



Correspondence

# ESFA Update academies: 24 July 2019

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## 1. Information: annual accounting officer letter to academy trusts

ESFA chief executive, Eileen Milner, has written a [letter to accounting officers at academy trusts](#). The letter includes important information about academy trust financial management, internal scrutiny and governance.

At the same time, we've added a [good practice guide on internal scrutiny](#) to help trusts meet their new reporting requirement.

## 2. Information: academies chart of accounts

We published the [academies chart of accounts](#) in May 2019 as part of DfE's [better financial reporting programme](#).

Since then, we've been contacted by a number of trusts about adopting the chart of accounts. We are also aware that there are others trust planning to upgrade or change their finance system this year and may be considering the chart of accounts as part of this change.

We would like to work with any trust adopting the chart of accounts. For advice and feedback, please contact [betterfinancialreporting.comms@education.gov.uk](mailto:betterfinancialreporting.comms@education.gov.uk).

### **3. Information: removal of funding approval from pre-existing qualifications**

We announced in our [consultation on the review of post-16 qualifications](#) at level 3 and below that we would remove funding approval from pre-existing qualifications where a redeveloped qualification also exists.

On Monday 22 July, we published [the list of qualifications affected](#).

We will fund existing learners through to completion, but no new starts will be permitted from 1 August 2020. This applies to 16 to 19 funding, adult education budget, advanced learner loans and European Social Fund.

We are aware of difficulties in removing funding approval where smaller qualifications are “nested” within larger qualifications. Rather than ‘topping up’ the smaller nested qualification with the larger qualification, the ESFA will put in place the facility to support those students who wish to, to ‘step down’ from the larger qualification to the smaller qualification.

This should then allow providers to start those students who may wish to undertake the larger qualification, but are unsure whether they can manage this, to enrol on the larger qualification from the start, but with the reassurance that they can step down and achieve the smaller qualification if they wish to.

We will issue further guidance on this facility in August.

### **4. Information: reducing data burdens on schools**

The Secretary of State for Education has written [a letter to local authorities and academy trusts](#) about the importance of tackling workload issues.

The letter highlights their role in reviewing and reducing data burdens on the schools they support in line with the recommendations in the [making data work report](#).

# 5. Information: guidance to support preparations for leaving the European Union

As a responsible government we have been planning, and continue to prepare for all eventualities, and that includes managing the impacts of a no deal Brexit if they arise.

The government has published extensive advice on the steps that citizens, businesses and other organisations may need to take to prepare for our exit from the EU. We recommend that the schools sector takes the necessary steps to ensure they are similarly prepared and we know that many of you have plans ready to put into action.

As part of our preparations, we have updated our existing guidance to [support the schools sector to prepare for Brexit](#). The guidance signposts education institutions to relevant information, setting it in the context of how it may affect the education sector.

We will be updating it further as information becomes available.

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