



Correspondence

ESFA Update further education: 14 October 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. Information: completing the FE education setting status form webinar – Thursday 15 October at 3:15pm

We are hosting a one-hour webinar on Thursday 15 October at 3:15pm for heads of management information and similar roles in FE colleges responsible for completing the department’s daily [educational setting status form](#).

We will use this session to explain the purpose of the form, summarise the key changes made through the update to the form on Monday 12 October. You will also be able to raise questions in advance and on the day with our presenters. Please submit questions to enquiries_esfa@education.gov.uk.

Please take the opportunity to look at our [updated guidance](#) in advance of the session.

[Register here](#) for the webinar.

3. Reminder: submit your final 2019 to 2020 ILR

R14 is open for your final return for the 2019 to 2020 academic year. This is the final opportunity to submit individualised learner record (ILR) data for 2019 to 2020. The data cannot be updated or amended after R14 closes on Thursday 22 October.

It is important that your data is submitted error free, accurate and complete because errors or incomplete returns can impact on the payments your organisation receives. We recommend you submit your data as early as possible and that you check your validation and funding reports, available on [Submit learner data](#). Providers leaving their submissions until the last minute run the risk of not having made a submission by the deadline to guarantee payments.

To help, we have produced guidance to correct the [most common data errors](#) experienced over the last 3 months. You can contact our customer service team for assistance on specific issues and support not covered by this guidance. Some issues may take some time to resolve and it may not be possible to clear those raised very close to the deadline, so we strongly recommend that you take prompt action to ensure your return is correct and complete.

You can contact us by using our [enquiry form](#).

4. Information: coronavirus testing kits for further education providers

Additional coronavirus (COVID-19) testing kits are available for further education (FE) providers to order via the [online portal](#) for use in line with our [guidance](#). These kits are only for those who develop one of the [symptoms of coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) and face significant barriers to accessing a test.

FE providers will have received a unique organisation number (UON) via email from the Department of Health and Social Care which will be needed to place the order. Please call the Test and Trace helpdesk on 119 if you have not received your UON or if you have lost your record of it.

5. Information: the Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers 2020 live broadcast - register now

We are pleased to announce that [registrations are now open](#) for the live broadcast of the Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers 2020.

The new rankings will be announced at 3pm on Wednesday 21 October, via a special live broadcast and is open to everyone to join. This broadcast will feature a full countdown of the Top 100, presentation of the research and analysis and interviews with employers and apprentices.

These employer rankings will annually rate the Top 100 Large Apprenticeship Employers, and recognise their commitment to employing apprentices, the creation of new apprenticeships, the diversity of their new apprentices, and the progression of their apprentices onto further apprenticeships and employment.

For further information, follow our apprenticeship social media channels, and further details will be [published on our website](#).

6. Information: 19 to 24 traineeship procurement opportunity for existing and new providers

Following the publication of the government’s [Plan for Jobs](#), which included a £111 million investment to triple the number of traineeships available in 2020 to 2021, ESFA are running a procurement opportunity so providers and employer providers can access funding to deliver 19 to 24 funded traineeship growth.

We will be looking for providers and employer providers who have the capacity to start providing high-quality traineeships from the beginning of February 2021 through a ring-fenced contract for service. In addition to the procurement opportunity, we are introducing a new employer incentive of £1,000 to incentivise employers to offer new traineeship work placements and support with the employer’s costs in setting up their offer. The new incentive payment will only apply during the 2020 to 2021 academic year. More information on the employer incentive will be available shortly.

In July 2020 we published a news story which provided details on how potential applicants can [register for the procurement](#). Within the narrative it states that opportunities to bid for additional 19 to 24 traineeship funding will be handled through the Department for Education’s [e-sourcing portal](#). Organisations who do not already have an existing account must register for one, as this is the only method to access tendering documentation.

ESFA will be administering the procurement process electronically via [Jaggaer](#) the DfE e-Procurement Solution (e-PS) portal. Potential applicants can access Jaggaer via a web browser and potential applicants are required to submit their Tenders in accordance with the instructions set out in Jaggaer and the ITT.

Existing 2020 to 2021 AEB Contract for Services will expire on 31 July 2021. Training providers that wish to deliver 19 to 24 traineeship starts from 1 August 2021 must successfully secure a new contract through the current traineeship ITT procurement process. This expiration applies to Contracts for Services only and not grants, which do not expire.

The traineeship procurement application window opened on 7 October 2020 and the deadline for receipt of the completed Tenders is 5pm on Wednesday 28 October 2020. The deadline for enquiries and clarifications is noon on Friday 23 October 2020.

Find [more information on the traineeship programme](#) on GOV.UK.

