Office for Students

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3 September 2026

Dear [Accountable Officer]

Interim financial return November 2026 – deadlines and requirements

I am writing to ask you to submit an interim financial return relating to your institution's financial year ending in 2027. This letter explains why we are asking for this additional return and provides further details about the data we are requesting, the deadline for submission and how we will use the data in our financial monitoring work. You can find further information about the return itself in Annex B, alongside this letter. Please also note this is a single year return and is separate from the Annual Financial Return 2026 that was issued in April.

We first introduced interim financial returns in April 2025 to support our duty to monitor financial patterns and trends across the sector. These interim returns help to fill what is in our view a gap that would otherwise apply in our main, annual reporting framework – and across some critical areas of our understanding of in-year, actual performance, as compared with forecast performance. For example, this next planned interim return will allow us to assess how the most recent recruitment activity has affected budgets, and the scale of any resulting financial challenges. Without that information, we would be less able to monitor emerging risks and target our responses where support may be needed.

We recognise, however, that we need to gather this additional information in the most proportionate way – and only to supplement the fuller financial picture we already receive through annual reporting. On that basis, we have designed previous interim returns to be as minimal and light-touch as possible and continue that approach in this next interim return.

As with the previous interim returns, this will be a short, focused return to understand any material movements in some core financial information relating to your forecast performance and position for the year ending in 2027. The return template includes just 12 questions in total (including some that are optional) and only across areas that are key to understanding any in-year variance between actual versus forecast performance.

Due to the introduction of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) 2026 for financial years beginning in 2026, the return workbook has also been adapted to allow providers to submit under either SORP 2019 or SORP 2026. We recognise that providers are at different stages of transition and have designed the template so you can submit according to your own internal reporting.

Requirements and deadline for the interim financial return

You can find the detailed requirements for this interim return in Schedule 1, at the end of Annex A in this letter, and guidance on submitting the return in Annex B (attached). Please ensure the information you submit accurately represents your best estimate of your provider's financial position for the year ending 2027.

Please submit this information through the Office for Students (OfS) portal. The portal will open for this return by early October 2026.

The deadline for submission is **2359 on Friday 13 November 2026**. Your return will not need to be verified before submission and will not require approval from your governing body.

Reporting material changes to actual or forecast financial performance or position, and outside the interim and annual reporting framework

Please continue to let us know of any reportable events in the normal way. This is an important mechanism that ensures visibility of material changes for an individual provider at the earliest opportunity. If you anticipate a material change to your actual or forecast financial performance or position, including a change in forecast or actual student numbers not included in your most recently submitted financial forecasts, please report this to us as set out in our reportable events guidance.[1]

Please contact Will Dent, Head of Financial Sustainability Oversight, at regulation@officeforstudents.org.uk or on 0117 931 7305 if you have any questions about this letter or the return we are asking you to make.

Yours sincerely

Deonne Rowland
Deputy Director of Regulation (Financial Sustainability)
regulation@officeforstudents.org.uk

[1] See OfS, Regulatory advice 16: Reportable events.

Annex A: Information requirements

To: The governing body of, XXXXX (the "Provider")

Notice under general ongoing condition of registration F3: Provision of information to the Office for Students ('OfS')

Whereas:

(A) The provider was registered by the OfS in accordance with section 3 of the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 (HERA) on the Register of English higher education providers.

(B) For the purpose of assisting the OfS in performing any function, or exercising any power, conferred under any legislation, the OfS has the power under general ongoing condition F3(i) (and by virtue of section 8(1)(b) of HERA) to compel the governing body of a registered English higher education provider to provide the OfS, or a person nominated by the OfS, with such information as the OfS specifies at the time and in the manner and form specified.

Therefore:

Pursuant to general ongoing condition of registration F3, the provider is required to provide the specified information at the specified time and in the specified manner.

Definitions:

"Specified information" means the information listed in the 'Specified Information' column at each row of the table at paragraph 2 of Schedule 1 to this Notice, in the required format, where specified in Schedule 1 of this Notice, which sets out the requirements for the provision of information to the OfS for the interim finance return.

"Specified manner" means the specified information must:

i. Be provided to the OfS via the OfS Portal; information related to the Portal will be provided in due course.

ii. Comply fully with guidance in Annex B (attached) issued by the OfS for each data return requirement.

iii. In respect of the 'Specified Information' of the table at paragraph 2 of the Schedule 1 of this Notice, be signed off by the individual or body as specified in the column 'sign-off required by' in that table.

"Specified time" means the deadline for provision of the specified information as set out in the column 'deadline' of the table at paragraph 2 of Schedule 1 of this Notice, which corresponds to the date in the column 'Specified Time' in the same row of that table.

Signed on behalf of the OfS and authorised for that purpose:

Deonne Rowland
Deputy Director Regulation (Financial Sustainability)

Date: 3 September 2026

Schedule 1: Interim financial return November 2026

1. The interim financial return is a data return that the provider must submit to the OfS to allow the OfS to monitor compliance with general ongoing condition D (Financial viability and sustainability).

2. [Provider name] is required to submit the following information by the deadline in the table below.

3. Please note that we will not be able to offer technical assistance outside of normal office hours.

Table: Deadline and information requirements

Deadline	Specified Time	Specified Information	Sign-off required by
13 November 2026	2359	Financial and contextual information to be completed as described in paragraph 3 of this Schedule. OfS portal submission instructions will follow in due course.	Submission of the return can be made by the accountable officer or by the director of finance or equivalent where appropriate authority has been delegated.

4. The provider is required to submit to the OfS the following forecast and contextual information relating to the provider's financial year that ends in 2027:

   a. Total income

   b. Total expenditure

   c. Current asset investments

   d. Cash and cash equivalents including the amount of 'restricted' cash and cash equivalents reported

   e. Net cash inflow / (outflow) from operating activities (after tax)

   f. Date of lowest cash balance (from now to end of financial year ending 2026)

   g. Lowest cash balance (£000s)

   h. Do you anticipate either non-compliance with any covenant attached to your borrowing or other financial commitments; or requiring a waiver of covenants for the financial year ending in 2026 or 2027?

   i. Do you expect to draw upon borrowing to support operating cashflow before the end of the 2026 financial year?

j. 13-month cashflow forecast by month. See the example table below.

	Nov-26	Dec-26	Jan-27	Feb-27	Mar-27	Apr-27	May-27	Jun-27	Jul-27	Aug-27	Sep-27	Oct-27	Nov-27
13-month cashflow forecast	**£000s**	**£000s**	**£000s**	**£000s**	**£000s**	**£000s**	**£000s**	**£000s**	**£000s**	**£000s**	**£000s**	**£000s**	**£000s**
Opening cash and cash equivalents													
Change													
Closing cash and cash equivalents													

k. Free text commentary on anything relating to the cashflow forecast (e.g. significant or unusual cash inflows or outflows, mitigations for low period of liquidity).

l. Finally, there will be a free text box for any further comments relating to the financial performance or position of your provider (e.g. financial contingencies, secured and unsecured cost saving plan).