



INDEPENDENT
HIGHER
EDUCATION

Covid-19 Update: 27 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.



Upcoming Webinars

Webinar: New to Tier 4

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

Overview: Our webinar is designed for providers who do not yet have a Tier 4 licence but are interesting in applying. Our legal expert Nicola Carter will outline what you need to do to apply successfully, and our guest speakers UKCISA and Peter Skillen from IHE Member Study Group will talk about the role of the sponsor and how to make it work for you.

Register: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/webinar-new-to-tier-4-workshop-tickets-103789186250>

Webinar: CMA Essentials (including during COVID-19)

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

Overview: This webinar with leading law firm Pinsent Masons and EdAd, specialist consultants on CMA-compliant processes in student recruitment and admissions, will provide essential training for staff in meeting CMA conditions. It will also consider the impact of COVID-19 on complying with consumer legislation and CMA HE guidelines for all providers.

Register: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/webinar-cma-essentials-for-he-staff-tickets-102791175172>



Last week's essential news

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Government Statements

- UK Government **expanded eligibility for coronavirus tests** to anyone aged 5+ with symptoms and added 'loss of smell/taste' to the recognised symptom list:
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-for-coronavirus/ask-for-a-test-to-check-if-you-have-coronavirus/>
- Welsh Government publishes **Resilience Plan for Post-16 Education**: <https://gov.wales/plan-launched-support-education-over-16s>



Finance and Human Resources

- The **Corporate Insolvency and Governance Bill 2019-21** was introduced to Parliament. Pinsent Masons have written a helpful summary: <https://www.pinsentmasons.com/out-law/analysis/corporate-governance-insolvency-bill>
- SMEs can now apply online to recover the costs of paying coronavirus-related **Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)**: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-back-statutory-sick-pay-paid-to-employees-due-to-coronavirus-covid-19>



Regulation and the OfS

- OfS added more Q&A on the **proposed new registration condition**, including on subcontractual arrangements:
<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/coronavirus/provider-guide-to-coronavirus/time-limited-condition-of-registration>
- Government updated **apprenticeship guidance**, including information on making apprentices redundant and who is responsible to help them find another employer:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-apprenticeship-programme-response>
- Welsh Government published guidance on their acting as the issuing authority for **apprenticeship frameworks in Wales**:
<https://gov.wales/apprenticeship-issuing-authority>



Teaching and Learning

- New QAA guidance on **Admissions and Transitions**, including regulation in different nations, student funding, mental health, online learning: <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/news-events/support-and-guidance-covid-19/admissions-inductions-and-transitions>
- New QAA guidance on **effective practice in UK TNE**, including virtual delivery models while physical restrictions continue: <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/docs/qaa/guidance/effective-practice-uk-tne-covid-19.pdf>
- **Ofqual** announced decisions on exceptional arrangements for awarding **GCSEs, AS and A levels**: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ofqual-gcse-and-a-level-consultation-outcomes-and-autumn-exam-series-proposals>

as well as for **vocational qualifications**:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/exceptional-arrangements-for-assessment-and-grading-in-2020>

and a new consultation on **additional autumn exams**:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-an-additional-gcse-as-and-a-level-exam-series-in-autumn-2020>



Admissions and Recruitment

- UCAS launched a **survey on “private candidates”** with a view to developing best practice guidance.
- UCAS produced an insight brief for their members on **international student behaviours**.



Student Welfare and Support

- Updated guidance for HE providers, including on helping students to collect belongings from their accommodation in a safe and managed way:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/actions-for-he-providers-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak>
- UKCISA published two new blogs for supporting international students with mental health and mindfulness:
<https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/NewsWall/Blog>



International Students and Visas

- Updated **Home Office guidance** confirmed those with leave due to expire can extend or switch in the UK until 31 July:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-uk-visa-applicants-and-temporary-uk-residents>
- **OfS briefing note** on ways in which universities and colleges are supporting international students:
<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/coronavirus-briefing-note-supporting-international-students>
- New **QS survey data** finds 72% of international students open to prospect of starting UK studies this year online:
<https://www.qs.com/the-state-of-uk-international-student-recruitment-uncovering-the-latest-international-student-survey-findings>
- **Russell Group proposals** on international students:
<https://russellgroup.ac.uk/news/russell-group-sets-out-proposals-to-give-uk-the-edge-in-competitive-international-student-market>



