

## HNF Guidance for Evidence Form

**The deadlines for evidence submissions are on the website.**

The evidence form is available in either Word or Excel format and the examples are updated. Please do not delete any section of the evidence form or leave any section blank. If you cannot provide the information required, then please reassess whether an HNF application is appropriate at this time. The provision map is the most commonly deleted part of the form, substituting in-house documents in its place. Please do not do this – all relevant information about provision must be included on the provision map provided.

Apart from having access to EHCPs, the information on the form is all that the moderators will work from. Do not send any other documents – all relevant information from EHCPs, reports or assessments should be captured on the evidence form. You must evidence that the learner's needs and provision align with the banding descriptors and exemplars provided. If there are sections of the form that you cannot complete, you should wait until you have all the relevant evidence. If assessments by external agencies are taking time to be completed (by this, we mean that the learner has been on a waiting list for longer than six months), you can submit the application and we will take this into consideration.

**APPLICATIONS WITH TOTALLY INCOMPLETE SECTIONS WILL NOT BE MODERATED AND THERE WILL BE NO OPPORTUNITY TO RESUBMIT UNTIL THE FOLLOWING TERM.**

Every term we have a high number of applications where moderators are unable to agree the band applied for because the evidence suggests that the learner's needs are not 'high need' and/or the provision does not exceed the first £6,000 of Element 2 funding. Please ensure that you can evidence high need that requires provision in excess of £6,000. If a learner is allocated a Band A or Band B, this recognises that there is a level of SEND but not at High Needs level. We do not continue to record bands below Band C but you can use them for your own in-house data.

The moderation process is at a high cost to the Local Authority – somewhere in the region of £5,000 per day and we need to minimise the amount of time spent processing applications that are incomplete.

**Please follow this guidance when completing evidence forms:**

<b>PAGE 1</b>	
<b>DFE Number</b>	All settings have an allocated DFE number – anyone in your setting who deals with data should know what this number is.
<b>Name of Setting</b>	Please give the name of the setting and the location – we have experienced problems with schools that have the same/similar name to others and schools that change their name when becoming an academy.
<b>UPN</b>	Every learner has a unique pupil number so please include this as it helps to identify learners across our systems. We have nearly 14,000 learners now with an HNF band and accurate identification is crucial. Where FE settings do not use UPNs, please leave blank and we will fill this in.
<b>Name of Learner</b>	Please be precise here – often learners change their name through choice or new family arrangements – you will need to provide us with any previous

	names that have been used by the learner to help us to cross reference our records.
<b>Date of Birth</b>	This is another vital piece of information when identifying learners – especially those with similar names – please include the date of birth.
<b>Year Group</b>	This helps the moderators to establish the phase of education that the learner is in and begin to formulate the picture of need at the beginning of the process. Please indicate if a learner is placed out of year group.
<b>Live in Suffolk?</b>	If a learner is in a Suffolk school but does not live in Suffolk, there are some things for you to consider. If they have a non-Suffolk EHCP, then it is your responsibility to seek funding directly from the relevant Local Authority who maintains the plan. PLEASE NOTE THAT THE PREVIOUS RECOUPMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR A CHILD IN CARE ARE NO LONGER OPERATIONAL - THIS MEANS THAT SUFFOLK LA WILL ONLY FUND LEARNERS WITH A SUFFOLK EHCP. We also fund SEN Support learners in Suffolk schools, regardless of where they live but we do not fund SEN Support Suffolk learners in non-Suffolk schools, unless they are a Child in Care. This can be very complicated – please check with us if you have any questions.
<b>SEND Status</b>	Please be very clear about where in the EHCP process the learner is – a learner remains on SEN Support until a draft EHCP has been issued. At any stage during the application process or the Statutory Assessment process, a decision could be made to not issue an EHCP.
<b>Child in Care?</b>	As previously described, a Child in Care in a Suffolk school is funded by Suffolk, as long as they live in Suffolk and have a Suffolk EHCP. If they have an EHCP from another Local Authority, then you will need to apply to this LA for funding. A Suffolk Child in Care on SEN Support can be funded by Suffolk in both a Suffolk school and a non-Suffolk school.
<b>Dual Placement?</b>	<p>We need to know if any learner in your setting is attending any alternative provision, regardless of what the provision is or who is incurring the cost. Dates of commencement and any known estimation of end dates should also be provided. In the case of learners who have never been allocated an HNF band, please do not expect the alternative setting to complete an application for HNF. Most learners in AP, stay on a substantive school roll and the responsibility for their provision is jointly held by both settings. You should be liaising regularly with the AP setting and together you should be able to collect the relevant evidence for you to make an HNF application. If you are funding the cost of AP that has been sourced by you, this should be clearly shown on the provision map and all relevant HNF will be allocated to your setting. Please note that bands are allocated according to the accurate correlation between need and provision – using very expensive independent alternative provision does not guarantee a higher band, if it far exceeds the need. In some cases, very expensive provision is not a justifiably reasonable cost and there should be no expectation that funding will cover the whole cost of it. If the LA is funding the AP, you will not receive HNF until the learner returns to you full time. Where there is a combination of an LA AP school and your own sourced provision, HNF will not be paid in most cases, due to the cost to the LA of a second amount of Element 1 and 2 funding. Our policy around learners accessing the Alternative Tuition Service is different and if the school is providing additional provision, we now pay HNF if the ATS offer is only 5 hours. If you have a learner who is dual placed with a special school, the special school will continue to receive HNF at an agreed band and you must make arrangements between yourselves for you to receive a proportion of the funding.</p> <p><b>Please note that the recently revised spreadsheet template indicates clearly how to record information around Dual Placement. If you are paying for AP, this is recorded on the Learners with a Band tab and the details placed in the Comments section. If the LA is paying for AP or</b></p>

