



Education & Skills  
Funding Agency

Education and Skills Funding Agency  
Sanctuary Buildings  
Great Smith Street  
London  
SW1P 3BT

Tel: 0370 000 2288  
[ESFA-enquiry-form](#)

26 August 2020

To Accounting Officers in academy trusts. Copied to chairs of trustees.

Dear colleague

### Submission of 2019/20 financial statements and associated documents

In my [letter to you in July](#) I explained that we were continuing to review our assurance delivery plans and their interaction with the timetable for submitting academy trusts' financial statements to ESFA.

I am now writing to inform you that, in light of the challenges presented by COVID-19, we have decided to extend the deadline for submission of your audited financial statements for the year ended 31 August 2020 by one month. The date by which you must now send your financial statements to us is now **31 January 2021**, rather than 31 December 2020. You will need to submit your auditor's management letter, accounts submission coversheet and internal scrutiny annual report at the same time as your financial statements.

We are also extending the corresponding deadline for submitting your [accounts return](#) to **23 February 2021**. Previously this was 19 January 2021. Additionally we will delay the launch date and the deadline for submission of your [land and buildings collection tool](#) by 5 weeks as reflected in the table below.

We hope that the additional time will allow you to satisfactorily resolve with your auditors any issues connected with the important task of reporting your financial performance for the year, in this exceptional period for all schools.

The updated timetable for your financial returns is as follows:

Return	Launch date	Deadline for submission
<a href="#">Audited financial statements</a> ; and: - Accounts submission coversheet - Auditor's management letter - Internal scrutiny annual summary report	13 Oct 2020	31 Jan 2021
<a href="#">Accounts return (AR)</a>	10 Nov 2020	23 Feb 2021
<a href="#">Land and buildings collection tool (LBCT)</a>	12 Nov 2020	17 Dec 2020
<a href="#">Budget forecast return outturn (BFRO)</a>	20 April 2021	18 May 2021
<a href="#">Budget forecast return three year (BFR3Y)</a>	22 June 2021	27 July 2021

Email: [Eileen.Milner@education.gov.uk](mailto:Eileen.Milner@education.gov.uk)

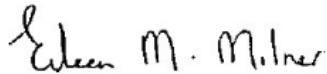
I do want to emphasise two points.

First, it is incredibly important that you achieve the extended deadlines as we rely on your financial statements to provide timely assurance to Parliament that money is well-managed in the sector, and thank you in advance for your efforts and support in this. I encourage you to aim for the usual deadline of 31 December, but in the knowledge that the additional time is available should issues arise during your audit. You must also continue to publish your financial statements on the trust's website promptly, but we are providing an additional month, to 28 February 2021, for you to do this too.

I also want to emphasise that the extension we are offering is for the year ended 31 August 2020 only, and you should work on the basis that the timetable will revert to its usual pattern the following year.

With my best wishes to you and your colleagues, especially as term restarts.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eileen M. Milner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'E'.

**Eileen Milner**

Chief Executive, Education and Skills Funding Agency