This bulletin is intended for colleges, schools and other providers. You can read other articles for academies in the full version of the e-bulletin on our website.

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Reminder: Tell us what you think

Many thanks to those of you who have already completed the latest Education Funding Agency customer survey.

If you have not already done so, please take a few moments to tell us what you think of the service we provide. The survey is open until 1 February.

This is the second survey that we have run since EFA opened, and we will be running them twice a year to ensure we are responding to the latest feedback.

The information we gained in the first survey was invaluable to us. Following your comments we made a number of changes, including separating this e-bulletin into two editions to make it easier for you to find the information you need, and creating a single EFA section at www.education.gov.uk/efa.

We have also changed the way we handle enquiries, continued developments to our systems to improve our accuracy and efficiency, and have launched our customer charter.

Information: 16-19 Bursary Fund – 2013/14 allocations

We will be notifying providers of their bursary allocations in the March Allocation Statement. This bulletin gives advance notice of a couple of changes that we are introducing this year.

Firstly, we are changing the way providers receive funding for their vulnerable group bursary recipients. In response to your feedback, we will no longer include the funding to pay these bursaries in your allocation. Although the system of basing the amount on your previous vulnerable group numbers worked well for larger providers, you have told us that it creates uncertainty and an administrative burden in smaller and medium sized providers whose numbers of vulnerable group students vary significantly from year to year.

From 2013/14 therefore, funding for vulnerable group bursaries will be held centrally and your allocation will be for discretionary bursaries only. We trust this will enable you to plan your discretionary schemes earlier, and with much greater confidence, because your allocation will not come under pressure to pay unforeseen vulnerable bursaries later in the year.

You will still be responsible for identifying vulnerable learners and making payments to them in the same way you do now – the difference is that you will draw down the funding on demand whenever you need it from a central point. Detailed instructions on how to do this will be provided soon.

Secondly, we are refining the mechanism for calculating allocations of discretionary bursaries for 2013/14. The methodology will still be based on the number of students at your institution in receipt of EMA at £30 per week in the 2009/10 academic year, but this
will be adjusted to reflect changes in your actual learner volumes since 2009/10.

In the longer term we will develop a new methodology for calculating discretionary allocations as the EMA data is becoming out of date. We have started to investigate this but want to spend more time consulting with the sector and will be launching a consultation shortly so we can introduce a new methodology for 2014/15.

Information: Youth Contract for 16 and 17-year-olds – extension of the eligibility criteria

The Youth Contract programme is in place to provide additional support to 16 and 17 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET) and who have no GCSEs at A*-C. The programme has been delivering support to disengaged young people since September 2012.

The procurement process for the Youth Contract resulted in £20 million efficiency savings from the total £126 million of funding available for delivery of the programme over the three years. On Tuesday 15 January Schools Minister David Laws announced that these efficiency savings mean that the Youth Contract programme can be extended to support an extra 15,500 young people NEET aged 16 and 17 years including:

- Young people who are or were in care.
- Young people who have one GCSE at A*-C.
- Young offenders released from custody.

Prime contractors delivering the Youth Contract will commence supporting these additional groups of young people from early February 2013.

You can read the press notice about the extension to the eligibility criteria for the Youth Contract on the Department for Education website.

Information: Traineeships programme open for discussion

Employers consistently say that they are concerned that young people often lack the right skills and attitudes when they apply for an Apprenticeship or other employment. Yet many young people, including those who are currently not in education, employment or training (NEET), are highly motivated by work, or the prospect of it. On 10 January 2013 we published a Discussion Paper: Traineeships: Supporting young people to develop the skills for Apprenticeships and other sustained jobs.

This sets out our ideas for the introduction of a new Traineeships programme which would support young people, aged 16-24, to develop the skills they need to impress potential employers and to secure and succeed in employment, including
Apprenticeships. The Discussion Paper is available at: www.education.gov.uk/traineeships

We are keen to hear your views on the ideas set out in the document. You can join the discussion by submitting written comments to: Traineeships.DISCUSSION@education.gsi.gov.uk.

Please also feel free to share this information with your own colleagues, members and stakeholders.

**Information: Supported internships trials and national roll-out 2013**

In September 2012 we launched a trial of supported internship programmes at 15 colleges around England.

These programmes are designed for young people between the ages of 16 and 24 who have complex learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

All post-16 education providers could adopt a study programme from September 2013 following these trials.

To be eligible, a young person must have a Learning Difficulty Assessment.

This means they will typically be drawing on high cost funds for support. Local authorities therefore may be asked to commit element 3 funding on top of EFA funding to deliver supported internships.

Post-16 providers and academies with post-16 provision will need to work with their local authority leads must work together to arrange a supported internship programme. This will allow you to align budgets more effectively.

The supported internship trial is part of the special education needs reforms as outlined in *Support and Aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability: Progress and Next Steps*.

If you would like more information about the trial or supported internships in general, please email Karen Lucas.