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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Information: Post-16 funding arrangements for 2013/14

We have sent a letter to all institutions delivering 16-19 education and training. The letter confirms the funding arrangements for 2013/14. It also gives information on national volumes, budgets and funding rates, and an update on policy developments.

This will ensure institutions have all the information with which to complete their planning for the year.

Over the last few days we have begun the process of sending institutions their individual 2013/14 allocations for 16–19 students, high needs students aged 16-24 and bursary funding. Most institutions will have already received details of their allocation, and all should have received this by the end of March.

Information: Applying to become an EFA provider via the zero-funded gateway

The new window for applications to the zero-funded gateway will be open on the contracts finder website between 1 and 26 April 2013. This is for providers wishing to deliver education and training for the Education Funding Agency. You can find guidance and documentation on our website.

If you are considering applying, please remember that your proposed learning programmes must meet the requirements of the new study programmes for 16-19 year olds. Sub-contracting is not permitted during the zero-funded period of delivery.

We will score the extent to which your application meets the programme of study requirements as part of our evaluation process.

You can find further information about study programmes on our website.

If you enter the market via this route we will incorporate you into our funding cycle once the zero-funded period has concluded. This is subject to acceptable performance. Please also note other key points for providers delivering through this route:

1. We will not make any payments for provision until at least one validated ILR return has been submitted.
2. The maximum period that any provider should be zero-funded is 12 months.

We will aim to ensure that all providers entering the market through this route fit into our standard funding and business cycle as soon as is practicable.

We expect any successful applicants to start delivery at the start of the next academic year.
Information: Assurance framework for high needs funding 2013/14

The assurance framework for high needs funding 2013/14 is now available.

It tells local authorities, providers and academies about the assurance arrangements for the funding of high needs pupils and students for 2013/14.

These arrangements cover financial health assessments and assurance over providers’ use of funds.

Information: LLDD 19-24 position statement

We have published a statement explaining funding responsibilities for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities aged 19-24.

The statement covers the position from the academic year 2013/14 onwards.

The statement takes into account the role of the EFA and the relevant statutory duties of local authorities and the chief executive of Skills Funding Agency. It also confirms any transfer of funding between the two agencies.

If you have any questions about this position statement, please email llldd.ef@education.gsi.gov.uk

Information: Earlier 2012/13 ILR final return date confirmed

The final Individualised Learner Record (ILR) return for 2012/13 will be 25 October 2013.

The Information Authority board has confirmed this date and approved actions that will address providers’ concerns about meeting this deadline.

The board also agreed to press the Data Service, departments and agencies to ensure that the earlier return is matched by earlier consolidated data being available for providers.

Further details are available on the Information Authority website.

The EFA has changed the date for the final claim return for 2012/13 in line with this. We will amend the ILR Funding Returns 2012/13 document accordingly later in the year.
Action: Demographic Growth Capital Fund: revised performance criteria

We have revised some of the criteria required by the Demographic Growth Capital Fund (DGCF).

We have changed the minimum performance standards that should support capacity growth.

We have done this following several questions about whether these standards are appropriate.

One of the main changes is to clarify the standards for general further education colleges. In addition, local authorities can have some extra flexibility in validating performance. This will help them where inspection and performance information is not readily available.

You can see the revised performance criteria in the revised DGCF guidance, available on our website.

Action: Independent Specialist Provider building improvement fund 2013-15

This new capital fund is now open for applications by Independent Specialist Providers (ISPs). Only ISPs listed in the application information are eligible to apply.

Application instructions and the application form are available on our website.