

Inverclyde  
council

# Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

This handbook has been produced to provide you with a handy reference for any EMA issues that you may have.

Please refer to this handbook for advice in the first instance.

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**If you require further information, please do not hesitate to contact the Customer Service Centre.**

Inverclyde Council, Customer Service Centre, Municipal Buildings,  
Clyde Square, Greenock, Inverclyde PA15 1LY

### Telephone operating times

Monday	8:45am to 4:30pm
Tuesday	8:45am to 4:30pm
Wednesday	8:45am to 4:30pm
Thursday	8:45am to 4:30pm
Friday	8:45am to 3:30pm

**Phone** 01475 712850 – option 2

**Email:** [EMA.HO@inverclyde.gov.uk](mailto:EMA.HO@inverclyde.gov.uk)

## Introduction

EMA is designed to support you to remain at school to improve your qualifications and better prepare you for the world beyond school.

In paying you an EMA, the rules become comparable to those that would be expected of an employer:

- 100% attendance
- excellent timekeeping
- co-operation with the rules of the organisation
- a commitment to doing the job to the best of your ability

## Learning Agreement

You have completed a learning agreement, confirming you understand and are willing to abide by the conditions of an EMA award as part of your application form. Once your application has been approved, we will forward your learning agreement to the school. You will then meet with a senior member of staff who will sign and return the learning agreement to Education Services as confirmation you are completing at least 21 hours of guided study. Only once this process has been completed can we consider you for EMA payments.

The learning agreement is a 'living' document and will be reviewed by guidance on a regular basis.

A new learning agreement will be completed as part of the application for each year you wish to be considered for EMA.

It is important that your behaviour and attitude are acceptable to the school for you to make the most of your educational opportunity. Failure to keep to the terms of the learning agreement by co-operating with the school will lead to withdrawal of the EMA. Exclusion from school will result in non-payment of EMA.

### **Please note:**

**The learning agreement process will not be complete until you have met with your guidance teacher and agreed to your timetable requirement for EMA.**

## Course of Study

This includes all learning activities that are timetabled, such as PE and RMPS. In all cases, the course requirements will be set out at the start of the academic year. In formal subjects within the curriculum, the requirements will include completing homework, participating in internal assessments and sitting the final examination. In total you should be undertaking at least 21 guided hours of study per week. If at any time your timetabled study hours fall below 21, you will no longer be entitled to EMA.

## Attendance

It is a requirement that you are in attendance for all of the time in all classes, i.e. 100% attendance. In the event of one illness lasting **up to five** school days in each term, you will be able to self-certify. You will be required to inform the school of the absence by telephone at the start of a period of illness and give an indication of how long the absence is likely to last.

On return to school, you will be required to sign a declaration detailing the reason for your absence. You will also have to discuss the absence with your Guidance Teacher.

If an absence continues for more than five school days, a medical certificate will be required to continue to access the EMA. After 15 days of absence the EMA will be the subject of review. Individual circumstances will be taken into account. If it is decided to stop payments during the absence, they will resume when you return to school.

As GPs are not obliged to provide medical certificates, this may have to be at your own expense. A medical certificate will be requested if you have been absent due to illness for a period of more than five consecutive days (for example Monday - Friday). Medical certificates for shorter absences will not be requested. If you go on holiday during term-time, no matter the reason, you will not receive EMA whilst you are on holiday.

## Late coming

It is expected that you will be in school at the beginning of the day and registered for classes for the day. There may be a rare occasion where you are late for school for a legitimate reason; the school will look on this sympathetically. However, after you have been issued with a warning about late coming, any future late coming will result in the suspension of the EMA.

## Appeals

You can appeal against a decision to withhold an EMA.  
The appeal should be made in writing to Education Services.

Evidence from the appellant and from the school will be considered, and a decision will be communicated to the appellant.

There is no further right of appeal.

## Change of Circumstances

You should notify the EMA Section **in writing** immediately of any change in your circumstances, for example, if your bank account details change.

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

## Complaints

Formal complaints about the EMA programme or EMA policies will be dealt with in accordance with Inverclyde Council Complaints procedures.

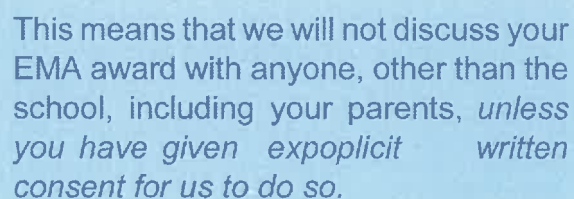
## Data Protection

The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) is a scheme funded by the Scottish Government and administered by Inverclyde Council for schools within the Inverclyde area. The Scottish Government and Inverclyde Council are both data controllers in relation to your information.