7. Information: Functional Skills Qualifications (FSQs) legacy end dates

In May, we extended the end dates for legacy English and maths FSQs from 31 August to 31 December 2020 to allow more time for continuing learners to complete their assessments following the closure of most educational settings over the summer.

The Secretary of State has agreed to further extend the regulation end dates to 31 July 2021. This is to allow sufficient time for continuing learners only to complete outstanding assessments from the ongoing disruptions from the COVID-19 pandemic. Once the relevant awarding organisations have extended certification end dates of these qualifications on Ofqual’s Register of regulated qualifications, we will update the Learning Aim Reference Service (LARS).

Where there are ongoing difficulties with training and assessment, we are asking employers to work flexibly with providers to enable apprentices to complete their FSQ assessments.

For further information please contact your awarding organisation.

8. Information: eligibility for calculated results – clarified guidance

Ofqual recently issued a communication to awarding organisations reiterating the circumstances under which a calculated result can or cannot be utilised, and where it cannot, what awarding organisations are expected to do instead.

To be eligible for a calculated result, a learner must have expected to sit an assessment(s) for a qualification that was in scope for issuing calculated results during the period 20 March to 31 July 2020. The award of the calculated result must be based on trusted evidence.

Learners who were ready to sit an assessment during this period would only be eligible for a calculated result if sufficient trusted evidence existed during the period of eligibility (i.e. 20 March to 31 July 2020) upon which to base their result. Evidence that was generated after 31 July cannot be used.

For more detailed information, please speak to your awarding organisation.

9. Information: Level 2 Apprenticeships Functional Skills requirements

We have published [guidance for apprentices, employers, training provider, end-point assessment organisations \(EPAOs\) and external quality assurance providers](#) about flexibility to apprenticeship funding rules due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

This, and our updated [apprenticeship funding rules](#), include the current temporary suspension of the rule requiring level 2 apprentices to study towards, and attempt, level 2 functional skills assessments until 31 December 2020.

Due to ongoing disruptions to assessments, we are extending this suspension until 31 March 2021. A level 2 apprentice will still require a level 1 functional skills in English and/or maths to complete their apprenticeship. The temporary suspension applies to both apprenticeship standards and frameworks.

Our apprenticeship rules will be updated to reflect this change.

10. Information: funding claims 2019 to 2020 - final claim

Your 2019 to 2020 final claim form will be available on [Submit learner data](#) from 9am Monday 26 October and will close at 5pm Tuesday 3 November.

You must sign your claim digitally on [Manage your education and skills funding](#) by 5pm on Wednesday 4 November by your principal or a delegated authority. You will need to submit and sign a claim if you receive funds through:

- 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)
- 16 to 19 education

Once you have submitted your claim on [Submit learner data](#), you will be able to view it and sign it on [Manage your education and skills funding](#) within 15 minutes.

You can find the [funding claims guidance](#) on GOV.UK and there is separate [guidance for 16 to 19 education funding](#).

The [user guide to help you complete the form](#) will be available before claims open.

If you have any queries about this, please contact your Territorial Manager.

11. Information: funding to local transport authorities

We are providing over £27 million to local transport authorities (LTAs) to continue to support children and young people getting to school or college this term. This is in addition to more than [£40 million of funding announced on 8 August](#), which has already helped thousands of children and young to get to school or college in the first part of the autumn term.

The funding has been allocated based on LTAs own spend from the first half of the term and forecasts for the second half. LTAs will continue to have the flexibility in how they use the funding to meet the needs of local families.

Through the grant agreement, we have asked LTAs to consider the needs of FE students in their plans, and where FE providers are experiencing transport challenges as a result of COVID-19, we encourage FE providers to work with LTAs to ensure that the transport for their students can be met. LTAs may choose to provide coach services for 16 to 19 students directly or, for example, allocate funding to individual colleges to arrange their own transport services where this is needed as a result of social distancing on public transport.

12. Information: grants to reduce carbon emissions, save energy and reduce bills

12.1 Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme

As part of a wider plan to upgrade the nation’s buildings, the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) last week launched the £1 billion [Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme \(PSDS\)](#).

The PSDS will help public sector organisations in England, including Institutions of further and higher education, maintained schools, academies and free schools, to install energy efficiency and low carbon heating measures, reducing energy bills and carbon emissions. The deadline for application for the PSDS is 11 January 2021.

12.2 Low Carbon Skills Fund

To support this scheme, BEIS also launched the [Low Carbon Skills Fund](#), providing funding for developing bids and delivering projects. The deadline for application is the 4 December 2020.

For details on how to apply and further guidance, visit [Salix Finance](#).

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Coronavirus (COVID-19) The UK has left the EU

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance and support](#) [Check the new rules for January 2021](#)

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