



INDEPENDENT
HIGHER
EDUCATION

Covid-19 Update: 3 June 2020

*Joy Elliott-Bowman, Alex Proudfoot, Marie Clark,
Independent Higher Education*



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



Weekly Covid-19 comms schedule

Wednesday – a general update webinar with Q&A for all independent providers (members and non-members)

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: 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>



Upcoming IHE Network Meetings

- **10 June** – [Marketing and Recruitment Network](#)
- **23 June** – [Heads of Finance Network](#)
- **29 June** – [Student Data Forum](#)
- **7 July** – [Admissions Managers Network](#)
- **7 July** – [Tier 4 Compliance Network](#)

If you would like to suggest a topic for an event or a particular guest speaker/organisation to talk at an IHE Network or Forum, please email events@independenthe.com.



Last week's essential news

3 June 2020



Government Statements

- New NHS Test and Trace service in England, allowing people to check their symptoms, order a test, and identify recent close contacts who may be at risk if they do test positive.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/nhs-test-and-trace-if-youre-contacted-after-testing-positive-for-coronavirus/>

- Updates to the Preparing for the wider opening of schools from 1 June

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preparing-for-the-wider-opening-of-schools-from-1-june?mc_cid=bd447dea4b&mc_eid=bbd4c6bd5e



Devolved Nations

- In Scotland new legislation to enable essential public services to continue to be able to discharge their functions while the coronavirus pandemic continues, as well as providing additional flexibility and support for businesses.

https://www.pinsentmasons.com/out-law/analysis/coronavirus-scotland-no-2-act?mc_cid=bd447dea4b&mc_eid=bbd4c6bd5e

- The Scottish Government published a press statement regarding universities' phased return.

https://news.gov.scot/news/colleges-and-universities-preparing-for-phased-return?mc_cid=bd447dea4b&mc_eid=bbd4c6bd5e



Finance and Human Resources

- Self-Employment Income Support Scheme has been extended - with those eligible able to claim a second and final grant capped at £6,570
- Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme has been extended. Employees can be brought back part time in July, and a new taper requiring employers to contribute to furloughed salaries from August

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/chancellor-extends-self-employment-support-scheme-and-confirms-furlough-next-steps>



Regulation and the OfS

- OfS published two new Q&A on unconditional offer-making

https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/coronavirus/provider-guide-to-coronavirus/unconditional-offer-making/?mc_cid=bd447dea4b&mc_eid=bbd4c6bd5e

- The Student Loans Company updated its guidance for current students with more information on Disabled Students' Allowances and Migrant Worker status.

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-for-current-students?mc_cid=bd447dea4b&mc_eid=bbd4c6bd5e



Teaching and Learning

- Lecturemotely is a new website for higher education lecturers and institutions to find and share resources and support for remote teaching, assessment and student support.

<https://www.lecturemotely.com/>

- The UK Council for Graduate Education has released a guide to help research supervisors navigate the challenges of online and remote doctoral supervision.

https://supervision.ukcge.ac.uk/resources/ukcge-guide-to-online-supervision/?mc_cid=bd447dea4b&mc_eid=bbd4c6bd5e



Teaching and Learning

New QAA papers published

- Admissions and transitions into higher education

https://www.qaa.ac.uk/news-events/news/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-admissions-and-transitions-into-higher-education?mc_cid=bd447dea4b&mc_eid=bbd4c6bd5e

- Higher education in apprenticeships

https://www.qaa.ac.uk/news-events/news/the-impact-of-the-covid-19-pandemic-on-higher-education-in-apprenticeships?mc_cid=bd447dea4b&mc_eid=bbd4c6bd5e



Teaching and Learning

New QAA papers published (continued)

- Contingency planning for international provision

https://www.qaa.ac.uk/news-events/news/qaa-publishes-guidance-on-contingency-planning-for-international-provision?mc_cid=bd447dea4b&mc_eid=bbd4c6bd5e

- Contingency planning for placement provision

https://www.qaa.ac.uk/news-events/news/qaa-publishes-guidance-for-uk-higher-education-providers-to-help-contingency-planning-for-placement-provision?mc_cid=bd447dea4b&mc_eid=bbd4c6bd5e



Admissions and Recruitment

UCAS further information on Clearing Plus

- Clearing Plus is a more efficient and personalised way to match students in clearing to the best course for them

https://wonkhe.com/blogs/clearing-plus-transforming-admissions-experiences/?mc_cid=bd447dea4b&mc_eid=bbd4c6bd5e

- Explaining the data science

https://wonkhe.com/blogs/the-data-science-behind-clearing-plus/?mc_cid=bd447dea4b&mc_eid=bbd4c6bd5e

- The UCAS Q&A has been updated to include new information for independent students

https://www.ucas.com/search/frequently-asked-questions/coronavirus?mc_cid=bd447dea4b&mc_eid=bbd4c6bd5e



International Students and Visas

- New Home Office guidance for Tier 4 and short-term study extends temporary concessions to 31 July, allows new students to start their course online and adds more flexibility on start dates, CAS and visa applications.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/888981/CoronavirusTier4sponsorsmigrantandsandshort-termstudents.pdf

- Some UK Visa and Citizenship Application Centres will reopen from 1 June.

https://www.gov.uk/ukvcas?mc_cid=bd447dea4b&mc_eid=bbd4c6bd5e

- From 8 June, all arrivals in the UK will have to give border officials details of their journey plans and an address at which they will self-isolate for 14 days.

