

ESFA letters to academy trusts about high pay – October 2019

On 3 October 2019, Eileen Milner, chief executive of the Education and Skills Funding Agency, wrote to the chair of trustees at 11 academy trusts, with between 4,500 and 6,000 learners on roll, about levels of executive pay.

The first letter is about levels of executive pay. The second letter is about levels of executive pay at academy trusts previously contacted by ESFA.

Included is a list of academy trusts that received letters from ESFA about high executive salaries in October 2019.

HS2 to streamline procurement process for civils sub-contractors

Four of HS2 Ltd's biggest contractors will introduce a standardized pre-qualification (PQ) system for subcontractors in a bid to streamline the process, reduce costs and boost productivity.

The new Common Assessment Standard will ensure that bidders looking for work with the high speed rail company's four main civils contractors – Align, BBV, EK and SCS Railways – will go through identical pre-qualification processes.

Developed as part of HS2's 'Collaboration Hub' initiative, the contractors worked with two of the sector's biggest representative organisations, Build UK and the Civil Engineering Contractors Association (CECA), and through industry body, High Speed Rail Industry Leaders Group (HSRIL), to agree the new system.

According to research, it is estimated that suppliers in the construction industry are currently spending up to £1bn per year on tendering for work. This new system will help avoid duplication and cut costs. Build UK, CECA, and HSRIL joined forces two years ago to deliver the new PQ system and have just launched its first phase. HS2's contractors will be the pioneers of the new system, implementing it at scale through the future HS2 supply chain.

The Common Assessment Standard for PQ's will mean suppliers have a choice in assurance provider creating market competition and reducing the costs associated with infrastructure procurement. It ensures that all suppliers meet a high-quality standard, essential for HS2 to deliver a safe and quality supply chain.

HS2's Collaboration Hub enables HS2's Main Works Civils Contractors to work together to find common approaches and initiatives that will ensure consistency across the HS2 programme, and that the best procurement decisions are made for the project. HS2 will represent approximately 11% of UK infrastructure spend over the next decade and will be the largest individual client in the sector. The approaches taken to procurement on the project will not only have an impact on HS2 but the wider construction sector.

Andy Cross, Procurement Director, HS2 Ltd said:

Building Britain's new high speed railway provides a significant opportunity for the construction industry to innovate and work together, to leave lasting improvements on the sector as a whole. By adopting new approaches, such as the Common Assessment Standard, we can potentially transform the way in which the industry works, and procures goods and services.

Jo Fautley, Deputy Chief Executive, Build UK said:

The construction industry is making great strides towards more collaborative working and the Common Assessment Standard has been developed by industry, for industry, based on standards that clients, contractors and the supply chain have all agreed on. The adoption of the Common Assessment Standard by leading clients such as HS2 will help to improve efficiency and reduce duplication and cost, supporting the future delivery of world-class infrastructure.

Under the new trailblazing system, a supplier will be able to take the accreditation to any sector of the construction industry, beyond the rail sector. Not only will this reduce the costly, complex and repetitive burden the current procurement approach takes, but could improve standards across the board in the sector.

[If you're going out to scare, know what to wear](#)

In its new campaign, OPSS is providing advice to help consumers to buy safe costumes and trick or treat safely.

Look for the CE mark on the label

Fancy dress costumes should be tested for flammability. The CE mark certifies it's been tested.

Buy from a trusted store or website

If you're shopping online, check who you are buying from. If it's a third-party seller, find out as much about them as you can.

Read all the safety information

This includes on the label and online. If it's clothing for small children, check for laces, drawstrings, and small, trailing or floaty parts.

Look for ratings and reviews from other customers

Other customers may have given feedback. Be savvy.

Is it safe? Check it hasn't been recalled

Visit productrecall.campaign.gov.uk and check the costume hasn't been recalled. It's quick to do and could make a big difference.

Speak up if you find an issue

You can report safety issues to the retailer, website, seller and your local Citizens Advice team.

Help spread the word

You can follow our campaign on Twitter @OfficeforSandS – use #scaresafely to retweet – or help spread the word using the materials below which are free to download and use

Print ready posters

PDF, 108KB, 1 page

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Digital materials

[GIF 1 – Scare safely](#)

[GIF 2 – Don't get tricked](#)

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[Chance to 'win while you save' with new credit union prize account](#)

- Treasury launches pilot of new PrizeSaver account on International Credit Union Day
- Savers who put away as little as £1 with participating credit unions have chance to win up to £5,000 a month
- Account is part of work to raise awareness of credit unions and

encourage greater saving for the future

Savers could now win up to £5,000 a month with the launch of a new account with credit unions today (Thursday 17 October).

To mark International Credit Union Day, the Treasury has teamed up with 15 credit unions across Britain to launch the new PrizeSaver pilot account. The pilot will give people who open an account with participating credit unions the chance to win prizes every month and boost their savings.

Every month will see a top prize of £5,000 awarded to the winning saver, with a further 20 smaller prizes of £20 also awarded. Accounts are available now with the first wave of credit unions and the first prize-draws will take place in mid-December.

