Department for Education

A guide to new University Technical College revenue funding 2017 to 2018

April 2017

Contents

Introduction

1. This guide sets outs how the revenue funding for new University Technical Colleges (UTCs) will be calculated and paid based upon funding rates for the 2017 to 2018 academic year.

2. This guide also sets out the importance of good financial health and the financial governance and accountability requirements for trusts. A pre-opening financial management and governance self-assessment is available at Annex A, and is a helpful tool for trusts to assess a UTC's financial governance and compliance prior to opening. **UTCs should complete the self-assessment ahead of their readiness to opening meeting (ROM).**

3. The Government is currently preparing to introduce a national funding formula (NFF) for 5 to 16 provision, which will mean a change in how 5 to 16 provision is funded (including for free schools). The current funding system does not support our aspiration that all children reach their full potential and succeed in adult life. Similar local areas and similar schools receive very different levels of funding, with little or no justification.

4. A consultation on the detail of the NFF closed on 22 March 2017 and the government expects to announce its decisions later this year. The consultation included a proposal to build in an overall 'funding floor', so that no school will face a reduction of more than 3% per-pupil overall as a result of the formula compared to the funding that they would have received in 2017 to 2018 under the existing local funding arrangements. The government intends to ensure that any new free schools that are not yet open but which are in the pipeline (including projects being approved in wave 12) are funded consistently with other schools. For these schools, we propose to calculate the funding floor on the basis of the funding that they would have received under the local funding formula had they had pupils in all year groups in 2017 to 2018. The current version of the template, updated in April 2017, does not include the NFF. The template will be updated again once decisions on the NFF have been taken.

5. The following funding will be available in 2017 to 2018 to UTCs upon opening:

- local pre-16 formula funding
- national 16 to 19 formula funding
- pupil premium business rates grant
- high-needs funding
- post-opening grant
- transitional funding, subject to conditions, in recognition of the difficult start-up years faced by UTCs

Each is described in more detail later in this guide.

6. This guide does not cover:

- funding for other mainstream free schools and non-mainstream free schools (e.g. special or alternative provision free schools for which separate guides are available)
- funding for 16 to 19 free schools, for which a separate guide is available
- free schools open before September 2017 (who will be receiving updates on future funding arrangements from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA))
- any initial funding which may be provided by the department to help free school proposers to develop their projects before the opening of the school (e.g. project development grant)
- capital funding, which will depend on the circumstances of individual free schools (and within this heading is included any ongoing annual costs of leasing premises)
- Value Added Tax (VAT) – open academies and free schools do not receive a separate grant to cover these costs, but will be able to claim back, when open, any VAT paid in respect of their non-commercial activity, directly from Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) via their VAT scheme for academies

Financial health and efficiency

7. Effective schools make the best use of resources – ensuring every pound is used efficiently to improve our children's education standards and have maximum impact for their pupils and the school. This means planning educational improvement and finances together. Managing school finances is not an 'additional' responsibility or requirement – it is intrinsic to each and every high performing school.

8. For schools to deliver the high standards parents and pupils expect of them, they must start from a position of strong financial management. In practice, this means schools can invest more of their resources in the classroom, making even more of a difference to the children that need it most. To support free schools and others in achieving this, the department has launched online guidance and tools on efficiency and financial health.

Financial planning

9. UTCs should plan their expenditure to ensure that it is affordable within the funding provided. This should be an on-going process with financial plans updated as plans for the school are more fully developed, staff are appointed, site plans are developed and other costs are more firmly established. Groups should also refresh financial plans as further details of funding arrangements are confirmed, and review regularly to ensure they reflect

the likely number of pupils based on the number of applications. In doing this, they will want to make sure they are aware of funding arrangements for each new academic year.

10. The department will need assurance that UTCs are on-course to be financially viable on opening. UTCs will have shared their financial plans with the department before entering into a funding agreement. Plans will need to be resubmitted ahead of the school's ROM. Please note that at post 16, an adjustment of -30% must be applied to take account of the historical drop out between accepted offers and start date, due to students being able to hold multiple offers. It should also be noted that not all post 16 students progress from Year 12 to Year 13; this figure is typically around 15%. The details included in this plan will be used in order for draft funding allocation statements to be issued.

11. Projects should be ready to submit their plans at these points with **evidence to underpin their pupil number assumptions** which must **be realistic and achievable**. The department will want to see that as far as possible the plans reflect the school's income based on the best estimates of available grants, the school's outgoings and the likely number of pupils. Your plans should show that the school will not go into deficit at any point.

