

Correspondence

ESFA Update further education: 22 July 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: Education and Skills agreements for 2020 to 2021

Providers should now be receiving their Education and Skills agreements for 2020 to 2021 via the [Manage Your Education and Skills Funding Service \(MYESF\)](#).

To guarantee initial payment in August 2020, providers should ensure that the agreement is signed in MYESF by Friday, 31 July 2020.

3. Reminder: July financial collection from colleges deadline

On Monday 15 June 2020, we released templates for a simplified, COVID-19 specific financial return from colleges. These were made available via [GOV.UK](#). We are reminding colleges to complete and return the following documents by Friday, 31 July 2020:

1. [Monthly cash flow template](#) – this is a slightly updated version of the template used in July 2019 Item
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 Integrated financial model for colleges (IFMC) collection, via the document upload portal on GOV.UK.

We are only requiring accounting officers 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 will be providing guidance and support through the [ESFA's online enquiry form](#) in place of the mailbox previously used. Please ensure you select 'College Financial Returns' under query type, and reference 'COVID-19 July financial return' in the body of the query.

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. Reminder: Change of Control/Ownership

We would like to remind providers about the contractual requirement to give ESFA 12 weeks' notice, of any notice of intended, or proposed change of control / ownership of the contractor.

For further information, please refer to the relevant Change in Control/Change in Ownership (or equivalent) clauses within your respective contracts and funding agreements with the ESFA.

When the ESFA is made aware of any changes of control, or ownership, we will undertake appropriate due diligence checks. This is to consider whether the change is permissible, under Regulation 72 of the Public Contracts Regulations, and/or in breach of RoATP Conditions of Acceptance and/or in breach any other ESFA policies or contractual requirements.

If you have any queries, please contact us [via the ESFA enquiry form](#).

5. Information: Provider Relief Scheme (July - October 2020)

ESFA have begun to assess applications to the Provider Relief Scheme and will begin to notify applicants of the outcomes from today. We expect to notify all applicants by 6 August, as previously communicated, and we would ask for your patience in the meantime

6. Information: Sector-based work academies

On Wednesday 8 July the Chancellor announced in ['A Plan for Jobs 2020'](#) additional funding to increase sector-based work academies placements in England for the 2020 to 2021 financial year.

Key points

This [DWP scheme](#) is designed to help Jobcentre Plus (JCP) claimants build confidence to improve their job prospects whilst helping employers in sectors with current local vacancies to fill them. The scheme lasts up to 6 weeks, and has 3 components:

- pre-employment training
- work experience placement
- a guaranteed job interview

ESFA Adult Education Budget (AEB) can fund pre-employment training, the average course length is 2 to 3 weeks.

JCP fund the work placement and job interview components.

ESFA will allocate additional funding before end of August so delivery can start from Tuesday 1 September.

More information will be available in next version (v2) of [ESFA AEB funding rules 2020 to 2021](#).

7. Information: revised guidance for the 2020 to 2021 academic year delivery of industry placements, capacity and delivery fund

As a consequence of the impact COVID-19 has had on delivery of industry placements and the ability of providers to build capacity in the second half of the 2019 to 2020 academic year, the industry placement delivery target has been reduced to 25% of qualifying students for the 2020 to 2021 academic year.

ESFA will also allow delivery across two academic years where students commence a two-year programme beginning in 2020 to 2021 and where a minimum of 50% of placements are successfully completed by the end of the 2020 to 2021 academic year.

All providers with a capacity and delivery fund allocation will receive a letter outlining their 2020 to 2021 academic year delivery targets and the required level 2 and level 3 split.

8. Information: apprenticeships carry-in allocations for the 2020 to 2021 funding year

We have now issued apprenticeships carry-in allocations for the 2020 to 2021 funding year through [Manage your education and skills funding \(MYESF\)](#). These allocations include funding for learners that started:

- before 1 May 2017 (under the old funding system)
- with non-levy employers between 1 May and 31 December 2017 (under the new funding system)
- with non-levy employers between 1 January and 31 March 2018 (if you were offered a 3 month run-down

extension as a result of being unsuccessful in the non-levy procurement). We have updated the [19+ technical guidance](#) and [the apprenticeship performance-management rules for training providers](#). If you have any queries, please contact us using our [ESFA online enquiry form](#).

9. Information: 2019 to 2020 final claim reconciliation

This is relevant to the following funding streams:

- grant funded adult education budget (AEB) (adult skills, 19 to 24 traineeships and community learning)
- learner support for AEB Procured (adult skills and 19 to 24 traineeships) – paid-on-profile
- grant funded Advanced Learner Loans Bursary (ALLB)

Further to the [COVID-19 guidance for further education and skills providers](#) we published in March 2020, we will provide further details on the reconciliation process in updated guidance during August. In summary, we will not be reconciling grant agreements with those providers that have attempted to continue delivering during the COVID period and have delivered in excess of 80% of their allocation. Where providers fall below this threshold and under delivery by more than £10,000, we will fund the actual costs of delivery for these grants. We will fund over-delivery as set out in the funding rules.

If you have any queries please use the [enquiry form](#).

10. Information: post-16 audit code of practice for 2019 to 2020

We have updated the [post-16 audit code of practice](#) for 2019 to 2020.

The audit code sets out a common standard for the provision of assurance for all post-16 providers, including sixth form and further education colleges and independent training providers. We have also updated the regularity self-assessment questionnaire to help sixth-form and further education colleges evidence compliance for their auditors.

11. Information: Summer support to new & existing learners – best practice toolkit of case studies

We recognise that colleges, providers and stakeholders have worked harder than ever to ensure learners stay engaged during these challenging times. Over the summer, the focus will be on how new starters and returning learners are supported into settings in September.

We have collected examples from providers and local authorities who are putting in place innovative steps to support young people joining or returning to further education, and to reduce the risk of learners becoming not in employment, education, or training (NEET).

[This information](#) is intended to provide an opportunity for colleges, local authorities and other providers to learn from emerging best practice and develop their approach to support new and existing students over the summer.

12. Information: guidance on the coronavirus (COVID-19) catch-up premium

In June we announced a £1 billion catch-up package to support pupils who may have fallen behind this due to lost teaching time as a result of the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. This package includes:

- a one-off universal £650 million catch-up premium for the 2020 to 2021 academic year to ensure that schools have the support they need to help all pupils make up for lost teaching time. This funding will be available for all state-funded mainstream and special schools, and alternative provision.
- a £350 million National Tutoring Programme to provide additional, targeted support for those children and young people who need the most help.

Full details on eligibility, funding allocation, payments and use of the funds can be found in the [guidance on the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) catch-up premium](#).

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