



INDEPENDENT  
HIGHER  
EDUCATION

# Covid-19 Update: 6 April

*Alex Proudfoot and Megan Wells*  
*Independent Higher Education*



# IHE Covid-19 Information Hub

6 April

- IHE Covid-19 Information Hub
  - <http://independenthe.com/activities/covid-19-hub>
  - Bringing together information and resources from across government, sector and commercial partners
- FAQs
  - <http://independenthe.com/activities/covid-19-hub/faq>
  - Collated from questions at Weekly Update and Member Drop-in sessions
- Themed information and resources
  - Admissions and recruitment
  - Finance and Human Resources
  - International students and visas
  - Regulation and the OfS
  - Student welfare and support
  - Teaching and learning



STOP PRESS -

International  
Students and  
Visas

6 April

## *New Home Office guidance for sponsors*

- The Home Office has updated their sponsor guidance to add information for sponsors:
  - who cannot pay the salaries of sponsored employees because they've temporarily reduced or ceased trading
  - who have issued a CoS or CAS and the sponsored employee or student has not yet applied for a visa.
- The rules now allow salaries to be reduced in line with the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme – up to 80% of salaries or £2,500 per month, whichever is lowest.
  - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-tier-2-4-and-5-sponsors>



# LAST WEEK - International Students and Visas

6 April

## *Fact sheets for visa customers and sponsors*

- Visa customers outside the UK
  - <http://independentthe.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Coronavirus-COVID-19-factsheet-visa-customers-outside-of-the-UK-02April.pdf>
- Visa holders and short-term residents in the UK
  - <http://independentthe.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Coronavirus-COVID-19-factsheet-visa-holders-and-short-term-residents-in-the-UK-02April.pdf>
- Guidance for sponsors
  - <http://independentthe.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/IHE-Covid19-Update-01.04.2020.pdf>



STOP PRESS -

Finance and  
Human  
Resources

6 April

## *New guidance: Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS)*

- Further information has been published by the Treasury on how to furlough employees and apply for the CJRS:
  - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wage-costs-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>
- Claims can be backdated to 1 March
- Employees made redundant or who stopped working for an employer on or after 28 February 2020 can be re-employed in order to be put on furlough and included on the scheme.
- Employers can only claim for furloughed employees who were on PAYE payroll on or before 28 February.
- Any employee whose wages are claimed through the scheme must be furloughed for a minimum 3 consecutive weeks.



## LAST WEEK -

# Finance and Human Resources

6 April

- New scheme for larger businesses called the Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme will be introduced.
  - <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chancellor-strengthens-support-on-offer-for-business-as-first-government-backed-loans-reach-firms-in-need>
- Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) take leading role on advice and support for local businesses. This can be accessed through their individual partnerships and support may differ between LEPs.
  - <https://www.lepnetwork.net/growth-hubs/>
- Main information hub for business support including Job Retention Scheme, Coronavirus Business Interruptions Loan Scheme, Statutory Sick Pay.
  - <https://www.businesssupport.gov.uk/>



STOP PRESS -

Admissions and  
recruitment

6 April

## *Making offers to applicants*

- Nicola Dandridge has written to all registered providers following the minister's decision to extend the unconditional moratorium until 20 April.
  - <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/26b1c2e5-e693-4504-980f-41c2d0afd593/moratorium-extension-03042020.pdf>
- OfS has clarified that unconditional offers can be made in limited circumstances where applicants already have their Level 3 qualification. They have produced an expectations page on offer making.
  - <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/coronavirus/provider-guide-to-coronavirus/unconditional-offer-making/>
- Providers can still not make unconditional offers on courses which rely primarily on auditions, interviews or portfolios, or confirm unconditional offers made just before the moratorium.
- This moratorium will be reviewed and further guidance issued before 20 April deadline.



