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1. Adult education budget: independent training provider contracts

Information

We have written to all existing independent training providers with information about the changes in public contract regulations which affect their contracts for services to deliver the adult education budget (AEB).

These changes mean we cannot automatically renew all contracts at the end of the current contracting

term, 31 July 2017. As a result of contracts ending a competitive procurement exercise for funding made available will open to all eligible providers on the Register of Training Organisations this week. Successful providers will be awarded a contract for 1 year with the potential to extend in the future.

2. Draft adult education budget (AEB) funding rules 2017 to 2018

Information

As part of the independent training providers AEB procurement exercise, announced on Monday 23 January 2017, we will shortly publish a draft of the [adult education budget funding and performance management rules 2017 to 2018](#) on GOV.UK.

We will publish an updated version in March 2017, incorporating feedback from providers and relevant stakeholders.

3. Funding rates and formula 2017 to 2018 published

Information

We have published version 1 of the [adult education budget funding rates and formula document](#) for the funding year 2017 to 2018.

This document sets out the details of our funding system for the AEB and 16 to 18 Skills Funding Agency funded traineeships.

For further information, please contact the [service desk](#).

4. Qualification achievement rates (QAR) and minimum standards (MS) 2015 to 2016

Information

In Update 340 we confirmed that the provisional qualification achievement rates (QAR) data and SFA minimum standards (MS) data for 2015 to 2016 had been released for review and feedback. We also informed you of our intention to release the final data following publication of the Further Education Statistical First Release at the end of January 2017.

Due to some technical issues with provider access to the provisional data, we have extended the QAR provisional data window to allow sufficient time to deal with feedback and to implement corrections where necessary. As a result the Department for Education has delayed the publication of the national 2015 to 2016 QAR data in the Further Education Statistical First Release.

If you have any queries, please contact the [service desk](#).

5. Apprenticeship grant for employers (AGE) facilities

Information

We will shortly issue funding statements setting out the amount of funding available to colleges and training organisations for AGE eligible starts during the period January to April 2017. Statements will be issued through [the Hub](#).

We will also shortly publish an updated version of the [Apprenticeship frameworks funding and AGE performance-management rules](#) (this document sets out the rules for funding, including the evidence required to support funding and the operational performance-management rules).

We will communicate arrangements for AGE from May 2017 in the near future.

For more information, please contact your business operations provider manager.

6. Funding claims 2016 to 2017 guidance

Information

We have published the [funding claims 2016 to 2017 guidance](#).

Your 2016 to 2017 mid-year claim form will be available in [the Hub](#) from 9am Tuesday 7 February for four days and will close at 6pm Friday 10 February. It will be pre-populated with your earnings following the R06 data collection return. You must add your forecasts for the remainder of the 2016 to 2017 funding year.

Full and completed ILR data returns for AEB will be required. The value of actual data submitted at R06, as well as the value of the funding claim, may be taken in account when setting up 2017 to 2018 adult education allocations.

For further information or related queries, please email the [service desk](#).

7. Updated restructuring facility guidance

Information

We have published updated [restructuring facility guidance for applicants](#), including additional sections on due diligence and assessment framework, which is a key tool we use to review restructuring facility applications for financial support from government by sixth-form and further education colleges following an area review.

For further information or to request a copy of the accompanying financial model, please email the [Transactions Unit](#).

8. Process for adding components to the 2016 to 2017 adult education budget local flexibility offer

Information

We have published [guidance for awarding organisations \(AOs\)](#) on how and when we will add components to the local flexibility offer for the remainder of 2016 to 2017.

Colleges and other training organisations, must check before delivering a component that the:

- AO provides a facility for the learner to be registered on it
- learner can achieve it alone or as part of accumulating achievement towards a qualification

For further information see GOV.UK.

9. National living and minimum wage campaign

Information

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy's national living and minimum wage campaign aims to make sure that employers and employees are aware that the rates will rise on 1 April 2017, and that workers are being paid at least the national minimum wage, or national living wage, depending on their age.

From this date, the new national minimum wage for apprentices aged under 19 (or aged 19 or over and in their first year of their apprenticeship) will rise to £3.50.

More information can be found on the [national minimum wage and living wage page](#).

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