

Education Maintenance Allowance

Pupil Handbook • Session 2020/2021



Introduction

You have been awarded an Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) and I am pleased to provide you with a copy of the EMA Handbook.

The handbook has been produced to provide you and your parent(s)/carer(s) with a handy source of reference for any EMA issues that you may have.

Please refer to the handbook for advice in the first instance. If you require further information please do not hesitate to contact the EMA Team.

EMA Team Contact

Address Finance Support Team
Education & Children's Services
Perth & Kinross Council
Council Building
2 High Street
PERTH
PH1 5PH

Please note the office is currently closed due to COVID-19 and we are working from home but you can contact us by:

Tel 01738 476234/476276

Email EMA@pkc.gov.uk

Please note:

Scottish Ministers reserve the right to amend the terms of the scheme at any time.

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1 Learning or Activity Agreement

In order for your EMA payments to commence, you must complete and sign a Learning or Activity Agreement. Learning Agreements must also be signed by a parent/carer. Failure to adhere to the terms and conditions of the Agreement may result in non-payment of the award.

The Learning or Activity Agreement is a “*living document*” and should be referred to throughout the year. You must discuss any changes in your course or the course content with your guidance teacher/Next Steps Coach. A new Agreement must be completed for every change that takes place.

You will need to complete a new Learning or Activity Agreement for each academic year.

School Students

The Learning Agreement should be discussed and agreed with your guidance teacher, it should be attached to a copy of your school pupil contract (where these are used).

Young People on Activity Agreements

The Activity Agreement should be discussed and agreed with your Next Steps Coach prior to signing.

2 Absence

EMA is paid for 100% attendance in every timetabled class and payment can be withheld for any unauthorised absence during that week. In general, if you are absent from school, your EMA may be withheld. Guidelines for sickness absence are as follows.

2.1 Responsibility

You are responsible for:

- *reporting your sickness absence to your school/base EMA contact;*
- *completing and returning your sickness certification form within three days of your return to your school/base;*
- *providing medical certificates when required.*

Your school/base is responsible for:

- *the recording of daily attendance patterns for successful EMA applicants;*
- *authorising or stopping payments;*
- *retaining attendance and absence data records;*
- *retaining other relevant documents and information (eg letters, medical and self-certification forms).*

2.2 Authorised/Unauthorised Absence

Reasons for absence are based on the Perth & Kinross Council Attendance/Absence Guidelines (see Section 2.8, ie code, description and category). The EMA Payment/Non-Payment column defines where payment will or will not be paid.

2.3 Medical Certificates and Absences Due To Ill Health

You are required to produce documentary evidence that you are unfit to attend your school/placement due to ill health. You can use sickness certification forms for the first five days' absence (but no more than three sickness absence periods) per term/placement. Fourth and subsequent sickness absence periods during the term/placement will require a medical certificate from your doctor as will any sickness absence which continues for five consecutive school/working days or more. The academic year is defined as three terms per year (normally August to December, January to March and April to June).

2.4 Sickness Absence Reporting Procedure

In the event of sickness absence, you must report your inability to attend school/base in accordance with the following procedure:

- **On your first day of sickness absence** - you must notify your school office/base as soon as practicable but in any event, by no later than lunchtime and advise of reasons for, and the estimated length of, absence. If you do not give an estimated length of absence, you must notify the school office/base before lunchtime every day of your absence. The first school day or working day of sickness is regarded as the first day of sickness absence.
- **On your return to school/work** - you must obtain and complete a sickness certification form and return it to the school office/base **within three days**. You and your parent/carer (if appropriate) must sign the form.
- **If sickness absence continues for more than five school/work days** - by no later than the sixth school/work day, you must obtain a medical certificate from the doctor and send the certificate to the school office/base. You must submit further medical certificates to cover any continued absence. The medical certificate may have to be provided at your own expense.
- **If the doctor's surgery will not issue a medical certificate** - your parent/carer should write to the school/base confirming that you attended the surgery but that they would not issue a medical certificate. Also, if appropriate, the tear-off page of any prescription issued should be enclosed with the letter. This will then be treated as an appeal by Education & Children's Services (see Appeals 3.3).

