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Guidance

Place change notification process: technical note

Updated 22 January 2020

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1. Purpose

This guide is primarily for local authorities and institutions. It sets out the process for local authorities notifying ESFA of institution level changes to 2020 to 2021 high needs place numbers and how the workbook should be completed for local authorities requesting changes. For local authorities requesting changes to hospital education funding, this should be read alongside the 2020 to 2021 local authority hospital education funding changes: guidance. It should also be read alongside the [high needs funding 2020 to 2021: operational guide](#).

2. Introduction

There are three main sections to this guide. The first section is aimed at local authorities and institutions. It sets out the process for notifying ESFA of institution level changes to 2020 to 2021 high needs place numbers and which institutions are in scope of the 2020 to 2021 place change notification process. It also

explains how place funding is determined for institutions outside the scope of this process.

The second section, completion of the workbook is specifically for those completing the workbook on behalf of local authorities. It explains how the workbook can be downloaded and provides technical guidance on completing and submitting returns.

The third section, outcomes: determining place numbers, is aimed at both local authorities and institutions. It explains how outcomes from the place change process are determined by ESFA, and the process for querying 2020 to 2021 place numbers.

3. Changing place numbers

ESFA aims to issue all 2020 to 2021 academic year allocations to institutions by the end of March 2020. The place change notification process enables provider local authorities (the local authority in which the institution is located) to notify ESFA of any changes to the number of high needs places, or hospital education places, at those institutions funded via ESFA. The principles of the place change notification process remain largely unchanged from 2019 to 2020.

Discussions between provider local authorities and institutions should begin as soon as possible to enable agreement to be reached over the number of places to be funded, before local authorities are required to submit returns to ESFA on 15 November 2019. It's important institutions are pro-active and engage with their provider local authorities, especially if they believe places funded in the current academic year may not be appropriate for the following year. Similarly, local authorities commissioning places at an institution for which they are not the provider authority, should proactively contact the institution or provider local authority to ensure these places will be reflected in the total places funded. This is particularly important if there is likely to be a significant change in the numbers commissioned.

We recognise there may be exceptional cases where local authorities and institutions do not agree on the number of places to be funded. In such cases the provider local authority may submit a return, but must record it as 'not agreed' with the institution. The determining place numbers section explains how these are determined by ESFA and reflected in the published outcomes. There may be a small number of cases where the number of places are not agreed, and the issue is raised through the 2 week enquiry window, that require further investigation and discussion. In such cases we may need to issue an allocation based on the not agreed place numbers, and issue a revised allocation when the matter is resolved.

The outcomes of the place change notification process will be issued in mid/late January. Local authorities and institutions need to check these to ensure the place numbers are correct. If an institution does not appear on the published outcomes,

they will continue to be funded on the same [place numbers as in 2019 to 2020](#).

There will be a two week window for local authorities and institutions to query outcomes following their publication. ESFA should be notified of errors or concerns during this enquiry window. Further information on this process is available in the enquiry window section. It is important that issues are raised before the window closes. Requests to change places after this date are unlikely to be considered.

3.1 Scope of 2020 to 2021 place change notification process

The following institution types are funded from a local authority's dedicated schools grant, via ESFA, and are therefore within scope of the 2020 to 2021 place change notification process:

- mainstream primary and secondary academies with special units, resourced provision or sixth forms
- mainstream free schools with special units, resourced provision or sixth forms
- studio schools (as above)
- university technical colleges (UTCs) (as above)
- special academies
- special free schools
- alternative provision (AP) academies
- further education (FE) institutions
- independent learning providers (ILPs)

In addition, this process should be used to notify ESFA of 2020 to 2021 place numbers for:

- special post-16 institutions (SPIs) that meet the initial eligibility criteria for receiving place funding directly from the ESFA in 2020 to 2021, and which are not currently funded by ESFA in 2019 to 2020; they will normally be institutions that already receive funding from the commissioning local authority, but may include new institutions
- maintained primary and secondary schools with special units, resourced provision or sixth forms, maintained special schools and PRUs that convert to academy status on, or by, 1 January 2020

The following types of institution are outside the scope of this process:

