



INDEPENDENT
HIGHER
EDUCATION

Covid-19 Update: 20 April

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Independent Higher Education



IHE Covid-19 Information Hub

15 April

- IHE Covid-19 Information Hub
 - <http://independentthe.com/activities/covid-19-hub>
 - Bringing together information and resources from across government, sector and commercial partners
- FAQs
 - <http://independentthe.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



Last week's essential news

20 April 2020



Major Changes

- Scotland has extended their support for business packages to match England.
- UKCISA secures clarification on key issues such as Migrant workers access to Student Loans.
- Ofqual announce consultation on exceptional exam grading and assessment 2020.
- New guidance on apprenticeships from government:
 - End point assessments
 - Guidance for employers
 - External quality assurance providers
- OfS create teams to help providers communicate with them more effectively.



New Resources and Support

- QAA hosts [webinars on their guidance](#) including accelerated degrees, placements and practical assessments.
- Jisc releases [new events](#) on digital productivity, supporting frontline staff, and other COVID-19 support and a new Microsoft Teams group for strategic and operational continuity.
- House of Commons library releases [Coronavirus implications for the future and higher education sectors in England](#).
- [British Council](#) has released information and we webinars on key markets for international students.



New this week

20 April 2020



Finance and Human Resources

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS)

- HMRC portal opens today 20 April (via Government Gateway)
- Extended to new employees on payroll by 19 March
- Furlough period extended to end of June

CJRS for Higher Education

- HE providers are eligible for CJRS but with certain limitations
- HE-specific guidance published: <https://bit.ly/2xJgJ5E>
- “Any grant from the CJRS should not duplicate other sources of public funding where these are being maintained, such as **UK home student tuition fees.**”
- “DfE is considering appropriate measures to **monitor** the use of these schemes in order to **detect any duplication** of funding, and will be considering potential options to **recover misused public funding** as required.”



Finance and Human Resources

CJRS – conditions for furlough in HE

HE providers should only furlough employees and seek support through the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme if they meet the following conditions:

- the employee works in an area of business where services are temporarily not required and **whose salary is not covered by public funding**
- the employee would otherwise be made redundant or laid off
- the employee is not involved in delivering **provision that has already been funded**
- the grant from the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme would not be duplicative to other public grants that the HE provider receives and would not lead to financial reserves being created

(<https://bit.ly/2xJgJ5E>)



Finance and Human Resources

CJRS – public funding restriction for HE

- The new guidance prohibits staff whose salaries are paid for by public funding (including home student tuition fees) from being eligible for the scheme
- Government “recognise the complexity of HE revenue and the role that cross-subsidy plays”
- “As a guiding principle, HE providers should not seek to furlough a higher proportion of their wage bill than could reasonably be considered to have been generated through commercial income”

(<https://bit.ly/2xJgJ5E>)



Admissions and Student Recruitment

There has been a further extension on the moratorium on unconditional offers extended until 4 May 2020

- The only types of unconditional offer that can be made are where students have already achieved their level-3 qualifications.
 - Moratorium only applies to 2020/21 offers, not to any student starting before 1 August 2020.
 - Pre-sessional courses are considered part of 2020/21 intake and moratorium applies
- DfE will publish grades for cancelled A level exams in England on 20 August



International Students

Government releases new guidance for Tier 4 and short-term study (Replaces all other temporary guidance, applicable from 17 April 2020)

- Flexibility for educational oversight.
- Record absences but only report if students are withdrawn. Use online contact points where possible.
- Students who withdraw because of COVID-19 will not count for BCA.
- Below degree level do not need to meet 15 hours study if studying online.
- Students employed by NHS trust not restricted to 20 hours per week. Students not studying are considered on vacation.
- Tier 4 students can volunteer as NHS Volunteer Responder
- UKVI may apply discretion where a student may exceed time limits due to COVID-19.



International Students

- Distance Learning ok for existing students, and new students with a visa but who cannot travel. New students studying online without a visa do not need one.
- New CAS – change start dates if CAS is not used or expired. Home Office will consider exceptionally accepting used or expired CAS. Students can use digital documents to apply for visas.
- Higher Education Providers without Track Record, those not eligible for OfS can self-assess English Language where they cannot take SELT. Must keep records of assessment.
- Students can continue to transfer in-country until 31 May including those who need to extend to complete courses due to COVID-19. Students can start from point of application.
- Police Registration: From 21 March students do not have to register or report changes to police.



International Students – Short-term study

- Switching in-country until 31 May – new courses can start from application.
- Students with exceptional extension can take another course
- Cannot extend short term study but must make an application for leave outside the rules.



IHE Drop-in schedule

IHE will be changing the way we communicate with you.

- Monday will be a general update and drop-in
- Wednesday will be a short general update and a specialist webinar with Q&A
- On Fridays we will send a weekly email with all the essential information from the week
- As before we will continue to update the IHE COVID-19 Information Hub with all the latest information.



IHE Quality, Teaching and learning Drop-in

- IHE hosting Quality, Teaching and Learning Drop-in as part of Wednesday Drop-in session.
- 4:00pm this Wednesday. Link has gone out in email.



Free Student eTextbook Programme

Free Student eTextbook Programme webinar

Thursday 23 April 2020, 12:15-13:00.

Kortext has partnered with leading textbook publishers to provide a sector wide support programme for students during this period of campus closures.

Join us to hear how Kortext are offering a number of pathways to access the content.

Representatives of Jisc and Kortext will be on hand to answer your questions about what is a relatively straightforward and free opportunity!

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/webinar-free-student-etextbook-programme-tickets-103122028764?aff=odeimcmailchimp&mc_cid=c83a231c44&mc_eid=bbd4c6bd5e



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