LAST WEEK -

## Admissions and recruitment

6 April

### *Awarding of grades for cancelled school exams*

- Ofqual has published guidance for schools, colleges, students and parents on how GCSEs and A Levels will be awarded.
  - <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/how-gcses-as-a-levels-will-be-awarded-in-summer-2020>



STOP PRESS -

Regulation and  
the OfS

6 April

## *New Guidance on Quality and Standards*

- OfS released guidance on quality and standards late Friday afternoon.
  - <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/guidance-for-providers-about-quality-and-standards-during-coronavirus-pandemic/>
- Providers are expected to make “all reasonable efforts” to allow students to continue learning, but they must communicate with students and pay particular attention to students who they have identified as vulnerable before or have become vulnerable as a result of COVID-19
- Partnerships:
  - The awarding body remains responsible for quality, regardless of validation, sub-contract or TNE; must take responsibility for the impact of any proposed changes.
  - Each registered body must still maintain the quality of the courses they deliver
  - Awarding bodies initiate provisions for significant disruption but may need to adapt for courses delivered through sub-contract or validation and communicate with partners
  - **Pearson Awards:** Providers should have a policy for dealing with extenuating or mitigating circumstances and assessment regulations, which can be applied flexibly during this period.



STOP PRESS -

Regulation and  
the OfS

6 April

## *New Guidance on Quality and Standards (continued)*

### **Admissions**

- Providers must take reasonable action to ensure students can make an informed choice about study
- Those who take advantage of students will face regulatory action

### **Assessments**

- Where possible, use normal practices for marking and moderation, external examining, etc.
- Be flexible where needed on assessments and ways to make up overall assessment requirements for module, unit, course.
- Communicate everything
- ‘No detriment’ or a ‘safety net’ are “likely to be appropriate”
- Have safeguards against contract cheating
- Relevant case studies: UAL: Creative solutions for creative subjects including low-tech solutions and digitised sketchbooks or mock-ups.



STOP PRESS -

Regulation and  
the OfS

6 April

*New Guidance on Quality and Standards (continued)*

- Specific guidance for placements, postgraduate programmes, and professional bodies.
- *Case study: The Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA)*
- **HESA Student Return and HESA Alternative Provider Student Return suspended (will proceed at a future date)**
- OfS will be suspending regulatory activity in relation to Quality and Standards Reviews that were undertaken for some providers after their registration, and not initiating any action in relation to performance on student outcomes until normal regulatory activity is resumed.



STOP PRESS -

Regulation and  
the OfS

6 April

## *Consumer Protection*

- Consumer protection law continues to apply
- Making contractual changes must be ‘fair’ – communicate in advance, the reasons and impact of changes, and outline the options for students to avoid changes.
- Providers should consider making “reasonable alternatives available” where students feel they would have had a better outcome if the course had been taught as planned. This can include coming back to be taught when circumstances allow.
- Students must be able to access internal procedures for complaints and appeals and provided with clear accessible information about their right to appeal to awarding body and OIA.
- No changes to Student Protection Plans required
- Further briefing and case studies on consumer protection expected.



LAST WEEK -

## Regulation and the OfS

6 April

### *Updated information from the OfS website*

- Monitoring of funded projects has been updated – will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.
  - <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/coronavirus/provider-guide-to-coronavirus/funded-projects-monitoring-changes/>
- Regulatory requirements
  - <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/coronavirus/provider-guide-to-coronavirus/regulatory-requirements/>
- Student guide to coronavirus, including healthcare students.
  - <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/for-students/student-guide-to-coronavirus/healthcare-students/>



## LAST WEEK -

# Regulation and the OfS

6 April

- Guidance on reportable events – now more narrowly defined:
  - <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/5b874e9b-5588-4bec-b386-d83d59a20401/covid-19-reportable-events-guidance.pdf>
- Transparency information no longer needs to be submitted in April 2020 and the associated F1 Notice issued on 19 February 2020 has been withdrawn.
  - <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/data-collection/transparency-return-2020/>
- Letters from OfS and Universities Minister
  - <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/coronavirus/publications-and-letters-about-coronavirus/>
  - <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/coronavirus/letters-from-the-minister-of-state-for-universities/>
- Deadline suspended for the next submission of the HESA Student Return and HESA Alternative Provider Student Return
  - <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/f351a739-6cd6-4310-8f98-a6aa603f17f4/quality-and-standards-guidance-during-coronavirus.pdf>



