



Education  
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Agency

# **Information on institution exceptional submissions for high needs**

**Academic year 2014 to 2015**

**December 2013**

# Contents

Introduction	3
Making an exceptional submission for the academic year 2014 to 2015	4
Which institutions are in scope?	4
Which institutions are not in scope?	4
What is an exceptional submission?	4
Key principles	4
Defining a high needs student	5
Process	5
Assessment criteria	6
Evidence	6
Outcome	6

## Introduction

As part of the high needs place funding arrangements announced in July, we asked local authorities to co-ordinate a review of high needs places to inform place- led funding allocations for the academic year 2014 to 2015.

The aim of place-led funding is to ensure the number and distribution of places in the system reflects need and to provide financial stability for institutions (especially specialist institutions) to invest in staffing and infrastructure. Places are not intended to be associated with named individuals.

We expect, however, that local authorities honour the commitment to existing pupils and students. Preserving continuity of provision for young people who have already started a course and who will continue into a new academic year is a condition of the dedicated schools grant (DSG) that the Education Funding Agency (EFA) allocates to local authorities.

Collaboration between local authorities and with institutions is a feature of the place review, which will culminate in local authorities returning high needs place numbers for 2014 to 2015 to the EFA by 23 December. We expect local authorities and institutions to have discussed and agreed the place numbers required across school and post school institutions.

We recognise, however, there may be exceptional cases that require a review of an institution's place-led funding. The purpose of this document is to inform institutions of the process for making an exceptional submission for additional place funding for the academic year 2014 to 2015.

Institutions are asked to note the key principles, criteria and evidence before deciding whether to make an exceptional submission.

We have launched a [high needs web page](#) to improve access to information by local authorities and institutions. We recommend that you visit the page regularly to access the latest updates and information. You can access the timetable and process for implementing the 2014 to 2015 high needs place funding arrangements and additional information that brings together the answers to questions we are often asked by local authority staff and institutions on this process. This includes information on Elements 1, 2 and 3, contracting, SEN (Special Educational Needs) reforms and looking ahead to 2014 to 2015.

# Making an exceptional submission for the academic year 2014 to 2015

## Which institutions are in scope?

1. Further Education (FE) institutions, including charitable and commercial providers (CCPs), independent specialist providers (ISPs) and non-maintained special schools (NMSS) who are directly funded by the EFA for high needs places are in scope.

## Which institutions are not in scope?

2. Maintained schools and maintained special schools have a direct funding relationship with their maintaining local authority and are therefore not in scope.
3. We will inform academies of their high needs allocation in the Funding Statement to be issued by the end of March 2014. Academies should refer to the Funding Statement and accompanying allocations information, before considering whether an exceptional case is required. As with any funding issues arising from the Funding Statement, academies should contact [academy.questions@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:academy.questions@education.gsi.gov.uk) in the first instance. Academies are therefore not in scope for the process described in this document.

## What is an exceptional submission?

4. For FE institutions, including CCPs and ISPs, only element 2 will be allocated on the basis of the local authority HNTs. An exceptional submission is, therefore, a request for an additional £6,000 for every place above the total place number confirmed by local authorities. Element 1 will be paid on a lagged basis in the academic year 2014 to 2015 on the basis of actual academic year 2013 to 2014 Individualised Learner Record (ILR) data.
5. For NMSS, where all place funding will be allocated on the basis of the local authority HNTs, it is a request to fund an additional £10,000 for every place above the total place number confirmed by local authorities.

## Key principles

6. Institutions in scope are asked to note the following before deciding whether to make an exceptional submission:
7. An exceptional submission is not a request for additional top up funding. It is a request for additional place funding, over and above the total academic year 2014 to 2015 place numbers, confirmed in the local authority high needs templates (HNT) due to be returned to us by 23 December 2013.

8. For the institutions in scope, we have asked local authorities to use the **actual** high needs pupils or students attending in the academic year 2013 to 2014 to be the default place numbers for 2014 to 2015, adjusted only where there are significant changes that local authorities know will happen.
9. We will only consider exceptional submissions against the overall number of places returned by individual local authorities for the institution.
10. We expect local authorities and institutions to have discussed the place numbers for the academic year 2014 to 2015 and for local authorities to have informed institutions of the final place numbers prior to returning the HNT to the EFA by 23 December.
11. We will use the local authority completed templates, including the reasons provided to explain where the 2014 to 2015 institution place number differs from the actual number in 2012 to 2013 and 2014 to 2015, as part of the assessment process for institution exceptional cases submitted.

## Defining a high needs student

12. For funding purposes, a high needs student is defined as a young person aged 16-18 who requires additional support costing over £6,000 and any young person aged 19-24 subject to a Learning Difficulty Assessment (LDA), Statement of Special Educational Need or, in future, an Education Health and Care (EHC) Plan who requires additional support costing over £6,000. Funding for such high needs students, aged 16 to 24, consists of both place funding (Elements 1 and 2) and top-up funding (Element 3).
13. Institutions are not funded in the same way for students who require additional support costing less than £6,000. Institutions do not receive Elements 2 and 3 for these students and local authorities do not commission places or provide specific additional funding. Further information is provided in an [overview document](#) and in the EFA's post-16 funding guidance.
14. For non-maintained special schools, the place information provided will also cover children aged under 16 and the place funding for all places pre and post 16 will be £10,000 instead of the separate Elements 1 and 2 for post 16 high needs students.

## Process

15. To the institutions in scope, we intend to communicate the academic year 2014 to 2015 high needs place numbers returned by local authorities by latest w/c 20 January.
16. Following consideration of the 2014 to 2015 place numbers and the Key Principles and criteria in this document, institutions that want to make an exceptional submission

have until 31 January 2014 to submit to the EFA. We will communicate the format for the exceptional submission in January.

## Assessment criteria

17. We will only consider exceptional submissions where the institution can provide evidence that the total number of 2014 to 2015 places returned by local authorities for the institution do not take into consideration the institution's total number of actual places in 2012 to 2013 and 2013 to 2014.
18. In addition to the evidence provided against the criteria above, we will scrutinise each institution's exceptional submission for 2014 to 2015 against:
  - a. the data and rationale for place numbers provided by local authorities in the HNT;
  - b. declared 2013 to 2014 actual student numbers for post-school institutions;
  - c. 2012 to 2013 full year numbers from the ILR;
  - d. School census numbers from 2012 to 2013;
  - e. allocated numbers for 2013 to 2014; and
  - f. the latest available actual data for 2013 to 2014.

## Evidence

19. The institution must provide:
  - a declaration from the Principal (or equivalent) that the 2014 to 2015 place numbers submitted reflect the institution's best available assessment and meet the definition of a high needs student;
  - an explanation of the basis for the exceptional submission and evidence to support your return; and
  - an explanation of the process to collate and verify the actual high needs place numbers you are returning.
  - Evidence should include:
    - an explanation and summary of the discussions the institution has had with local authorities on agreeing place numbers for 2014 to 2015; and
    - confirmation of the total number of high needs places for the academic year 2013 to 2014 from the ILR or Census, demonstrating where the place numbers for 2014 to 2015 do not reflect the actual student numbers for 2012 to 2013 and 2013 to 2014.

## Outcome

20. If there is clear evidence to support the 2014 to 2015 place numbers we will agree to fund some or all of the additional places requested.

21. Where the EFA does not agree to fund the additional places requested, the institution will receive place funding for the academic year 2014 to 2015 on the place numbers returned by local authorities in the HNT.
22. The EFA's decision is final and we will communicate the outcome to institutions by the end of February and issue final allocations statements reflecting the outcome of the submissions process in March.



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