- maintained primary and secondary schools, maintained special schools and PRUs
 - changes to pre-16 and post-16 place numbers in maintained institutions are funded directly by the maintaining local authority and ESFA doesn't need to

be informed of changes to place numbers at a maintained institution that is not converting to an academy on, or by, 6 January 2020

- when a local authority maintained school converts to an academy, current place numbers must be notified to the project lead before conversion
- AP free schools: ESFA will contact AP free schools direct in November 2019 for information to determine their place funding allocations for the 2020 to 2021 academic year
- non-maintained special schools (NMSS) and special post-16 institutions: NMSS and SPIs are funded directly by ESFA using school census and Individual Learner Record (ILR) data respectively, except for the SPIs seeking place funding from ESFA for the first time in 2020 to 2021. Aside from that exception, the place change notification process is not used to fund NMSS and SPIs

Although local authorities do not need to return place numbers for these institutions to the ESFA, they should consider the entirety of the high needs provision available across both mainstream and specialist institutions, how that provision is currently meeting the needs of children and young people, and what changes are necessary to meet their needs in future. This should be an important feature of local authorities' strategic planning process and discussions with all institutions offering special provision for their young people.

3.2 Changes to local authority hospital education funding

As in previous years, local authorities can request changes to their hospital education funding where there has been a change to medical provision locally, or where such a change will occur during the next funding period. Requests for changes to a local authority's hospital education must be submitted through the place change notification workbook and advice on completion of this is included in this technical note. A separate guide explaining the criteria for requesting additional [2020 to 2021 local authority hospital education](#) funding and evidence required has been published.

4. Place change process: timeline and actions

4.1 3 October 2019

Department for Education:

- high needs funding 2020 to 2021: operational guide published

4.2 9 October 2019

Department for Education:

- 2020 to 2021 high needs place change notification technical note published and workbook issued to local authorities
- January 2019 school census data published for special academies and free schools. We will not publish 2018/19 the ILR - R10 data because we have recently shared 2018/19 R06 data with local authorities, when we confirmed the import/export adjustment for the 2019-20 FY. 2018/19 R14 data will be published as part of a November 2019 update
- 2019 to 2020 high needs place allocations to institutions published (as at 1 September 2019)

Local authorities:

- engage in discussions with institutions about funded 2020 to 2021 place numbers

Institutions:

- engage with local authorities about the high needs places to be commissioned in 2020 to 2021, and liaise with your provider local authority to agree the total 2020 to 2021 funded places for your institution

4.3 15 November 2019

Local authorities:

- deadline for local authority submission of 2020 to 2021 high needs place number changes and requests for local authority hospital education funding changes to ESFA

4.4 End November 2019

Department for Education:

- initial validation of returns complete. ESFA may request a resubmission.

- publish 2018 to 2019 ILR R14 data

Local authorities:

- local authorities to be ready to respond to any ESFA requests for template resubmissions

4.5 Mid to late January 2020

Department for Education:

- outcomes of place change notification process published

Local authorities:

- check published outcomes are correct

Institutions:

- institutions within scope of the place change notification process to check published outcomes are correct

4.6 Early February 2020

Local authorities:

- 2 week window closes for enquiries relating to the published outcomes

Institutions:

- 2 week window closes for enquiries relating to the published outcomes

4.7 March 2020

Department for Education:

- 2020 to 2021 high needs allocations issued to FE institutions, free schools, academies, NMSS, SPIs and ILPs

4.8 April 2020

Department for Education:

- 2020 to 2021 DSG update, to reflect the outcome of the 2020 to 2021 place change notification process and high needs place deductions (DSG allocations updated termly for in-year academy conversions)
- publication of 2020 to 2021 high needs place numbers at institution level

5. Place funding: principles

As in 2019 to 2020, places funded should broadly reflect both local authorities' recent commissioning activity and strategic planning to secure suitable special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) provision and alternative provision (AP) in line with their statutory responsibilities. In determining the number of funded places, local authorities should consider all high needs providers in their area and must take account not only their own commissioning decisions but also the commissioning decisions of other local authorities. In the case of AP, local schools' commissioning activity and plans should also be considered.

