

Correspondence

# ESFA Update further education: 10 June 2020

Updated 10 June 2020

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## 1. Latest information on coronavirus (COVID-19)

The Department for Education has published guidance about [COVID-19 in educational settings for staff, parents and carers, pupils and students](#) on GOV.UK.

There is also [guidance on the apprenticeship service about COVID-19](#).

Please check [GOV.UK](#) regularly for updates.

## 2. Action: applications to the college collaboration fund (CCF)

The college collaboration fund (CCF) is a £5.4 million national programme of competitive grant funding for all statutory further education (FE) colleges. It enables colleges to collaborate, share good practice and benefit from sector expertise to address common quality improvement priorities. The fund builds on the previous strategic college improvement fund.

The CCF was originally launched on Thursday 27 February 2020, but the first application round was then cancelled due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. The second round is now open and supports FE colleges to address current challenges around quality improvement and capitalise on good practice, including that developed through emerging new ways of working.

The deadline for applications is close on Sunday 28 June. [Further information is available on GOV.UK](#).

## 3. Reminder: July financial collection from colleges

On Monday 15 June, we will be releasing templates for a simplified, COVID-19 specific financial return from colleges. These will be made available via GOV.UK. We will be asking colleges to complete and return the following documents by the 31 July 2020:

1. Monthly cash flow template – this is a slightly updated version of the template used in July 2019
2. Financial Health Calculator – this newly developed template calculates financial health with minimal information
3. Commentary – as with most ESFA returns we will be asking for some narrative to provide some context for the financial information.

The submission process will be the same as that used for the February 2020 IFMC collection, via the document upload portal on GOV.UK.

As with the IFMC return we will run webinars, provide guidance along with the same mailbox and response process. We don't anticipate colleges needing as much support as with the February IFMC return but we will monitor requests to ensure it's adequate. Thorough testing will be carried out on the templates before release, however if issues are identified following publication, we will quickly issue any updated templates on GOV.UK.

We discussed this proposal with colleges to ensure it captures the minimum information required to assess the financial impact of COVID-19 on the sector and individual colleges, whilst respecting finance teams are busy managing those impacts in their organisations.

We are only requiring accounting officer to sign-off the return, as we acknowledge that it might not be possible to convene a full governing body sign-off meeting ahead of the return deadline.

We continue to honour our commitment to simplify the IFMC with the sector, however, we appreciate it is not the right time to liaise with the sector on further improvements. Over the past months we have focused on improving the model and removing the errors while simplifying where possible.

## 4. Information: updated apprenticeships performance-management rules for training providers

We have now published an updated version of the [apprenticeship performance-management rules for training providers](#). This document has been updated to cover apprenticeship non-levy extensions from 1 April 2020.

When allocations were issued we committed to review allocations using R09 data (April data submitted in May) to make sure they were set at the right level to fund all carry-in learners. We know that not all providers were able to submit full R09 data so will postpone this review for now. We will communicate more information shortly.

These performance-management rules should be read alongside the relevant funding rules.

If you have any queries, please contact us using our [ESFA online form](#).

## 5. Information: provider relief schemes

Cabinet Office has published [Procurement Policy Note 04/20](#). This builds on the guidance for contracting authorities in PPN02/20, upon which ESFA's provider relief scheme (April to June 2020) was based.

As a consequence of this new guidance, we are considering the options for extending our relief schemes, and will provide further information as soon as possible.

## 6. Information: update to the Advanced Learner Loans funding rules 2020 to 2021

We have published version 1 of the [Advanced Learner Loans funding and performance management rules 2020 to 2021](#).

The main change from the draft, published in April 2020, is the inclusion of the performance management rules which have been revised for 2020 to 2021.

The rules apply to all providers of education and training holding a loan facility condition and loans bursary fund agreement with ESFA.

## 7. Information: Advanced Learner Loans – launch of the 2020 to 2021 application service

The 2020 to 2021 [Advanced Learner Loans application service](#) will open on Monday 15 June 2020 for learners who wish to start eligible qualifications from 1 August 2020 funded with a loan.

## 8. Information: new Advanced Learner Loans funding letter templates

We have updated the [learning and funding information letters for 2020 to 2021](#). You must issue these to learners, including for offenders in custody, who are considering funding their qualification with a loan. We have also published guidance on [how to complete the letters](#).

## 9. Information: keeping children safe in education during the COVID-19 pandemic

We want schools and colleges to be able to focus their efforts on responding to the Covid-19 pandemic. As such, the 2020 Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) consultation which was suspended on 31 March 2020 has been withdrawn.

The majority of the revisions have been withdrawn to be reconsidered for future updates in a full public consultation, the timing of which we will confirm later this year.

There are a small number of revisions that we will still make. These fall into three categories:

- those that reflect legislative changes and as such are essential to ensure the guidance remains accurate
- those that provide additional helpful support and information, such as on mental health and children in need
- important clarifications which will help the sector better understand and/or follow our guidance

We plan to publish revised KCSIE guidance for information in June 2020, to come into force on 1 September 2020.

We will continue to support schools and colleges to keep their children safe during this pandemic. To help do this we have issued non-statutory interim guidance: [coronavirus \(COVID-19\): safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers](#). The guidance supports governing bodies, proprietors, senior leadership teams and designated safeguarding leads so they can continue to have appropriate regard to KCSIE and keep their children safe. It also suggests where schools and colleges might consider safeguarding policy and process differently when compared to business as usual. This guidance is under constant review and was most recently updated on 20 May 2020 to reflect what schools and colleges should consider as more children return to school and college.

It should be noted that while Ofsted's routine school and college inspections are currently suspended to enable leaders to focus on responding to coronavirus, Ofsted retains the power to inspect state-funded schools and colleges if it has significant concerns about safeguarding. The Department for Education also retains the power to commission Ofsted or the Independent Schools Inspectorate (as appropriate) to inspect independent schools if it has significant concerns about safeguarding.

Schools and colleges should also continue to consider and make referrals to the Teaching Regulation Agency (TRA) as per paragraph 166 of [KCSIE](#) and the TRA's [advice for making a referral](#). During the coronavirus period all referrals should be made by emailing [misconduct.teacher@education.gov.uk](mailto:misconduct.teacher@education.gov.uk). All referrals received by the TRA will continue to be considered.

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