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Department  
for Education

Guidance

# Advice for schools on how to prepare for Brexit

Updated 18 October 2019

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It is important that you plan now to [prepare for the UK leaving the EU](#).

## Stay up to date

A Brexit deal has been agreed but needs to be ratified. The UK could still leave with no deal on 31 October 2019 if the UK and EU do not approve and sign the withdrawal agreement.

This page tells you how to prepare for Brexit and will be updated if anything changes. [Sign up for email alerts](#) to get the latest information.

## The EU Settlement Scheme

Inform any staff, parents or carers of pupils who are EU, [EEA](#) or Swiss citizens that they need to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme to continue living in the UK

after 2020.

If there's a no deal Brexit, the deadline for applying will be 31 December 2020.

Read the [guidance on EU Settlement Scheme](#) to find out who needs to apply.

Use the [EU settlement scheme toolkit for employers](#) to help your employees.

Irish citizens' right to live in the UK will not change when the UK leaves the EU. Irish citizens do not need to apply for the EU Settlement Scheme, but their family members, who are not Irish or British citizens, will need to.

## Staff from the EU arriving after Brexit

Read [employing EU, EEA and Swiss citizens and their family members after Brexit](#) to make sure your staff can work in the UK.

## School places after Brexit

Schools and local authorities cannot take into account nationality or immigration status when deciding which pupils to admit. There will be no change to this after Brexit.

Once the future immigration system is introduced in 2021, EU, EEA and Swiss nationals will not be able to enter the UK for the sole purpose of attending a state-funded school. This will not prevent children who are entering the UK for another purpose, for example, as a dependant of a worker or a student, from being eligible for a school place.

The right of Irish nationals to access education will continue to be protected under the [Common Travel Area](#) arrangements.

UK nationals with children who return from the EU after the UK leaves the EU will continue to be entitled to [apply for a school place](#).

## Prepare as an employer

Read the [advice about employing](#) to prepare.

Read the guidance on [workplace rights if there's no Brexit deal](#).

# European teaching qualifications

Teachers with EU, EEA or Swiss teaching qualifications who already have qualified teacher status (QTS) will continue to hold QTS.

In the event of a no-deal Brexit:

- teachers that have applied for QTS before the exit date will be able to continue with their application under the previous system as far as possible
- teachers with EU, EEA or Swiss qualifications who have not applied before the exit date will still be able to apply for QTS after Brexit under a new system, but will need to provide a letter of professional standing from a competent authority or other relevant body in the EEA country, or Switzerland, where they are recognised

Read the [qualified teacher status \(QTS\) guidance](#) for further information.

If the UK leaves the EU with a deal that contains an implementation period, there will be no change to arrangements for EEA and Swiss nationals that apply for QTS recognition during that time. Arrangements after the implementation period are subject to further negotiations between the UK and EU.

## Checking for EEA teacher sanctions or restrictions

If there's a no-deal Brexit, EEA professional regulating authorities will no longer be required to automatically share details of any sanction or restriction imposed on teachers with the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA). This means the TRA will no longer automatically receive or maintain details of those teachers who have been sanctioned, post exit, in EEA member states.

In this case schools must continue to carry out the same safer recruitment checks for applicants who have lived or worked outside the UK as they currently do for all other staff. In addition, schools must continue to make any further checks they think appropriate so they can consider any relevant events that occurred outside the UK. Schools will be able to apply the same processes as they do when employing an individual from the rest of the world.

If the UK leaves with a deal, the existing system for checking EEA sanctions will remain in place until at least 31 December 2020.

When the UK leaves the EU we will update the [keeping children safe in education statutory safeguarding guidance](#) to reflect these changes.

# Travel to the EU

Read [Visit Europe after Brexit](#) and [access to healthcare for UK nationals studying or travelling abroad](#) if you're planning a trip to Europe after Brexit.

Collective passports will remain in force.

Check the [foreign travel advice pages](#) for the latest updates on the relevant country and sign up for an [email alert subscription for foreign travel advice](#).

Follow the guidance on [taking equipment to the EU](#) if you're arranging school travel to the EU with sports, exhibitions or other equipment.

Follow the guidance on [preparing to drive in the EU after Brexit for bus and coach drivers](#) if relevant.

Check to see which countries still accept the [List of Travellers visa scheme](#) for school groups.

## Data protection

Read the [Brexit guide: data protection for education providers](#) to find out what you need to do to remain compliant with data protection laws after Brexit.

## Food supplies

Contact your food supplier or suppliers, or your local authority or academy trust, if they arrange food on your behalf, to make sure they:

- are planning for the potential impacts of a no-deal Brexit, including:
  - ensuring that their secondary suppliers are prepared
  - plans to adapt menus to allow for product substitution if necessary
- can continue to meet nutritional standards
- can continue to meet special dietary needs and manage allergies

Local authorities and schools must continue to provide meals to all registered pupils who request one. Where the pupil meets the criteria for free school meals, the meal must be provided, free of charge.

Schools have significant flexibilities within the school food standards, which they can refer to if certain items are in short supply.

## Changing ingredients in your menus

If you're making changes to your menus or substituting food products, you must make sure you can continue to meet any special dietary needs.

It's important that allergen ingredients are not introduced. To help prevent this, you should:

- continue to make your caterers aware of any pupils with allergies
- check any product changes with your food suppliers
- ask your caterers to read labels and product information before using them
- use the [Food Standards Agency's allergen matrix](#) to list the ingredients in all your meals
- make sure any meals containing allergen ingredients remain identifiable

Follow the [guidance for schools on managing food allergies](#).

Read the Food Standards Agency's [allergen guidance for institutional caterers](#) for more information.

## Medicines and medical products

Continue with your normal arrangements over medicines and medical products to support pupils with health conditions.

You may also wish to contact parents or carers of children with medical conditions to make them aware of the [NHS guidance on getting medicines if there's a no-deal Brexit](#).

## Erasmus+

You should continue to deliver any Erasmus+ and ESC projects that are contracted.

Participation in Erasmus+ will continue until 2020 with a deal.

You may no longer receive EU funding for Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps (ESC) projects if there is a no-deal Brexit.

Read our guidance for more information and [register to claim from the government guarantee](#).

## Brexit

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