Collaborative relationships and early dialogue between local authorities and institutions play an important part in the preparations for academic year 2020 to 2021. In order to agree appropriate allocations of high needs place funding to institutions:

1. Provider local authorities should discuss both current numbers of places being taken up, and the number of places required in future with their institutions.
2. Institutions should raise with their provider local authorities cases where they believe they are not being funded for the correct number of currently commissioned places, or the number of commissioned places is likely to change.
3. Equally, local authorities commissioning places, but which are not the provider local authority, should engage with the institution so that they are aware of any change in the number of places to be commissioned. Where there is likely to be a significant change to the number of places they commission, they should also proactively contact the provider local authority to ensure this is reflected in the number of places funded.

The funded places should include the total number of places required to meet the needs of all local authorities, not just those of the provider local authority.

It's important that local authorities and institutions work together to agree and submit place numbers that reflect the needs of all local authorities, ensuring that place numbers submitted are as accurate as they can be from the start of the academic year. This ensures an institution's allocation is appropriate and reduces

the need for commissioning of places in excess of the institution's allocated place numbers. Read the high needs place funding section in the [high needs operational guide 2020 to 2021](#) for more information. The section 'where pupil and student numbers exceed allocated place numbers – an example' in that guide also gives advice on funding arrangements in cases where local authorities commission additional places significantly in excess of the place numbers funded for that year.

Local authorities fund increases in place numbers from their high needs budgets. Changes to 2020 to 2021 high needs place numbers will not change an authority's allocation of high needs funding, which is calculated through the national funding formula.

Provisional allocations of the 2020 to 2021 high needs funding block of the DSG for each authority, calculated by the high needs national funding formula, will be published in October 2019. Further information on high needs funding arrangements are available in the [high needs funding 2020 to 2021: operational guide](#).

6. Completion of the local authority workbook

This section shows local authorities how to navigate and complete the high needs workbook for submission via the [ESFA data collections portal](#). Local authorities must submit the workbook via the portal by 15 November 2019. Submissions received after this date may not be considered.

The high needs workbook can be downloaded from the [ESFA data collections portal](#). ESFA have contacted local authority designated users with information on how to access the workbook. If you're not sure who the designated user is within your local authority, or want to submit the return for your authority please [contact ESFA](#).

A 2020 to 2021 place change notification by a local authority must meet the requirements set out in this technical guide

The five sections of the 2020 to 2021 place change notification workbook are listed below, with a summary of their content:

Cover

Local authorities to enter contact details. The primary contact will need to sign off the return, confirming that their template has been completed in line with this guidance and captures the number of places required by all local authorities.

2019 to 2020 high needs data

Pre-populated with 2019 to 2020 high needs place numbers for institutions in the local authority area as at 1 September 2019 that are within scope.

Place Change Notification (PCN)

Local authorities may enter 2020 to 2021 place number changes for institutions within scope. Where numbers are not entered, academic year 2020 to 2021 place numbers will remain unchanged from academic year 2019 to 2020. See below for further information on completion.

Hospital education template

Local authorities to enter requests for changes to hospital education funding due to a change in medical provision in their area. DCS sign-off will also be required for audit purposes.

Validation Sheet

Highlights to local authorities and ESFA any required fields within the document that are incomplete.

6.1 Key rules for the successful completion of the workbook

Key rules:

- for each entry, start at column A of the place change notification template and work along the row
- ensure the change is correctly recorded as either 'agreed' or 'not agreed' with the institution
- do not enter data into greyed out cells
- only one entry is permitted per academy, college or other institution
- where a change in the place number is required enter the total place numbers you require after any adjustment has been applied
- if no change is required leave the cell blank. If '0' is entered into the 2020/21 revised place number columns, the final place numbers will be set at zero
- ensure all validation markers show as 'pass' before submitting the workbook to the ESFA
- ensure institutions are entered in the correct section of the PCN worksheet:
 - the second section is for institutions funded for high needs places via ESFA in 2019 to 2020
 - the first section is for other institutions

6.2 Cover sheet

Enter the contact details of the person who is responsible for completing the workbook. This information will be used by ESFA if there is a query regarding your submission.

Primary contact details must be entered for the workbook to be accepted, however you may wish to include additional contact details in the second and third columns.

ESFA also requires that the declaration on this worksheet is completed by the primary contact for every submission. If the declaration is not completed correctly the submission will be rejected and a resubmission requested.

