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Correspondence

ESFA Update academies: 4 November 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](#).

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

2. Information: Academy trust virtual finance director's networking event

We are hosting the first academy trust virtual finance director's networking event on Thursday 21 January 2021 from 9.30am to 1pm.

Join us to hear keynote addresses from:

- Baroness Berridge, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the School System
- Eileen Milner, ESFA Chief Executive
- Warwick Sharp, Director, Academies and Maintained Schools Directorate, ESFA

We will be covering key themes, including:

- funding policy
- financial governance
- bringing a new school in to a MAT
- effective procurement

This will be a live event using MS Teams. We will issue joining instructions in December along with information about how to submit questions ahead of the event.

Please reserve your place using [Eventbrite](#).

3. Information: View my financial insights webinars

We have arranged a schedule of webinars to help you to familiarise yourselves with the view my financial insights (VMFI) tool.

Please register for your preferred date:

- [Wednesday 11 November from 2pm to 3pm](#)
- [Thursday 19 November from 1pm to 2pm](#)
- [Tuesday 24 November from 12pm to 1pm](#)

4. Information: automating your academies accounts return

We are working with two financial management software suppliers to pilot new technology that enables you to send data directly from your financial management system (FMS) to the Department for Education (DfE). Our intention is to roll out this functionality to the whole academy sector.

You can read our [quick start guide](#) to automating your accounts return. This shows you the three simple steps you need to take to get up to 80% of your academies accounts return pre-populated with data you hold in your software system.

We have also produced a short video demonstrating the new automation functionality.

4.1 Can I use automation?

In order to use automation you first need to have adopted, or mapped to, the academies chart of accounts.

If you have already adopted or mapped to the academies chart of accounts, please check with your software supplier to see if they offer this option as you may be able to use automation.

If you haven't yet adopted or mapped to the academies chart of accounts, please see more information about our [academies chart of accounts](#) and talk to your supplier about switching over.

5. Information: 16 to 19 tuition fund

Revised allocations statements are now available on ESFA Information Exchange for providers that returned a completed opt-in form between the 20 September and the final deadline of the 14 October. The payments the new total funding allocation inclusive of the [16 to 19 tuition fund](#). Payments will normally commence in December. For FE institutions and local authorities (where maintained sixth forms have opted in) contract variations will be issued during November and will need to be signed by the end of the month to ensure payment in December. This contract variation can only be issued where there are no variations currently awaiting signature. Please review your account on [MYESE](#) to ensure you have nothing outstanding.

Full details of eligibility are given in the guidance on the [16 to 19 tuition fund](#). Note that special schools and special academies are not in scope for the 16 to 19 tuition fund as all of their provision is covered by the [schools catch-up premium funding](#).

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