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Education
Funding
Agency

Introduction

The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) funded local authorities (LAs) for the financial year 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 to deliver learning to young people in England. LAs are required to submit their chief financial officer (CFO) signed grant return to the Education Funding Agency (EFA) in respect of funds received from the SFA. This requirement is specified in the Joint Audit Code of Practice (JACOP) between LAs, EFA and SFA. This guide explains how to complete and submit the return.

During the financial year 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017, EFA's Provider Risk and Assurance (PRA) division is responsible for collecting LA grant returns on behalf of the SFA and EFA.

This guidance relates to the stage 1 return that LAs will need to complete for the funding received from SFA for the financial year 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

We will be collecting further returns for the financial year 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017 at the end of October 2017. We will update this guidance in September 2017.

Guide to completing your grant return

There is one form to complete:

- Annex 1 - 16 to 19 Grant return statement for 2016 to 2017

The CFO must certify the grant return.

Annex 1: 16 to 19 Grant return statement for 2016 to 2017

- Within the 'Exceptions' section of Annex 1, please confirm whether there have been any exceptions by selecting 'Yes' or 'No'.
- If 'Yes', please provide details of the exception(s); this should detail the funding streams, providers' names, values of funding affected including reasons for the exception and any other relevant information.

Please do not alter the wording of the grant return. There is no requirement for the grant return to be audited, but the return may be subject to review by LA external auditors, at their discretion.

Submit your grant return

You need to upload your completed LA grant return for the 2016 to 2017 financial year using EFA's Document Exchange. You can access EFA Document Exchange by logging onto [Secure Access](#) and selecting EFA Information Exchange from your list of applications. Once you are in the EFA information Exchange, select the Document Exchange tab at the top of the page.

Please submit your CFO signed [LA grant return](#) to EFA by 30 April 2017. Please print your LA grant return, physically sign it and scan it as a pdf. You then need to upload the CFO signed pdf version and the Excel version to the 'finance and payments' folder under AY 2016 to 2017 in Document Exchange.

To upload your LA grant return, navigate to the 'finance and payments' folder under AY 2016 to 2017. Select 'actions', then 'upload content'. Once your return has been selected, choose 'stage 1 statement of assurance' as the document purpose when prompted. It is important that you select 'stage 1 statement of assurance' as the document purpose when uploading your return.

Please note: PRA populates a national spreadsheet direct from this return. We ask that you do not amend the format or include links. This helps our data input and validation processes.

For support and guidance about EFA Information Exchange, please visit our [support page](#).

Scope

Only the payments made by SFA to LAs are within the scope of this return. LA controlled providers and maintained schools with sixth forms, together with any funding provided for 14 to 19 partnerships are in scope for this return. LAs are the assurance lead for these organisations and are therefore responsible for the assurance of these funds.

Under JACOP, LAs are responsible for the assurance of other funds paid to LA controlled providers and schools with sixth forms. This includes any funding received from the Higher Education Funding Council for

England (HEFCE) and SFA. Funding received from the European Social Fund via SFA is outside the scope of these provisions. PRA are responsible for the assurance return for funds received by LAs under JACOP.

This guidance relates to the return required by SFA. SFA requires only a general statement of assurance for the period covered by this return. LA CFOs can view their authority's [funding allocations from SFA](#) for the 2016 to 2017 academic year.

Additional information

If you have any questions about your LA grant return or need further information on the updated process please contact us using the [online enquiry form](#).

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