

ESFA publishes annual report and accounts for 2020-21

News story

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Education & Skills
Funding Agency

ESFA, has published its [Annual Report and Accounts 2020-21](#), which highlights that it has delivered on its funding body role, by issuing main allocations to education and skills providers for the academic year 2021/22 with 99% on-time and with 100% accuracy.

ESFA also approved 423,082 funding payments in 2020-21, with 100% paid accurately and on-time and, in response to COVID-19, delivered £842 million of additional funding across 15 funding streams which providers and employers have accessed 115,000 times.

John Edwards, ESFA's interim Chief Executive said:

I would like to pay tribute to and thank everyone who has shown flexibility and resilience in supporting the skills and education sector during the challenges of the pandemic. Education and training providers, colleges, local authorities, schools, academies, early years settings and our people at ESFA have all worked at an incredible pace to keep on delivering. It has been a shared endeavour and we can feel a sense of pride and confidence in our efforts to continue to provide high quality education and skills training opportunities right across the country.

ESFA has successfully balanced the delivery of business priorities with the additional demands brought about by COVID-19. These include providing funding lifelines to support the sector; managing the Coronavirus Helpline which at its peak handled over 5,000 calls a day; providing careers advice to individuals impacted by the pandemic; communicating to the sector and public; ensuring that

vocational and technical education awards were delivered with the minimum delays possible in summer 2020; using data science to model learner attendance; and playing a key role in supporting the wider re-opening of education settings.

We have strengthened our oversight of colleges and training providers, creating a proportionate and robust approach to assuring public spending and investment in skills, and an emphasis on prevention, rather than intervention. This includes the introduction of a new subcontracting standard that requires independent assurance that providers who subcontract have the correct controls in place.

Looking forward, in line with the [Declaration on Government Reform](#), the Cabinet Office commissioned an independent review of the ESFA as an arm's length body. The review is considering the ESFA's operating model, governance, accountability model and impact. The review was launched in July 2021 and is on track to run until January 2022.

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