The information you supply shall be used for the purpose of assessment, award, payment and where necessary, recovery of EMA and we will provide information to the Scottish Government, all in accordance with the requirements of the Scottish Government EMA (Scotland) Business Model.

**Data Protection:** Inverclyde Council is obliged to comply with current Data Protection Laws. Information provided by you will be held by the Council. Such information will be used to assist in the provision and administration of Education Maintenance Allowance. The Council is under obligation to manage public funds properly. Accordingly, information that you provide may be used to prevent and detect fraud. It is also possible that we may share this information for the same purposes with public bodies, including neighbouring councils, government organisations or other organisations, which handle Public Funds. By signing the application, you have given your consent for data processing.

Further information can be found at: [www.inverclyde.gov.uk/privacy](http://www.inverclyde.gov.uk/privacy)



This means that we will not discuss your EMA award with anyone, other than the school, including your parents, *unless you have given explicit written consent for us to do so.*



## Summary of Terms and Conditions

- Your learning agreement must be agreed with the school and returned to Education before payments will be considered.
- EMA will only continue to be paid if attendance, conduct and progress are satisfactory
- EMA payments may be suspended if the conditions of the award are not complied with
- EMA is a weekly amount, paid fortnightly, **two weeks in arrears**
- A school week is deemed to be three days or more. If any school week is less than three days, no payment will be made. It should also be noted that EMA is not paid during school holidays i.e. October, Christmas or Spring break
- You must notify the school about absences before or on the first day of absence
- Payment can be withheld, without warning, based on the following:
  - If attendance falls below 100% in any one week, no payment will be made for that week unless all absence has been covered by a self-certification, medical certificate or been approved by the school. Lateness also affects payments.
  - If Learning agreement conditions are not met i.e. attainment and conduct
  - If you go on holiday during term-time, you will not receive EMA whilst you are on holiday

Two-week period ending	Payment run date	Payment date	
Fri 8 Aug 2025	Thu 14 Aug 2025	Thu 21 Aug 2025	*holiday period - no payment
Fri 22 Aug 2025	Thu 28 Aug 2025	Thu 4 Sep 2025	*holiday period – 1 week only
Fri 5 Sep 2025	Thu 11 Sep 2025	Thu 18 Sep 2025	
Fri 19 Sep 2025	Thu 25 Sep 2025	Thu 2 Oct 2025	
Fri 3 Oct 2025	Thu 9 Oct 2025	Thu 16 Oct 2025	
Fri 17 Oct 2025	Thu 23 Oct 2025	Thu 30 Oct 2025	*holiday period – 1 week only
Fri 31 Oct 2025	Thu 6 Nov 2025	Thu 13 Nov 2025	
Fri 14 Nov 2025	Thu 20 Nov 2025	Thu 27 Nov 2025	
Fri 28 Nov 2025	Thu 4 Dec 2025	Thu 11 Dec 2025	
Fri 12 Dec 2025	Thu 18 Dec 2025	Wed 24 Dec 2025	
Fri 26 Dec 2025	Fri 19 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2025	Thu 8 Jan 2026	*holiday period – 1 week only
Fri 9 Jan 2026	Thu 15 Jan 2026	Thu 22 Jan 2026	*holiday period – 1 week only
Fri 23 Jan 2026	Thu 29 Jan 2026	Thu 5 Feb 2026	
Fri 6 Feb 2026	Thu 12 Feb 2026	Thu 19 Feb 2026	
Fri 20 Feb 2026	Thu 26 Feb 2026	Thu 5 Mar 2026	
Fri 6 Mar 2026	Thu 12 Mar 2026	Thu 19 Mar 2026	
Fri 20 Mar 2026	Thu 26 Mar 2026	Thu 2 Apr 2026	
Fri 3 Apr 2026	Thu 9 Apr 2026	Thu 16 Apr 2026	
Fri 17 Apr 2026	Thu 23 Apr 2026	Thu 30 Apr 2026	*holiday period - no payment
Fri 1 May 2026	Thu 7 May 2026	Thu 14 May 2026	
Fri 15 May 2026	Thu 21 May 2026	Thu 28 May 2026	
Fri 29 May 2026	Thu 4 Jun 2026	Thu 11 Jun 2026	Last payment for S5 & S6 leavers
Fri 12 Jun 2026	Thu 18 Jun 2026	Thu 25 Jun 2026	
Fri 26 Jun 2026	Thu 2 Jul 2026	Thu 9 Jul 2026	
*Holiday periods apply to schools managed by Inverclyde Council only.			
*Holiday periods for schools outwith the management of Inverclyde Council will vary			
PLEASE NOTE: You must speak to your guidance teacher to agree your 21 hours of timetabled study before any payments can be made.			