

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs) 2026-2027

In response to some of last year's queries received on the HFL Education contract renewals, we have prepared some further information in table form which should answer some general queries we received.

<p>What do I need to do next for my FS contract renewal?</p>	<p>Look at the information detailed within the Business Services: Financial Services section of the new HFL contract sheet. Check the service quoted meets your need/expectation. Then complete the separate 'Options' sheet identifying any changes you would like to make or tick the 'No Change' box and return it to us.</p>	<p>Please return ASAP to fs.contracts@hfleducation.org and no later than Monday 2nd March 2026.</p>
<p>What happens if a key person leaves my school during the year (either permanently or on a long term absence)? Can I change my contract?</p>	<p>Please contact us as soon as possible and we should be able to help you in both the short and long term as well as provide valuable advice and guidance. We can usually take on additional bookkeeping work to support a school immediately and we will do our utmost to support monthly monitoring and budget setting too.</p>	<p>Please direct all contract enquiries via our helpdesk fs.contracts@hfleducation.org We will get the relevant Service Delivery Manager to give you a call.</p>
<p>How much notice do you need to change my contract?</p>	<p>We require a full term's notice to reduce your contract as we employ staff in the correct ratios to service the contracts we have.</p> <p>As noted above, we will do whatever we can. If you need additional help in the short term, please do contact us and we will be happy to discuss your needs and find out how we can help.</p>	<p>Please direct all contract enquiries via our helpdesk fs.contracts@hfleducation.org We will get the relevant Service Delivery Manager to give you a call.</p>

<p>How can I contact Financial Services about my contract?</p>	<p>Please direct all contract enquiries via our helpdesk fs.contracts@hfleducation.org</p> <p>It is helpful to the team if you can make contact with us as early as possible. Too many changes and enquiries left to the deadline date means we cannot process them all in time before HFL need to issue the final contracts for budget setting purposes.</p>	<p>We will direct your enquiry to the correct person. Please direct all contract enquiries via our helpdesk fs.contracts@hfleducation.org</p>
<p>What does the BRONZE SERVICE include?</p>		
<p>Systems Helpdesk and CPD Training (NEW) price is included in the Helpdesk total.</p>	<p>Is required – as part of the agreement from the suppliers to reduce the price of licences secured under the Finance & MIS Framework. The service prepares the software with information from HCC and in conjunction with the software suppliers in addition to providing full Alerts and Technical guidance throughout the year.</p>	<p>Our Financial Services contract now includes 16 comprehensive CPD sessions, delivered through a blend of live and on-demand formats. Covering all key financial areas for maintained schools, this service supports robust compliance and confident financial management. (Course info to follow)</p>
<p>Access Education Budget software licence</p>	<p>Is required for all HCC maintained schools. This is included under the Financial Services section of the HFL contract renewal</p>	<p>Price is held for 2026/27.</p>
<p>DMS01 Arbor Finance software licence HFL Finance and MIS Framework</p>	<p>Is required for all HCC maintained schools. (FMS schools please liaise with ParentPay Group (PPG) formerly ESS for further information).</p>	<p>Please look out for the renewal on the DMS section of the contract renewal document. <i>Licence renewal documents will be sent to you by DMS for signing if your agreement is out of date.</i></p>

<p>DMS01 Arbor Finance Additional software licence (the school must hold a main account licence) HFL Finance and MIS Framework</p>	<p>Optional - Can be used if you have a Fund Account or Governors' account with a reasonable level of transactions. Otherwise for very low numbers of transactions they could be managed in another way but must be recorded and audited.</p>	<p>Please look out for the renewal on the DMS section of the contract renewal document. <i>Licence renewal documents will be sent to you by DMS for signing if your agreement is out of date.</i></p>
<p>NB: Cancellation on licences will be due on Friday 11th December 2026 for the financial year 2027-28.</p>		
<p>What do the BOOKKEEPING, DIAMOND, GOLD, SILVER and BUDGET SERVICES contain?</p>		
<p>Bookkeeping Service (Digital service) NEW – BACS option can be added at no additional charge – contact us.</p>	<p>This standalone bookkeeping service is now available to all schools who hold an Arbor Finance licence. Schools can add to their contract or request PAYU. We can also support schools with BACS payments. The school would upload invoices before payment, and we will create a BACS file that is ready to import directly into your online banking system. This process ensures the planned spend is shown against your budget straight away, giving you real-time visibility of your school's finances.</p>	<p>Price held for 2026/27 We will direct your enquiry to the correct person. You can add this service on the options sheet provided and return it to us at fs.contracts@hfleducation.org</p>
<p>Diamond Service (Digital service)</p>	<p>The hours used and forecast in your Diamond service this year plus any known changes were reviewed in December 2025 and contract hours adjusted accordingly. The bookkeeping charges have not increased again this year; therefore, the Diamond contract is able to take advantage of this as well as preferential rates for monitoring and budgeting. This is the best value and most comprehensive finance package you can buy.</p>	<p>fs.contracts@hfleducation.org Please make contact ASAP, we will direct your enquiry to the right person.</p>
<p>Gold Service (Digital service) What is included as standard and which options are recommended?</p>	<p>The hours used and forecast in your Gold service this year plus any known changes were reviewed in December 2025 and contract hours adjusted accordingly.</p>	<p>If you would like to discuss, add or change your options, please contact fs.contracts@hfleducation.org</p>