HE Sector news and opinion

- The University of Cambridge confirmed its leaked plans to **hold all lectures online** during 2020-21:
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-52732814>
- Whereas plans to **open their campuses** for students from September were announced by both the University of Bolton:
<https://www.bolton.ac.uk/news/a-message-from-the-vice-chancellor>
and Nottingham Trent University:
<https://www.ntu.ac.uk/about-us/news/news-articles/2020/05/looking-ahead-to-academic-year-2020-21>



New this week

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Regulation

Department for Education to review Guidance for educators by 31 May

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>

Department for Education publishes new guidance for opening of Schools (including secondary schools)

- 15 June opening subject to 5 tests
- HE providers might note some of the restrictions
 - Limited year groups invited to return. 25% of each year group attend at any one time.
 - Use guidance on “implementing protective measures in education and childcare settings”
 - Have mechanisms to check if students feel unwell; clean surfaces often
 - Minimize contact and mixing. Keep students in small groups throughout the environment
 - Minimize public transport

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june>



Regulation

OfS consultation on stability and integrity of HE sector closes

- OfS closed consultation at 12:00 noon 26 May
- Providers should note two Q&A at the end of the consultation page on unconditional offers
 - Providers can now make unconditional offers however the consultation made clear OfS consider these to be against the interest of students
 - Some unconditional offers that have typically been a normal part of the offer-making process may be acceptable (mature students, disabled students). No mention of creative subjects.

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/coronavirus/provider-guide-to-coronavirus/unconditional-offer-making/>



Regulation

Updates from Student Loan Company

- Students applying as Migrant workers who have lost employment should apply as an EU student. They can apply for Migrant Worker funding later once SLC have clear guidance.
- Students currently funded as migrant workers will not have to submit evidence for the rest of the 2019/20 academic year.
- Students applying for DSA, who cannot get additional medical evidence or diagnostic assessment reports from their GP should apply and if SLC need more they will let the student know.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-for-current-students#i-am-looking-to-reapply-as-a-migrant-worker-how-will-the-covid-19-outbreak-affect-this>



International Students

Home Office to review Tier 4 and short-term study Guidance by 31 May

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-tier-4-sponsors-migrants-and-short-term-students>

Updated guidance for UK applicants and temporary UK residents

- Some UK Visa and Citizenship Application Centers will re-open 1 June including two in London, two in Manchester and the Croydon office among others
- Some VACs are resuming services overseas. Check TLS and VFS for each country.
- Link to help you cancel your visa
- Link to “check what you need to do before you travel” including information on self-isolation from 8 June.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-uk-visa-applicants-and-temporary-uk-residents#history>



International Students

UKCISA Update “Questions we can answer”

- Information on new SELT centers opening
- Confirmation that leave granted under Coronavirus extension schemes does not prevent making another application in the UK
- Updated information on waiving academic progression if students need to apply to extend to complete their course.
- More information on travel and quarantine
- Added to Questions we cannot answer: How absences will be treated in future settlement applications.

<https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Studying--living-in-the-UK/Coronavirus-Covid-19-info-for-international-students>



Teaching and Learning

New QAA Guidance on TNE

- *Effective practice in UK transnational education during the covid-19 pandemic* found in TNE and International Policy and Practice

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/news-events/support-and-guidance-covid-19/tne-international-policy-practice>



Recruitment and Admissions

UCAS Updates student FAQs

- New information for A-level students and independent students.

<https://www.ucas.com/search/frequently-asked-questions/coronavirus>

UCAS blogs on WonkHE to clarify Clearing Plus

- Clearing Plus is for students who didn't achieve grades or changed their mind and no longer have a confirmed place. It is not a tool to promote students changing their minds.
- Algorithms used to create personalized searches are based on what students have taken in the past.
- Providers can choose to define their acceptance criteria

Clearing Plus: <https://wonkhe.com/blogs/clearing-plus-transforming-admissions-experiences/>

Data Science behind Clearing Plus: <https://wonkhe.com/blogs/the-data-science-behind-clearing-plus/>



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