A periodic medical absence that extends over a period of three weeks will be the subject of review. Individual circumstances will be considered.

Your failure to comply with the requirements for reporting sickness may result in the EMA being suspended without notice.

2.5 Late Attendance for School Students

Late attendance is defined as late or very late.

Late is if you arrive after the start of registration but before 10.30 am for morning attendance. You will be allowed one late attendance per week. Your payment will not be issued for any week when you are late more than once.

Very late is if you arrive after 10.30 am for morning attendance. Your payment will not be issued for any week when you have a very late attendance.

EMA payments may be considered where the pupil is late due to transport problems.

Persistent lateness will be dealt with via the disciplinary procedure.

2.6 Late Attendance for Young People on Activity Agreements

Late attendance is defined as late or very late.

Late is if you arrive after the agreed start time but within one and a half hours of the start time. You will be allowed one late attendance per week. Your payment will not be issued for any week when you are late more than once.

Very late is if you arrive one and a half hours or more after the agreed start time. Your payment will not be issued for any week when you have a very late attendance.

EMA payments may be considered where the pupil is late due to transport problems.

2.7 Study Leave (school students only)

Your school will decide study leave during exam times. Official study leave will not affect EMA payments but you must ensure you are not absent outwith these dates - for example if study leave is confirmed as starting on a Wednesday and ending on a Thursday, you must have full attendance for the Monday, Tuesday

preceding and the Friday following. Absence outwith official study leave dates will result in non-payment for the relevant week. Should you not attend your exams during the period, payment will be withheld.

If you are in S6 you will have completed your course after your exam period therefore your EMA payments will stop.

Study leave is not applicable to Activity Agreement applicants.

2.8 Criteria for Attendance/Absence – EMA Payment/Non-Payment

NB: These are primarily for school students however they will be used for assessment of young people on Activity Agreements where applicable.

Code	Description	Category	EMA Payment/Non-Payment
ABS (A)	Alternative Education	Authorised	Payment
ABS (A)	Authorised Absence	Authorised	Payment
OAT (O)	School Contract Bus Late	Not counted	Payment
PER (P)	Temporary Short Appointment	Not counted	Payment
PER (P)	Dentist (half day +)	Authorised	Payment
EXC (X)	Exclusion	Exclusion from school	Non-Payment
DCU (R)	Exceptional Domestic (Unauthorised)	Unauthorised	Non-Payment
DCA (Q)	Exceptional Domestic (Authorised)	Authorised	Payment
UPH (G)	Family Holiday	Unauthorised	Non-Payment except religious holidays by prior arrangement
OAT (O)	Interview: work/higher or further education	Attendance out of school	Payment when by prior arrangement
OUA (N)	Home Tuition: not approved	Unauthorised	Non-Payment
OUA (N)	School Refuser: identified	Unauthorised	Non-Payment
LAT (J)	Late (<50% opening)	Late	Please refer to note 2.5
SEL (D)	Self-certified (from parent/pupil)	Authorised	Please refer to note 2.3
MED (F)	Medically Certified (from doctor)	Authorised	Please refer to note 2.3
EXL (Z)	Travelling Family (4 weeks +)	Authorised	Payment
OAT (O)	Partnership Education (link)	Attendance out of school	Payment when by prior arrangement
OUA (O)	Sheriff Appeal: attendance	Unauthorised	Non-Payment
PER (P)	Doctor/hospital (half day +)	Authorised	Payment when by prior arrangement
PHL (E)	Relative Visit (4 weeks +)	Authorised	Non-Payment
STY (S)	Study Leave	Study leave	Payment when by prior arrangement
UNA (U)	Truancy	Unauthorised	Non-Payment
TBC (T)	Unauthorised (unresolved)	Unauthorised	Non-Payment
LT2 (K)	Very Late (>50% opening)	Late	Please refer to note 2.5
WRK (W)	Work Experience	Attendance out of school	Payment when by prior arrangement
VIS (V)	Excursion/School Activity	Attendance out of school	Payment
FLD (V)	Excursion/School Activity - Field Trip	Attendance out of school	Payment
SCH (~)	In school but not in class	Authorised	Payment
CLO (C)	Emergency closure	Attendance out of school	Payment

NB: holidays taken by school students within term time will not be considered as authorised absence.