	The Gold standard service elements included are shown on page 7-8 of the SLA . We highly recommend the school buys the additional elements noted on the sheet to avoid additional strain on school-based resources and the Finance Business Partner (FBP) needing to work on a PAYU basis (at a higher cost) to be able to complete the monitoring accurately.	
Silver Service (Digital service)	Quality Assurance (QA) of 2 monitors completed by the school, one in P3 and one in P7. The aim of this is to ensure the school is ready to accurately complete its termly reforecast to HCC. The service offers in-year training and mandatory attendance on workshops to ensure you are prepared for Year End.	If you would like to discuss, add or change your options, please contact fs.contracts@hfleducation.org
Budget Finalisation and Budget Preparation NB: Budget costs shown are for May 2026 for finalisation, and for March 2027 for preparation	Hours used have been reviewed in December 2025 and forecast into year end. If the services have been purchased, the contract year starts in May 2026 with the finalisation of budgets for 2026-27 started and prepared in March 2026 (last contract year). The year ends in March 2027 with the new budget for 2027-28 being prepared with the software being updated for the new financial year and school budget share being checked, funding being calculated in addition to staff changes being updated.	If you would like to discuss, add or change your options, please contact fs.contracts@hfleducation.org

Budget Uploading to Arbor and Profiling	Hours used have been reviewed in December 2025 and forecast into year end. This service (if purchased) includes loading the budget to Arbor/FMS accounts software and profiling in the correct months across the year to allow more accurate budget monitoring.	Please make contact ASAP , we will direct your enquiry to the right person fs.contracts@hfleducation.org
Budget Updates to Access Education software, Alerts and Technical Guidance (formerly bulletins) and staff updates	Hours used have been reviewed in December 2025 and forecast into year end. Maintenance of the Budget software is completed across the year using HFL Alerts and Technical Guides, mid-year updates, staffing changes and change to major income streams such as funding.	Please make contact ASAP , we will direct your enquiry to the right person fs.contracts@hfleducation.org
What FUND ACCOUNT SERVICES do you offer?		
DMS01 Arbor Finance Additional software licence (the school must hold a main Arbor account licence)	This can be used if you have a Fund Account or Governors' account with a reasonable number of transactions. Otherwise for very low numbers of transactions they could be managed in another way but must be recorded and audited.	Please look out for the renewal on the DMS section of the contract renewal document. <i>Licence renewal documents will be sent to you by DMS for signing if your agreement is out of date</i>
Fund Account Bookkeeping Service	An option for any school using Arbor and holding a main account Arbor Licence using the additional Arbor licence. Each year of accounts will be required if you are behind on completion of your Fund Account.	There is a flat rate per annum for standard low usage accounts*. You can request this as an option.
Fund Account Audit	An audit is required annually on your Fund Account. We offer a face-to-face audit for a minimum of 3 hours. To be able to complete this, your bookkeeping has to be up to date. Each year not completed will be charged for.	The cost is shown separately on your HFL contract if you purchased this service last year. You can choose this as an option to add to your contract.
*On discussion, if it is identified that you have a very high number of transactions, the Service Delivery Manager will provide a new quote for the completion of the work. Last year all schools met the standard price noted above.		

<p>How can I contact Financial Services about my contract?</p>	<p>Please direct all contract enquiries via our helpdesk fs.contracts@hfleducation.org</p> <p>It is helpful to the team if you can make contact with us as early as possible. Too many changes and enquiries left to the deadline date means we cannot process them all in time before HFL need to issue the final contracts for budget setting purposes.</p>	<p>We will direct your enquiry to the correct person fs.contracts@hfleducation.org</p>
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