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Education & Skills
Funding Agency

Guidance

2019 to 2020 student transfer process for existing qualifications

Updated 30 October 2019

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Summary

This guidance sets out the student transfer process for pre-existing qualifications, for providers of education and training to follow. You can use this process for students who begin a large qualification that we will stop funding from 1 August 2020, and who want to transfer to a smaller qualification 'nested' within the larger qualification.

This guidance also sets out what you must do in the individualised learner record (ILR) or Learning Provider portal system from the Student Loans Company (SLC) to complete a transfer, and when you need to do it.

Expiry or review date

This guidance will expire on 23 October 2020.

Who is this publication for?

This guidance is for providers of education and training. It will also be of interest to mayoral combined authorities¹ and the Mayor of London, with devolved authority for adult education functions funded by the adult education budget (AEB).

Introduction

In the [first stage consultation on the review of post-16 qualifications at level 3 and below in England](#) (consultation), the Department for Education (DfE) stated its decision to withdraw funding approval from some pre-existing qualifications in the [16 to 18 performance tables](#).

Pre-existing qualifications are qualifications that last appeared in the 16 to 18 performance tables for 2016 or 2017 as Tech Levels or Applied General qualifications. Redeveloped qualifications are Tech Levels and Applied General qualifications that met the criteria to be in the 16 to 18 performance tables from 2018 onwards. DfE identified 163 pre-existing qualifications that are available alongside newer redeveloped qualifications in the 2020 [16 to 18 performance tables](#).

As part of the consultation, DfE asked if there were any other equality considerations that it had not covered in the [impact assessment](#). DfE also reviewed the pre-existing qualifications identified with awarding organisations, to confirm that there were newer redeveloped qualifications available.

We (the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)) will withdraw funding approval from these 163 pre-existing qualifications from 1 August 2020. We published the [list of pre-existing qualifications with removed funding approval](#) on 22 July 2019. For the rest of this document, the term 'pre-existing qualifications' refers to the 163 pre-existing qualifications identified by DfE.

Students starting these pre-existing qualifications from 1 August 2020 will not be funded through:

- 16 to 19 study programmes
- level 3 legal entitlement (funded through the AEB, irrespective of where the student resides in England)
- advanced learner loans (loans)
- European Social Fund (ESF)

We will continue to fund students who start studying a pre-existing qualification before 1 August 2020, until they complete the qualification or they reach the qualification's certification end date, whichever happens sooner.

Nested qualifications

Through the responses to the consultation, we found that some pre-existing qualifications are part of a suite of qualifications, where a smaller qualification is 'nested' within a larger qualification. This means that a student who achieves the smaller qualification can use it to count towards achieving the larger qualification in the same suite. Students who start and achieve the smaller qualification can top-up to a larger qualification in the following year.

From 1 August 2020, any student who started a smaller pre-existing qualification in the 2019 to 2020 funding year will not be able to progress to the larger pre-existing qualification in 2020 to 2021, and still be funded. This is because we will not approve the pre-existing qualifications for funding from 1 August 2020.

We do not want to disadvantage these students, so we have put in place a transfer process for these nested pre-existing qualifications. This process is only available for the 2019 to 2020 funding year.

In the 2019 to 2020 funding year, you should make both of the following points clear to students:

- they will not be able to progress to the larger qualification in the following year, once they have achieved the smaller qualification
- they have the option to start on the larger qualification in their first year and transfer to the smaller qualification

If a student starts on the larger qualification in the first year and chooses not to progress to the second year, you can transfer the student to the smaller qualification in the same suite. You can only do this if the student has met all the assessment requirements for the smaller qualification, and achieved it in the first year.

Transferring a student to the smaller qualification will not affect your [qualification achievement rates \(QAR\)](#), or our audit of your organisation.

You may already have students who have applied to start the smaller qualification in 2019 to 2020, or who have already started the smaller qualification. You should tell these students that they will not be able to progress to the larger qualification in 2020 to 2021 and still be funded. You should give them the option to transfer to the larger qualification at the start of the 2019 to 2020 funding year.

Student transfer process

If you are delivering pre-existing qualifications that are part of a suite of nested qualifications in the 2019 to 2020 funding year, we strongly encourage you to start a student on the larger qualification. The student must also agree to start on the

larger qualification.

If the student achieves the smaller qualification within the 2019 to 2020 funding year, they can choose not to progress to the second year of the larger qualification. In these cases, you can transfer the student onto the smaller qualification.