	providing a place in an AP school, this is recorded on the Funding to be Withheld tab.
<b>HNF Band Request?</b>	<p>Please indicate the band that you are applying for and please do not change it from what you recorded on your spreadsheet. There is a sixteen day gap between the spreadsheet deadline and the evidence deadline – it is highly unlikely that a learner will have changed to a different band in this short space of time.</p> <p>If you are requesting a change to a band, you only need to submit evidence if the new band is higher than the allocated one. You must indicate that this is not a first submission and then tell us when the learner was previously entered and the band they were allocated. PLEASE ENSURE THAT THE BAND ALLOCATED IS THE ONE THAT YOU WERE NOTIFIED OF AFTER MODERATION – DO NOT RECORD THE BAND THAT WAS REQUESTED IF THIS IS DIFFERENT FROM THE ONE ALLOCATED.</p>
<b>Attendance</b>	<p>By completing this section, you will evidence other aspects of the form – engagement with learning, alternative provision and medical issues. This information should correlate with timetables and provision maps. Please note that we have seen a huge increase in learners being placed on part timetables and have not withheld funding in the spirit of this always being a temporary measure and one that could be revoked by a parent/carer without notice. The new quality assurance that has been introduced has tracked learners on part timetables in previous terms and we have asked settings to update us on the progress that has been made. In most cases, this has happened and funding has not been adjusted. Where this isn't the case, we have had to adjust funding on a pro-rata basis.</p> <p>We also carry out support work for settings that either request help or are identified by the moderators as needing support. This has involved visits to settings in all three localities and provided a very valuable opportunity for discussions to take place and for us to develop the guidance that we give to everyone. Unfortunately, we don't have enough time to visit everyone and the capacity of the team is currently reduced due to maternity leave.</p>

<b>PAGE 2</b>	
<b>Category of Need</b>	<p>This is the section where the need(s) must be clearly evidenced. The SEND Code of Practice (2015) defines the four main areas of need – there is also a fifth section for medical information. Please refer to the Evidence Form Examples for an indication of how to populate this section of the form.</p> <p><b>PLEASE DO:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• use the banding descriptor headings to ensure that your information is in the correct sections</li> <li>• use the banding descriptor terms (in bold type) to define the level of need</li> <li>• use the terminology that practitioner reports use to describe diagnoses and to define difficulties</li> <li>• give an overall judgement (taken from your assessment data) to define the working levels of the learner and evidence the gap between working levels and chronological age</li> <li>• give a diagnostic judgement that is based on a diagnostic test and not a screening tool – many screening tools are very useful indicators of performance but <b>do not</b> evidence the descriptor terms in bold like a diagnostic test or practitioner assessment would do</li> <li>• give a precise indication of how the needs and difficulties impact on the learner's communication skills, engagement with learning,</li> </ul>