12. Plans should be based on the most up-to-date available estimates of grant funding. The UTC financial template containing 2017 to 2018 funding rates is available on GOV.UK, and will calculate indicative funding using the up-to-date funding rates. The template includes pre- and post-16 ready-reckoners which show the breakdown of funding based upon estimated pupil numbers and characteristics.

Pupil number adjustment

13. Once open, if the October schools census shows the school has not admitted the predicted number of pupils, any excess funding will be clawed back in the following academic year. Where more pupils are recruited than have been funded for, ESFA will carry out an in-year reconciliation and pay any additional funding in January/February of the current academic year.

Annual revenue funding for UTCs

14. Except where stated below, the funding for each UTC will be calculated and paid by ESFA. Pre- and post-16 funding will be paid monthly on the first working day of the month in equal instalments.

Local formula funding (pre-16)

15. Most of the annual revenue funding for pre-16 provision within UTCs is based on the local funding formula applied to all schools in the relevant local authority, including maintained schools and academies. The local formula is a simple and transparent formula, agreed by a local schools forum (a body predominantly made up of representatives of local schools – which must include academy representation broadly proportionate to the number of pupils in academies). The formula can only incorporate the following elements (it need not incorporate them all, but those in bold are mandatory):

- **a basic local funding unit for each pupil aged 5 to 15 attending the school**
- **deprivation measured by rate of uptake of free school meals and/or income deprivation affecting children index (IDACI)**
- looked-after children
- prior attainment
- pupils with English as an additional language
- pupil mobility (the number of pupils entering the school at non-standard entry points)
- a lump sum of up to £175,000
- split sites
- exceptional funding factors
- Private Finance Initiative contracts
- sparsity
- in Buckinghamshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Kent and West Sussex only an additional factor is allowed for schools on the London fringe

As set out in paragraphs 3 and 4, the government is planning to introduce NFF for pre-16 provision.

Funding protection for local formula funding (pre-16)

16. The minimum funding guarantee (MFG) ensures that schools' funding is not reduced unexpectedly by a large amount as a result of any changes made to the local formula between years. This restricts schools to a maximum loss of 1.5% per pupil on most of their budget. The lump sum and sparsity factor are outside this calculation

17. New UTCs receive a similar level of protection against the per-pupil funding amount they would have attracted had they been open the previous year.

National 16 to 19 formula funding

18. Most of the annual revenue funding for 16 to 19 provision in UTCs will be based on the national formula applied to all 16 to 19 places, including maintained schools and

academies. Schools will be asked to submit a short business case in February before they open which provides evidence to support their assumptions about the characteristics to be reflected in the formula. This will inform the final funding level.

19. Funding is based on a national 16 to 19 funding formula:

[Student numbers
x
National funding rate per student
x
Retention factor
x
Programme-cost weighting
+
Disadvantage funding]
x
Area cost weighting

20. Normally these factors are based on latest available data from 1 to 3 years prior to the allocation year; however, for new institutions the first 2 years may be based upon the business case submitted and from year 3, will be based on available data from the school census. ESFA will review these business cases prior to opening, usually from February to March. **If no business case is submitted, or a case is not approved, the factors will be based on averages appropriate to the institution at either national or local authority level.**

21. Students are categorised into funding bands based on the number of planned hours per students. Each funding band is assigned a national funding rate. The bands and funding rates per student for 2017 to 2018 are:

Band	Annual timetabled hours		National funding rate per student
5	540+ hours	16 and 17-year-olds Students aged 18 and over with high needs	£4,000
4a	450+ hours	Students aged 18 and over who are not high needs	£3,300

4b	450 to 539 hours	16 and 17-year-olds Students aged 18 and over with high needs	£3,300
3	360 to 449 hours		£2,700
2	280 to 359 hours		£2,133
1	Up to 279 hours		£4,000 divided by FTE

22. For new UTCs it will be assumed that all students are full-time, unless ESFA is informed otherwise, and therefore attract the national funding rate of £4,000 per student. It is important to note that all funding can be subject to change.

23. The retention factor will reduce funding if the student does not complete their programme of study for the academic year. **For new UTCs the national average will be used (0.972 in 2017 to 2018).**

24. The programme-cost weighting recognises that some programmes are more costly to deliver than others. All academic and some vocational programmes are weighted at the base rate of 1. Other vocational programmes are weighted higher than 1, dependent on the sector subject area assigned to the programme's core aim. **For new UTCs the national average will be used (1.016 in 2017 to 2018) unless they can justify a different amount** due to the specific programme(s) of study offered, which must be agreed by ESFA prior to opening via the business case exercise.

