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If you would like to give feedback please contact us at efa.bulletin@efa.education.gov.uk. To add recipients to the distribution list, please send their name, email address, organisation, organisation type and role.

All statutory guidance and legislation linked from this site reflects the current legal position unless indicated otherwise, but it may not reflect current Government policy.

Please click here to see copies of the Skills Funding Agency’s updates
Action for all Education Funding Agency customers

Article 1 - EFA customer survey

Thank you to all our customers who have already completed our survey, but if you haven’t, there is still time to tell us what you think about the service we provide. Are our communications timely, relevant and easy to follow? Can you access the information you need on our website and do you know how to contact us? What do we do well and what could we improve?

The online survey should take no more than 10 minutes to complete, and responses are completely anonymous. We will use the feedback received to improve our service and communication for customers. The survey closes on **Friday 27 July**.

Back up

Information for all 16-19 providers

Article 2 - Future of residential schemes

The Government has decided not to make any major changes to residential support for young people aged 16-18 in the near future. The Residential Bursary Fund and Residential Support Scheme for young people will continue in 2013/14.

The Department for Education (DfE) will continue to review all financial support arrangements, including residential support, to ensure support is effectively targeted to those students facing the greatest financial barriers to participation.

Further information about residential support is available on the DfE website.

If you have any questions about these schemes you can email us at residentialsupport.EFA@education.gsi.gov.uk

Back up

Information for all 16-19 providers

Article 3 - Residential Bursary Fund end of 2011/12 MI return

Specialist providers of the Residential Bursary Fund who administered the fund in 2011/12 will be required to submit an end of year management information return in October 2012.

All providers with Residential Bursary Funding in 2011/12 will be emailed a form for completion by the EFA’s Learner Support team. The form will include guidance on the data that is required, although providers will recognise the content of the return from previous years. The Residential Bursary Funding Guide for 2012/13 sets out the data requirement in Section 6.

The 2011/12 return will be sent to providers by the end of July, with the final deadline for returns 31 October 2012. Any questions about the information that is required, whether in advance of the form being sent to you or whilst completing the return, should be sent to: residentialsupport.EFA@education.gsi.gov.uk.
Information for 16-19 providers and academies with sixth forms

Article 4 - Care to Learn – consultation replies published

The Department for Education (DfE) has decided there will be no change to the Care to Learn scheme, which helps meet the cost of childcare for young parents who remain in education or training. The scheme remains open to all parents in England who are under 20 in the academic year they start a course.

The DfE carried out a nine-week consultation on the Care to Learn childcare support scheme in 2011. Four options for changing the scheme were considered. Changes were to be introduced for young parents starting courses in 2012/13 but this was delayed in order to allow further discussions with those affected and a review of the take up rates in the current academic year.

An analysis of the replies to the consultation and the Government’s response is available on the DfE website.

Back up

Information and action for academies and local authorities

Article 5 - LACSEG reform consultation

The Department for Education (DfE) has published proposals for replacing LACSEG (Local Authority Central Spend Equivalent Grant) from 2013/14. The full document, Replacing LACSEG: Funding local authorities and academies for the functions that devolve to academies can be viewed on the DfE website.

From 2013/14 LACSEG will be replaced by transparent national funding arrangements for central education services. LACSEG will be replaced in two ways.

Schools Block LACSEG will be replaced by additional money in the school budget share from 2013/14. Local authorities will be required to delegate the maximum amount of the Dedicated Schools Grant straight to academies through local funding formulae. More details about changes to school funding arrangements from 2013/14 are published on the schools revenue and funding section of the DfE website.

The LACSEG paid to academies also includes money for the services that local authorities provide to maintained schools using their general funding from the Department for Communities and Local Government. This is known as LA Block LACSEG.

The proposal is that LA Block LACSEG should be replaced by a single national grant for local authorities and academies. The grant would be calculated on a clear and transparent per-pupil basis, putting an end to the year-on-year turbulence and national variation in funding levels. This would also allow academies and local authorities to understand how their funding has been calculated and to plan properly for the year ahead.

Responses to the questions set out in the consultation are invited by the deadline of Monday 24 September.