# IHE Covid-19 Survey

6 April

- Last week you should have received an email from IHE inviting you to complete the IHE Covid-19 Provider Survey
- Created to understand how Covid-19 has affected your institution, covering changes to your provision, the financial impact and business planning.
- Collecting this information quickly will be critical in arming us with the intelligence we require to lobby government departments including the Department for Education and Home Office, as well as the Office for Students, for the actions and support you need.
- Please could provider complete this by Thursday 9 April and the questions can be seen here.
  - [http://independenthe.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/COVID-19-IHE-Provider-survey\\_all-providers.pdf](http://independenthe.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/COVID-19-IHE-Provider-survey_all-providers.pdf)
- If you have any questions or would link resending, please send to [info@independenthe.com](mailto:info@independenthe.com)



## IHE sessions coming up

6 April

### *Dates and themes for the next two weeks*

- Our Wednesday and Friday drop-in sessions for members all have special themes we explore in more detail
- Join us and invite your colleagues to our upcoming sessions:
  - Wednesday 8 April – Business and Financial Support
  - Friday 10 April – no drop-in session (Easter)
  - Monday 13 April – no weekly update (Easter)
  - Wednesday 15 April – Student Support
  - Friday 17 April – theme TBC (requests?)
- We hope to be joined by KPMG for Wednesday's session on Business and Financial Support.



# Contact IHE

- Email [info@independenthe.com](mailto:info@independenthe.com)
- Phone 020 3929 3370



LAST WEEK -

## Teaching and Learning

6 April

- QAA have new guidance up on their site, some publicly available and others just for QAA members.
- They have identified their priorities going ahead after the [Quality Discussion Forum](#).
  - Academic standards including teaching and assessment and academic integrity
  - Work based learning including placements, partnerships and study abroad
  - Accelerated degrees
  - Practice and Lab-based work
- IHE is supporting the creation of this guidance, please get in touch if you have any feedback.
- Draft guidance shared on 3 April (to members and sector bodies), published on 8 April latest for public
- The publication of the guidance will be accompanied by a series of webinars for QAA members
- New Blog by QAA CEO on maintaining standards in challenging times
  - <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/news-events/blog/doing-the-right-thing-securing-standards-in-challenging-times>



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# Covid-19 Update: 8 April

*Joy Elliott-Bowman & Megan Wells*  
*Independent Higher Education*



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# International Students and Visas

8 April

## *New British Council Market News*

Provinces in China announcing dates for staggered reopenings of schools and universities

- Provinces across China are releasing dates for the staggered reopening of schools. Contact IHE for more specific dates.
- **Five** provincial-level regions not included in the information, Beijing, Shanghai, Hubei, Guangdong and Hebei have not yet announced any dates.
- All other provinces plan to reopen schools, colleges and universities plan to re-open before the end of April except:
  - Final-year university, vocational high school and college students in Tianjin

Chinese education authorities announce flexibility on overseas distance learning recognition during epidemic period

- The Chinese Service Center for Scholarly Exchange (CSCSE) - a body under the Ministry of Education - announced on April 3rd that it would relax its rules on the recognition of overseas distance-learning qualifications due to the current COVID-19 epidemic.



# International Students and Visas

8 April

## *Temporary closure of Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS)*

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) is currently unable to accept new ATAS applications.

The scheme will be re-opened as soon as soon as possible. All ATAS applications submitted before 6 April will continue to be processed.

The ATAS HEI ([ATAS-HEIs@fco.gov.uk](mailto:ATAS-HEIs@fco.gov.uk)) inbox will continue to be monitored.



# International Students and Visas

8 April

Former International Directors Charlene Allen and Sirin Miles are bringing together Heads and Directors of International to discuss current issue, share concerns, thoughts, ideas and best practice.

