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Education & Skills  
Funding Agency

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## 1. Information: financial returns online system maintenance

Due to routine maintenance, the online system used for the land and buildings collection tool and accounts return will be unavailable from 6pm on Thursday 19 October to 1pm on Friday, 20 October.

## 2. Information: land and buildings collection tool (LBCT)

So far, 265 trusts have completed their LBCT return. We encourage all trusts that haven't yet started the return to do so as soon as possible. The deadline is Tuesday, 31 October 2017.

Please make sure you use the updated [LBCT guidance](#) and [online form registration information](#). You can view a recording of our webinar held on 3 October on the LBCT page on GOV.UK. We'll add the recording of the second webinar held on 19 October early next week.

When registering for the first time, please ensure you use your trust UPIN (which is different to your academy UPIN). We wrote to trust accounting officers/chief financial officers in late September to provide new trusts with their registration trust UPIN.

If you have any questions about the LBCT, please contact us using our [enquiry form](#). Please put "LBCT question" at the top of the form.

### 2.1 Skype conferencing Q&A Session

In addition to published information and webinars, we're hosting weekly Skype conferencing Q&A sessions from 4pm to 5pm every Thursday to answer queries directly.

Please use this [Join Skype Meeting](#) link to access the conference and download the web app if necessary. If you don't use Skype, you can join by phone. Call 02033 215238 and, when instructed, enter the conference ID (2081 9375).

## 3. Information: Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) 2018 to 2019

The Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) 2018 to 2019 is now open for applications.

CIF is an annual bidding round for single academy trusts, smaller multi-academy trusts (MATs) and sixth-form colleges. It is mostly allocated to schools to address a significant condition need with a small proportion allocated to high performing academies and colleges to address overcrowding or create extra places.

We have updated the [Condition Improvement Fund](#) page on GOV.UK with refreshed guidance about the application process and the timeline of activities for 2018 to 2019.

If you are applying to CIF for the first time, you must register to use the portal by 5pm on 30 November 2017.

The deadline for all applications for CIF 2017 to 2018 is midday on 14 December 2017.

## 4. Information: allocations user research

Could you share your experience of the allocations process?

We want to talk to Finance Managers in academies, SATs and MATs who are actively involved in their allocations statements. Participation is valued from established and new academies.

## Meeting times:

Monday, 23 October	Tuesday, 24 October	Wednesday, 25 October
1pm to 2pm	1pm to 2pm	1pm to 2pm
2.30pm to 3.30pm	2.30pm to 3.30pm	2.30pm to 3.30pm
4pm to 5pm	4pm to 5pm	4pm to 5pm

To join us for a 1 hour webmeeting, please email [suzanne.higham@education.gov.uk](mailto:suzanne.higham@education.gov.uk) or call 07443 292 339 stating your preferred slot and we will get in touch to confirm your place. If you can't make these times but would like to take part - 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. We hope you are able to join us and share your insights.

## 5. Information: MAT Development and Improvement Fund

The Department for Education (DfE) has launched a new multi-million pound fund to help the best academy trusts in the country to provide direct support to underperforming schools.

The £53 million investment will support the strongest trusts – particularly those focused on raising attainment for disadvantaged pupils – to take on and improve underperforming schools.

You can read information about the [MAT Development and Improvement Fund](#) and how to apply on GOV.UK.

The deadline for applications is 26 November 2017.

## 6. Information: publication of schools block and 16 to 19 revenue funding allocations for 2017 to 2018

This week we have published on GOV.UK:

- Schools block funding allocations to each individual mainstream maintained school (for financial year 2017 to 2018) and academy (for academic year 2017 to 2018) under [local authorities' funding formulae for the funding year 2017 to 2018](#)
- [16 to 19 revenue funding allocations](#) for individual schools, academies and further education institutions funded by the ESFA for 16 to 19 year olds and 19 to 25 year olds with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

We have published the data-sets to show how the ESFA has allocated £5.7 billion (16 to 19) and £32.5 billion (schools block funding) of public funds.

## 7. Information: Schools Buying Hubs

DfE's Schools Commercial Team is looking for participants in the North West and South West regions to participate in a pilot for regional School Buying Hubs to support schools in their purchasing.

Do you want access to better deals?

Do you want buying to be easier?

Do you want access to help and advice?

If you have answered 'yes' to any of these questions and are in the North West or South West region, you could help to shape the future of school buying through a new Schools Buying Hubs service.

You can read more about and register your interest in the [regional schools buying hub pilot](#). Please contact the [DfE Schools Commercial Team](#) with any questions.

## 8. Information: visit ESFA at the Academies Show

If you want to know more about academies funding and financial management, and schools financial health, come and visit ESFA at the [Academies Show](#) on Wednesday 22 November 2017 at the NEC in Birmingham. We look forward to meeting visitors at our exhibition stand and at the various workshop sessions we're running at the show.

## 9. Information: ESFA school census autumn 2017 - 16 to 19 reports are now available in COLLECT

ESFA school census autumn 2017 16 to 19 reports are now available in COLLECT. The reports are available to schools and academies during the entire period the autumn census is open.

The report suite comprises 6 reports, 3 each for the current year and for the previous year. We have developed the reports to help schools and academies quality assure their data and make more accurate census returns.

If you find any anomalies, please contact us using the [online form](#).

The [ESFA school census autumn 2017: 16 to 19 reports user guide](#) and [complementary school census post-16 interactive tool](#) are available on GOV.UK.

We have received a large number of business cases from schools and academies that have arisen from common errors, so we encourage institutions to use the tool to check that they have correctly recorded:

- GCSE maths and English prior attainment
- valid, up-to-date qualification numbers (QNs)
- transfers and withdrawals

There are examples of all these errors and their solutions in the tool.

## 10. Information: National Apprenticeship Week 2018

We have announced the dates of the 11th annual [National Apprenticeship Week \(NAW\)](#).

National Apprenticeship Week 2018 will run from 5 to 9 March 2018.

During the week employers and apprentices from across England will come together to celebrate apprenticeships and the positive impact they have on individuals, businesses and the wider economy.

More details will follow over the next few months so please keep an eye on social media and our pages on GOV.UK. In the meantime, please spread the word about the dates of the week.

## 11. Information: choices at 16 questionnaire

With the introduction of T-levels on the way, this is a good time to look at how students make their post-16 choices and consider how best DfE services can support their decision making.

Our [short survey](#) will help us understand your views on students entering 16+ education and making career choices. We will also use this questionnaire to recruit the user base for follow-up research e.g. phone interviews. The survey will close on Tuesday, 24 October.

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