

Dear User

URGENT INFORMATION ON THE EMA PAYMENT PROCEDURE OVER THE CHRISTMAS 2009 PERIOD FOR EMA E2E, PLA AND FE SHORT COURSE LEARNERS (N.B. a separate email has been sent to ALG and EMA FE Providers)

Please cascade this User email to all operational staff within your organisation.

Payments to learners in E2E, PLA and FE short course programmes of study for week commencing 14th December 2009

Payment decisions for week commencing 14th December 2009 will be presented during week commencing 21st December and these should be approved by Learning Providers as usual.

Payments to learners in E2E, PLA and FE short course programmes of study for week commencing 21st December 2009

As you will be aware payment decisions for week commencing 21st December 2009 cannot be made on laps for those on E2E, PLA and FE short course programmes of study until Saturday 26th December at the earliest, when the majority of Learning Providers will be closed until after Monday 28th December.

To enable those learners who will still be in learning during this week to receive their EMA weekly payment between Christmas and New Year **an automatic weekly payment for week commencing Monday 21st December will be made by the Learner Support Service on Wednesday 23rd December.** The normal 3 working day BACS clearance will apply, meaning that payments should reach bank accounts by Wednesday 30th December, whereas payments going into Building Societies (which normally take 4 working days to clear) may take until Thursday 31st December. Please note that the automatic payment does **not** include the Bonus element for E2E, PLA and FE short course learners. The bonus decisions for week commencing 21st December will need to be made immediately on your return from the Christmas / New Year break.

Where a learner is **completing their learning** during **week commencing 14th December** an **end of learning** must be entered into the system **by 6:00pm on Wednesday 23rd December** to ensure an automatic payment is **not** made to these learners.

Where a learner is completing their learning during week commencing 21st December and you would want this learner to receive a payment please ensure an end of learning is entered into the system on your return from the

Christmas / New Year break otherwise please enter the end of learning before 6:00pm on Wednesday 23rd December.

Where a learner did not meet your attendance requirements and should not have received a payment for week commencing 21st December you must ensure that the payment decision for week commencing 21st December is **reversed from a Yes to a No decision immediately on your return** from the Christmas / New Year break. This action will deduct the payment from the next eligible payment week.

Accrued authorised absence in E2E and PLA

As part of the learning patterns in E2E and PLA programmes, learners may accrue authorised absence through regular attendance, usually at a rate of two days per calendar month of attendance.

Where the Provider closes down for periods, for example at Christmas, learners are to take accrued authorised absence. Should they have not accrued sufficient authorised absences to cover that period of learning, that period cannot be treated as an authorised absence for EMA purposes and cannot be paid.

Learning Patterns

Learners will only need to accrue absence for the actual learning days which are included within their study pattern.

For example, if Wednesday, Thursday and Friday is the study pattern that has been agreed with the learner, they will only need to have accrued (and use) two days – to cover Wednesday 23rd and Thursday 24th December - of their accrued authorised absence to get paid for the week commencing 21st December 2009.

For the week commencing 28th December a learner in the same situation (i.e. Wednesday, Thursday and Friday is the study pattern that has been agreed with the learner) would need to have accrued (and use) two days – to cover Wednesday 30th and Thursday 31st December 2009 – if not attending for the week.

Where a Learning Provider is closed for the whole of the week commencing 21st December and the learner regularly studies on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday (the full week), they will need to have accrued (and use) 4 days of authorised absence to qualify for payment. For the week commencing 28th December, where a Learning Provider remains closed for the whole week, the learner will also need to have accrued (and use) 3 additional days of authorised absence to qualify for payment.

Helpline hours over the Christmas period

Service availability for the Learner Support Provider and Learner Support Learner Helplines over the Christmas period will be:

- Christmas Eve – 07:00 – 16:00
- Christmas Day – closed
- Monday 28 December – closed
- Tuesday 29 December – 08:00 – 18:00
- Wednesday 30 December – 08:00 – 18:00
- New Year's Eve – 08:00 – 16:00
- New Year's Day – closed

If you have any questions about this email, please contact the Learner Support Provider Helpline on **0845 600 7979**.

Kind regards

Learner Support Service

EMA Provider Guidance notes are available at
www.lsc.gov.uk/providers/moneytolearn