



Correspondence

ESFA Update further education: 10 March 2021

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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: further education (FE) workforce data collection staff specification

We have published the [FE workforce data specification](#) on GOV.UK. The specification details the scope and staff level data items to be collected.

The FE workforce data collection service will open in July 2021. We'll ask you to send information about your further education staff once a year.

The collection for 2020-21 is voluntary, but it will be required from the 2021/22 academic year. You are encouraged to send your data this year to get used to the service and give us feedback.

You'll need to tell us about your organisation and staff for the past academic year. We'll help you prepare your data and offer different ways for you to send your data.

This includes:

- completing an online form
- updating a template which will allow the production of an XML file
- uploading an XML file

All the collection options will be available via the submit learner data service when the collection opens.

In return, for sending us the data you'll get information which will help you to:

- compare performance with other providers
- make informed business and planning decisions
- gain the same status as schools and higher education

Collecting your data will help the Department for Education (DfE) to:

- understand how policy changes affect staff (for example, introducing T levels)
- understand pay and how it affects recruiting and keeping staff
- identify skill gaps in the further education sector

3. Information: FE teacher training grants and bursaries available for a further academic year (2021 to 2022)

The Department for Education (DfE) recently announced details of financial support for FE teacher training for the 2021 to 2022 academic year, in priority subjects, for skilled non-graduates as well as graduates.

The in-service grants are paid to a trainee's employer (such as an FE college) to help provide the trainee with a specified teaching qualification (Level 5 or above), remission from teaching time, and additional support (such as mentoring):

Subject	In-service grant value
Mathematics	£18,200
SEND	£18,200
English	£18,200

In addition, tax-free bursaries are available to trainees who are training pre-service to teach high-priority shortage subjects in the FE sector:

Subject	Bursary value
Mathematics	£26,000
Science (including chemistry, physics and biology)	£26,000
Engineering (and/or manufacturing)	£26,000
Computing	£26,000
SEND	£15,000
English	£12,000

More information is available at: [FE funding: initial teacher education \(ITE\) 2021 to 2022](#).

4. Information: subcontracting returns following consultation response: deadlines confirmed with follow up document

On Thursday 4 March we published a [follow up document to the subcontracting consultation response](#) we published in June 2020. This publication sets out further detail of what we expect from providers in relation to each proposal, including the following requests to the agency:

- 16 to 19 provision only: requests to continue with existing "distance learning" arrangements in 2021 to 2022
- 16 to 19 provision only: requests to continue with "whole programme subcontracting" arrangements in 2021 to 2022
- excluding ESF provision and local authorities: cases made to the agency if providers do not think they can reduce their subcontracting

The document covers information that should be in the request, where this should be sent to, and confirms the deadline of 31 May 2021 for all the above requests.

Please [contact the enquiry service](#) if you have any enquiries.

5. Information: interim measures for managing the subcontracting market when ROTO formally closes

On 9 September we announced the Register of Training Organisations (ROTO) will be formally decommissioned on 31 July 2021. We have now set the interim measures for managing subcontracting until the externally assessed standard is introduced in 2022 to 2023.

We will pre-define a minimum level of due diligence and set out our expectations for financial monitoring/assessment that lead providers should conduct on their subcontractors. There is already a requirement to this effect. We will be more prescriptive to ensure all subcontractors meet our minimum thresholds and conduct additional internal checks. This is consistent with the reforms in that the direct contractual relationship is between provider and subcontractor.

We will also be conducting some direct financial health checks on the largest subcontractors.

Further information is available in the [follow up document to subcontracting reforms](#) published on Thursday 4 March, as these interim measures relate to subcontracting.

6. Information: funding rates and formula guidance for 2021 to 2022

We have published the [funding rates and formula guidance](#) for academic year 2021 to 2022.

We have made the following updates:

- the introduction now includes arrangements related to coronavirus (COVID-19)
- retention: the funding methodology is temporarily using an average retention factor
- Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2019: the funding methodology now uses the 2019 Index, rather than the one used in 2015
- exceptional in-year growth: we made minor additions to clarify the providers eligible for growth and to state that we have the power to recover growth awards
- formula protection funding: we no longer pay formula protection funding

7. Information: National Careers Service course directory platform improvements

The National Careers Service has been making improvements to the 'Publish to the course directory' platform to give providers more control over their course information. Providers offering T Levels that started in 2020, or are due to start in 2021 or 2022, can now update course details directly using the National Careers Service's [Publish to the course directory service](#).

You can [watch a walkthrough demonstration video](#) to see how easy it is to update course information. Please check your information and make sure relevant colleagues, know how to access and use the 'Publish to course directory'.

If you have any questions about adding your courses to the directory, please contact support@coursesdirectory.org.uk or call 0844 811 5073.

8. Information: free period products for schools and colleges

With pupils back in the classroom, it's important that schools and colleges can support learners so that no one is left behind because of their gender or background.

All schools and colleges can order a range of free period products for learners, including environmentally friendly and reusable products, and they can decide how to make these products available to learners.

[Log on to the phs portal](#) to order products and find practical support and guidance on the scheme on [GOV.UK](#). If you have any questions, contact phs customer services on 01827 255500 or periodproducts@phs.co.uk.

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