



INDEPENDENT
HIGHER
EDUCATION

Covid-19 Update: 20 May

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IHE Covid-19 Information Hub

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



Weekly Covid-19 comms schedule

Monday – a weekly update webinar with Q&A for members and non-members

Wednesday – a short general update and specialist webinar with Q&A for members only

Friday – an email rounding up the week's essential information

... and we continue to update the IHE Covid-19 Information Hub on our website with all the latest information.



IHE Member Networks

28 May – [Quality Managers Staff Network](#)

28 May – [Student Services Staff Network](#)

23 June – [Heads of Finance Staff Network](#)

7 July – [Admissions Managers Staff Network](#)

7 July – [Tier 4 Compliance Staff Network](#)

Follow the link to register or email events@independenthe.com



Webinar: New to Tier 4

When: 1 June 2020, 14:00-17:00

Who: Nichola Carter, Head of Immigration at Carter Thomas Solicitors, Tema Nwulu, Advice and Training Officer at UKCISA, and Peter Skillen, Director (Risk and Compliance) at Study Group.

This workshop is relevant to all members who **currently do not have a Tier 4 License**.

Tickets £75 for non-members. If you are interested in attending click on the [following link](#) to book your place.



Webinar: CMA Essentials for Higher Education

When: 10 June 2020, 13:00-16:30

Who: Leading law firm Pinsent Masons, alongside EdAd, specialist consultants on CMA processes in student recruitment and admissions.

The workshop will cover the following topics:

- Understanding the CMA Higher Education Guidance
- Updated legal considerations for staff responsible for consumer protection in higher education
- Role of OfS in consumer protection
- Strategies for applying and managing the CMA Higher Education guidance in recruitment, admissions and student complaints & appeals.

Tickets £75 for non-members. If you are interested in attending please click on the [following link](#) to register.



Government decisions

Everyone in the UK with symptoms now eligible for tests

- Anyone experiencing a new, continuous cough; high temperature; and now also a loss of or change in your normal sense of smell or taste can book a test by visiting www.nhs.uk/coronavirus

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/everyone-in-the-united-kingdom-with-symptoms-now-eligible-for-coronavirus-tests>



International students and visas

Immigration Bill – Second Reading

- Debate included several mentions of education and international students but focused on graduate route for Spring 2021
- Discussion on delegated powers that would allow Home Office to make sweeping changes to immigration system post-Bill.

[https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-05-18/debates/7FA826EF-0D2F-473A-B036-78D1A7F01A31/ImmigrationAndSocialSecurityCo-Ordination\(EUWithdrawal\)Bill](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2020-05-18/debates/7FA826EF-0D2F-473A-B036-78D1A7F01A31/ImmigrationAndSocialSecurityCo-Ordination(EUWithdrawal)Bill)

British Council - What can UK universities learn from Chinese universities' return to campus?

Includes recommendations for the UK sector when considering reopening.

<https://education-services.britishcouncil.org/insights-blog/chinese-universities-begin-return-campus-some-major-changes-%E2%80%93-what-can-uk-universities>



International students and visas

DIT - Maturing Education in the Middle East

Date: Thursday 29 May

Time: 12-13:00

Hear about educational trends, opportunities and the way forward during these challenging times.

Sunita Mirchandani UAE Lead Adviser for Education & Training Department for International Trade, UAE

Sally Jeffery Partner, PwC, Middle East Education & Skills Practice Leader, Global Education & Skills Network

Ross Barfoot Partner and Head of Education Practice Clyde & Co

If interested email DIT.UAEEvents@fco.gov.uk



International students and visas

Russell Group sets out proposals to give UK the edge in competitive international student market

- Continuing visa reforms to streamline the immigration process and ensure Britain remains a globally attractive destination for students
- A joint international marketing campaign to show the UK and its universities are an open, safe and welcoming place to study
- Seeking global consensus on recognition of online courses.