To successfully complete the declaration ensure the following steps are completed:

- check the tick box to confirm your agreement to the statement included within the declaration
- insert an electronic signature or typed name into the section headed 'signature or typed name'
- enter the date of completion into the 'date completed' cell

DCS sign-off is only required where the hospital education template is completed. Note that:

- this must be an electronic signature
- where this cannot be entered directly into the cover sheet a signed copy of the agreed declaration can be added to the designated cell on the cover sheet

The validation on this page will show as a 'Fail' where the primary contact details and DCS contact details (if required) have not been entered and the declaration has not been completed correctly, specifically the statement is ticked and the signature entered.

Additional information is included in the cover sheet showing the sections of the workbook that form part of the data collection exercise. These are:

- 2019 to 2020 high needs data
- place change notification
- hospital education
- validation sheet

There is a brief description of the areas covered and a hyperlink to the different sheets to help navigate around the workbook.

6.3 2019 to 2020 high needs data sheet

This sheet contains details of 2019 to 2020 high needs data, correct as of 1 September 2019, for those institution types that are in scope for changes from current high needs places. Refer to 'scope of 2020 to 2021 place change notification process' for a list of institutions that are in scope.

Filters have been applied to allow you to search the data but the worksheet is protected and you will be unable to change this data. Details from this sheet, of any institution you identify as requiring a change, will be replicated in the place change notification sheet.

6.4 Place change notification sheet

The PCN sheet should be used to notify ESFA of changes from 2019 to 2020 high needs places and place values for academies with hospital education funding.

Validation rules are built into the worksheet to ensure correctly formatted data is entered into the cells. In addition, the validation sheet will highlight instances where information is entered incorrectly, for example, data is entered into greyed cells or a unique reference number (URN) appears more than once.

At the top of the sheet is the current validation status (see the section headed Validation Sheet for more details). This will show as 'pass' if the worksheet is completed correctly.

The workbook is split into two sections depending on the reason for change:

- in the first section, local authorities must enter those institutions with the reason for change identified as 'new institution' or 'other', and select the relevant option from the drop down list
- 'change from current high needs places' should be entered in the second section. Entries here must relate to institutions in the 2019 to 2020 high needs data sheet

Two links have been added at the top of the PCN sheet that will help you to navigate between the different sections of the worksheet.

The workbook is designed so that when the reason for change, URN and/or institution type is entered, cells requiring completion will open and change from grey to white backgrounds. For each entry, start at column A and work along the row.

The process for completing the two sections of the sheet are set out below.

New/other change notification

The first section of the workbook (rows 14 to 28) focuses on 'new' and 'other' reasons for change in the academic year 2020 to 2021. Refer to Scope of 2020 to 2021 place change notification process for a list of institutions that are in scope.

Use the 'New / Other' link at the top of the worksheet (row 4) to navigate to this section of the workbook.

How do I decide which drop-down to use

'New' should be selected where:

- new or existing institutions that are in scope of this data collection exercise but were not funded for high needs places in 2019 to 2020
- new SPIs to be funded for high needs places in 2020 to 2021 (subject to due diligence process)
- schools or pupil referral units that were local authority maintained at 1 September 2019, but will convert to an academy on or by 1 January 2020 and require high needs place funding in 2020/21
- special free schools located in the local authority's area that were not open by 1 September 2019, and are not therefore included in the pre-populated data, but that are due to open on or by 1 January 2020

'Other' should be selected to notify ESFA of changes that are not covered by the other options, such as:

- infrastructure changes eg mergers and amalgamations, including mergers across local authorities
- institution name changes

Select the appropriate drop down option in column A of the workbook. The following fields should be completed to allow the proposed change to be processed correctly:

- has the change been agreed (column B): enter 'yes' or 'no'. Implications associated with these options are set out in the outcomes: determining place numbers section
- proposed date of change (column C): the date should be the date the template is completed, or a later date and should be formatted dd/mm/yy
- UKPRN (column D) and UPIN (column E) are for DfE use only and should not be completed
- URN (column F): this must comprise of six numbers, no letters are permitted and should be resourced from Get Information About Schools if you are unsure. If unknown, leave blank
- LAEstab (column G): this must comprise of seven numbers, no letters are permitted. If unknown, leave blank