The pilot, announced at last year's Budget, is designed to help improve people's financial resilience by encouraging greater saving for the future, as well as raise awareness of credit unions and the services they offer.

The Economic Secretary to the Treasury, John Glen, said:

We all know that saving for the future is important and I want to make it as easy and attractive for people as possible.

That's why we've teamed up with credit unions, on International Credit Union Day, to launch the new PrizeSaver account pilot, giving people the chance to win up to £5,000 on their hard-earned savings.

Credit unions provide an invaluable service for people up and down the country and I'm pleased that together we can give more people the chance to win while they save.

Credit unions are a type of member-owned cooperative, controlled and run by members. Most either serve specific local areas or certain professions like the police. Credit unions redistribute their profits to members through interest or dividends, or by investing in new services to meet the needs of their members.

Fintech company incuto was appointed by the Treasury earlier this year to administer the pilot and work with credit unions to ensure they can operate the account. The move is part of the government's drive to use innovative UK fintech companies to boost financial inclusion.

The PrizeSaver pilot is designed to encourage new and existing credit union members to save, starting with as little as £1 a month. The pilot also aims to attract new members to credit unions, who play a vital role in financial inclusion in particular as an alternative to high-cost lenders.

The account is partly inspired by the 'Save to Win' scheme in the US, which

has helped credit union members save \$200 million and has awarded \$3.1 million in prizes nationwide.

The pilot will run until the end of March 2021 and will help inform understanding of the PrizeSaver model. The Treasury will work with participating credit unions to evaluate the success of the PrizeSaver accounts throughout the pilot, with an ambition to roll the account out more widely if successful.

[Entrepreneur training pilots for refugees launched across the UK](#)

Four pilots to encourage refugees to establish businesses have been launched across the UK today.

The pilots are part of a 1 year programme jointly funded by the Home Office and The National Lottery Community Fund, which will be overseen by the Centre for Entrepreneurs (CFE).

The 4 programmes will be based in Bristol, Belfast, the East of England and Staffordshire.

Working directly with refugees and established local businesses, the pilots will deliver tailored start-up programmes that will take refugees from the idea stage to the launch of their business.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

The UK has world leading resettlement programmes which provide sanctuary to thousands of the most vulnerable refugees every year.

It is vital that these refugees are given the best chance to flourish. This project will help them to build businesses and make a real success of their new lives in the UK.

Mark Purvis, Deputy Director England at The National Lottery Community Fund said:

By putting people in the lead and championing entrepreneurship, this project, made possible by National Lottery players, will support refugees to fulfil their potential and thrive.

Centre for Entrepreneurs chairman Oliver Pawle said:

We are grateful for support from the Home Office and The National Lottery Community Fund in helping us realise the vision we set out in our report last year.

The Centre for Entrepreneurs is excited to work with the delivery partners over the coming year to help over 100 refugees into entrepreneurship and to prove that tailored business support strengthens integration.

Offering a good geographical spread across the country, the 4 programmes have been selected because of their track record in delivering business startup support.

The programmes will be overseen by CFE and a national expert advisory group including representatives from the Home Office and The National Lottery Community Fund, refugee entrepreneurs, and experts from the academic and voluntary sectors.

[ACH](#) will engage with over 100 refugees in Bristol and the West of England. Building on a previous research project, ACH will support refugees new to entrepreneurship; business owners 'just about managing' and looking to strengthen their foundations; and ambitious entrepreneurs looking to scale up.

East Belfast Enterprise will offer those taking part access to professional development sessions, enterprise training, startup bursaries and mentoring support. The pilot will provide support to develop networks within the community, so that even if self-employment is not for them people will have access to further education and other employment opportunities.

Serving the urban centres of Peterborough, Ipswich and Norwich, [MENTA](#) will provide the participating refugees access to workshops, mentoring and peer-to-peer support groups which will be led by local role models. This pilot will primarily target refugees who ran businesses in their home country, developing their expertise for the UK.

The Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce will provide comprehensive support for 40 refugees and will build on extensive experience in business support. Drawing on their networks, Staffordshire Chambers of Commerce will also deliver mentoring support via volunteer entrepreneurs. They will also share the results of the project with the network of 52 accredited Chambers of Commerce across the country.

Refugees in the UK have access to mainstream benefits and services to enable their integration and departments across government are working to ensure services meet their needs. This new pilot will allow refugees to move forward with the process of integration, which was the focus of the government's Integrated Communities Action plan published in February 2019. In the action plan the government committed to increase integration support for all refugees in the UK, with one of the key focuses being employment.

As part of that commitment, the Home Office, in partnership with United

Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Organisation for Migration, Business in the Community and the Department for Work and Pensions recently launched 'Tapping Potential' – guidelines for British businesses on employing refugees. The government is also committed to continuing support for the Refugee Employment Network, whose vision is to enable every refugee in the UK to gain appropriate, fulfilling, paid employment or self-employment.

The pilot will cost £360,300; £210,150 will be covered by the Home Office and the remaining £150,150 will be covered by The National Lottery Community fund. The Centre is working with academic partners to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the pilot so that, if successful, it can be implemented more widely in the future.