<https://www.gov.uk/uk-border-control>



HE Sector news and opinion

- UPP Foundation called for a ‘civic army’ to rebuild communities formed by offering all young people a 6 months’ paid work placement:
<https://upp-foundation.org/civicaarmy/>



New this week

3 June 2020



Government statements

Student Number Controls announced for England

- SNCs policy confirmed by DfE for Approved (fee cap) providers in England
- Full-time, UG UK/EU students starting on/after 1 August 2020
- SNC also applies to Full-time English students at RUK providers
- Growth of 5% allowed over baseline forecasts

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/student-number-controls>



Student Number Controls

Which Students?

- FT, UG, UK/EU including foundation years on eligible courses
- 1 August 2020 – 1 August 2021
- Excludes A levels or equivalent level 3 qualifications in autumn 2020
- Excludes PT, PG, International
- Excludes Apprenticeships: Not eligible students
- Accepted offers: If the providers has accepted offers from before the notification date which exceed SNC, these will be permitted but no further numbers given.

Which Providers?

- England: Approved (fee cap) only
- RUK: Anyone with eligible students
- Excluded: New Providers (insufficient information)



Student Number Controls

Student Number Controls Calculation

- Base entrant numbers + Base growth rate (ratio) + 5% (or 10 students for providers with less than 150 entrants)
- Base entrant numbers from HESES19 (Table 5)
- Base growth rate estimated from AFR (forecast Table 7)
- Those without AFR or signed off forecast by 4 May 2020 are given 1.5% growth
- Negative growth will be topped up to 0%
- RUK providers: Base entrants from SLC + 1.5% average growth + 5%
- One FT student is equivalent to one FTE (accelerated may have issue)
- Raise errors with DfE as soon as possible



Student Number Controls

Additional 10,000 places

- Approved (fee cap) only providers to bid; one application for each group below.
- 90%+ continuation rate; 75%+ high skill employment or further study
- No subject to specific conditions of registration related to quality (B)
- 5000 for healthcare including Dental, Dietetics, Podiatry, Paramedics, Speech and Language and more
- 5000 for subjects of strategic importance including Architecture, Engineering, ITT, Social Work, Math, (Annex B)
- No limit for healthcare bids; 250 limit for strategic subjects
- 18 June deadline; web portal available
- Specialist providers prioritized after high continuation and outcome
- ITT providers with a cap in excess of their SNC should contact DfE



Student Number controls

Consequences?

- DfE will use HESES20 or SLC data to determine if a provider has exceeded numbers
- For a provider going beyond their SNC by >0% to 6%, a 3% reduction in the fee limit for 2021/22
- For a provider going beyond their SNC by >6% to 12%, a 9% reduction in the fee limit
- For a provider going beyond their SNC by >12%, a 15% reduction in the fee limit
- RUK providers will see similar reduction in loan amount

What next?

- Providers should have received specific confidential letters outlining their SNCs
- Secretary of State will lay draft regulations - The Higher Education (fee Limits and Student Support) (England) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020



Regulation and the OfS

Supporting black, Asian and minority ethnic students during the coronavirus pandemic

OfS will hold an event this Friday online to facilitate discussion on the key areas of support for black, Asian and minority ethnic students during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

- The event is full but OfS will release a recording after the session

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/news-blog-and-events/events/supporting-black-asian-and-minority-ethnic-students-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>



Teaching and Learning

QAA: Preserving Quality and Standards in 2020/21

- New guidance to help universities as they plan for the next academic year. It looks in particular at quality and standards and the student experience.
- Four principles that providers can use to help their planning:
 - Any move to on-site activity is safe and secure for staff and students
 - Degree awarding bodies maintain quality and standards in the move to flexible provision
 - Providers engage with students and staff in planning changes to delivery and assessment of teaching and learning
 - Providers' planning scenarios are flexible and responsive to students' needs.

<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/news-events/news/the-physically-distanced-campus-how-universities-and-colleges-are-preparing-for-the-next-academic-year>



Teaching and Learning

Jisc COVID-19 Drop-in – Google for Education

- The next cloud drop-in session will focus on Google for Education and Google Cloud products. Hear from other members and get advice from cloud consultants.

<https://www.jisc.ac.uk/events/cloud-drop-in-04-jun-2020>



Teaching and Learning

JISC Connect More – 16-18 June

Connect More is an opportunity to explore how to elevate the student experience.