Sessions are weekly, you can view the last one here:

## **Regional insight into the impact of COVID-19 with a focus on China**

[https://TheIC.webinarninja.com/live-webinars/268551/register?in\\_tok=fe7047a2-7f2f-4fc9-9cd7-90dde7de2bbe](https://TheIC.webinarninja.com/live-webinars/268551/register?in_tok=fe7047a2-7f2f-4fc9-9cd7-90dde7de2bbe)



# Teaching and Learning

8 April

## *New QAA guidance: securing academic standards and practice and lab-based assessment*

- Two new [sets of guidance](#) have been published today by the QAA, with further guidance expected today.
- <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/news-events/support-and-guidance-covid-19>
- Securing academic standards and supporting student achievement: including key information on exams and assessments in the current environment; communication and consultation with students; the 'safety net'; or 'no detriment' approach to grading; credit volume and progression; degree algorithms; the use of externals; whether certificates or transcripts should be marked to indicate the special circumstances of this year; and advice on resits and appeals.
- Practice and lab-based assessment: including advice for the creative arts, music and performance, as well as laboratory and simulated clinical environments, with key guidance on topics such as alternative modes of assessment and student support.



# Ofqual guidance

8 April

## Ofqual guidance on A-level assessments (England only)

- Following the announcements that school exams would not take place this summer, Ofqual have [published guidance](#) for England which details how GCSEs, AS and A-levels will be awarded this summer along with further [guidance for teachers, students, parents and carers](#).
- The guidance outlines the process for schools and colleges to submit grades to the exam boards, including a list of the evidence teachers should use to make their decision.
- To ensure that the grades are fair, a process of standardisation will be developed, and consulted on. Final grades will be expected on or before the August results day.
  
- **Press release:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/how-gcses-as-a-levels-will-be-awarded-in-summer-2020>
- **Guidance:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcses-as-and-a-level-awarding-summer-2020>
- **Letter to students:** [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/877830/Letter to students - Summer 2020 grading.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/877830/Letter_to_students_-_Summer_2020_grading.pdf)



# In the media

8 April

## **Universities UK Campaign: #WeAreTogether university efforts against Covid-19**

Highlight the full range of activity the higher education sector is engaged in to combat coronavirus.

**IHE need your stories: What are you, your staff or students doing to support the efforts against Covid-19.**

## **UCAS Facebook Live Q&A with Michelle Donelan**

Yesterday UCAS hosted a [Facebook Live Q&A](#) with universities minister Michelle Donelan.



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- If you have any questions or would link resending, please send to [info@independenthe.com](mailto:info@independenthe.com)



INDEPENDENT  
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# Information on Business and Financial Support

*Megan Wells*

*Independent Higher Education*



# SLC Q&A and contact centres re- opening

- SLC have partially restored customer contact services for students, graduates and providers.
  - <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/slc-restores-partial-customer-contact-services>
- They are prioritizing urgent student finance cases and ask people to check the FAQs before calling as lines will be busy.
- New and returning students in England and Wales can continue to apply for student finance.
- Contact centres are open between 10:00-17:30 for funding and payment queries.
  - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-on-contacting-the-student-loans-company>
- Prospective students
  - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-for-prospective-students>
- Current students
  - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-for-current-students>
- Those in repayment
  - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-for-repayment-customers>



# OfS Regulatory Conditions

8 April

- OfS are currently working with DfE and other stakeholders to assess financial situation of providers and evaluate range of options that may be available to support providers.
  - <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/coronavirus/provider-guide-to-coronavirus/questions-and-answers/>
- Annual Financial Return still needs to be submitted and guidance can be found in Annex B and C
  - <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/3353f2e8-179a-4fbd-b257-a2951d18868e/f3-f4-notice-new-reporting-requirements-march2020.pdf>
  - If auditors have suspended financial audits due to Covid-19, please contact OfS to discuss how this should be noted in the submission. They are aware that this may be the case for some providers.
- Reportable events still have to be submitted within 5 days if about short-term financial risk. This needs to be done when:
  - A provider is required to report to the OfS if it considers it to be reasonably likely that its liquidity will drop below 30 days at any point during a rolling three month period from the date of the report to the OfS
  - <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/5b874e9b-5588-4bec-b386-d83d59a20401/covid-19-reportable-events-guidance.pdf>