25. The disadvantage funding is made of two blocks:

- Block 1 recognises the costs associated with engaging, recruiting and retaining young people from disadvantaged backgrounds (based on IMD 2015). **For new UTCs the local authority average will be used, unless they can justify a different amount** in the business case
- Block 2 awards additional funding to the institution for the numbers of students without either or both of GCSE English and mathematics at grade 4 or better. The institution receives £480 per student per subject (so a student without both of English and mathematics attracts £960 for the institution). Allocating based on poor prior attainment is the best proxy we currently have for identifying those young people who are likely to need additional support with their study programmes in order to succeed. **For new UTCs the national average will be used (0.189 instances per student in 2017 to 2018) unless they can justify a different amount in the business case**

26. An area cost uplift will be applied to reflect the higher costs of learning in some areas of the country. This uplift applies to all elements of the formula.

27. Additional funding is then added in respect of:

- **high-needs places**: £6,000 for each place as identified by local authority commissioning plans and decisions
- **student support (bursary) funding**: for new UTCs it is assumed that 36% of students will be eligible for student support funding. For 2017 to 2018 this is a standard rate of £298 per student

28. More information on 16 to 19 funding is available on GOV.UK.

Pupil premium

29. The pupil premium is additional funding for publicly funded schools in England to raise the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and close the gap between them and their peers. In 2017 to 2018, schools will receive the pupil premium for each pupil attending the school in years from reception to year 11 who is known to have been eligible for free school meals at some time in the last six years (£1,320 for primary and £935 for secondary).

30. Schools will also receive £1,900 for each pupil who has left local authority care because of either adoption, a special guardianship order, a child arrangements order or a residence order. If a pupil has registered as eligible for free school meals and has also left local authority care for one of these reasons, they will attract the £1,900 rate.

31. Children who have been in local authority care for 1 day or more also attract £1,900 of pupil premium funding. Funding for these pupils doesn’t go to their school; it goes to the virtual school head in the local authority that looks after the child. Virtual school heads are responsible for managing pupil premium funding for looked-after children.

32. Pupil premium payments are made to UTCs in quarterly instalments. There is more information on the pupil premium on GOV.UK, including an explanation of the accountability requirements.

33. There is also a service premium of £300 to support children and young people with parents in the armed forces. More information about the service premium is available on GOV.UK.

Education services grant

34. In the 2015 Spending Review, the department announced a saving of £600m by removing the education services grant (ESG) general funding rate from September 2017. Academies and free schools will continue to receive the current annual rates per pupil for

the April to August 2017 period. We have also put in place protection arrangements for academies and free schools following the removal of the ESG general funding rate using the same methodology as in 2016 to 2017.

35. Free schools which open between April and August 2017 will receive ESG funding at the current per pupil rate prorated to the number of days open. From September 2017 they will also be eligible for the protection arrangements. Free schools which open from September 2017 onwards will not be eligible for ESG funding or ESG protection.

Risk protection arrangement (RPA)

36. UTCs are able to opt in to a voluntary risk protection arrangement provided by the government. The RPA is an alternative to insurance where UK government funds cover losses that arise. There is no cost or premium to join the RPA. ESFA will deduct £20 per pupil at source from the UTC's General Annual Grant (GAG). UTCs do not have to enter the scheme and are free to make their own alternative insurance arrangements, however there will be no additional funding provided should extra costs be incurred. More information on RPA can be found on GOV.UK.

Business rates grant

37. UTCs will receive a grant to cover the actual cost of business rates (at the 80% discounted charitable rate). This needs to be claimed via the online form on GOV.UK.

Special Educational Needs (SEN)/Alternative Provision (AP) commissioner top-up funding (high-needs)

38. UTCs will receive additional funding from the local authority for pupils aged up to 19 with high needs where the local authority has commissioned the place. Schools will be expected to fund the first £6,000 of additional educational costs (over and above standard teaching and learning) for each high-needs pupil from their own budget.

Post-opening grant

39. UTCs are provided with a post-opening grant to reflect the additional costs in establishing a new publicly-funded school which cannot be met through the GAG. The post-opening grant provides funding in two elements as the UTC grows: non-staffing resources, paid on a per-pupil basis; and a leadership grant. These titles reflect the basis on which the funding is calculated, but the grant can be spent on any legitimate purpose of the school.

40. The first element (resources) is paid each year that the school builds up to capacity for each new pupil expected to be on roll. UTCs will receive £500 for each new pupil.

41. The second element (leadership) is a fixed-rate grant of £315,000, payable over three years (50% in the first year; 30% in the second; and 20% in the third).