<https://russellgroup.ac.uk/news/russell-group-sets-out-proposals-to-give-uk-the-edge-in-competitive-international-student-market/>



Regulation and the OfS

Office for Students releases more Q&A on time-limited condition

- Specific question on subcontractual arrangements
- Includes recruitment of international and postgraduate students
- Confirms the student number controls are being developed and imposed by DfE
- Providers in the registration process would not need to satisfy the condition to be registered by conduct covered by the condition may be covered by other conditions such as C1 (CMA)
- Conduct which took place before registration may also be considered after registration.

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/coronavirus/provider-guide-to-coronavirus/time-limited-condition-of-registration/>



Regulation and the OfS

Government have updated their Coronavirus (COVID-19): apprenticeship programme response guidance

- Updated guidance on training and assessing in line with safer working guidelines
- Calculating furlough for apprenticeships and meeting the minimum wage
- Off the job training guidance
- Guidance on making apprentices redundant and helping them find another employer.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-apprenticeship-programme-response?utm_source=df7cee49-94a8-491e-bb5d-1ff1066c2886&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate#history



Teaching and learning

QAA publishes new guidance on Admissions and Transitions

- Resource guide with links to regulatory information and resources for each of the four nations on admissions and transitions
- One stop guide to information on student funding, mental health, student transitions, online learning and technology.
- <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/news-events/support-and-guidance-covid-19/admissions-inductions-and-transitions>



Admissions and Recruitment

UCAS to release insight on international student behavior

- Insight brief showing data on international student behavior to come this Friday
- For UCAS members only

<https://www.ucas.com/providers>

UCAS launches survey on “Private Candidates” : See UCAS Wednesday Bulletin

- UCAS is developing guidance and best practice for working with private candidates which will come from provider survey
- Asks questions about Private Candidate Policies, or parts of mitigating circumstances policies designed to support private candidates.



HE Sector

Sutton Trust: COVID-19 and Social Mobility Impact Brief #3: Apprenticeships

- As of early April, 39% of apprenticeships were continuing as normal, with 36% furloughed and 8% made redundant. 17% of apprentices had their off-the-job learning suspended
- 81% of their apprentices would return to their course once economic restrictions were relaxed. 58% were confident all their apprentices would return, while 17% reported that fewer than half of their apprentices would resume
- 31% reported that they were likely to hire fewer apprentices over the coming year, or none at all
- 37% of surveyed employers reported that some of their apprentices were not able to work from home due to a lack of equipment, or because their role was not suitable for such work
- 24% of employers surveyed reported that a **learning provider** had closed.

<https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/covid-19-impacts-apprenticeships/>



HE Sector

Sutton Trust: COVID-19 and Social Mobility Impact Brief #3: Apprenticeships

- Concerns over degree apprenticeships and the prioritisation of spending in the levy
- Breakdown of deprivation by apprenticeship level, with intermediate (level 2) apprenticeships and degree (level 6 and 7) apprenticeships forming mirror images of each other
- The former is dominated by those from more deprived areas, and the latter by those from less deprived areas. There are twice as many degree level apprentices from the wealthiest areas as there are from the poorest
- In 2017 there were 19, 8,892 last year
- More than half of degree apprenticeships taken up by people over 30
- Senior leadership courses – equivalent to an MBA - have expanded significantly, growing six-fold from 552 to 3,410 in 2018/19
- Conversely, the proportion of young apprentices from deprived communities taking degree level apprenticeships up has fallen (from 9% in 2016 to 6% last year)
- The number of older apprentices from well-off areas has more than doubled (from 5% to 11%), leading to a growing access gap for those under 25
- Senior leadership and chartered management courses alone now make up almost half (46%) of the entire degree apprentice cohort.

<https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/covid-19-impacts-apprenticeships/>



HE sector

London Economics and UCU publish a report on COVID-19 pandemic on university finances

- Surveyed students between 7th May-12th May on deferral rates
- If universities opened as normal 86.7 would return
- If universities were not operating as normal 72% would return
- 24.4% are considering an offer from another university

<http://londoneconomics.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/LE-Impact-of-Covid-19-on-university-finances-FINAL.pdf>



HE sector

University of Bolton – open from September

This will mean widespread innovative changes on campus, with measures including, but not limited to:

- Providing regular socially distanced face-to-face tutorials, laboratory experience, access to arts studios and specialist facilities
- Implementing an effective scheduling system
- Dividing sessions for access on campus into set times per day
- Strictly observing recommended social distancing guidelines at all times
- Installing sophisticated airport style walk through temperature scanners at every building entry
- Making bicycles available for loan by students, enabling them to avoid crowded public transport.
- Ensuring there are adequate additional sanitiser stations
- Providing and making the wearing of face coverings on campus compulsory for the foreseeable future
- Carefully managed walking routes including one-way navigation
- Additional self-service, café-style takeaway food and drink stations to minimise queues
- Instigating a rigorous cleansing programme throughout all university buildings.

