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Skills Funding
Agency

SFA Inform is a monthly update from the Skills Funding Agency (SFA). Inform focuses on funding systems and data management in further education and skills.

If you have any new members of staff or existing staff that you think might find Inform useful, please ask them to email us at informnewsletter@sfa.bis.gov.uk.

Funding claims guidance and mid-year claim

For action

The Funding Claims [2016/17 guidance document](#) has been updated to reflect any changes and we will also publish a technical guidance document to help you complete the form within the next week.

You must submit your mid-year funding claims by 6pm on Friday, 10 February using the digital claim form on [the Hub](#) if you receive funds through:

- a grant for your Adult Education Budget
- a grant with an Advanced Learner Loans Bursary contract
- a Discretionary Learner Support contract

The form will include your ILR R06 information and will be available from Tuesday, 7 February at 9am for four days. You must include your forecasts for the remainder of the 2016 to 2017 funding year. Once you have submitted your mid-year funding claim in the Hub, you will also be able to view it on the [Skills Funding Service](#).

Just a reminder that full and completed ILR data returns for the adult education budget 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 2017/18 adult education allocations.

You will not be able to complete the form after the deadline on Friday, 10 February.

Individualised learner record (ILR): R06

For action

The ILR R06 data collection for the 2016 to 2017 funding year is now open and will close at 6pm on Monday, 6 February. As always we recommend that you submit your data as early as possible.

On occasion, you may receive the job finished notification twice. Your file will have processed successfully. We are investigating the cause of this double notification.

If you need to submit an Earnings Adjustment Statement (EAS) and you do not have access to this on the data returns tab in the Hub, please email our [Service Desk](#) or call us on 0370 267 0001 to request this.

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

For information

In [issue 340 of Update](#) 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](#)

The learning aims tab on the Hub

For information

Some users may be experiencing an intermittent issue with the learning aims tab when you are signed into the Hub. If you are affected, please close the Hub and all of your browsers. Then please navigate back to [the Hub](#) and use the learning aims tab that is available there, before signing in.

ILR specification 2017 to 2018 : version 1

For information

We will publish [version 1 of the ILR specification for 2017 to 2018](#) at the end of January 2017.

In the 2017 to 2018 ILR specification, guidance that does not relate to the data specification has been removed. These notes will be incorporated into the provider guidance for 2017 to 2018.

ILR document update for 2016 to 2017

For information

At the end of January 2017, we will publish an update to the [ILR guidance for recording apprenticeships from 1 May 2017](#). This update will contain additional guidance about recording changes in circumstance such as breaks in learning for apprenticeships from 1 May 2017.

The guidance in this document applies to the 2016 to 2017 funding year, up to 31 July 2017. Guidance for recording apprenticeships on the ILR after this date will be published in the provider guidance for 2017 to 2018.

Apprenticeship framework withdrawals

For information

We have announced the withdrawal dates for the latest batch of 15 frameworks; 14 of these frameworks have replacement standards that provide good coverage and are approved for delivery.

One framework, the Professional Development for Work Based Learning Practitioners, has had zero starts in the last two funding years.

The last date for new starts will be 30 September 2017 and the frameworks will be withdrawn to new starts from 1 October 2017. We consider nine months notice of withdrawal for these frameworks to be sufficient

and reasonable. This will not impact any current learners as they will complete their apprenticeship framework as usual.

You can find [details of the frameworks we have either withdrawn or are withdrawing](#).

We intend to announce the next steps for withdrawing the remaining live frameworks in the spring.

Archived Data

For information

A new 'Archived' tab is available on Data Returns on [the Hub](#). This tab gives you access to data submissions and validation reports which were previously only available on request from the service desk.

The 'Completed' tab will show any collections that have closed within the last 12 months, anything before then will be available on the 'Archived' tab going back as far as 2013/14 when the Hub was launched.

The Archived tab will give you direct access to information which may be required for QAR analysis or migrating your data to a new MI system.

The new apprenticeship service

For information

In line with the apprenticeship levy starting in April, we are developing the new apprenticeship service, through which employers can plan, manage and pay for their apprenticeships online.

We have begun to invite some employers to set up their account on the service. We are doing this in a phased way so that we can continue testing and improving the service before we invite all levy-paying employers to register in February 2017.

Hub corner

For information

In R05 we processed 2,741 files from 905 providers. Over 500 providers submitted their first R05 file in the last 4 days of the collection window.

Where can you find further information?

For information

[Feconnect](#) is an online community for data professionals to discuss data issues and assist others to resolve data queries.

Follow [@sfadata](#) for all SFA data-related information on Twitter.

For web alerts, please go to <http://gov.uk/sfa> to sign up and stay in touch with the latest news.

To register for [Update](#), the weekly newsletter from the SFA for colleges, training organisations and key stakeholders, please email: Update@sfa.bis.gov.uk.

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