



INDEPENDENT
HIGHER
EDUCATION

Covid-19 Update

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Independent Higher Education



Covid-19 Hub

23 March

- Independent HE COVID-19 information hub:
 - <http://independenthe.com/activities/covid-19-hub>
- 19th March 2020 - Covid-19 Update from Tier 4 network:
 - <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/6575421887881583107>
- IHE FAQ developed through drop-ins
- IHE member webinars:
 - Thank you ThinkSpace
 - Invitations to members to share practice
 - Megan@independenthe.com



Department for Education: accommodation

23 March

- Students in halls of residence (provider owned or private) who develop symptoms should self-isolate in their current accommodation for 7 days. Providers should offer their support to facilitate this if possible.
- Students should only return home if possible not by public transport.
- Students living in privately owned halls should contact the manager of their accommodation to advise them of their plans
 - Recommend that IHE members with contracts with privately owned halls should seek to make plans in collaboration
- Note special advice for providers of under 18s in further education sector to support students to self-isolate
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-isolation-for-residential-educational-settings/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-on-isolation-for-residential-educational-settings>



Department for Education: travel advice

23 March

- Schools closed for all pupils apart from those whose parents are key workers
- Info for Erasmus+ students and UK students and staff already studying or working overseas: prepare for travel lockdown and inform home institution
- Education travel information now in line with FCO and social distancing advice – under 18s
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-travel-advice-for-educational-settings/coronavirus-travel-guidance-for-educational-settings>



Department for Education: entry qualifications

23 March

- GCSEs, AS and A Levels have been cancelled by the Education Secretary – what does this mean for HE providers?
- Calculate grade from predicted grade, teacher assessment and prior attainment. Calculated grade will be the formal grade used for FE and HE entry.
- Ofqual will develop and set out a process that will provide a calculated grade to each student which reflects their performance as fairly as possible
- Advice is to be flexible on admissions but not to start making new unconditional offers.
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-cancellation-of-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2020/coronavirus-covid-19-cancellation-of-gcses-as-and-a-levels-in-2020>



Sector Response: entry qualifications

23 March

- OfS response to exam situation
 - <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/news-blog-and-events/press-and-media/ofs-responds-to-further-details-on-grading-following-cancelled-exams/>
- UCAS and Universities UK have written a open letter to all applicants through UCAS on the arrangements of grades for this year's admissions cycle.
 - <https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/news/Pages/Update-from-UCAS-and-Universities-UK-.aspx>
- **A message from the Universities Minister, Michelle Donelan:**
“We want to assure students that grades will be equally as valid as those in previous years, and their hard work will be rewarded and fairly recognised. There is no reason for the usual admissions cycle to be disrupted.”
- Discover Uni
 - <https://discoveruni.gov.uk/corona-covid-19-information/>



HM Treasury: economic response

23 March

- Coronavirus job retention scheme
 - All UK employers will be able to access support to continue paying part of their employee's salaries for those who would have otherwise been laid off due to the virus.
 - Up to 80% of wage costs with a cap of £2,500 a month
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chancellor-announces-workers-support-package>
- Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme starting up today.
- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/873676/Covid-19_fact_sheet_18_March.pdf
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-business-support-to-launch-from-today>
- People unable to work for more than seven days because of Covid-19 can obtain an isolation note through a new online service. <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19>



BEIS: intel request

23 March

- The Government is closely monitoring developments in relation to potential economic impacts on the UK economy and individual businesses and supply chain. We welcome information from businesses on:
- The impacts across supply, demand and labour markets
- Actions being taken by firms to address these impacts
- Any gaps in the Government response from your perspective
- Please send your intelligence to intel@beis.gov.uk. We are aware that individual company information may be commercially sensitive, and it will be treated accordingly. Please note that this inbox is only for receiving intelligence only and does not provide business advice.



QAA

23 March

- IHE has been in conversations with QAA about quality concerns
- Over the coming days and weeks they will be providing:
 - advice for institutions about **changes to ongoing and scheduled review processes**, which we are developing in dialogue with funding bodies and regulators across the UK
 - publicly-available guidance on **maintaining quality and standards in the immediate context**
 - publicly-available guidance on **mitigating the impact on assessment, progression and graduation in coming academic years**
 - **regular webinars to support the sector** on specific areas relating to these.
- This will be available to both QAA members and non-members
- QAA has set up a task group to assess quality of HE in this time



JISC

23 March

- Full set of links (covered last week in Guy's webinar) can be found on the JISC coronavirus hub.
- <https://www.jisc.ac.uk/coronavirus>



HESA

23 March

- HESA have put an update out with Coronavirus related content.
- Graduate Outcomes will continue as normal throughout this time including current collection of survey responses for cohort B graduates.
- Helpdesk liaison team to offering support via a new number **+44 (0) 1242 388 531** or [**liaison@hesa.ac.uk**](mailto:liaison@hesa.ac.uk)
- <https://www.hesa.ac.uk/news/coronavirus>



UCAS

23 March

- UCAS have brought together resources for students, advisers and providers on the admissions related Covid-19 implications.
- <https://www.ucas.com/providers/coronavirus-update>
- Includes information on the exam announcements of all four nations, as well as impact on international qualifications
- Updated information on UCAS events cancelled.



Things you should have received

23 March

- Letter from Nicola Dandridge, 17 March - <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/letter-from-the-office-for-students-on-coronavirus/>
- Letter from Minister Donelan, 20 March



IHE Representation

- Office for Students
 - Meeting on quality assurance
 - Admissions processes
 - UUK, IHE, AOC work on partnerships
 - All consultations postponed
 - Mental Health bid postponed
- Home Office
 - Lobby for clear guidance released as soon as possible
 - Changes to attendance monitoring
 - SELTS, extensions in country
- Department for Education
 - Support for providers
 - Planning – international students admissions
- QAA
 - Information available to non-members
- UCAS
 - Statement on changes to admissions



IHE Survey

- IHE to launch survey of all independent higher education providers to:
 - Better understand issues
 - Support lobby of government
 - Support actions of government and regulatory bodies
- Survey responses will be kept anonymous unless you give us your full permission to share.