3 Appeals Procedure

3.1 Appeals – Applications

If you are refused EMA support and you disagree with the decision, you may lodge an appeal using the following process:

- *You must lodge an appeal within 1 calendar month of the date of the letter notifying you of the decision.*
- *You must lodge an appeal in writing and send it to the Finance Support Team, Education & Children's Services, who will consider any additional evidence provided by you. You must state the reason for the appeal and include any relevant additional evidence or information, ie clarification of household income, written confirmation from employers if available or a benefits statement if not already provided.*

All such evidence will be considered confidential under the terms of the Data Protection Act and treated accordingly.

Where the Council considers there are circumstances on which they need advice, they will refer to the EMA Unit at the Scottish Government.

The Appeals Process will take no longer than 14 days including any Scottish Government input/involvement. However, it is possible that some appeals may raise issues of government policy which may require more time to resolve. If this is the case you will be advised of the delay in writing.

You will be notified of the result in writing and the Council will record the decision. Additional evidence or copies of documents provided by you will be stored with the original application information in accordance with the terms of the Data Protection Act.

Where your appeal is successful you will receive a Letter of Award and an EMA Contract and any original documents supplied with your appeal. Where you are successful with an appeal, you will be notified of the date that back payments will be paid from.

Where an appeal is not successful you will be notified of the decision in writing.

3.2 Appeals – Stoppage of Weekly Allowance

Where the issue cannot be resolved within the school/base, you should lodge an appeal and send it to the Finance Support Team, Education & Children's Services in writing within 1 calendar month of the stoppage.

3.3 Appeals – General

Appeals against any decision must be lodged in writing to the EMA Team at Perth & Kinross Council within one calendar month of that decision.

Perth & Kinross Council maintains an Appeals Register which details information surrounding EMA appeals and the date of their resolution and also of their outcome.

This information will be made available to the EMA Unit at the Scottish Government on an annual basis to enable monitoring of the effectiveness of the programme.

All details are to be considered confidential under the terms of the Data Protection Act and treated accordingly.

3.4 Complaints

Formal complaints about the EMA programme or EMA policies (ie reasons other than EMA applications, support and stoppage of awards) will be dealt with in accordance with Perth & Kinross Council formal complaints procedures. Please contact us if you require details.

The information will be recorded in a Complaints Register and forwarded to the EMA Unit at the Scottish Government on an annual basis to enable monitoring of the effectiveness of the national programme.

4 Change in Circumstances

You should notify the EMA Team immediately by email to EMA@pkc.gov.uk or in writing (*address at the front of this handbook*) of any change in you or your family's circumstances for example:

- *you change address;*
- *your bank account details change;*
- *if you leave or change school/base;*
- *if you change your course or course content.*

Failure to notify us of any changes may result in the non-payment of the award.

5 How We Use Your Personal Information

The information provided by you will be used by Perth & Kinross Council to establish entitlement to Educational Maintenance Allowance. The information may be shared for the same purposes with public bodies, including neighbouring Councils or other organisations which handle public funds.

The Council may check information provided by you, or information about you provided by a third party, with other information held by us. We may also get information from certain third parties or share your information with them in order to verify its accuracy, prevent or detect crime, protect public funds or where required by law.

For further information, please look at our website www.pkc.gov.uk/dataprotection or email DataProtection@pkc.gov.uk or telephone 01738 477933.

