



INDEPENDENT
HIGHER
EDUCATION

Covid-19 Update: 11 May

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IHE Covid-19 Information Hub

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



IHE Drop-in schedule

- Monday a general update and drop-in webinar
- Wednesday a short general update and a specialist webinar with Q&A
- Fridays an email the essential information from the week
- We continue to update the IHE COVID-19 Information Hub with all the latest information.



IHE Members Drop-in: 13 May

- Members Drop-in 13 May will focus on Scenario Planning
 - What does the new government advice mean for higher education?
 - What actions are members taking to plan for the rest of the 2019/20 academic year? What about 2020/21?
 - Planning for international students and staff?
 - Maintaining Quality in scenario planning?
 - Scenario planning and consumer protection



Webinar: OfS Consultation

When: Thursday 14 May 2020

Who: 10:00-11:00

The Office for Students has recently launched a consultation on the integrity and stability of the higher education sector in England. Join us to hear more and discuss the consultation.

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/consultation-on-the-integrity-and-stability-of-the-english-higher-education-sector/>

Proposals include a new, time-limited condition that would allow them to take action against higher education providers that engaged in conduct which would not be in the interests of students and the wider higher education sector in these exceptional circumstances. The deadline for responses: 26 May 2020

If you are interested in attending please click on the [following link](#) to register.

Non-members can use the following code to register OFSCONSULT20



Last week's essential news

11 May 2020



Government HE Support Package

Government support package for higher education providers and students

- Government Announcement:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-support-package-for-universities-and-students>
- Government Guidance:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-he-providers-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak/actions-for-he-providers-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>
- Further guidance on SNCs expected.
- IHE continues to lobby for an SME package



Government HE Support Package:

Finance and Human Resources

Finance for Providers:

- **Student loan fee payments will be re-structured next year.** Providers must manage their cash flow as this is a one-off intervention for autumn only
- Providers can access government support schemes
- Providers can access Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme
- Working with OfS to prioritise funding allocations to specialist providers
- DfE will intervene to support a provider only where needed, where it is possible and appropriate, and as a last resort. Will use a restructuring regime.
- Bringing forward £100m in Quality-related Research funding and establishing a DfE/BEIS Ministerial taskforce on university research sustainability.

Finance for students:

Increase in hardship funds/use of discretionary funding for those with existing teaching grant. This is not new money but the existing £46 million set aside for disadvantaged students.



Government HE Support Package:

Admissions and Recruitment

Government re-introduces temporary student number controls based on provider forecasts plus 5%

- 10,000 additional places – 5000 of these to nursing and allied health courses
- Will not apply to international (non-EU) students
- May be more exemptions
- Those who do not abide by controls will have sums available through student finance system reduced in the subsequent academic year

UCAS will boost the Clearing process

<https://www.ucas.com/corporate/news-and-key-documents/news/more-personalised-options-and-support-ever-students-clearing-2020>



Government HE Support Package:

International Students

- Education Sector Advisory group to update International Education Strategy by autumn 2020 to respond to the impact of COVID-19
- Graduate immigration route still going ahead by summer 2021



Government HE Support Package: Regulation and the OfS

OfS consults on a new condition of registration

The provider must not engage in any form of Conduct which in the opinion of the OfS could reasonably have a material negative effect on the Stability and/or Integrity of the English Higher Education Sector. (Continuum of events back to 11 March 2020)

- The short-term stability of English higher education providers
- Recruitment practices that are not in the interests of students
- Providers seeking to obtain an unfair advantage over other providers
- The wider interests of students and the public interest.

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/consultation-on-the-integrity-and-stability-of-the-english-higher-education-sector/>



Teaching and Learning

- Ofqual publishes initial decisions on GCSE and A level grading proposals for 2020:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ofqual-publishes-initial-decisions-on-gcse-and-a-level-grading-proposals-for-2020>



Admissions and Recruitment

- CMA published generic [guidance](#) relating to consumer contracts, cancellation and refunds as a result of Covid-19.
- OfS expected to release joint guidance with CMA next week.
- Reminder IHE Blog on CMA:
<http://independentthe.com/archives/consumer-protection-and-students-where-are-we-now>
- IHE online workshop: CMA Essentials:
<http://independentthe.com/archives/18-march-2019-webinar-cma-and-covid19>



Student Welfare and Student Support

- **The Association of Colleges** has [predicted](#) that half of the new labour market entrants (approximately 100,000 16 to 25 year olds) will struggle to find meaningful employment as the economic shocks of Covid-19 continue to be felt.
- **JISC predict** more than half of final year students will lose jobs or internships during the pandemic:
<https://www.jisc.ac.uk/news/more-than-half-of-final-year-students-lose-jobs-or-internships-during-pandemic-06-may-2020>



