



Correspondence

ESFA Update further education: 12 August 2020

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1. Latest information on coronavirus (COVID-19)

The Department for Education has published guidance about [COVID-19 in educational settings for staff, parents and carers, pupils and students on GOV.UK](#).

There is also [guidance on the apprenticeship service about COVID-19](#).

Please check [GOV.UK](#) regularly for updates.

2. Action: how to claim exceptional learning support (ELS) for 2020 to 2021

We have published the [guidance and cost form for exceptional learning support for the 2020 to 2021 funding year](#).

Providers and employers must complete the estimated cost of exceptional learning support at the beginning of a learner's programme and submit the completed cost form via the [ESFA online enquiry form](#).

We are responsible for paying exceptional learning support for:

- learners aged 19 and over with an identified learning difficulty and/or disability (LDD) without an education, health and care (EHC) plan
- all age apprentices that have an identified LDD and are with or without an EHC plan
- advanced loans-funded learners with an identified LDD without an EHC plan as part of the Advanced Learner Loans bursary fund.

Further information on ELS can be found in the [adult education budget funding rules 2020 to 2021](#) and [advanced learner loans funding rules 2020 to 2021](#).

If you have any questions after reading our guidance please contact us via the [ESFA online enquiry form](#) ensuring that you add "20-21 Exceptional Learning Support" in the subject title. You will need to select Contract (19+) as the "Query Type" to enable your query to be transferred to the correct team.

3. Reminder: take action to prepare for 1 January 2021

While the government continues to negotiate a free trade agreement with the European Union, there are actions your business can take now to prepare for the end of the transition period after Brexit.

You can use the straightforward [checker tool](#) to identify the specific steps you need to take to be ready on 1 January 2021.

You can also [sign up to receive a regular Business Readiness Transition Bulletin](#) providing information on major announcements and recently published guidance.

4. Information: Learning Aims Service redesign

The [Learning Aims website](#) (part of the Hub) is being replaced by 'Find a learning aim' for the start of the 2020 to 2021 academic year. The find a learning aim design, which is now live, has simplified the user experience while still providing all of the key information our users need.

We have conducted research with various people to understand and improve our designs. This is an ongoing process and you can continue to help gather more feedback by completing this [survey](#).

The old website will still be available, but we encourage you to use the new website to ensure you have the most up to date information.

If you have any questions, please submit an [ESFA online enquiry form](#).

5. Information: relief scheme for providers of apprenticeship training to public sector employers

We have introduced a [relief scheme](#) that will enable public sector employers, who pay the apprenticeship levy, to provide relief to their suppliers of apprenticeship training if they consider that they meet the requirements as laid out in the above guidance, in line with Cabinet Office [Procurement Policy Note 02/20 – Supplier relief due to Covid-19](#) dated March 2020 ("PPN 02/20") and [Procurement Policy Note 04/20 - Recovery and Transition from COVID-19](#) dated June 2020 ("PPN 04/20"). The [policy](#) was published Friday 7 August 2020.

Please note that only training providers designated by a public sector employer as a 'critical supplier' will be eligible to apply to this scheme. Eligible providers will have to be able to demonstrate a financial need for exceptional support and will be subject to open book scrutiny to determine proper use of funds. Training providers should contact their public sector employer(s) to discuss their eligibility, and not ESFA.

6. Information: 16 to 19 tuition fund opt-in template

The Department for Education (DfE) announced [additional funding to support small group tuition for 16 to 19 students](#) that do not have a grade 4 in maths and / or English GCSE where learning has been disrupted because of COVID-19.

Providers must accept the extra funds, by signing a declaration to use the funds within the conditions stipulated in the [guidance](#) by completing an opt in template. The template will include the detail of the additional funds and will be issued to all eligible providers through the document exchange.

You can access the ESFA Information Exchange by logging into [DfE Sign-In](#).

7. Information: how T Levels will be funded in 2020 to 2021 academic year

As further information is made available regarding the size of the technical qualifications for the first wave of T Levels being delivered in 2020 to 2021, the guidance for [How T Levels will be funded](#) will be revised this week.

8. Information: get help with ESFA services

We are developing an [online help centre](#) for education and training providers.

The aim is to make sure our key tools, services and guidance are easy to find, as well as making information available so that customers can resolve common issues without having to raise a query with our support teams.

Read more about the help centre from our [feconnect post](#).

9. Information: measures to ease public transport

The government has announced new [measures to ease public transport](#) as children and young people return to education in September. This included new funding for additional dedicated home to school/college transport. This will be distributed to Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) who will receive more than £40m funding for the autumn term to help them create extra capacity and allow more students to use alternatives to public transport, whilst social distancing measures remain in place. Funding allocations are based on the number of children and young people in the area and how far they have to travel to schools and FE settings. FE providers are encouraged to work with LTAs to ensure that the needs of FE students are reflected in local plans.

LTAs will be asked, through the grant arrangements, to spend this funding to support school and FE transport. The grant arrangements will make clear that they must assess the travel needs of FE students, local plans must consider FE students and they should engage FE providers when deciding how to spend the money. LTAs will also need to consider local priorities and allocate funding accordingly. They may choose to provide coach services for 16-19 students directly or, for example, allocate funding to individual colleges to arrange their own transport services where this is needed as a result of social distancing on public transport. LTAs will also have the flexibility to use the funding to meet the needs of local families, which could include hiring more coaches, buses, private hire vehicles, minibuses, or other modes of transport to supplement public transport.

The announcement also encouraged students and staff who have the option to walk, cycle or use a scooter to do so, with the drive for active travel being backed by £2 billion of government investment. This will be supported by a new campaign due to be launched shortly to reduce demand on public transport at peak times and minimise overcrowding in the autumn to ensure that public transport is available for those who do not have an alternative.

10. Information: transport to school and other places of education

[New guidance on transport to schools and other places of education](#) was published yesterday. The guidance sets out measures to minimise the risk of transmission on dedicated transport and includes arrangements local transport authorities should take to facilitate the return of children and young people to education. Although primarily aimed at local authorities, this guidance is also relevant for FE providers with their own dedicated transport.

As set out in the [autumn reopening guidance](#), 'one metre plus' guidelines will not apply on dedicated college transport, but transport operators should still apply social distancing where possible. The guidance also recommends that children and young people aged 11 and over (unless exempt) wear masks on dedicated transport.

Is this page useful? Yes No

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Coronavirus (COVID-19)

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance and support](#)

The UK has left the EU

[Check the new rules for January 2021](#)

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