6 Disciplinary Policy

In certain circumstances, disciplinary action may be taken, eg misconduct, persistent lateness, abuse of sickness absence regulations.

There are two possible ultimate penalties:

- *stopping weekly payment;*
- *stopping total award.*

Your weekly payment may be stopped when an oral warning has been issued to you.

Your award can only be stopped completely after an oral warning, written warning and final warning have been issued to you.

7 Payment Between Summer Exams and Holidays *(school students only)*

If you intend to return to school after the summer holidays, fortnightly payments will be made up to the end of the academic year provided you attend school and adhere to the EMA terms and conditions.

If you leave school on completion of your exams, you will only be eligible to receive an EMA until the week of the last SQA exam.

8 Terms and Conditions

The terms and conditions to which you agreed when applying and signing for EMA are set out below:

1. *Applications can only be accepted where the applicant has reached the statutory school leaving age.*
 - *If the applicant is legally allowed to leave school after Summer (full award), they should apply from the preceding June.*

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- *If the applicant is legally allowed to leave school after Christmas (part award), they should apply from the preceding December.*
2. *If an application is received with documentation missing, correspondence will be sent requesting said documents. These documents must then be returned within three weeks. If the documents have not been received in this office within the three week timescale the applicant will be required to re-apply and this may result in the loss of EMA payments.*
 3. *In extreme circumstances, eg parental redundancy, awards can be based on current incomes and a provisional award can be made.*
 4. *Successful applicants must complete a Learning or Activity Agreement and adhere to the terms of the Agreement or EMA payments will be stopped immediately without notice.*
 5. *Successful applicants (school students only) must attend school for a minimum of 21 guided learning hours per week (including study periods) or their placement for an agreed number of hours.*
 6. *Successful applicants will only receive payment for the weeks where 100% attendance (and/or authorised absence) has been maintained.*
 7. *Successful applicants will be entitled to five days sickness-certification (but no more than three sickness absence periods) within an academic term and must adhere to the absence policy. Any other absences must be covered by a medical certificate and authorised by the school on the appropriate adjustment form. A medical certificate may have to be provided at the applicant's own expense.*
 - 7a. *If the doctor's surgery will not issue a medical certificate, a letter from the successful applicant's parent/carer confirming a medical certificate was requested but refused, should be submitted. Also, if appropriate, the tear-off page of any prescription issued should be enclosed with the letter. This will then be treated as an appeal by Pullar House (see Terms & Conditions number 16).*
 8. *Successful applicants must notify the school office/base as soon as practicable of sickness absence but in any event, by no later than lunchtime on each day of absence and advise of reasons for and estimated length of absence. If it is a long-term absence, the school/ base must be notified on the first day of absence of the reason for and estimated length of absence. On return to school/base, the applicant should obtain and fill in a sickness-certification form and return it to the school/base within 3 working days or payment may be suspended.*
 9. *Payment may be stopped for late attendance. Late attendance for school students is defined as late or very late.*
 - *Late is arrival after start time but before 10.30 am for morning attendance - weekly payment will not be issued for that week if 2 or more late arrivals are incurred.*
 - *Very late is arrival at school after 10.30 am for morning attendance - weekly payment will not be issued for that week if any "very late" arrivals are incurred.*
 - 9a. *Late attendance for young people on Activity Agreements is defined as late or very late.*
 - *Late is arrival after start time but within one and a half hours of the start time - weekly payment will not be issued for that week if 2 or more late arrivals are incurred.*
 - *Very late is arrival more than one and a half hours after the agreed start time - weekly payment will not be issued for that week if any "very late" arrivals are incurred.*
 10. *Payment may be stopped for poor conduct. The school/base can contact Education & Children's Services and request that the EMA payments be stopped for that young person.*
 11. *Payment may be stopped for poor progress. EMA payments can be stopped if the school/base advises that the applicant has not made progress with their studies/placement.*
 12. *Payments to successful applicants will be made on a 2 weekly basis (unless notified otherwise) and will be paid directly into the applicant's bank account. EMA awards will not be paid into the bank account of any other person.*
 13. *Successful applicants should check with their own bank in the first instance to ascertain when/what EMA payments have been paid into their bank account for the relevant period.*

