



Skills Funding
Agency

Update

Issue 292
20 January 2016

Welcome

In this issue of Update, our weekly round-up of business-critical and useful information to Skills Funding Agency (SFA) colleges, other training organisations and direct grant employers:

1. **Individualised Learner Record R06 2015 to 2016: Opens Friday, 22 January**
2. **Subcontracting Controls: External Assurance**
3. **European Social Fund 2000 to 2006: Document Retention**
4. **Traineeships: Ofsted Inspection Grade Rule Change**
5. **Advanced Learner Loans: Seminars**
6. **The Hub: New Business Intelligence User Role**
7. **Apprenticeship Levy Survey**

Please share Update with your colleagues, who might like to register for [web alerts](#). This will notify them by email when we publish new editions of [Update](#) on [GOV.UK](#). If you have any feedback, please email [Update](#).

NOTE: Our [Business Cycle](#) sets out the key milestones from April 2015 to March 2016 and will help you plan ahead.

1. Individualised Learner Record R06 2015 to 2016: Opens Friday, 22 January

Action

The individualised learner record R06 data collection for the 2015 to 2016 funding year opens on **Friday, 22 January**.

The R06 is a mandatory return; you must submit your data to [the Hub](#).

We publish a [maintenance schedule](#), which lists future collection dates and proposed system maintenance.

For further information, please refer to the [Payments and Data](#) page on [GOV.UK](#).

[Back to top](#)

2. Subcontracting Controls: External Assurance

Action

The following organisations must submit their completed external assurance on subcontracting controls certificate to their Central Delivery Service (CDS) adviser by **Sunday, 31 January**:

- lead providers with subcontracts totalling £100,000 or more in the 2015 to 2016 funding year
- direct grant employers subcontracting more than 50% of their allocation in the 2015 to 2016 funding year

We produced an [information document](#) on this requirement and sent it to all lead providers and direct grant employers in September 2015.

We will consider what actions to take against lead providers and direct grant employers that fail to meet the deadline.

If you would like to discuss the above, please contact your CDS adviser.

[Back to top](#)

3. **European Social Fund 2000 to 2006: Document Retention**

Action

You can now destroy electronic and hard-copy records from the European Social Fund (ESF) 2000 to 2006 programme.

The document retention period for this programme ended on **Friday, 15 January** and relates to contracts that ended in 2008 or before.

This destruction **does not** apply to records for the ESF 2007 to 2013 programme: you must continue to keep those records until at least 31 December 2022.

For further information, please refer to [Action Note 84](#) from the ESF Managing Authority in England or email [Local Responsiveness](#).

[Back to top](#)

4. **Traineeships: Ofsted Inspection Grade Rule Change**

Information

From 1 August, you will no longer need to have an Ofsted inspection grade of Outstanding (Grade 1) or Good (Grade 2) to offer traineeships. This was confirmed in the publication [English Apprenticeships: Our 2020 Vision](#).

We will bring this rule change forward to **1 February**, as detailed in the [Funding Rules 2015 to 2016 Version 2 Addendum 3](#). All other 2015 to 2016 funding rules continue to apply.

If you have an existing funding allocation and the appropriate contractual arrangements, you will be able to deliver traineeships ahead of the 2016 to 2017 funding year.

For further information, please email traineeships.

[Back to top](#)

5. **Advanced Learner Loans: Seminars**

Information

From Tuesday, 23 February, we are holding a series of seminars relating to Advanced Learner Loans together with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). The seminars will provide you with more detail on the changes to the Loans offer in the 2016 to 2017 academic year.

For full details of dates, times and locations, and to book your place, please refer to the [Advanced Learner Loans](#) page on [GOV.UK](http://gov.uk); registration closes on **Friday, 12 February** and places are limited, so please register early to avoid disappointment.

For further information, please email [Advanced Learner Loans](#).

[Back to top](#)

6. **The Hub: New Business Intelligence User Role**

Information

Shortly, we will share business intelligence information through interactive dashboards on [the Hub](#). We will use this for the first time to share your 2014 to 2015 qualification achievement rates information.

We will add a new business intelligence user role so that your 'super-users' can manage access to the business intelligence information. We will make the business intelligence user role available on **Monday, 25 January**.

Please make sure that your Hub 'super-users' are aware of the new role and encourage them to allocate it to relevant staff.

For help and advice on the Hub user roles, please email the [Service Desk](#).

[Back to top](#)

7. Apprenticeship Levy Survey

Information

In April 2017, the apprenticeship levy will come into effect at a rate of 0.5% of an employer's pay bill. A £15,000 allowance for employers will mean that the levy will only be paid on an employer's pay bill over £3 million.


We have launched an [Apprenticeship Levy Survey](#) to understand how you would like to access your levy funds and use them to make payments to training organisations.

The deadline for completion is **Friday, 5 February**; it should take no more than 10 minutes to complete. Your responses will help us to shape and improve our offer and service to employers.

For information, please email the [Digital Apprenticeship](#) team.

[Back to top](#)



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511