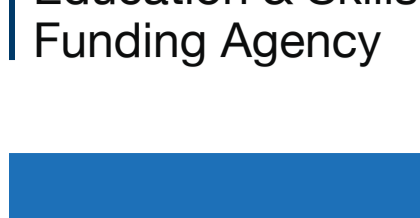




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Correspondence

ESFA Update further education: 21 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. Reminder: apprenticeship service new employer agreement

In August 2020 we published the latest version of [ESFA Apprenticeship Agreement for Employers](#). This agreement is available for employers to view and accept through the Organisations and Agreements section of their apprenticeship service account. Employers who choose to accept the latest agreement will be able to apply for incentive payments for hiring a new apprentice through their account.

Employers who accepted a legal agreement prior to 9 January 2020, will need to accept the latest agreement if they wish to apply for incentive payments, record new apprenticeship starts, make changes to existing apprenticeships, and advertise vacancies. If employers choose not to accept the new agreement, they will still be able to view any current apprenticeships and funding will still flow from their levy account to pay for training under their existing agreement.

3. Reminder: funding claims 2019 to 2020 – final claim

Your 2019 to 2020 final claim form will be available on [Submit learner data](#) from 9am on Monday 26 October and will close at 5pm on 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 updated [funding claims guidance](#) on GOV.UK which includes a section on the reconciliation business case process.

There is separate [guidance for 16 to 19 education funding](#).

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

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

For [further information](#) visit GOV.UK.

4. 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.

5. Information: redundant apprentices - statutory instrument

New legislation allowing more redundant apprentices to complete their apprenticeships came into force on Thursday 15 October.

Currently ESFA continue to fund the apprentice to complete their programme if they are made redundant within 6 months of their final day of training. This allows apprentices that are close to the end of their apprenticeship to continue on their programme while they look for another employer to complete their apprenticeship with, or, if they are unable to find one, allow them to complete their apprenticeship without an employer.

The amended legislation will help to support more redundant apprentices affected by COVID-19. The amended legislation will extend this support to also fund to completion all apprentices who are at least 75% of their way through their apprenticeship at the point of redundancy. This will give apprentices who have made a substantial and long-term investment in their apprenticeship the opportunity to complete their training, and achieve occupational competence.

These changes will mean more redundant apprentices can complete their apprenticeship, putting them in a stronger position to secure new employment. The change applies to apprentices undertaking both standards and frameworks.

The Redundancy Support Service for apprentices continues, providing free advice and guidance to apprentices affected by redundancy, as well as helping them to identify new apprenticeship opportunities available across the country.

[More information](#) is available on GOV.UK.

6. Information: updated apprenticeship funding rules for 2020 to 2021

We have published version 2 of the [ESFA apprenticeship funding rules 2020 to 2021](#).

These documents set out the rules for apprenticeship funding, including the evidence required to support it and apply to apprenticeship starts from 1 August 2020.

The rules are being updated to reflect the new secondary legislation relating to redundancy, which came into force on 15 October 2020, as well as a number of other clarifications.

They should be read alongside the [apprenticeship response to coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) as some of these flexibilities are continuing.

The changes we have made are detailed in the summary of changes which can be found on the [apprenticeship funding rules](#) page on GOV.UK.

7. Information: adult education budget (AEB) delayed assessments

Some students may still be finishing assessments where they had originally planned to complete their learning by 31 July 2020, because [assessments have been delayed](#). Therefore, there may be AEB achievements that will not be recorded in time for R14 and subsequently will not be funded through our usual processes. If providers have not been able to record these achievements in the 2019 to 2020 R14 ILR, and can record them in the 2020 to 2021 R04 ILR, we will pay this outside of our usual processes.

We expect providers with procured AEB contracts and contract for service providers only to be affected. Providers paid through grant should not be affected as they should be covered by the lower end of year reconciliation tolerance; however if you feel you are affected by this then please contact us through the [enquiry form](#) (asking to go to 'Funding 19+ Calculations').

We will contact affected providers in mid-January with the amounts we intend to pay, and this will be in provider's accounts on 31 January.

8. Information: version 4, ESFA adult education budget (AEB) funding and performance management rules 2020 to 2021

We have published version 4 of the [ESFA AEB funding and performance management rules 2020 to 2021](#). This version reflects the changes the Department for Work and Pensions have made to the take-home pay threshold as recorded on an individual's Universal Credit statement. The threshold is used to calculate an individual's eligibility for unemployed status and uses the take-home pay figure only disregarding any benefits the individual receives, including Universal Credit.

If an individual is not eligible for full funding under the unemployed definition, they may be eligible under "learners in receipt of low wage" if they earn less than £17,004 a year.

ESFA is committed to engaging those adults who are the furthest away from the job market and provide the skills and learning they need to equip them for work, apprenticeships and other learning.

The rules apply to all providers of education and training who receive AEB funding from the Secretary of State for Education acting through the ESFA. If you have any queries, please use our [online enquiry form](#) or speak to your territorial lead contact.

9. Information: Incentive for Hiring a New Apprentice – Recap

Employers large and small can [apply for large cash incentives](#) designed to create more high-quality apprenticeship opportunities.

As part of the [Government's Plan for Jobs](#), employers are being offered £2,000 for each new apprentice aged and over, 25 they hire, and £1,500 for each new apprentice they hire aged 25 and over, up to the 31 January 2021. This includes taking on an apprentice who has been made redundant.

The new cash incentives for employers are in addition to the existing £1,000 payment for new 16-18-year-old apprentices, and those aged under 25 with an Education, Health and Care plan.

The [incentive payment for hiring a new apprentice](#) is different to the apprenticeship levy and can be used on anything to support organisational costs, for example facilities, uniforms, apprentice's travel or their salary.

Any organisation can apply for the payment, no matter the size or the sector. Applications must be made through the Apprenticeship Service, employers not currently registered will be able to set up an account.

The apprenticeships incentive is one of a [number of skills offers for employers offering financial incentives](#) – including Traineeships and Kickstart – as part of the Government's economic recovery package.

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