



Department  
for Education

# **Condition Improvement Fund 2019 to 2020**

**Checklist for applicants**

**October 2018**

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## Checklist for applicants

This checklist contains a range of steps that you will need to consider when you apply to the Condition Improvement Fund (CIF). It is not an exhaustive list nor does it replace the Information for Applicants guidance.

### Things you can do straight away

- Will you need planning permission for your project? Check with your local planning authority
- Check that you have access to the CIF Portal and make sure that at least one other person from your trust can access the account in case you are unavailable
- If you have applied for CIF before, consider the feedback you have received as this may help you prepare your next application
- If you have not applied for CIF before, read previous guidance to help you understand the general application process
- Familiarise yourself with the [Good Estate Management guide](#). We will also expect some projects to be built in accordance with the standards in the [Output Specification 2017](#), further advice will follow in the information to applicants.

### Use the Information for Applicants guidance

Once CIF 2019 to 2020 information for applicants has been published, check:

- Your project(s) meets with CIF priorities
- You are clear which type of project(s) you are applying for and have referred to the appropriate assessment criteria
- If required, you have contacted your local planning authority and have applied for planning permission
- You are familiar with the deadlines for action set out in the important dates section of the guidance

## Prepare your evidence

Make sure that you check the evidence before you submit to ensure that it relates to your project(s). We cannot accept additional information during assessment and if you submit evidence for the wrong project your application will lose marks.

### Check:

- You have summarised the 'what, when, why and how' of your project
- The 'what, when, why and how' are clearly defined and evidenced
- Your evidence is focused on the building issue –and does not include irrelevant detail about the school history, ethos and attainment record
- Your evidence clearly identifies the project need, the extent of that need and the urgency of need
- The proposed works within your application meet the project need criteria
- You have prioritised the worst condition element for the school and your evidence doesn't include a mix of condition priorities
- Your evidence places the issue in the context of the overall needs of the school to illustrate the reason for its prioritisation
- Your evidence provides concise and relevant extracts of more lengthy documents such as condition surveys – without losing the context
- The data in your application form agrees with the data in the supporting information – milestone and programme dates that are inconsistent increase concern about delivery risk
- Your evidence includes an appropriate, relevant and qualified opinion for specific issues such as fire, asbestos, legionella or safeguarding
- You have applied for [Significant Change](#) approval, if required
- Any photographic evidence is clear and relevant

## Access the CIF portal

Check:

- That you have access to the CIF Portal. If you already have an account from previous CIF rounds you should continue to use that one and not create a new one
- That your account can be used by more than one person in case you are not available and access is needed
- If you change the password that you make sure others with access are notified or you may end up locking each other out of the account
- You refer to the portal guidance and, if you're new to the process, the step by step instructional videos on the portal.

## Create a CIF portal account

If you have not applied for CIF before and need to create a new portal account, you should contact us via the [ESFA contact form](#) and provide the following information:

- Email Address - this must be an email that is not already linked to an existing CIF account. Ideally use a generic account name (e.g. admin@school.com, office@school.com etc) as this makes it easier for us to contact you about your application or funding.
- Name of contact
- Position of contact (e.g. Head Teacher, Business Manager, CFO)
- Telephone number
- Trust number (if applicable)
- Trust address (if applicable)
- School or sixth-form address (if not part of a trust)
- School name(s) and URN(s) (include the names and URNs of all schools if in the trust)

We cannot give portal accounts to contractors or professional advisers, or if your establishment already has a CIF portal account.

When you set up your account, remember the username is the name of the account not the contact and should not be your own name. Ideally, it should be a name specific to your school, college or trust. Make sure your username doesn't include any spaces or special characters and is no longer than 20 characters.

## Upload your information

Do not leave it to the last minute – plan your application so you can review it and resolve any issues in good time. Remember you do not have to upload it all in one go, you can amend and save as you go along.

Check:

- Your attachments comply with the document size (1Mb per document)
- You have not embedded files in your application – we cannot access them
- You have not included website or other external links in your application – we cannot access them
- All your documents are readable – especially scanned documents which can appear too dark or blurry; or documents which have been shrunk so much that they are illegible when expanded
- Your application form does not duplicate information given in the attachments
- When you are ready to submit your application, that you save it first and read through it one last time. However, you must still submit your application before the window closes for us to consider it.



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Reference: DFE-00298-2018



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