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Guidance

Support for local authorities delivering post-16 further education

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Applies to England

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A self-improving sector with access to support

The Department for Education (DfE) will continue to empower a self-improving sector, with 3 tiers of additional support for local authority further education (FE) providers. The support will be:

- intensive
- targeted
- universal

This summary is focused on government-funded support, but there is also a wide range of market-led support available.

DfE also encourages our strongest providers to share their expertise with others through peer leadership and across the further education system. FE Commissioner support should be seen as complementary to that.

DfE fully funds all support provided by the FE Commissioner's team, and it is free to providers. Providers will need to commit resources and time to work effectively with the FE Commissioner team.

Intensive support

Intensive support will continue to take place in the small number of cases where:

- concerns are persistent
- there are significant challenges that cannot be resolved through improvement alone

This will be when an intervention trigger has been met. [Post-16 intervention and accountability](#) has more information.

Targeted support

Targeted support will preserve and prioritise some forms of support for those providers that would benefit most. Each regional improvement team, working closely with its dedicated Deputy FE Commissioner, will consider risks across a region and recommend support programmes to those providers where most needed.

Types of targeted support may include support on:

- curriculum and quality

- apprenticeships
- health checks
- tailored support such as:
 - advising on transition ladders
 - effective partnerships to build pathways
 - improved transition for learners

Examples of the targeted support offer

Supportive conversations with the FE Commissioner team

The FE Commissioner and their team of deputies and advisers have a wealth of further education practitioner experience and are available to support continuous improvement at all stages.

If a local authority FE provider is identified as being at risk, this may lead to an informal, supportive discussion with the team to explore the most appropriate support available.

Health checks

Health checks are prioritised for those local authorities where 16 to 18 provision faces risk to, or challenges with student outcomes and success. They may also include other provision where the local authority's approach to quality and standards needs further support. This may include elements of the FE Commissioner's apprenticeship reviews.

Apprenticeship performance reviews

Apprenticeship performance reviews are largely but not solely supported where a local authority is experiencing challenges with delivering apprenticeship quality and standards.

Reviews are focussed on the prioritisation and operational implementation of apprenticeship delivery and the local authority's approach to compliance and improvement.

Tailored support from the FE Commissioner team

This could include help to access peer support from within the further education sector.

The FE Commissioner's team has developed a range of specialist support that can be tailored to suit the specific need and circumstances of providers. This can include help to:

- understand specific issues or challenges
- improve what is already working well

This service will be prioritised for local authority FE providers that will benefit most from direct engagement with the FE Commissioner's team.

A local authority would first request an informal, supportive conversation before requesting and agreeing any further package of tailored support.

Tailored support will involve working closely with the FE sector including:

- signposting
- promoting
- sharing examples of effective practices that we have identified through the work of the FE Commissioner's team

Universal support

Universal support is intended to promote collaboration and foster continuous improvement.

Resources and support available to all local authorities include:

- effective practice guides
- webinars and improvement events that already enable this self-improving culture across the sector

Effective practice guides

The FE Commissioner produces a range of effective practice guides for use within the FE sector. They contain case studies and information useful to any provider of FE.

- [Further education estates planning](#)
- [College management accounts good practice guide](#)
- [Effective practice in curriculum planning](#)
- [Adult education budget: effective practice guide](#)
- [Effective practice in delivering 16 to 19 level 2 English and maths](#)

Contact us

To request FE Commissioner support, email fe.commissioner@education.gov.uk.

If you are a local authority FE provider and have a specific query, you can discuss this with your DfE regional improvement team, or ask the FE Commissioner support team fe.commissioner@education.gov.uk.

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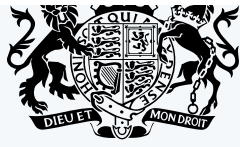
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