- Rethinking teaching, learning and assessment in the new environment
- Supporting wellbeing for staff and student engagement
- Digital leadership
- Curriculum redesign
- Digital and learning resources

<https://www.jisc.ac.uk/connect-more>



Student Welfare and Support

UUK principles and considerations: emerging from lockdown

- Universities UK briefing on areas for universities to consider as they begin to emerge from lockdown
- Principles agreed between UUK, UCEA and trade unions

<https://universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/principles-considerations-emerging-lockdown-uk-universities-june-2020.aspx>



Student Welfare and Support

UUK – Principles and considerations: emerging from lockdown

The health, safety and wellbeing of students, staff, visitors, and the wider community will be the priority in decisions relating to the easing of Covid-19 restrictions in universities.

Universities will make appropriate changes to university layout and infrastructure in accordance – at minimum – with public health advice, including guidelines on social distancing.

Universities will review their teaching, learning and assessment to ensure that there is the required flexibility in place to deliver a high-quality experience and support students to achieve their learning outcomes in a safe manner.

Universities will regularly review the welfare and mental health needs of students and staff.

Universities will develop effective processes to welcome and support international students and staff, including throughout any self-isolation period.



Student Welfare and Support

UUK – Principles and considerations: emerging from lockdown

Universities will regularly review their hygiene and cleaning protocols in all university spaces, and adapt them in response to changing public health advice and risk levels.

Universities will introduce measures to enable research to be conducted in a safe and responsible manner.

Universities will engage with students and staff, including consultation with recognised trade unions.

Universities will work with civic or local partners wherever appropriate.



Student Welfare and Support

Planning for a Sustainable Future: the importance of university mental health in uncertain times

- New report from Student Minds outlines how universities can make mental health a university-wide priority in the context of Covid-19
- Informed by the University Mental Health Charter, it provides principles universities can apply in making strategic decisions about next year and beyond

https://www.studentminds.org.uk/charter_sustainablefuture.html



International Students and Visas

Universities Minister to join British Council live event

- Universities Minister Michelle Donelan will speak at Going Global session on Friday 5 June, *'Destination UK: Supporting international learners through coronavirus'*
- International panel (China, Germany, Mexico) will explore short, mid and long-term impact that Covid-19 will have on HE systems, institutions and students around the world

<https://www.britishcouncil.org/going-global/live-events/destination-uk>

Jisc update on supporting online education in China

- To address the challenges faced by international students from China returning home during the pandemic, we are exploring options to support enhanced access to online education in China, including a pilot project with Alibaba Cloud Enterprise Network.

<https://www.jisc.ac.uk/international/briefing-on-jiscs-pilot-project-with-alibaba-cloud-enterprise-network>



International Students and Visas

Home Office new guidance 29 May and 1 June

- New guidance for Tier 4 and Short term study students was released Friday, and an update to Tier 2, 4 and 5 sponsor guidance on Monday
- 31 July is new deadline for extensions, and online delivery exceptions
- International students in the UK may commence a new course by distance learning.
- Scanned documents can be sent to the Home Office, originals may be requested

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/888817/Covid-19_-_guidance_for_Tier_4_sponsors_and_migrants_and_for_short-term_students.pdf



International Students and Visas

Home Office new guidance 29 May and 1 June

- Attendance monitoring concession applies to work placements
- Sponsors must keep records on sponsored students where a concession is applied; CAS issued on temporary concession must be in SMS
- Notify UKVI when students withdraw due to COVID and keep records ahead of BCA
- Pragmatic and flexible approach to start dates for CAS and expired CAS
- SELT concession is only for pre-sessional courses; SELT centres are opening and students must take a SELT where the centre is opened before the CAS is assigned or used if available. (7 days)
- Students due to start no later than 1 October 2020 can extend if visa ends before 31 July 2020
- Exempt from Academic Progression where extending due to COVID or sponsor confirms new course meets genuine career aspirations before 1 Oct
- Police Registration concession from 21 March 2020
- Updated list of NHS professions
- Only where course is suspended are students considered in vacation time, not institution
- Short-term whose leave expires after 31 July will also be permitted to study a further course if their course is completed or can't be done by distance learning
- More information on VACs, SELTS and 30-day visas



HE Sector news and opinion

UCU student survey – fears universities could go bust

- New survey with Youthquake shows almost 25% prospective students fear their university could go bust due to Covid-19
- 49% fear that damage caused by funding cuts because of the pandemic will negatively impact on their education
- 71% back a delay to the start of term

<https://ucu.org.uk/article/10804/Almost-a-quarter-of-prospective-students-fear-their-university-could-go-bust-as-a-result-of-Covid-19-crisis>



Contact IHE

Email info@independentthe.com

Phone 020 3929 3370

Website www.independentthe.com

Twitter @independent_HE