# OfS Regulatory Conditions

- Providers are no currently required to report:
  - **The provider becoming aware of legal or court action**
  - Regulatory investigation and/or sanction by other regulators
  - **Any new partnerships, including validation or subcontractual arrangements**
  - Opening a new campus
  - Intended campus, department, subject or provider closure
  - **The implementation of a student protection plan except where this is covered under 'cessation or suspension of delivery of higher education'**
- Providers are still required to report:
  - changes of legal status of the provider
  - changes of ownership or control of the provider
  - the provider resolving to cease to provide all higher education on a permanent basis
  - any material suspected or actual fraud or financial irregularity. ([Guidance](#) on page 6 defines 'material')
  - changes to a provider's accountable officer or the chair of its governing body
  - changes to the information published on the OfS Register.



# Government Business Support

8 April

- Business Support is a website which compiles all government business and economics support available (some UK-wide):
  - <https://www.businesssupport.gov.uk/>
- Covid-19 Government Guidance for Employers:
  - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-employers-and-businesses-about-covid-19/covid-19-guidance-for-employees>



# Statutory Sick Pay

8 April

- Statutory sick pay (SSP) available from first day of illness or self-isolating for affected individuals starting on or after 13 March 2020.
- Businesses are SMEs are able to claim back the whole two weeks SSP but can only pay the standard amount.
  - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-back-statutory-sick-pay-paid-to-employees-due-to-coronavirus-covid-19>
- Online service to claim this not yet available.
- The scheme can only be used by those on PAYE payroll on or before 28 February and had fewer than 250 employees on 28 February 2020.
- 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>



# Job Retention Scheme

8 April

- Coronavirus job retention scheme
  - <https://www.businesssupport.gov.uk/coronavirus-job-retention-scheme/>
  - 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
  - Should be set up by the end of April to start processing grants.
- This scheme is designed for those who are 'severely affected' by Covid-19 and unable to maintain current workforce with employer judgement applied to 'severely affected'.
- Public sector organisations
  - Where organisations are not primarily funded by the government and whose staff cannot be redeployed to assist with the coronavirus response, this scheme may be appropriate.
  - Our understanding that any provider in the Approved category should be eligible and the majority of those in the Approved (fee cap) category should also be eligible to apply for this scheme if the other conditions are met.



# Job Retention Scheme

8 April

- Employer guidance
  - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wage-costs-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>
  - Employers will be taxed on job retention scheme funding as income
  - There is a minimum of 3 weeks furlough which can be extended or rotated.
  - Can only claim for furloughed employees that were on your PAYE payroll on or before 28 February 2020. Employees hired after 28 February are not eligible for the scheme
- Employee guidance
  - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-if-you-could-be-covered-by-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>
  - Employees are able to take on second employment not linked or associated with current employment.
- The Home Office rules now allow Tier 2 salaries to be reduced in line with the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme – up to 80% of salaries or £2,500 per month, whichever is lowest.
  - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-tier-2-4-and-5-sponsors>



# Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme

8 April

- CBILS has been created to support smaller business facing financial difficulties due to Covid-19.
  - <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chancellor-strengthens-support-on-offer-for-business-as-first-government-backed-loans-reach-firms-in-need>
- Businesses can borrow up to £5 million through the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme, first 6 months interest free.
  - <https://www.businesssupport.gov.uk/coronavirus-business-interruption-loan-scheme/>
- To be eligible you must be UK based in your activity, have an annual turnover of no more than £45 million, have a borrowing proposal which the lender
  - a) would consider viable, were it not for the COVID-19 pandemic
  - b) believes will enable you to trade out of any short-term to medium-term difficulty
- Lenders now cannot request personal guarantees for loans under £250,000.
- Full information on the process of applying to a CBILS accredited lender can be found on the British Business Bank site
  - <https://www.british-business-bank.co.uk/ourpartners/coronavirus-business-interruption-loan-scheme-cbils-2/for-businesses-and-advisors/>



# Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme

8 April

- New scheme for larger businesses called the Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme will be introduced.
- It will provide a government guarantee of 80% to enable banks to make loans of up to £25 million to firms with an annual turnover of between £45 million and £500 million.
  - <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chancellor-strengthens-support-on-offer-for-business-as-first-government-backed-loans-reach-firms-in-need>
- Expected to be launched later this month.
- Businesses eligible have to be UK based activity, have an annual turnover between £45 and £500 million, unable to secure regular commercial financing, and Have a borrowing proposal which the lender:
  - a) would consider viable, were it not for the COVID-19 pandemic
  - b) believes will enable you to trade out of any short-term to medium-term difficulty
  - <https://www.businesssupport.gov.uk/coronavirus-large-business-interruption-loan-scheme/>
  - Lenders will still be expected to conduct their usual credit risk checks, but this scheme allows them to specifically support business that were viable before the COVID-19 outbreak but are facing significant cash flow difficulties, that would otherwise make their business unviable in the short term.



## Self-employment Income Support Scheme

8 April

- The scheme will mirror the support of the Job Retention Scheme and will cover up to 80% of their profits with a cap to £2,5000. HMRC will use average profits from tax returns in 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19 to calculate this grant size.
- Eligibility includes self-employed or member of partnership, lost of trading/partnership trading profits due to Covid-19, have trading profits less than £50,000 and more than half of total income come from self-employment.
  - <https://www.businesssupport.gov.uk/self-employment-income-support-scheme/>
  - Tax self-assessment forms must be complete by 23 April 2020 to apply
- Guidance from HMRC sets out how self-employed people can access the scheme
  - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-a-grant-through-the-coronavirus-covid-19-self-employment-income-support-scheme>
  - Scheme not yet ready to apply for and HMRC will contact eligible individuals when launched to apply.



# Commercial Rental Support

8 April

- Government has confirmed extra protections for businesses with a ban on evictions for commercial tenants who are unable to pay due to Covid-19
  - <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/extra-protection-for-businesses-with-ban-on-evictions-for-commercial-tenants-who-miss-rent-payments>
  - These measures are included in the Coronavirus Bill and covers non-payment of the next three months
  - As commercial tenants will still be liable for the rent after this period, the government is also actively monitoring the impact on commercial landlords' cash flow and continues to be in dialogue with them.



# Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs)

8 April

- Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) have taken a leading role locally on advice and support for businesses. This can be accessed through their individual partnerships and support may differ between LEPs.
- For example London LEP is offering one to one support appointments, factsheets and guides covering rent and lease obligations and a checklist for businesses to prepare for the impact of COVID-19.
- Some LEPs are releasing specific funds for their area.
- Providers should contact their local LEP to see what additional support may be available.
  - <https://www.lepnetwork.net/growth-hubs/>



# ELT & Business Rates

8 April

- English Language providers have been included in the Covid-19 business rates relief that is currently available to the hospitality and tourism sectors.
  - <https://www.englishuk.com/en/about-us/news-press/english-uk-news?newsId=3075>
- ELT schools can now contact their local authorities requesting this relief.



# Financial support for Scottish Students

8 April

- The Scottish Government has launched emergency financial support package for students studying at Scottish colleges and universities facing hardship due to Covid-19.
  - <https://news.gov.scot/news/extra-hardship-payments-for-students>
- The total fund is £2.2million with £100,000 available to support around 1,000 students studying with private providers
- This will be paid directly to affected students and administered by Student Awards Agency Scotland.



# IHE sessions coming up

8 April

## *Dates and themes for the next two weeks*

- Our Wednesday and Friday drop-in sessions for members all have special themes we explore in more detail
- Join us and invite your colleagues to our upcoming sessions:
  - Friday 10 April – no drop-in session (Easter)
  - Monday 13 April – no weekly update (Easter)
  - Wednesday 15 April – Student Support
  - Friday 17 April – theme TBC (requests?)



# Questions?

- Until 16:30 General questions
- 16:30-17:00 Business and Financial Support and questions – guests Richard Turnbull and Liam Symington, KPMG



# Contact IHE

- Email [info@independenthe.com](mailto:info@independenthe.com)
- Phone 020 3929 3370