	<p>social/emotional wellbeing, mental health, physical health, physical ability and sensory functioning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be very clear that the emerging needs of younger learners are special educational needs and not needs that are associated with developmental delay that may resolve in time.</li> </ul> <p><b>PLEASE DO NOT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• just give an overarching diagnosis that cannot evidence the level of need – e.g. diagnosis of ASD – a learner with this diagnosis could fit Band C descriptors or Band H descriptors – we need details.</li> <li>• go into too much detail – especially about very sensitive information or peripheral information (e.g. about family members or generic details of conditions/medical needs)</li> <li>• refer to any documents/reports in name only – it is expected that you will have taken any key information from them and incorporated it into the narrative, as well as indicating when they were written in the later part of the form</li> <li>• provide information that does not match that which is recorded in other sections of the form.</li> </ul>
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<b>PAGE 3</b>	
<b>Assessment Information OVER KEY STAGES</b>	<p>The <b>Examples</b> have been removed – they didn’t appear to function as they were intended to and for the moderators, they caused confusion. Please populate all key stage sections prior to the key stage that the learner is in, using all types of current and historical assessment data.</p> <p>All primary learners are currently assessed according to the criteria for the year group that they are in. Learners who are not working at this level are either working at another level within the key stage or at a pre-key stage level. Please clearly indicate how your setting defines progression in this respect. For example – a learner progressing through Year 1 may be 1 Emerging, 1 Beginning, 1 Developing, 1 Mastered, 1 Exceeding or any other terminology that your setting uses. Please do not just put 1E, 1B, 1D, 1M, 1E etc. – out of context it is not always obvious what the initials stand for.</p> <p>Likewise, in a secondary setting please show progression in GCSE levels, not just a target grade. For example – Target Grade 4/Achieving Grade 2.5 – this indicates precisely how far away from the target grade the learner is currently working. Key Stage 3 data can include any assessments that involve standardised scores or information that can define progress against other key stage data.</p> <p>We still see assessment data expressed as “<b>Working well below</b>” – please do not use this term and wait until you can provide quantitative data that shows progress over time. Please also be aware that screening tools are not the same as diagnostic tools – we quite often see the data from a screener being presented as the only evidence of need and at HNF level, a learner should have been assessed diagnostically either by yourself or a relevant professional.</p>

<b>PAGE 4</b>	
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<b>Assessment Information CURRENT</b>	Please include all relevant assessment data to indicate the learner's current levels. By placing the data in the relevant boxes according to level, a visual representation of the learner's needs is demonstrated.
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<b>PAGE 5</b>	
<b>Other Assessments</b>	Please include all relevant assessment data that is specific to the learner's identified needs. For example – SaLT assessments for C and I needs; literacy/numeracy assessments for C and L needs; social/emotional assessments like Thrive or PASS for SEMH needs. All EHCPs have involved an EP assessment during the EHCNA stage – please give any relevant assessment data from the EP report if this is still current.

**IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO POPULATE THESE SECTIONS – YOU MAY NEED MORE TIME TO WORK WITH AND ASSESS THE LEARNER, BEFORE MAKING AN APPLICATION FOR HNF.**

<b>PAGE 6</b>	
<b>Specialist Support and Services Involvement</b>	This section includes all outside agency support across Education, Health and Social Care. It is expected to see that there is, or has been, relevant service involvement to identify need(s) and support ongoing interventions. Please ensure that, unless you have met with persistent parental refusal to permit referrals to be made, you demonstrate that all relevant services have been approached/ accessed and that all diagnoses/descriptors have been supported by a relevant professional, where applicable.

<b>PAGE 7</b>	
<b>Timetable of Support</b>	<p>Please ensure that this is fully completed and reflects any reference to support that is previously mentioned. The basic classroom support and specific interventions should be indicated and the level of support should be clearly defined. The use of 'small group' is not a clear term – please indicate staff to learner ratio using 1:2; 1:3; 1:4 etc. Please note that ratios are always given as staff to learner – so 2:1 means two staff to one learner and 1:2 means one staff to two learners.</p> <p>If the learner is not attending full time, please ensure that attendance is clearly defined. If a learner is in full time alternative provision, you should still be able to give an indication of their attendance at the provision.</p> <p>The use of colour coding for different levels of support (please see the example evidence forms) is a good visual tool for the moderators and also can be easily compared with the provision map – you can use highlighting or different coloured fonts for this.</p>

<b>PAGE 8</b>	
<b>Provision Map</b>	The provision map does not need to replicate the information already given in the descriptions of need or the timetable of support. It needs to clearly summarise the overall level of support that the learner is receiving and clearly demonstrate the staff/learner ratio. The example evidence forms

show how to cost provision – many conversations have been had about what costings to use and settings are free to pay their support staff at whatever rate they choose. However, for the purpose of sharing a finite pot of money equitably, we have to retain the following rates:

Teaching Assistant Rate - £14 per hour

Senior Teaching Assistant Rate - £15.50 per hour

Higher Level Teaching Assistant Rate - £18 per hour

Instructor Rate - £27 per hour

Teacher Rate - £45 per hour

Please see the Provision Mapping document for further information.