If you have any questions about the proposed changes to the current LACSEG
Information for academies

Article 6 - Academy insurance 2012/13

The process for funding academy insurance up to (and including) academic year 2011/12 has been to reimburse academies their premium costs. The Department for Education (DfE) has decided that for the academic year 2012/13 the Education Funding Agency will continue to reimburse insurance premium costs and therefore there is no change to the current process.

Academies are obliged to follow relevant procurement regulations and achieve value for money through competition when purchasing their insurance. To assist academies, the DfE has worked with the Crescent Purchasing Consortium (CPC) to provide a legally compliant procurement route to the insurance market.

The new CPC academies insurance framework has four providers, which can be used by academies to select the insurance company which best meets their specific requirements in terms of price and the service offered. The framework, by its very nature, encourages competition between the suppliers.

Each of the framework suppliers offer bespoke insurance advice and risk management support to their academy customers. CPC’s website address is: http://www.thecpc.ac.uk/aboutus/academies/index.php
We will advise you of any changes affecting 2013/14 as soon as we can.

Action for academies

Article 7 - Reclaiming VAT on pre-opening academy and Free School costs

Academies and Free Schools can reclaim VAT on non-business expenses (those related to the provision of free education) incurred in preparing for their opening. This means that converter academies can reclaim VAT in respect of their converter grant, and sponsored academies, Free Schools and UTCs can reclaim VAT in respect of their pre-opening funding.

All claims must be submitted within four years of incurring VAT and can only be made once the school is open, at which point the academy trust legally becomes an academy proprietor. Multi-academy trusts can only reclaim VAT in respect of any new academies once those academies are open.

Any existing academies wishing to reclaim VAT on pre-opening costs incurred from the introduction of the reclaim facility in April 2011 can now submit a claim to HMRC.

Additional evidence may be required to support claims where the academy trust was not invoiced directly (eg, a converter academy where the previous governing body was invoiced) and HMRC will consider correspondence or minutes of meetings relating to the
purchase when assessing the VAT refund. For further information or queries please contact the HMRC’s VAT helpline on 0845 010 9000.

Information for academies and academy sponsors

Article 8 - Multi-academy trusts and the Local Government Pension Scheme

We would like to remind you that all academies’ non-teaching staff are eligible for the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) including those working in the head office of a multi-academy trust.

To find out more, contact the relevant LGPS administering authority.

Information for academies

Article 9 - National Audit Office survey with selected academies

The National Audit Office (NAO) has asked a sample of academies to complete a short online survey as part of a value for money study on the expansion of the academies programme.

Those academies selected to participate have been notified and provided with web links and log-in details to complete the survey. If you have received such a notification and are having difficulty accessing the survey, please contact the NAO team directly: Mark Bisset: mark.bisset@nao.gsi.gov.uk, 020 7798 5429; or Erin Mansell erin.mansell@nao.gsi.gov.uk, 020 7798 7023).

As the initial deadline for the survey has now passed, the NAO would be grateful if any academies who have not yet responded would do so as soon as possible. The NAO is carrying out this work using its statutory access rights (which are also incorporated in the conditions of each academy’s funding agreement) and with the full support of the Department for Education and the Education Funding Agency.

Information for academies

Article 10 - Golden Hello and Golden Handcuff incentive payments

The Teaching Agency’s Funding Team is responsible for payment of all claims to Golden Hello and Golden Handcuff reimbursements to schools. Information is available on the Department for Education website covering the scheme eligibility and the claims process.

Academies are invited to make claims to the Teaching Agency at any time in the year by emailing a scanned copy of the teacher’s application, a copy of the financial declaration (only required with initial claim) and an invoice with a payment breakdown to Golden.hello@education.gsi.gov.uk.
Claims should be made on the Golden Handcuff claim form (available on the website soon) and sent to LA.Funding@education.gsi.gov.uk along with an itemised invoice.

Academies should ensure that this invoice includes their current banking details, and that claims should be emailed to address above; posted forms will not be accepted for payment.

The Teaching Agency funding team is clearing the backlog of claims since transition from the TDA of this work, and will then move towards a weekly payment run for any claims.

Back up