This student transfer process applies to:

- 16 to 19 study programmes
- level 3 legal entitlement (funded through the AEB, irrespective of where the learner resides in England)
- loans

Although we have withdrawn funding approval from pre-existing qualifications in the ESF offer, this student transfer process does not apply to the ESF offer. This is because there is little evidence that providers of education and training are delivering pre-existing qualifications in the ESF offer.

Student transfer within the ILR

This section explains how to transfer the student from the larger qualification to the smaller qualification in the 2019 to 2020 ILR. You can only follow this process if the student has met both of the following conditions:

- the student has achieved the smaller qualification in the 2019 to 2020 funding year
- the student has studied for the pre-existing qualification with funding through the 16 to 19 study programmes, the level 3 legal entitlement, or loans

You must complete all student transfers **on or before 18:00 on 22 October 2020**. After this date, the [2019 to 2020 ILR](#) will close, and you will not be able to transfer the student without this having an effect on your [QAR](#) and audit.

Although you have until 22 October 2020, you should transfer students at the earliest opportunity within the 2019 to 2020 funding year.

You can find full instructions for transferring students in section 5.4.2 of the [2019 to 2020 provider support manual](#), under the heading 'Recording learner transfers: a learner transfers to a different learning aim within the same provider'.

You must record all of the information outlined below in the ILR.

Against the larger qualification that the student started on, you must record a transfer date on or before 31 July 2020. You must do this by reporting:

- an Actual end date which reflects the last date learning was completed by the student who is withdrawing from the larger qualification

- code '3' for completion status (learner has withdrawn from the learning activities leading to the learning aim)
- code '40' for withdrawal reason (learner has transferred to a new learning aim)
- code '3' for outcome (no achievement)

Against the smaller qualification that the student will transfer to, you must:

- record a restart
- add a Learning start date that is after the Actual end date of the larger qualification – the start date must be 120 days (or fewer) after the Actual end date of the larger qualification (you can find further information in [education and training qualification achievement rates \(QAR\) technical specification 2018 to 2019](#))
- add an Actual end date which is on or before 31 July 2020
- amend the funding using the funding adjustment field, to reflect delivery of the smaller qualification, where this is applicable (you can find guidance on how to do this in section 4.7.14 of the [2019 to 2020 provider support manual](#), under the heading 'Funding adjustment for prior learning and Other funding adjustment')
- record this as the core aim of a student's 16-19 study programme, if the original larger aim was the core aim

By following these steps on or before the 22 October 2020, there will be no impact on your [QAR](#) and audit.

Before you transfer a student, you should make sure that you are familiar with any registration requirements and timescales set out by the relevant awarding organisations, and follow them.

Our funding policy on retakes and/or resits for the 2019 to 2020 funding year applies to all students, regardless of this student transfer process. We will not fund resits and/or retakes for students on 16 to 19 study programmes (unless there are exceptional circumstances), and for students aged 19 and over.

We will monitor enrolments on the pre-existing qualifications in the 2019 to 2020 funding year.

If you have any queries about this process, please contact us using the [ESFA enquiry form](#).

Student transfer where the student has taken out a loan

This section explains how to transfer the student from the larger qualification to the smaller qualification through the SLC's [Learning Provider Portal](#). You can only follow this process if the student has met both of the following conditions:

- the student has achieved the smaller qualification in the 2019 to 2020 funding year
- the student has taken out a loan to study the larger qualification in 2019 to 2020

You must complete all student transfers **before the qualification end date**. Most qualifications will have a qualification end date of 31 July 2020, unless the awarding organisation withdraws them earlier. After the qualification end date, you will not be able to transfer the student.

You should transfer students at the earliest opportunity within the 2019 to 2020 funding year.

You can find instructions for transferring a student in section 13.6.3 of the [user guide for Learning Provider Portal](#), under the heading 'How to process a change in learning aim'.

By following these steps, the student's loan will be reduced to show that they have studied for and achieved the smaller qualification.

Where a student's loan is reduced, SLC will change the payments to you. You can find more information about this in section 13.6.1 of the [user guide for Learning Provider Portal](#).

We will monitor loan applications with SLC on the pre-existing qualifications during the 2019 to 2020 funding year. If you have any queries about this process, please contact the SLC's [Provider Services Support Desk](#).

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1. The current devolved authorities are: Cambridgeshire and Peterborough; Greater Manchester; Liverpool City Region; Tees Valley; West Midlands; West of England. North of Tyne Combined Authority and Sheffield City Region Combined Authority are due to take on the adult education functions from the funding year 2020 to 2021, subject to them being ready and meeting the statutory test. [↩](#)

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