Any rates applied in excess of these, will not be deemed accurate if used to evidence provision that exceeds the needs of the learner. PLEASE DO NOT USE THE PERCENTAGE METHOD ON PROVISION MAPS.

We often see things included on provision maps that are not acceptable for an HNF application. Please note the following guidelines:

INCLUDE:

- Cost of TA/STA/HLTA support for classroom learning and interventions that are provided specifically for the learner – we would not expect to see an HLTA being used for basic classroom support. HLTAs should be trained to deliver specific interventions or to deliver learning under the guidance of a teacher. Senior TAs will be trained to deliver group interventions like ELSA or ELKLAN.
- Cost of Instructor/Teacher - sometimes an instructor (a non-qualified teacher) or a teacher may be employed specifically to deliver learning to a small group as a SEND intervention. This is the only circumstance where teacher time can be costed – all other teaching is part of the setting's core offer and is funded via place funding.
- Cost of Therapy – some therapies are not available through education/health services and where they are appropriate for the described need(s) and sensibly priced, the cost can be included as part of the learner's provision. We suggest a ceiling cost of £40 an hour for therapy.
- Cost of Specialist Equipment – where relevant to the learner's needs and not part of any generic equipment that the setting is expected to supply/not available through health services.
- Cost of training staff to deliver therapies or interventions where it has not been possible to access it free of charge.

DO NOT INCLUDE:

- cost of teacher time
- cost of senior leadership time
- cost of SENDCo time
- cost of pastoral support that is generic to the setting
- cost of administration time
- cost of preparing generic resources
- cost of carrying out an Annual Review of an EHCP
- cost of carrying out assessments that are part of the setting's offer to other learners – e.g. exam access arrangements, whole school testing, EP assessments
- cost of IT hardware
- cost of software that will largely benefit others
- cost of residential provision
- cost of extensive medical support where a learner meets the criteria for Continuing Care from Health

	Please ensure that the provision map only covers the core 32.5 hours of attendance. Other elements of support are not within the HNF remit as they are discretionary and their inclusion makes the provision map difficult to assess.
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**Sending in your evidence forms:**

**ARRANGEMENTS FOR DOCUMENT SHARING**

The system called Perspective Lite (part of the Broadcast Plus platform) for sharing documents between settings and the Local Authority, is fully operational across mainstream, special school and specialist unit settings. FE settings should continue to use the email system but we are exploring the possibility of being able to use Perspective Lite in the future. Likewise, non-Suffolk settings may be able to use Perspective Lite in the future.

The Perspective Lite platform has been developed and it will no longer be necessary to use a zip file for multiple documents.

**For now, FE settings and non-Suffolk settings should follow the following guidance on how to send your evidence forms in:**

Sending sensitive email to Suffolk County Council - if your organisation or email provider doesn't have a secure email connection with SCC (known as a TLS connection), you'll need to request a secure Thread" or conversation with the Council. Once this secure thread is established, all subsequent replies in the conversation/thread are secure.

Please note that by using this system, you do not need to apply any other form of encryption or password protection. Moderators cannot open encrypted evidence or a separate email notifying a password, as they do not have access to an email system that is linked to the documents.

To request a secure thread:

- Send a standard email to the **\*\*\*Inclusion Funding Hub\*\*\*** or any named HNF contact at SSC
- In your email, ask your SCC contact to reply and mark the email Official-Sensitive. This will set up the secure thread.
- Once, you've opened the reply they send you, you'll be able to reply to this enclosing any sensitive information you want to send to the Council.

It is your responsibility to send the information to SCC securely. Failure to do so could result in a data breach which your setting will be responsible for.

**\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE THE MAILBOX FOR HNF\*\*\***

Please send your evidence forms to **\*\*\*[InclusionFundingHub@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:InclusionFundingHub@suffolk.gov.uk)\*\*\*** and ensure you use the subject heading "HNF Moderation" to return your information so it can be easily identified.

**THE EVIDENCE FORM DEADLINES FOR THE WHOLE ACADEMIC YEAR, ARE CLEARLY DISPLAYED ON THE WEBSITE.**