- institution Name (column H)
- institution Type (column I: select your option from the drop-down list linked to the cell. See Scope of 2020 to 2021 place change notification process for those institution types that are in scope. By selecting the institution type the cells that require updates will become available (changing from grey to white)
- notes (column J): ensure that sufficient detail is supplied to enable EFSA to process the change, for example, details of all colleges involved in a merger

Where needed, add 2020 to 2021 revised place numbers to the open columns in the table (columns K to AT). 2019 to 2020 numbers will not be pre-populated but local authorities may manually enter the 2019 to 2020 place numbers on which an institution's 2019 to 2020 place funding is based, for information.

Change from current high needs places

The second section (rows 32 to 122) allows you to request changes to high needs places for academic year 2020 to 2021.

What should be included under the option 'change from current high needs places'

Select this option where:

- a change in place numbers is required for any institution funded by ESFA in the 2019 to 2020 academic year and listed on the 2019 to 2020 high needs worksheet

Use the 'Change' link at the top of the worksheet (row 7) to navigate to this section of the workbook.

In this section of the workbook a number of the cells are protected stopping you from entering data into them, for example, there is no drop-down option in column A and the reason for change is fixed. The following cells must be completed:

- has the change been agreed (column B) – enter 'yes' or 'no'. Refer to 'agreed cases' section for the implications associated with these options
- URN (column F) – this must comprise of six numbers, no letters are permitted

Upon entering the URN the institution details and place numbers will automatically populate the appropriate fields. This default information is retrieved from the 2019 to 2020 high needs data sheet.

Previously greyed out cells will change to white and open to allow you to enter data where applicable. If cells remain grey then these columns will not relate to the institution type associated with the school and they should not be completed.

Select the 2020 to 2021 revised place numbers cell that you want to change.

Enter the total number of places you require, not the difference between the new and old place numbers. For example, if a school has 13 pre-16 high needs places and a total of 20 places is required, enter 20.

The difference between the new and old place numbers will appear in the following cell 'Difference in 2020 to 2021 against 2019 to 2020'.

Where no change is required leave the cell blank and the 2019 to 2020 place numbers will automatically roll-forward. If '0' is entered into the 2020 to 2021 revised place number columns, the final place numbers will be set at zero.

Columns AO and AS allow changes relating to hospital education place numbers and/or the per place amount for academies only. The difference in place numbers and per place funding when compared to 2019/20 is calculated in columns AP and AS respectively. The total hospital education funding is calculated in column AT for each applicable institution.

Columns AW to AY calculates the total high needs places (excluding hospital education) for each institution.

A summary of all place changes applied to 2020 to 2021 data is set out at the top of the worksheet (row 6, starting at column I).

6.5 Hospital education template

This sheet can be used to submit requests to change hospital education funding at a local authority level for 2020 to 2021. Further information on what changes can be included in this workbook are detailed in the [2020 to 2021 Local authority hospital education funding](#) change guide.

Where a change is required, provide:

- hospital provider details including NHS provider, the change in medical provision, date of change and confirmation that NHS evidence is provided at cell A6
- education provider details including name of education provider, education provider type, LAestab (if relevant), current hospital education funding and the change in funding required at cell A19. Please also set out the impact of the change in medical provision on the education provision required in the additional information box
- resource required breakdown – provide a breakdown of additional resource required and associated costs at cell A32. Total funding will be calculated in cell C44
- attach evidence to cell A50. Instruction on how to insert a document is set out in cells A57 to A61. The type of evidence ESFA will require is set out in the guidance

6.6 Validation sheet

The validation sheet has been added as a check for local authorities to ensure the workbook is completed correctly. Prior to submitting the completed workbook to ESFA, all values within the validation table should show 'pass'. ESFA will request corrective action and a resubmission where a validation result shows as 'fail'.