Transitional funding for UTCs

42. Most open UTCs are eligible for additional, transitional funding of £200,000 per year for three years. This funding will be subject to UTCs meeting annual conditions related to improving educational and financial performance. UTCs opening in September 2017 will have conditions set at the start of the academic year and if they agree to the conditions the first instalment of the transitional funding will be paid later in the autumn term.

43. The funding from year two will be net of any debt UTCs owe to the ESFA; UTCs will not receive additional income in future until any debts built up in the first year have been cleared.

Financial governance and accountability

44. Trusts will need to ensure that spending decisions are transparent and in the school's best interests and should not give rise to criticism of the trust by Parliament, and/or the public, and/or the media. UTCs will need sound financial procedures - the capacity to handle public money, and good governance arrangements. On opening, UTCs will need to have a robust framework to manage their funding and ensure proper accountability and procedures are maintained.

The Academies' Financial Handbook

45. The Academies' Financial Handbook, together with the funding agreement, sets out the financial management and governance requirements for academy trusts.

46. **You must comply with the handbook throughout the pre-opening period and once open**. This is outlined within the grant agreements underlying any funding trusts receive from the department and/or ESFA. Non-compliance with the handbook is considered a breach of contract and may trigger various sanctions.

47. The handbook includes requirements in relation to financial oversight, financial planning, internal control, financial monitoring and management and proper and regular use of public funds as well as a number of other specific matters. The handbook also sets out the audit requirements for academy trusts.

48. The handbook is aimed at trustees, accounting officers (principals and chief executives), principal finance officers (finance directors and business managers), clerks to the board of trustees, local governing bodies of multi-academy trusts and auditors.

49. The handbook clearly articulates that the accounting officer is personally responsible to Parliament, and to the accounting officer of ESFA, for the resources under their control. This personal responsibility extends to ensuring regularity, propriety and value for money. The accounting officer also has responsibilities for keeping proper financial records and accounts, and for the management of opportunities and risks.

ESFA Information Exchange

50. ESFA Information Exchange is a secure website, accessible via DfE's secure access system. It enables academies to use:

- Document Exchange to receive and exchange documents with ESFA
- Knowledge Centre to find their own answers to common questions
- Business Calendar to check key business cycle dates and deadlines
- Digital forms for accurate financial returns and other transactions

51. A secure access account for new UTCs will be automatically set up using information shared from EduBase, the Department for Education's register of educational establishments. Prior to a UTC opening, ESFA will send an email to the secure access approver of the UTC who will then be able activate the account and add 2 approvers and up to 7 end users to use secure access and have access to Information Exchange.

Financial statements

52. UTCs, including those in the pre-opening phase, with a signed funding agreement must submit audited financial statements to ESFA, for each year ending 31 August, by 31 December. The Academies Accounts Direction prescribes the form and content of the financial statements. Prior to signing the funding agreement financial statements should be prepared in accordance with company law.

53. Trusts should set their accounting reference date to 31 August at Companies House. This is the date to which their financial statements will be produced.

54. Exceptions to submitting audited financial statements are:

- Extended accounting period - New trusts that have not previously prepared financial statements can extend their first accounting period to a maximum of 18 months. For example a trust incorporated at Companies House on or after 1 March 2017 can defer preparing their first financial statements until 31 August

2018. A trust incorporated before 1 March 2017 must prepare their first financial statements to 31 August 2017

- Dormant accounts – Trusts that have been dormant since incorporation can prepare dormant accounts. These do not have to be audited but still need to be submitted to Companies House and (if the trust has signed its funding agreement) to ESFA

55. This guide does not substitute for the full requirements in the Academies Accounts Direction.

56. The timetable for submission and publication of accounts, including how accounts are submitted, is set out in detail in the Accounts Direction. Key deadlines are given below:

- **By 31 December** – trust to send audited accounts, including an independent reporting accountant's report on regularity and auditor's management letter to ESFA
- **By 31 January** – trust to publish accounts on their website
- **By 31 May (i.e. within 9 months of the end of the accounting period) –** trust to file their audited accounts with Companies House. Further information can be found on the Companies House website

Other financial returns

57. Trusts must also submit the following financial returns to ESFA once open:

- **Budget forecast return** – submitted to ESFA by 31 July or 6 weeks after receiving the final funding letter, whichever is the later
- **Academies accounts return** – due where the UTC did not prepare audited accounts at 31 August but had opened by 31 March, or where the UTC did prepare accounts at 31 August but has opened between 1 September and 31 March. The return must be submitted to ESFA by 31 May in the first year only. Subsequent returns will be for the year ending 31 August and must be submitted to ESFA by 31 January
- Financial management and governance self-assessment - submitted to ESFA within four months of opening. The self-assessment highlights the main requirements academies must have in place soon after opening. A pre-opening self-assessment is available at Annex A, and is a helpful tool for trusts to assess a UTC's financial governance and compliance prior to opening

58. Trusts are responsible for keeping up to date with the latest deadlines and requirements. More information is available on GOV.UK.

