

From: IMPROVEMENT, School <School.IMPROVEMENT@education.gov.uk>

Sent: 16 January 2020 14:48

Subject: SI Offer Excel RAF January 2020

Dear NLEs,

Happy new year; I hope you all had a restful break over Christmas. As you know, before the holiday we took the decision to stop using the portal for the submission of Tier 2 and 3 RAFs and move to a new offline template in Excel. This new template has now been finalised and is attached to this email. We worked closely with TSC reps over the holidays to ensure the template is as straightforward to use as possible. Where you have already completed a RAF on another template or via the portal, TSC will liaise with the department to get this transferred to the new template; you won't have to duplicate any work already done. The main reason for replacing the portal RAF with an Excel template (rather than either of the existing Word or PowerPoint versions) is that we want to be able to understand how the funding is being spent and demonstrate the valuable impact you are making. We are not able to extract and aggregate information and data from Word documents in order to do this. By using Excel we will be able to produce individual monitoring templates pre-populated with the key information from the RAF in order that activity and spend can be tracked directly. In addition, the auto-populate functionality of Excel means that costs are totalled automatically and data entry errors are reduced, hopefully leading to fewer exchanges of RAFs between NLEs/TSC/DfE. We have suggested that TSC use text colour and the free-text box on each page to highlight any amendments made or additional information required.

Guidance updates

Attached here is the updated full NLE guidance. This has been amended to reflect the change of RAF format and to provide additional clarification on matters which have prompted questions since the start of the programme. These are flagged in the change log at the end of the document but please be reassured that there are no significant policy changes you need to be aware of. There have also been updates made to the national programmes list (Annex B – separate document, also attached) – please note changes to leadership and behaviour programmes in particular. The portal guidance (stored on the portal) will also be updated.

Continued use of the portal

Please do continue to use the portal to enter your deployment dates (this is what triggers payment for the deployments you've completed) and to submit Tier 1 returns. We are producing weekly reports for TSC to help them track regional progress and follow up with NLEs as necessary; we will be reviewing recorded autumn term activity on 24th January so please do endeavour to submit all your scheduled/completed deployment dates and completed Tier 1 returns before that date.

Thank you once again for your patience and ongoing commitment to the delivery of the offer and we look forward to working with you over the rest of the year.

Kind regards,

School Improvement Team