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14. *Successful applicants who call to make enquiries must provide their EMA number and/or date of birth before information can be provided.*
15. *Successful applicants agree that any EMA overpayment can be recouped in full or in part from subsequent EMA payments.*
16. *Appeals against any decision must be lodged in writing to Education & Children's Services within 1 calendar month of that decision.*
17. *A new application will have to be submitted at the appropriate time for each year of academic study.*
18. *Scottish Ministers reserve the right to amend the terms of the scheme at any time.*

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9 EMA Payment Timetable 2020/2021 (PKC Schools/Activity Agreements)

Week No	Week		Pay Day	School Days/Weeks Allowance
	3 Aug 2020	7 Aug 2020		No EMA entitlement - school holidays
1	10 Aug 2020	14 Aug 2020	28 Aug 2020	3 days/1 week School starts 12 Aug
2	17 Aug 2020	21 Aug 2020		
3	24 Aug 2020	28 Aug 2020	11 Sep 2020	10 days/2 weeks
4	31 Aug 2020	4 Sep 2020		
5	7 Sep 2020	11 Sep 2020	25 Sep 2020	10 days/2 weeks
6	14 Sep 2020	18 Sep 2020		
7	21 Sep 2020	25 Sep 2020	9 Oct 2020	10 days/2 weeks
8	28 Sep 2020	2 Oct 2020		5 days/1 week School ends 2 Oct
	5 Oct 2020	9 Oct 2020	23 Oct 2020	No EMA entitlement - school holidays
	12 Oct 2020	16 Oct 2020		No EMA entitlement - school holidays
9	19 Oct 2020	23 Oct 2020	6 Nov 2020	5 days/1 week School starts 19 Oct
10	26 Oct 2020	30 Oct 2020		
11	2 Nov 2020	6 Nov 2020	20 Nov 2020	10 days/2 weeks
12	9 Nov 2020	13 Nov 2020		
13	16 Nov 2020	20 Nov 2020	4 Dec 2020	8 days/2 weeks In Service Days 12 & 13 Nov
14	23 Nov 2020	27 Nov 2020		
15	30 Nov 2020	4 Dec 2020	18 Dec 2020	10 days/2 weeks
16	7 Dec 2020	11 Dec 2020		
17	14 Dec 2020	18 Dec 2020	15 Jan 2021	10 days/2 weeks
18	21 Dec 2020	25 Dec 2020		School ends 23 Dec
	28 Dec 2020	1 Jan 2021		No EMA entitlement - school holidays
	4 Jan 2021	8 Jan 2021		No EMA entitlement - under 3 days
19	11 Jan 2021	15 Jan 2021	29 Jan 2021	10 days/3 weeks School starts 7 Jan
20	18 Jan 2021	22 Jan 2021		
21	25 Jan 2021	29 Jan 2021	12 Feb 2021	10 days/2 weeks
22	1 Feb 2021	5 Feb 2021		
23	8 Feb 2021	12 Feb 2021	26 Feb 2021	In Service Day 10 Feb Occasional Holidays 11 & 12 Feb 7 days/2 weeks
24	15 Feb 2021	19 Feb 2021		
25	22 Feb 2021	26 Feb 2021	12 Mar 2021	10 days/2 weeks
26	1 Mar 2021	5 Mar 2021		
27	8 Mar 2021	12 Mar 2021	26 Mar 2021	10 days/2 weeks
28	15 Mar 2021	19 Mar 2021		
29	22 Mar 2021	26 Mar 2021	9 Apr 2021	10 days/2 weeks
30	29 Mar 2021	2 Apr 2021		4 days/1 week School ends 1 Apr
	5 Apr 2021	9 Apr 2021	23 Apr 2021	No EMA entitlement - school holidays
	12 Apr 2021	16 Apr 2021		No EMA entitlement - school holidays
31	19 Apr 2021	23 Apr 2021	7 May 2021	10 days/2 weeks Schools starts 19 Apr
32	26 Apr 2021	30 Apr 2021		
33	3 May 2021	7 May 2021	21 May 2021	9 days/2 weeks May Day Holiday 3 May
34	10 May 2021	14 May 2021		
35	17 May 2021	21 May 2021	4 Jun 2021	10 days/2 weeks
36	24 May 2021	28 May 2021		
37	31 May 2021	4 Jun 2021	18 Jun 2021	10 days/2 weeks
38	7 Jun 2021	11 Jun 2021		
39	14 Jun 2021	18 Jun 2021	2 Jul 2021	10 days/2 weeks
40	21 Jun 2021	25 Jun 2021		4 days/1 week School ends 24 Jun
	28 Jun 2021	2 Jul 2021	16 Jul 2021	No EMA entitlement - school holidays
	5 Jul 2021	9 Jul 2021		No EMA entitlement - school holidays
	12 Jul 2021	16 Jul 2021	30 Jul 2021	No EMA entitlement - school holidays
	19 Jul 2021	23 Jul 2021		No EMA entitlement - school holidays
	26 Jul 2021	30 Jul 2021	13 Aug 2021	No EMA entitlement - school holidays