59. Trusts can also keep up to date through the ESFA e-bulletin.

Further information

60. Further information on academies revenue funding is available on the ESFA pages on GOV.UK.

61. There are also training videos available which trusts may find useful.

Annex A – Pre-opening financial management and governance self-assessment

This self-assessment is comprised of questions from the Financial management and governance self-assessment**.** It is a helpful tool for trusts to assess a UTC's financial governance and compliance **prior to opening**. The self-assessment must be completed in full and sent to ESFA within four months of opening.

1. Has the board appointed a principal or chief executive?
2. Do the directors/trustees fully understand their duties as company directors and charity trustees to discharge their responsibility?
3. Has only one senior executive leader (principal or chief executive) been permanently designated as the accounting officer and does this person fully understand the duties and responsibilities of the role?
4. Does the accounting officer, under the guidance of the board, ensure appropriate oversight of financial transactions by having all the trust's property under the control of the trustees, measures in place to prevent losses or misuse; having bank accounts, financial systems and financial records operated by more than one person; keeping and maintaining full and accurate accounting records; and preparing accruals accounts, giving a true and fair view of the trust's use of resources, in accordance with existing accounting standards?
5. Does the board and appropriate committees meet at least three times per year and conduct business only when meetings are quorate?
6. Does the board receive, consider and act upon information about the financial performance of the trust at least three times a year?
7. Has a chief financial officer, with appropriate qualifications and/or experience, been appointed by the board?
8. Has the board approved a written scheme of delegation of financial powers that maintains robust internal control arrangements?
9. Has the board approved a balanced budget for the financial year and the approval been minuted?
10. Is the academy trust aware of considerations when making investments including having an investment policy to manage, control and track financial exposure, and ensure value for money; and regularly reviewing the policy and the trusts investments?

11. Has the board been made aware of the requirement to obtain approval from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) where it is considering borrowing funds or entering into liabilities such as leases or tenancies beyond delegated limits? If any payments have been made beyond delegated limits, full details must be provided in the commentary section below.
12. Has an appropriate internal control framework been established?
13. Has a contingency and business continuity plan been prepared?
14. Have the risks arising from your operations been assessed?
15. Has adequate insurance cover been obtained?
16. Has the board been informed of the delegated authority limits for the categories of transactions set out in the [Academies Financial Handbook]? If any payments have been made beyond delegated limits, full details must be provided in the commentary section below.
17. Has the board been informed of the requirement to ensure that all the academy trust's spending has been for the purpose intended; that there is probity in the use of public funds; and that all spending decisions represent value for money?
18. Has the board been informed of the requirement to obtain approval from ESFA before making any novel, contentious or other such payments (for example, staff severance payments) as detailed in the [Academies Financial Handbook]? If any payments have been made beyond delegated limits, full details must be provided in the commentary below.
19. Have all trustees, including the accounting officer, completed the register of business interests?
20. Has the academy trust published, on its website, its governing structure and remit and the relevant business and pecuniary interest of the accounting officer, members, trustees, including local governors where the trust is a Multi Academy Trust?
21. Are there measures in place to manage any conflicts of interest?
22. Has the board approved a competitive tendering policy?
23. Do senior officers' payroll arrangements meet tax obligations fully?
24. Has the board been informed that goods or services provided by individuals or organisations connected to the trust must be provided at 'no more than cost', on the basis of an open book agreement and supported by statements of assurance, in accordance with the conditions set out in the [Academies Financial Handbook]? If any goods or services have been provided that exceed 'no more than cost', not on the

basis of an open book agreement or without statements of assurance, full details must be provided in the commentary section below.

25. Has a set of accounting policies been approved?

26. Has an external auditor been appointed?

27. Has an audit committee or a committee that fulfils the functions of an audit committee been established?

28. Has a process for independent checking of financial controls been implemented?

29. Has an appropriate committee agreed a programme to address the risks to financial control?

30. Has the board been informed of the requirement to report to ESFA any instances of fraud or theft: above £5,000 against the trust whether by employees, trustees or third parties; or where fraud is unusual or systematic in nature? Full details must be provided in the commentary section where any such fraud or theft has occurred.

31. Has the board approved a whistleblowing policy?

Department for Education

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