



→ [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) | Guidance and support

→ [Brexit transition](#) | Take action now for new rules in 2021

[Home](#) > [Education, training and skills](#) > [Further and higher education, skills and vocational training](#)

> [Further education financial management and data collection](#) > [ESFA Update: 9 December 2020](#)



Education & Skills Funding Agency

# Correspondence

## ESFA Update academies: 9 December 2020

Published 9 December 2020

### Contents

1. Latest information on coronavirus (COVID-19)
2. Action: post-16 contract variations – check for yours during December
3. Action: launch of DfE exam support service claims process
4. Information: virtual academies finance directors’ forum
5. Information: updated model funding agreements
6. Information: updated pupil premium allocations for 2020 to 2021
7. Information: school resource management self-assessment tool
8. Information: Nativity advice
9. Information: qualification achievement rates

[Print this page](#)

### 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. 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: virtual academies finance directors’ forum

We are hosting the first academy trust virtual finance directors’ forum 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:

- bringing a new school into a MAT (presented by Lorraine Hughes, CEO of Cumbria Education Trust)
- funding policy
- financial governance
- effective procurement
- better financial reporting

You can [submit a question ahead of the event](#). Please send your question before Wednesday 16 December 2020. While it may not be possible to address every question specifically, we will attempt to cover as many issues as we can on the day.

This will be a live event using MS Teams and we will issue joining instructions in early January.

If you haven’t already, please reserve your place using [Eventbrite](#).

### 5. Information: updated model funding agreements

Updated [model funding agreements \(FAs\) for academy and free school trusts](#) have been published on GOV.UK.

Changes reflect current legislation and policy as well as some minor drafting changes to aid clarity.

If you have any questions about the new FAs, or would like to discuss updating your current FA to the new version, please contact us using the [ESFA enquiry form](#).

### 6. Information: updated pupil premium allocations for 2020 to 2021

We have updated the published [pupil premium allocations for 2020 to 2021](#):

- to take account of academy conversions up to 1 November 2020
- to update the allocations for looked after children with the information from the March 2020 children looked after data return from local authorities

The allocations for looked after children are paid directly to the local authority to be managed by the Virtual School Head. The [Key to Success website](#) will be updated shortly to reflect these changes.

### 7. Information: school resource management self-assessment tool

We have updated the [school resource management self-assessment tool \(SRMSAT\)](#) to include:

- a revised set of questions in the checklist
- updated guidance
- improved RAG ratings in the dashboard, to reflect the latest data and the recent pay award and pensions contribution changes

Completion of the self-assessment tool is mandatory for academy trusts, on an annual basis.

All academy trusts must complete the self-assessment tool and submit their completed checklist to ESFA by Thursday 15 April 2021. This date has been extended by one month from the published calendar, to take account of the revised deadline for academy trust financial statements. The on-line form will be available in February, to allow the checklist to be reviewed by the board of trustees prior to submission.

We will provide more information and a link to the online form in February.

### 8. Information: Nativity advice

If you are considering hosting a school performance online you may find the following advice helpful produced by the London Grid for Learning on how to do it safely:

[What goes on in Nativity, stays in Nativity...](#) – SafeBlog from LGfL DigiSafe.

### 9. 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.

Is this page useful?

[Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#) | [Brexit transition](#)

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

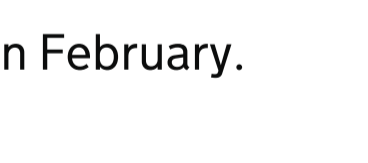
**Services and information** | **Departments and policy**

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <a href="#">Benefits</a>                           | <a href="#">Education and learning</a>              | <a href="#">How government works</a>                             |
| <a href="#">Births, deaths, marriages and care</a> | <a href="#">Employing people</a>                    | <a href="#">Departments</a>                                      |
| <a href="#">Business and self-employed</a>         | <a href="#">Environment and countryside</a>         | <a href="#">Worldwide</a>  |
| <a href="#">Childcare and parenting</a>            | <a href="#">Housing and local services</a>          | <a href="#">Services</a>   |
| <a href="#">Citizenship and living in the UK</a>   | <a href="#">Money and tax</a>                       | <a href="#">Guidance and regulation</a>                          |
| <a href="#">Crime, justice and the law</a>         | <a href="#">Passports, travel and living abroad</a> | <a href="#">News and communications</a>                          |
| <a href="#">Disabled people</a>                    | <a href="#">Visas and immigration</a>               | <a href="#">Research and statistics</a>                          |
| <a href="#">Driving and transport</a>              | <a href="#">Working, jobs and pensions</a>          | <a href="#">Policy papers and consultations</a>                  |
|  |   | <a href="#">Transparency and freedom of information releases</a> |

[Help](#) [Privacy](#) [Cookies](#) [Contact](#) [Accessibility statement](#) [Terms and conditions](#)

Rhestr o Wasanaethau Cymraeg | Built by the [Government Digital Service](#)

**OGL** All content is available under the [Open Government Licence v3.0](#), except where otherwise stated



© Crown copyright