

Correspondence

ESFA Update further education: 9 December 2020

Published 9 December 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: post-16 contract variations – check for yours during December

There are a large number of contract variations to be published during December. These variations will need to be signed by 31 December (16 to 19) or 5 January (adult). ESFA aim to publish these as early as possible, but this may be after your establishment has closed for the Christmas break.

Please ensure your contract authoriser checks periodically through December, especially if they do not have access to the email account where they would receive alerts. Contract variations awaiting signature in MYESF can be accessed from any device as long as you have your logon and password as it is a web-based solution found on [Manage your education and skills funding](#). Any variations signed after these deadlines will trigger increased payments in the following month.

3. Action: launch of DfE exam support service claims process

The [DfE exam support service](#) claims process is now live.

We have also published [guidance](#) to help you use the DfE exam support service.

Schools and colleges can use the service to make claims to cover costs, including:

- any net loss for exam fees charged by awarding organisations
- venues for alternative sites (externally booked)
- any net loss for invigilation (externally sourced)

The deadline for submitting a claim is 6 April 2021.

4. Information: college finance record

An updated version (1.1) of the college finance record has been published on the [College Accounts Direction webpage](#), replacing version 1.0. This is due to a formula error in version 1.0 on schedule 3a. This only impacts colleges in receipt of Provider Relief Scheme funding.

Details of the update are on the contents page of the finance record under 'version control'.

If you are affected by this change and have already started to populate version 1.0, the ESFA can update your finance record and return it to you. Please send your request, along with your finance record, to PRA.financialhealth@education.gov.uk.

5. Information: National Apprenticeship Week 2021(NAW2021)

"Build the Future" is the theme for NAW2021, taking place between 8 and 14 February 2021, aiming to encourage everyone to consider how apprenticeships help individuals to build the skills and knowledge required for a rewarding career.

The 14th annual week-long celebration of apprenticeships, taking place across England, will showcase the impact apprenticeships can have on communities, local businesses and regional economies and how they all benefit from the impact of apprenticeships.

[Read more about the week](#), and how to get involved, on GOV.UK.

6. Information: National Skills offer

6.1 Level 3 adult offer

From April 2021, any adult aged 24 and over who wants to achieve their first full level 3 qualification will be able to access almost 400 fully funded courses to get the skills they need to boost their careers.

This £95m investment is part of the Lifetime Skills Guarantee announced by the Prime Minister in September 2020. The [courses on offer](#) will deliver a wide range of skills in many jobs and sectors.

This investment comes from the £2.5 billion National Skills Fund, the Fund will support immediate economic recovery and future skills needs by boosting the supply of skills that employers require.

6.2 Skills Bootcamps

As part of the Lifetime Skills Guarantee the Prime Minister also announced a series of Skills Bootcamps. Complementing the Level 3 adult offer, new Skills Bootcamps offer free, flexible courses of just 12 to 16 weeks, giving people the opportunity to build up sector-specific skills and fast-track to an interview with a local employer.

On 2 December £43 million was announced as part of the National Skills Fund to extend Skills Bootcamps further across the country from April in 2021. DfE are keen to engage with interested parties who will design, develop, and implement a new flexible training model of digital or technical training (up to 16 weeks), to meet the needs of employers and to address the skills shortages vacancies in different regions of England. If you are interested, please register by 14 December at 3pm with your organisation name, contact details and job titles (maximum of two attendees per organisation) to E-mail: ELIPT.MAILBOX@education.gov.uk.

[Further information on both the level 3 offer and skills bootcamps](#) can be found on GOV.UK.

7. Information: newly devolved continuing learners within the adult education budget

We have now calculated the final value for newly devolved continuing learners within the adult education budget (AEB). If the value of your continuing learner funding has changed, an updated allocation statement is now available via [Manage your education and skills funding](#).

This funding is a part of overall ESFA funded AEB allocations and we will not manage it separately.

