**EMA Service Review Forums 2024**

**FAQ – Northern Ireland**

**Question**: Do we state in the bulletin when the sample checks are taking place?

**Answer:** We do not currently state this in the bulletins until after the sample check has started, but we’ll send communication before the sample check starts for both sample check 1 and 2.

**Question**: What are the maximum holiday weeks?

**Answer:** There is a minimum of 8 with no maximum.

**Question**: What is the acceptable maximum length of a medical certificate?

**Answer**: The maximum length is 3 weeks then it’s subject to review and on a case-by-case basis. Self-certification is acceptable for the first 5 working days.

**Question**: Should we pay a student for a 2-day induction?

**Answer**: Yes, but the course start date would have to reflect this, and we would need evidence of attendance.

**Question**: Can I see which learners have been selected as part of the sample check?

**Answer**: Yes, you can, there’s a sample check report you can use on the home page of the LC Portal. You’ll find it under Reports - LC reports - Sample check.

**Question:** How many absences can a student have before you stop paying them?

**Answer:** Each learning centre has their own learning agreement criteria, there’s no cap on how many incidences of illness a student can have so long as you’re satisfied it’s genuine. Learning Agreements must be realistic and fair. You can find more guidance on illness on the LC Services website.

<https://www.lcservices.slc.co.uk/ema-northern-ireland/guidance/guidance-notes-for-ema-learning-centres-in-northern-ireland/absence/illness/>

**Question**: My portal keeps crashing when I try and submit attendances? (colleges mainly)

**Answer**: Please screenshot the error message and report it to emainfo@slc.co.uk so they can escalate it.

**Question**: I‘ve had too many application forms delivered and I don't want to just throw them away, what can I do with them ?

**Answer**: If you have a larger college nearby then I'm sure the college could make use of them if you would be willing to drop them off. If not, then email your Account Manager and the next time they are in your area they’ll pick them up and make use of them elsewhere.

**Question**: Can a learner study a combination of courses 2 and 3 under EMA?

**Answer**: Yes, a course must be 15 hours as a minimum or full-time curriculum hours as timetabled, they are allowed a combination of levels.

**Question**: If a student’s bonus is disallowed, should we advise students?

**Answer**: Yes, you should let them know.

**Question**: If a student has applied on time and their application remains unapproved with no Learning Agreement signed by the 2 December deadline, can the bonus be awarded?

**Answer**: LCs should refer their request to their Account Manager and Operations will review this on a case-by-case basis (one reason could be due to Home Office documentation being delayed).

Missing register marks at the school or college was a common trend of topic across the forums. As registers are an internal requirement, you should raise the number of incomplete registers internally within your learning centre. Please highlight the fact that it impacts payments to students as the administrator needs evidence that students have attended all lessons before confirming their attendance on the portal.