- cell D2 gives the overall validation status of the workbook.
- cell D4 and D7 shows the final validation status concerning the cover sheet and the signed declaration. Note: the DCS signature is only required if the hospital education template is completed and is not included in this validation check
- cell D11 shows the status of the PCN sheet. Where this shows as 'fail', refer to row 18. This gives the summary status for each column where data can be entered. Where a 'fail' appears search that column in the table below to identify the cell containing the error, this will be highlighted in red. This table reflects the format of the PCN sheet and you can use this to locate the cell that has been populated incorrectly on the PCN sheet
- cells D13 and E13 show the status of the hospital education template and amount requested by the local authority. This will show as a pass, but you should ensure the amount is correct.

As with the PCN sheet, links have been added to the validation sheet to direct you to the two sections of the workbook relating to 'new/other' entries and changes from current high needs places.

6.7 Place change notification lookups sheet

The information contained within this sheet is lookup data that supports drop-down tables on the place change notification sheet. No action is required with regard to this sheet.

7. Outcomes: determining 2020 to 2021 place numbers

ESFA will publish the outcomes of this process, based on local authority returns, in January 2020.

7.1 Agreed changes

ESFA will update an institution's 2020 to 2021 place funding to reflect the

numbers notified by the local authority where recorded as 'agreed' with the institution. This will be reflected in the outcomes published in January.

Where post-16 place numbers at academies, or pre-16 place numbers for SEN units at mainstream academies, have been agreed but were not funded in 2019 to 2020, ESFA will check that the academy's funding agreement has a sixth form, or specialist provision for an SEN unit. If it does not, the published outcomes will record the change as agreed, subject to approval of such provision through the formal process for [making significant changes to an academy](#). Place funding will not however, be included in the 2020 to 2021 allocation until a signed deed of variation is received.

7.2 Special Post-16 Institutions (SPIs): due diligence process

Local authorities should enter details in their workbook return of SPIs that they are proposing would be funded directly by ESFA for the first time in 2020 to 2021. The local authority in which the SPI is located is responsible for including such SPIs in their return. The return must include the total number of student places for which the SPI is to be funded, and to be eligible for consideration for ESFA funding, these SPIs must have at least ten student places identified for 2020 to 2021. The deadline for the workbook return is 15 November 2019. Those SPIs will be subject to a due diligence process undertaken by the ESFA to assess if they are eligible to be funded. The costs of these places will mainly be met from local authorities' high needs allocations, on a lagged basis through the operation of the import/export adjustment in the national funding formula.

Following the place change notification process the ESFA will contact eligible SPIs to begin a due diligence process. Further information on the process and the requirements institutions must meet to become eligible for ESFA funding will be available in due course. Local authorities are able to commission and fund the full cost of placements in those SPIs that are not in receipt of funding from the ESFA, subject to their own due diligence. It's therefore only necessary to include on the workbook details of those SPIs for which the local authority is requesting that place funding is paid directly from ESFA for the first time.

7.3 Not agreed changes

Mainstream academies and free schools and AP academies

Where place number changes are marked as 'not agreed' for mainstream academies and free schools or AP academies, a change in place numbers will not be made and the January published outcomes will remain as the 2019 to 2020 place numbers that have been funded.

We expect there to be continuing dialogue between the relevant local authorities and institution in order agree the place numbers. Local authorities and institutions may then use the enquiry window to notify ESFA of changes in places numbers that are agreed after 15 November 2019.

Local authorities and institutions may provide further information via the enquiry window process in the exceptional circumstance that a place number change remains not agreed. ESFA will consider requests to change the number of places. ESFA may seek additional information and will take in to account all available pupil number and other data, when considering the requested change. The 2019 to 2020 place numbers may be used unless there is evidence that another number would be more appropriate. Alternatively, ESFA may hold funding back from the institution, providing an allocation based on a lower place number and make a deduction from the local authority's high needs allocation on the basis of a higher place number, until a place number is agreed.

Special academies, special free schools, 16-19 academies, FE institutions and ILPs

ESFA will consider notifications of place changes marked as not agreed with a special academy, special free school, 16-19 academy, 16-19 free school, FE institution or ILP. We expect to receive very few requests not agreed with institutions. If a change is not agreed with an institution, local authorities must report the number of places they are prepared to fund, reflecting the needs of all local authorities, and not the number of places the institution is seeking.