Regulation

- Freedom of Information guidance (England, Wales, NI) released: <https://ico.org.uk/media/about-the-ico/policies-and-procedures/2617613/ico-regulatory-approach-during-coronavirus.pdf>
- OfS response and Board decisions on grant funding: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/funding-for-2020-21-ofs-board-decisions/>
- OfS Terms and Conditions for funding: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/terms-and-conditions-of-funding-for-2020-21/>



Regulation

- OfS Prevent Monitoring during COVID-19:
<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/prevent-monitoring-requirements-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-pandemic/>
- OfS National Student Survey Publication 1 July 2020:
https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/c48df5a9-20ac-4b05-ac30-ed95bf46a58d/national-student-survey-2020_publication-of-data.pdf
- UKRI updated guidance for the research and innovation communities: <https://www.ukri.org/news/coronavirus-impact-on-ukri-supported-research/>



New this week

11 May 2020



UK Nations issue statements on response to COVID-19

- Scotland keeps *Stay at Home* message:
 - Use of face coverings should not replace handwashing and other measures: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-public-use-of-face-coverings/>
 - Exercise can now be unlimited: <https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others/pages/overview/>
- Northern Ireland also keeps *Stay at Home* message and extends lockdown to 28 May as Stormont discusses gradual and strategic plan for NI
- Wales also keeps *Stay at Home* message and extends lockdown: <https://gov.wales/wales-extends-coronavirus-lockdown>



Government COVID-19 Response

Government announces change to advice and restrictions for England: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/our-plan-to-rebuild-the-uk-governments-covid-19-recovery-strategy>

OUR PLAN TO REBUILD: The UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/884171/FINAL_6.6637_CO_HMG_C19_Recovery_FINAL_110520_v2_WEB_1_.pdf

SAGE modelling suggests that either fully opening schools or relaxing all social distancing measures now, will lead to a resurgence of the virus and a second wave that could be larger than the first.



Government COVID-19 Response

The Government's aim: Return life to as close to normal as possible, for as many people as possible, as fast and as fairly as possible, in a way that avoids a new epidemic, minimises lives lost and maximises health, social and economic outcomes.

Will consider:

- Overall health outcomes, not just those directly caused by COVID-19
- The short-term economic impact
- Country's long-term economic future
- The sustainability of public finances

Government must act to minimise the adverse social costs – will consider:

- The number of days of education children lose
- The fairness of any actions the Government takes
- The importance of maintaining the strength of the public services and civic organisations



Government COVID-19 Response

The Government has a planned timetable for lifting restrictions

- For the foreseeable future, workers should continue to work from home rather than their normal physical workplace, wherever possible.
- All workers who cannot work from home should travel to work if their workplace is open.
- More vulnerable children and children of critical workers should be urged to attend school in person
- The Government is also amending its guidance to clarify that paid childcare, for example nannies and childminders, can take place subject to being able to meet the public health principles, because these are roles where working from home is not possible
- Social distancing guidance on public transport must be followed rigorously
- Aim to wear a face-covering in enclosed spaces where social distancing is not always possible
- People may exercise outside as many times each day as they wish.
- People may drive to outdoor open spaces irrespective of distance
- The Government will require all international arrivals not on a short list of exemptions to self-isolate in their accommodation for fourteen days on arrival into the UK.



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Government COVID-19 Response

- A phased return for early years settings and schools. Schools should prepare to begin to open for more children from 1 June. The Government expects children to be able to return to early years settings, and for Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 to be back in school in smaller sizes, from this point.
- Secondary schools and further education colleges should also prepare to begin some face to face contact with Year 10 and 12 pupils who have key exams next year, in support of their continued remote, home learning.
- The government is also amending its guidance to clarify that paid childcare, for example nannies and childminders, can take place subject to being able to meet the public health principles.



Government COVID-19 Response

- No earlier than 4 July to open at least some of the remaining businesses and premises
- It is possible to reduce the risks of transmission in the workplace by limiting the number of people that any given individual comes into contact with regularly. Employers can support this where practical by changing shift patterns and rotas to keep smaller, contained teams.
- On Government schemes like the furlough scheme, these measures are extraordinarily costly and cannot be sustained for a prolonged period of time.
- Develop more resilient supply chains and international economic recovery



HE Sector

- Royal College of Nursing, alongside the Royal College of Midwives (RCM), UNISON and the National Union of Students (NUS) call for refund of tuition fees:
<https://www.rcn.org.uk/news-and-events/news/uk-rcn-calls-on-government-to-take-urgent-action-on-nursing-students-fees-and-debt-060520-covid-19>
- Baroness Randerson asks question on suspension of registration process by OfS and Lord Blunkett asks a private notice question on the support package for universities and students.
<https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Lords/2020-05-05/HL4015/>



Teaching and Learning

- QAA Scotland release new resources for Technology Enhanced Learning: <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/news-events/news/qaa-scotland-expands-resource-hub-for-technology-enhanced-learning>
- It covers:
 - Getting your teaching online
 - Lecture recording
 - Enhancing inclusion and accessibility
 - Student participation in co-creation
 - Policy and strategy development



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