We have used the R14 (October 2020) data return to calculate funding for learners that were in learning in 2019 to 2020 but did not complete their programme by 31 July 2020 within North of Tyne.

If your allocation statement has been updated, your contract will also be updated shortly. We advise providers promptly sign agreements to ensure payments are made on time.

For more information, please see the [19+ allocations technical guidance](#).

If you have any queries, please use the [ESFA online form](#).

8. Information: T Levels employer campaign – December 2020

The first ever T Levels media campaign, targeting employers, launched on 1 December 2020. The awareness raising campaign will run until the end of February 2021, with a short break over the Christmas period.

The campaign will showcase what T Levels are and how they apply to employers. It will build desire and excitement for T Levels, by demonstrating the benefits they offer employers and workplaces; whilst encouraging employers to host industry placement students.

Using display advertising, the campaign will target CEOs, Directors, HR managers, employers and line managers in industries including; design, surveying & construction, digital production, design & development, and education and childcare, to cover the first three T Level sector areas.

To extend reach the T Levels campaign will also target employers through a number of channels including social media – on LinkedIn, Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

T Levels students can make a huge difference to businesses, in England, by giving employers early access to the brightest talent entering the market.

Find out more by visiting: [Industry placement business benefits - T Levels](#).

9. Information: updated provider data self-assessment toolkit

We have released an updated version of the provider data self-assessment toolkit (PDSAT) on the [PDSAT section of GOV.UK](#).

This version includes an update to the sampler, enabling users to select audit samples and output a set of audit working papers for the 2020 to 2021 funding year.

PDSAT is available to providers of ESFA funded education and training to assist with their routine ILR data-checking procedures for their ILR data returns and with preparation for funding assurance reviews.

For further information, please use the [ESFA online form](#).

10. Information: removing funding approval from some digital skills qualifications: entry level and level 1

From 1 August 2021, we will remove funding approval from some existing qualifications for information and communication technology (ICT) and digital skills.

We are doing this as part of the Department for Education's work to reform essential digital skills. This reform will make sure students have access to high quality provision that will equip them with the digital skills they need for life and work.

You can find the [list of qualifications with removed funding approval](#) and [more information about why we are doing this](#) on the GOV.UK website.

If you have any further queries, please use our [contact form](#).

11. Information: removing funding approval from qualifications with no ESFA-funded enrolments

From 1 August 2021, we will remove funding approval from qualifications that had no ESFA-funded enrolments in the funding years 2015 to 2016, 2016 to 2017, and 2017 to 2018.

We have published the [list of these qualifications](#) on the GOV.UK website. The list is the outcome from a review process that we announced in February 2020, to support the [review of post 16 qualifications at level 3 and below](#).

If you have any further queries, please use our [contact form](#).

12. Information: colleges receiving emergency funding and insolvency solution funding

We have published details of the [number of colleges that have received emergency funding and insolvency solution funding](#), and the overall funding provided to these colleges. This is the first of such publications and will in future be published annually.

13. Information: qualification achievement rates

[Qualification achievement rates \(QARs\)](#), usually published for certain post-16 providers, were suspended for 2019 to 2020 due to coronavirus (COVID-19).

For 2020 to 2021, the approach for QARs will align with that for school and college performance tables. For 2020 to 2021, QARs will not be published but will be produced and shared securely with providers, Ofsted and DfE.

14. Information: review of the eligible and ineligible costs of apprenticeship training

ESFA is undertaking a review of the eligible and ineligible costs of apprenticeship training, that currently appear in the apprenticeship funding rules. We aim to launch the review on Thursday 10 December. We will be inviting over 600 organisations to take part in the review and these include provider representative bodies; apprenticeship trailblazer groups; employer providers; and the top 30 main providers funded by ESFA.

If you do not receive a direct invite you can contact one of the following organisations and ask for your comments to be included in their response:

- Providers: your representative body (e.g. AOC, AELP, UVAC)
- Employers: the relevant trailblazer group contact for the sector

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Coronavirus (COVID-19) Brexit transition

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

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