Note: these payment dates are subject to change.

The information contained in this document is intended as a general guide and it should not be regarded as a statement of the statutory position.

If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (on occasion only a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by contacting the Customer Service Centre on 01738 475000

إن احتجت أنت أو أي شخص تعرفه نسخة من هذه الوثيقة بلغة أخرى أو تصميم آخر فيمكن الحصول عليها (أو على نسخة معدلة لمُلخص هذه الوثيقة مترجمة بلغة أخرى) بالاتصال ب:
الاسم: Customer Service Centre
رقم هاتف للاتصال المباشر: 01738 475000

اگر آپ کو یا آپ کے کسی جاننے والے کو اس دستاویز کی نقل دوسری زبان یا فارمیٹ (بعض دفعہ اس دستاویز کے خلاصہ کا ترجمہ فراہم کیا جائے گا) میں درکار ہے تو اس کا بندوبست سروس ڈیولپمنٹ Customer Service Centre سے فون نمبر 01738 475000 پر رابطہ کر کے کیا جاسکتا ہے۔

如果你或你的朋友希望得到這文件的其他語言版本或形式

(某些時候，這些文件只會是概要式的翻譯)，請聯絡

Customer Service Centre 01738 475000

來替你安排。

Jeżeli chciałbyś lub ktoś chciałby uzyskać kopię owego dokumentu w innym języku niż język angielski lub w innym formacie (istnieje możliwość uzyskania streszczenia owego dokumentu w innym języku niż język angielski), Proszę kontaktować się z Customer Service Centre 01738 475000

P ejete-li si Vy, anebo n kdo, koho znáte, kopii této listiny v jiném jazyce anebo jiném formátu (v n kterých p ípadech bude p eložen pouze stru ný obsah listiny) Kontaktujte prosím Customer Service Centre 01738 475000 na vy ízení této požadavky.

Если вам или кому либо кого вы знаете необходима копия этого документа на другом языке или в другом формате, вы можете запросить сокращенную копию документа обратившись Customer Service Centre 01738 475000

Nam bu mhath leat fhèin no neach eile as aithne dhut lethbhreac den phàipear seo ann an cànan no ann an cruth eile (uaireannan cha bhi ach geàrr-iomradh den phàipear ri fhaotainn ann an eadar-theangachadh), gabhaidh seo a dhèanamh le fios a chur gu Ionad Sheirbheis Theachdaichean air 01738 475000.

You can also send us a text message on 07824 498145.

All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility.

www.pkc.gov.uk

(PKC Design Team - 2020140)