<https://www.bolton.ac.uk/news/a-message-from-the-vice-chancellor/>



Business and Finance

20 May 2020



Government introduces HE guidance for access to schemes

Access to Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS), Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CLBILS) and COVID Corporate Financing Facility (CCFF):

- Providers should consider if they need the support
- Approach their own banks

Reprofiling of tuition fees:

- Take “significant steps to improve efficiencies and manage their finances”

DfE purchasing land and buildings:

- DfE have “budgeted up to £100m to acquire sites for planned projects in England”
- **Are you taking advantage of these schemes? Are they working effectively?**



Government introduces HE guidance for access to schemes

Access to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) :

- Includes staff on hourly-paid or short-term contracts
- Should only include employees who would otherwise be made redundant or laid-off, or are NOT involved in delivery provision that has already been funded
- The grant should not “lead to financial reserves being created.”
- “...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”
- “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, including from non-public research grants and contracts.”
- **Are you taking advantage of these schemes? Are they working effectively?**



Hardship Funds and Supporting Students

Using public funding for Hardship schemes for students:

- Student premium funding can move to hardship funds. Providers should ensure the most vulnerable groups are able to access support where needed.

Using public funding for Mental Health and access to online learning support:

- Providers can use student premium and disabled student premium funding to support expanded mental health services and bolster the support for students with pre-existing mental health conditions.
- OfS capital grants can be used to address the needs of individual students for remote access to learning, teaching, assessment and the related services of a provider, for example through the provision of equipment or connectivity services, where students would not otherwise be able to secure these.
- **Have IHE members created Hardship funds?**



Impact of the OfS consultation

The Office for Students proposes to protect the wider interests of students and the public interest

“Beyond the higher education sector, some organisations have been subject to public criticism where they are judged not to have acted in the public interest during this period, for example by seeking financial support from government lending schemes at the same time as paying dividends to shareholders.

Students and the public have a particular interest in the conduct of higher education providers because they receive funding from taxpayer-backed student loans, and would expect providers to act appropriately during a period of national crisis”



Impact of OfS Consultation

(g): giving confidence to the public that the conduct of higher education providers will continue to meet high standards of probity and good governance during this period;

- Government has asked businesses to behave responsibly in applying for government loan and job retention schemes and only apply if you really need to
- Government has said schemes should not be made to boost reserves
- OfS may view behaviour that doesn't meet these conditions as not behaving in the public interest, regardless of sources of funding.
- **IHE need your views? What should we say in response to this clause in the OfS Condition?**



Resources

- **Government Support Package for Higher Education Providers and Students:**
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/882884/Government_support_package_for_higher_education_providers_and_students.pdf
 - Section on financial stability for providers
- **OfS Q&A:** <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/coronavirus/provider-guide-to-coronavirus/provider-faq/>
 - Q&A on financial assistance, support for vulnerable students and reportable events
- **OfS consultation on stability and integrity of the English HE sector:** <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/coronavirus/provider-guide-to-coronavirus/time-limited-condition-of-registration/>
 - Outline of consultation, consultation document and survey to respond
 - Q&A includes when consultation comes into force, those in registration process and other key info



Resources

- **Letter from the Chancellor to Banks:**
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/882875/01052020_CX_Letter_to_banks_-_pricing_and_CCA_.pdf
- **Government Financial Support for Education Guidance:**
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-financial-support-for-education-early-years-and-childrens-social-care/coronavirus-covid-19-financial-support-for-education-early-years-and-childrens-social-care#higher-education>
 - Applies to all levels but has specific HE section



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