



Education
Funding
Agency

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1. Information: accounts return update

We're aware that some academy trusts are continuing to experience issues with the accounts return process. We apologise for any inconvenience that this may be causing.

In addition to making a number of system improvements, we've published a new guide to help trusts with registering for the Hub and setting up the online form. This short guide answers the most common questions sent to our enquiry service. We have also updated our main guide to setting up the Hub. These are published on the [academies accounts return page](#) on GOV.UK.

We've also published a series of video self-help guides. These are:

- [registration and roles](#)
- [populating the online form](#)
- [academy trust approval process](#)
- [auditor review and submission process](#)

We've also increased the number of people working through outstanding enquiries and are aiming to clear these as soon as possible.

If you still have questions about registering for and setting up the online form, please contact academy.questions@education.gov.uk using the subject title "AR – technical issues" and we'll respond as a matter of urgency.

2. Action: national non-domestic rates (NNDR) claims

If you haven't yet claimed for national non-domestic rates (NNDR) for the 2015 to 2016 financial year, you should complete the [online claims form](#) by 31 March 2017. This is your last opportunity to claim for NNDR for the 2015 to 2016 year.

EFA will make payments in full, within 2 months of your claim.

We will refresh the form on 1 April 2017 for claims for financial year 2017 to 2018. It will still be available for claims for 2016 to 2017.

If you need to make additional claims for buildings that have been revalued before financial year 2016 to 2017, you should contact us using our [enquiry form](#). Please attach relevant invoices relating to the revaluations.

3. Action: spring school census 2017

The [spring school census](#) 2017 begins today (Thursday 19 January). The deadline for approved submissions is Wednesday 15 February 2017. The database will be closed to amendments from schools and local authorities on Wednesday 15 March 2017.

To help you make your returns for the spring school census DfE has produced various guides that are available on the [school census website](#).

4. Information: competency framework for governance

The Department for Education (DfE) has published an updated [governance handbook](#) and a new [competency framework for governance](#).

These outline the 6 key features of effective governance and the knowledge, skills and behaviours needed to deliver them.

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