The principles set out below will be used to determine the 2020 to 2021 academic year place numbers which will be published in January 2020, where those place numbers are marked as not agreed with special academies, special free schools, 16-19 academies, 16-19 free schools, FE and ILP institutions. Decisions will be informed by the published January 2019 school census and 2018 to 2019 R14 individualised learner record (ILR) data. We'll publish the ILR R14 data for the 2018 to 2019 full academic year at the end of November 2019.

These principles should assist local negotiations and can be used to resolve any disputes.

We'll only consider 2020 to 2021 place change notifications not agreed with the institution, where the change is:

- at least 10% of the total 2019 to 2020 academic year places for an institution with more than 50 high needs places, or
- at least 5 places for an institution with less than 50 high needs places in the 2019 to 2020 academic year

For those changes that do not meet the above thresholds, we will use the 2019 to 2020 place numbers. For those changes that exceed the above thresholds, we'll determine the 2020 to 2021 place number by using 2018 to 2019 ILR R14 (for FE colleges, ILPs and 16-19 academies and free schools returning ILR data) and the January 2019 school census data (for special academies and free schools),

and adopt the following three principles:

- where the notification and ILR or school census data confirm a reduction to the 2019 to 2020 place data, we'll change the 2020 to 2021 place numbers to the higher of the ILR/census data or the notification
- where the notification and ILR or school census data confirm an increase to the 2019 to 2020 place data, we'll change the 2020 to 2021 place numbers to the lower of the ILR/census data or the notification
- where a notification to change the 2019 to 2020 place data is not confirmed by the trend in the ILR or school census data, we'll not make any change to the place numbers and the 2019 to 2020 numbers will be used

Examples of how this will work for these institutions are shown below:

Notification	Institution	2019 to 2020 high needs places	Local authority notified	Percent change notified	ILR census data	ESFA decision	Basis for ESFA decision
Decrease to the 2019 to 2020 places	A	93	65	-30%	-67	67	Notification and data show reduction to HNP. ESFA decide on higher number, which in this case is the data.
Increase to 2019 to 2020 places	B	100	120	+20%	130	120	Notification and data show increase to HNP. ESFA decide on lower number, which in this case is the local authority notification.
Increase to 2019 to 2020 places	B	100	120	+20%	130	120	Notification and data show increase to HNP. ESFA decide on lower number, which in this case is the local authority notification.
Decrease to the 2019 to 2020 places	C	50	44	-12%	51	50	Notification shows increase to HNP, but data is lower. ESFA therefore roll forward 2019 to 2020 HNP.
Decrease to the 2019 to 2020 places - below threshold	D	40	36	-10%	36	40	Notification change in 10%, but for 4 places which is below 5 place threshold. Change not agreed.
Increase to the	E	30	35	17%	36	35	Change notification is

Examples showing process for deciding not agreed cases

8. Enquiry window

Following the publication of the place change outcomes in January 2020, there will be a two week window for local authorities and institutions to review the information and raise any enquiries with us about the outcome of the process, including where a place number previously marked as not agreed in the original return has subsequently been agreed. Queries received after this period are unlikely to be considered.

An enquiry can be made by a local authority or an institution. This is also an opportunity for local authorities who commission places at institutions outside their local authority area, to ensure the place numbers at these institutions accurately reflect their needs. If an enquiry is raised, in relation to a commissioning position that hasn't been agreed, we'd expect there to be continuing dialogue between the relevant local authorities and institution in order to resolve the issue.

ESFA will only consider a case to review place change outcomes where:

1. there is clear evidence of agreement on the 2020 to 2021 place number between the local authority and institution after a previous position that was not agreed
2. the impact on place numbers is significant

This is a change of either:

- at least 10% of the total 2019 to 2020 academic year places for an institution with more than 50 high needs places
- at least 5 places for an institution with less than 50 high needs places in the 2019 to 2020 academic year

To make an enquiry about the outcome of the process, a local authority, academy or FE institution must [contact ESFA](#) including '2020 to 2021 high needs place number: enquiry' in the subject, within the two week review period in January 2020. If a local authority is requesting a change, the relevant institution must be copied into the e-mail. If an institution is requesting a change, the relevant local authority must be copied into the e-mail. Please set out the nature of the enquiry clearly, and any background information that provides further context to enable us to consider it.

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