



**Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities**

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Thank you for your follow up letter of 20 March. I welcomed the opportunity to engage with the committee again in January and I am glad that my further written communication of 6 February was helpful.

I read with interest the submissions from local authorities in Scotland to your enquiry and understood the challenges they conveyed, including the need for greater flexibility in the funding. Multiply remains an integral part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and I would like to acknowledge the important role local authorities in Scotland are playing in driving forward projects to help improve adult numeracy skills.

We have already granted flexibility allowing Year 1 Multiply underspend to be carried over into Year 2, and – if need be - transferred to the People and Skills theme. For Year 3, we have also expanded the eligibility definition to capture a wider cohort of individuals. This now includes those who already hold an existing numeracy-related qualification, but whose numeracy skills no longer meet the functional standard. It also includes those individuals where Multiply could be helpful in supporting their progression into work, in their career or on to higher levels of training.

I hope these additional flexibilities will encourage further innovation in the delivery of Multiply and ultimately benefit more people across Scotland.

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