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Correspondence

ESFA Update local authorities: 20 January 2021

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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](#).

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

2. Reminder: mid-year funding claims for 2020 to 2021

The mid-year funding claim window will open at 9am on Monday 8 February 2021. We understand that this is a difficult time for everyone, and time and resources are under strain. However, we will still require you to submit an accurate mid-year claim so we have visibility of the challenges you are facing, which will inform the design of the year end reconciliation process.

Please submit your mid-year funding claim by 5pm on Friday 19 February 2021. This is slightly later than we originally published. The claim form will be available on [Submit Learner Data](#).

You will need to submit a claim if you receive funds through:

- grant funded – ESFA adult education budget (AEB) (adult skills, community learning, 19 to 24 traineeships and COVID-19 skills offer)
- learner support for ESFA AEB procured (adult skills and 19 to 24 traineeships) – paid-on-profile
- grant funded - Advanced Learner Loans Bursary (ALLB)

Once you have submitted your claim you will also be able to view it on the [Manage your education and skills funding](#).

If you have any queries about this, please contact your Territorial Manager.

3. Reminder: school census and the early years census

We have recently emailed local authority early years leads, finance colleagues, and census leads with supporting information to complete the school census and the early years census. If your local authority hasn't received this, please contact us via our [online enquiry form](#).

For the early years census, this guidance is to be used in addition to the [early years census 2021 guidance](#) already available on GOV.UK.

Further information on [completing the school census](#) is available on GOV.UK.

4. Information: high needs place change request outcomes 2021 to 2022

We have published the [high needs place change request outcomes: 2021 to 2022](#) that will inform the funded place numbers for the 2021 to 2022 academic year in academies, free schools, further education colleges and independent learning providers.

You should review the published outcomes as soon as possible to ensure the numbers reflect those expected. If an institution is not listed, this means no change was notified for that institution and the published 2020 to 2021 place numbers will be used as the basis of the 2021 to 2022 allocation.

Local authorities, academies or further education institutions can contact ESFA to query their 2021 to 2022 place numbers between 20 January 2021 and 5 February 2021.

More [information about the enquiry window](#) can be found in the high needs place change process guidance.

5. Information: 16 to 19 funding allocations 2021 to 2022

We have updated our [16 to 19 funding allocations information for academic year 2021 to 2022](#):

- our [timeline](#) lets you know when you can expect your allocations. We update the timeline on a regular basis, so do keep checking back to see the latest updates
- we have [confirmed the data sources](#) for student numbers and other formula elements we're using to calculating 2021 to 2022 allocation
- we have [published](#) the page where you will find information to help you understand your allocation

We have also published details about how [16 to 19 funding will work in academic year 2021 to 2022](#).

If you have any queries please contact us using our [online enquiry form](#).

6. Information: consultation on alternative arrangements for vocational and technical qualifications

The impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic means that the government is of the view that it is not viable for external exams and assessments to go ahead for some vocational and technical qualifications (VTQs) this year.

However, for VTQs that require a practical assessment to demonstrate occupational competency or to gain a licence to practise, we think that these assessments should continue to take place in school or college, where this is possible, subject to public health guidance.

It is really important we get views on these proposals, so on Friday we launched a joint consultation with Ofqual on the alternative arrangements for awarding Vocational and Technical qualifications where exams don't go ahead. Our aim is to ensure that there is a fair, equitable and robust awarding of qualifications this academic year, and would encourage learners, staff, and providers to respond as we are keen to hear your views.

The [consultation can be accessed on GOV.UK](#).

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