**EMA NI Service Review Forums 2025 Common Questions**

**Q** Is it okay to remove on day 1 and then just reinstate when LA has been signed – a way to stay complaint against day 10 service standard?

**A** There is nothing to stop this happening, but normal practice would be to monitor days and around the 8 day mark you should be warning the student that unless the sign their LA they cannot be paid, then remove the LA until student is ready to sign.

**Q** Unable to reinstate an application, prevented/ blocked on the portal. Can EMAINFO assist?

**A)** Yes, please contact **emainfo@slc.co.uk**

**Q)** Consistent 1- or 2-days absence each week with a sick note provided, is it okay to continue to pay?

**A)** Yes, however as with a non-EMA student there is an expectation where negative patterns of attendance are identified best practice would be to talk to the student/parents about their attendance.

**Q)** Registration certificate in the audit section – what is this?

**A)** This refers to a specific piece of evidence eg a register or Sim’s code.

**Q)** Are notes from SIMMs now classed as evidence for audit purposes?

 **A)** Yes, both electronic and paper-based evidence for attendance confirmations is

 acceptable

**Q)** Forged/ fake parent absence notes – what can we do?

**A)** We advise follow the same process you have internally for non-EMA students if behaviour persists discuss with parents or seek other medical evidence. EMA is an attendance-based allowance and behaviour should be managed by the School/College.

[Guidance notes for EMA Learning Centres in Northern Ireland, Guidance for EMA in Northern Ireland | Learning Centre Services from Student Loans Company](https://www.lcservices.slc.co.uk/ema-northern-ireland/guidance/guidance-notes-for-ema-learning-centres-in-northern-ireland/#1661)

**Q)** Can the Dept for Economy/ NI gov logo be added to the LA?

**A)** No, the template LA should not be altered.

**Q)** Do 18/19-year-olds need their parents to complete absence notes as the student is technically an adult? Guidance on Self Cert?

**A**) I would reference school rules in the LA re absence, i.e. sick note is required. Students always have a choice not to sign if they disagree with content of the LA. Technically there is an option to self certificate.

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**Q)** Unable to add/ confirm bonus as student applied/ approved late – what can be done?

**A)** Current advice is to keep a record of students who had been in attendance, but their application had not been approved by 02 December, when application is approved and LA updated please contact emainfo@slc.co.uk and they can assist. We are currently exploring a solution to this**.**

**Q)** QR codes for EMA would be benefit for promotion – easy for students to scan QR code and be directed to EMA app/ guidance

**A)** We are exploring this option for marketing material

 **Q)** Will there be an EMA online app portal for students?

 **A)** There is no current plan to introduce an online application.

**Q)** LA being signed by student on day 8 or 9 but LC closed due to midterm/ holidays therefore LA not updated on portal until after the 10 days which is unavoidable

**A)** Remove LA at earliest opportunity to meet 10-day rule

[Removing and restoring applications quick guide, Quick guides, Guidance for EMA in Northern Ireland | Learning Centre Services from Student Loans Company](https://www.lcservices.slc.co.uk/ema-northern-ireland/guidance/quick-guides/quick-guides-to-help-you-manage-the-ema-scheme-in-northern-ireland/removing-and-restoring-applications-quick-guide/)

1. Household income drops below threshold mid-year, can they therefore apply for EMA midyear and how much would they be entitled too?
2. **Yes –** contact**emainfo@slc.co.uk**for advice

**Q)** Do we have to evidence part 2/ bonus criteria has been met before LC makes payment?

 **A)** Yes, as with attendance confirmations, evidence must be in place before approval.

**Q)** Is screenshot/photos from a smartphone acceptable for audit evidence or does this have to be on word or PDF?

**A)** Providing evidence can be submitted to Auditor this should be ok

**Full guidance to help you with EMA can be found on the LC Website**

[Guidance for EMA in Northern Ireland | Learning Centre Service from Student Loans Company](https://www.lcservices.slc.co.uk/ema-northern-ireland/guidance/)

 [Education Maintenance Allowance application forms and accompanying notes | nidirect](https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/publications/education-maintenance-allowance-application-forms-and-accompanying-notes)

**For further-information relating to Audit enquiries please contact**

EMAinspections@economy-ni.gov.uk