

The Department for Education has issued a new release of the [schools financial benchmarking service](#) that enables schools to compare their income and expenditure with other schools in England.

This release includes 2015 to 2016 academy and trust data and includes:

- new functions to allow schools and academies to compare their staffing structures with similar schools
- a new “your charts” section which will allow users to design their own printable, custom reports

We would welcome any feedback, which you can provide using the feedback link embedded in the benchmarking tool.

3. Action: user research – funding allocation statements

Share your experience of the funding allocation cycle.

We want to talk the colleagues in academies, single academy trusts and multi-academy trusts who actively analyse and act on the funding (allocations) statements, making business decisions based on the content. We would like to speak with established and new academies, from primary to post 16 delivery.

Meeting times:

Wednesday, 15 November

10am -11am

11.30am – 12.30pm

1pm -2pm

2.30pm – 3.30pm

4pm – 5pm

To join us for a one-hour web meeting, email PDS.MAILBOX@education.gov.uk stating your preferred slot and we will confirm your place. If you can't make these times but would like to take part, please email us and we'll arrange a suitable time with you.

This research will help us identify what works well for you and where we may need to make improvements.

I hope you are able to join us and share your insights.

4. Information: visit the Schools Commercial Team at the NASBM

National Conference

Come and visit the Schools Commercial Team at our stand at the National Association of School Business Management (NASBM) Conference on 16 to 17 November 2017 in Birmingham.

If you want to find out more about the support and opportunities that are available for those responsible for buying in schools, join the session we will be holding on Friday, 17 November.

We look forward to meeting you.

5. Information: 16 to 19 Discretionary Bursary survey

The Student Bursary Support Service have contacted institutions to take part in a survey about [how institutions support post-16 students](#) who require financial help to participate in education. We would like to let institutions know that the survey period has been extended and will now close on 30 November 2017.

The survey asks specific questions about how you use your 16 to 19 Discretionary Bursary. Your responses will help the department to understand if the fund is supporting disadvantaged students effectively with the financial costs associated with continuing in education post-16.

The survey requests your UKPRN so data can be matched between your geographical location and known areas of disadvantage in the country.

6. Information: peer support for children and young people's mental health programme

DfE is working with the Anna Freud Centre to supporting schools and colleges in developing a peer mentoring programme which focusses on the mental health and emotional wellbeing of children and young people.

The Peer Support for Children and Young People's Mental Health Programme will involve over 100 schools and colleges across Ipswich, Oldham, Bradford, Derby and Hastings. If you're situated in one of these regions and are interested in taking part in the programme then please complete the [expression of interest form](#) by 5pm on Friday, 17 November.

There is no charge for workshops or materials and schools/colleges will be paid £3,500 to take part in the programme, which will be paid in 3 instalments across the year. For more information please refer to the [Anna Freud Centre website](#) or email schoolsprogramme@annafeud.org.

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