

1. Home (<https://www.gov.uk/>)
2. ESFA Update: 6 May 2020 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/esfa-update-6-may-2020>)

1. Education & Skills  
Funding Agency (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/education-and-skills-funding-agency>)

Correspondence

# ESFA Update academies: 6 May 2020

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## Contents

1. Latest information on coronavirus (COVID-19)
2. Information: updated academies chart of accounts
3. Information: 16 to 19 funding regulations guidance
4. Information: 2020 to 2021 student support scheme guides
5. Information: what impact do school closures have on my safeguarding responsibilities under the Prevent Duty?



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## **1. Latest information on coronavirus (COVID-19)**

The Department for Education (DfE) has published guidance about COVID-19 in educational settings for staff, parents and carers, pupils and students

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings>) on GOV.UK.

Please check GOV.UK (<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-schools-and-other-educational-settings>) regularly for updates.

## **2. Information: updated academies chart of accounts**

The Department for Education has updated the academies chart of accounts

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/academies-chart-of-accounts>) for use in the academic year 2020/21.

This incorporates a small number of necessary changes to the previous chart of accounts released in May 2019. The specific changes are detailed in the guidance which is included on the webpage.

The chart of accounts is the standard for financial data structure of the Department for Education, designed to underpin the academies accounts return and budget forecast returns.

Academy trusts who have already adopted the chart of accounts should ensure they update their own chart of accounts with effect from 1st September 2020 to reflect the changes. Other trusts are able to adopt the chart of accounts for the first time in 2020/21 should they wish, and to work with their software suppliers to do so.

Adopting the chart of accounts is not mandatory, however academy trusts who choose to adopt the standard will potentially benefit from future automated data transfer tools for financial returns.

## **3. Information: 16 to 19 funding regulations guidance**

We have published the 16 to 19 funding regulations guidance

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/advice-funding-regulations-for-post-16-provision>) for academic year 2020 to 2021. We have included information on the impacts of coronavirus (COVID-19) and the use of electronic signatures. We have listed the changes at the front of the guide.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued hard work in these difficult times.

## **4. Information: 2020 to 2021 student support scheme guides**

We have published student financial support scheme guides for the 2020 to 2021 academic year for:

- 16 to 19 Bursary Fund (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2020-to-2021-academic-year>)
- Free meals in further education (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/free-meals-in-further-education-funded-institutions-guide-for-the-2020-to-2021-academic-year>)

- Residential Bursary Fund (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/residential-bursary-fund-guide-for-the-2020-to-2021-academic-year>)
- Residential Support Scheme (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/residential-support-scheme-guide-for-academic-year-2020-to-2021>)
- Care to Learn (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/care-to-learn-guide-for-the-2020-to-2021-academic-year>)

You should ensure you review the guides and are clear about the funding rules which apply to each scheme.

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund guide has been updated to re-emphasise that both types of bursary funding are designed to help students overcome the individual financial barriers to participation they face. Institutions must ensure the funds go to those who genuinely need them and should not award any student a set amount of funding without an assessment of the actual needs they have. We have added a checklist (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2020-to-2021-academic-year#checklist>) for assessing bursary applications and a 'do's and don'ts' (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/16-to-19-bursary-fund-guide-2020-to-2021-academic-year#summary>) summary of key rules which institutions may find helpful.

## **5. Information: what impact do school closures have on my safeguarding responsibilities under the Prevent Duty?**

Prevent is a vital part of our work to safeguard vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism and it remains in operation in local authorities during this challenging time.

We have published information on Prevent Management during school closures (<https://educateagainsthate.com/blog/posts/school-closures-ongoing-prevent-management-support/>) including guidance for schools who have pupils receiving Channel support.