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8 December 2022

Dear [Accountable Officer]

Deadlines and requirements for Annual Financial Return 2023

I am writing to set out our approach to communicating our requirements for the Annual Financial Return 2023 (AFR23). The AFR applies to all registered providers (excluding further education and sixth form colleges). It includes the submission of financial data, forecast financial and student number data (both through the completion of a specified OfS workbook format), and other relevant contextual information, including audited and signed financial statements. The data collected in this return is used to monitor the financial viability and sustainability of providers, in particular in considering compliance with Condition D: Financial viability and sustainability.

Annual Financial Return 2022

We set out our requirements for the Annual Financial Return 2022 (AFR22) to all registered providers in our letter and annual notice issued under general ongoing conditions of registration F3 and F4 on 20 July 2021.¹ This return covers your provider's financial year ending in 2022. The specific deadlines for your provider were sent to you by email on 12 May 2022. As a reminder, the AFR22 deadlines set for your provider were:²

¹ See www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/deadlines-and-requirements-for-2021-22-data-returns-and-annual-financial-return-2022/.

² These deadlines should reflect any extension that you have been granted by the OfS. If you believe that you have been granted an extension which is not reflected above, please contact regulation@officeforstudents.org.uk.

Deadline	Submission date	By this deadline	Sign off required by
Deadline 1	XXXX 4 months after year end	Submit initial valid workbook Data verification process begins	
Deadline 2	XXXX 5 months after year end	All raised verification queries have been resolved Submit finalised Annual Financial Return workbook Submit audited and signed financial statements Submit all other required Annual Financial Return files	Financial forecasts and commentary must be approved by the provider's governing body prior to submission.
Deadline 3	XXXX 5 months and 2 weeks after year end	Any additional verification queries have been resolved Return is signed off by the accountable officer and sign off form is submitted	Final sign-off of the return must be completed by the accountable officer.

Annual Financial Return 2023 (AFR23)

We are updating our approach to how we communicate our requirements for AFR23, including reducing the number of communications we send to accountable officers about this return. This return will relate to the period where your provider's latest audited year is ending in 2023.

Unlike previous years, we did not set out our requirements for the AFR23 in the annual notice issued under general ongoing conditions of registration F3 and F4 on 27 July 2022.

Instead we will be issuing a separate F3 Notice about the return to all providers in April 2023. This notice will include the specific deadlines applying to your provider for the AFR23. We are also revising the content of the notice to ensure that all our requirements are presented alongside the deadlines in the same communication. We will issue this F3 Notice to you, as accountable officer, and your finance strategic contact(s), if you have any listed.

As in previous years, the deadlines set out in the F3 Notice will be related to your provider's financial year end of [YEAR END] and will make appropriate adjustments for public holiday periods. Please let us know as soon as possible if the financial year end for 2023 is incorrect, by responding to this email, as your deadlines are assigned on the basis of your year end.

We do not intend to change the deadlines for submitting key information required for the AFR23. You will need to submit the workbook³ four months after your financial year end, and signed

³ It is the responsibility of all providers to submit data, which is as accurate as possible in this initial workbook (we acknowledge that audit work on the last complete financial year may still be continuing at this time). We

financial statements and all other files, five months after your financial year end. As accountable officer, you will be expected to sign off the AFR23 five months and two weeks after your financial year end.

We are also bringing forward the release of other documentation related to AFR23 to help providers prepare their returns. This means that documents including the workbook templates and technical guidance material on completing and submitting the AFR23 will be available in April, at the same time we issue the notice.

Finance strategic contact

This letter has been sent to you as the accountable officer.

Most communications regarding the AFR23 will only be sent to the finance strategic contacts that we hold for your provider and we request that you review these to ensure that they are correct.

We have the following contact(s) listed as your finance strategic contact(s):

- XX
- XX
- XX

If you would like to amend, add or remove a contact, please email regulation@officeforstudents.org.uk. To add a contact, you will need to specify their name, job title, email address and phone number. You may have more than one person assigned as the finance strategic contact. All assigned contacts will be sent communications about the return.

Please contact us at regulation@officeforstudents.org.uk or on 0117 931 7305 if you have any questions about this letter.

Yours sincerely



David Smy

Director of Monitoring and Intervention

will perform a verification exercise designed to give the OfS assurance over the quality of the data submitted. We expect all providers to engage in responding to queries that arise during this verification exercise.