



INDEPENDENT  
HIGHER  
EDUCATION

# Covid-19 Update: 15 July

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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



# 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

### Strategies for student recruitment

**When: 16 July 2020**

**Overview:** This session will consider how providers can best engage with two groups of students both at the foothills of higher education: those who had their sights set on this horizon but are now fogged with uncertainty; and those whose paths led them here unexpectedly in the aftermath of pandemic and recession.

**Register:** <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/ihe-covid-essentials-strategies-for-student-recruitment-tickets-108960670298>



# Last week's essential news

8 July 2020



Top issue  
from last  
week

## Summer economic statement from the Treasury

- A new kickstart scheme will encourage employers to create jobs for 16-24 year olds by covering minimum wages of up to 25 hours per week, for six months.
- Extra funding for National Careers Service and expanding traineeships – employers will now receive £1,000 per trainee.
- £101 million to fund “targeted high value Level 2 and 3 courses” in 2020-21 for school and college leavers in England (18-19 years old).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-plan-for-jobs-documents>



# Government Statements

- The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has released guidance for performing arts and dance studios which is intended to accompany the FE and HE guidance released over the last week.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts>

- There was a range of new travel announcements including new guidance on the different categories of exempt travelers and documentation requirements.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-travellers-exempt-from-uk-border-rules>

- The Scottish Government published a new Coronavirus Further and Higher Education Sustainability Plan – including that EU undergraduate entrants will pay international fees from 2021.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-further-higher-education-sustainability-plan/>



# Finance and Human Resources

- The Student Loans Company set out its views on reliable student and provider finance during the pandemic.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/student-finance-through-the-pandemic>

- The Government has confirmed that if your employees require PPE you must provide this free of charge, or reimburse staff.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-to-treat-certain-expenses-and-benefits-provided-to-employees-during-coronavirus-covid-19#personal-protective-equipment-ppe>



# Regulation and the OfS

- OfS published a briefing on outreach activities during the pandemic which is essential reading for anyone with an access and participation plan.

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/news-blog-and-events/press-and-media/briefing-note-published-on-higher-education-outreach-during-the-pandemic/>



# Teaching and Learning

- DfE published guidance on reopening for higher education including students returning to shared accommodation.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-education-reopening-buildings-and-campuses/higher-education-reopening-buildings-and-campuses>

- AdvanceHE has launched their final report from the Creating Socially Distanced Campuses and Education (SDCE) Project.

[https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/creating-socially-distanced-campuses-and-education-project-final-capstone-report?utm\\_source=crm&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Consultancy%200-%20SDCE&dm\\_i=12ZA,6Y5AT,SOQG5I,RYCML,1](https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/creating-socially-distanced-campuses-and-education-project-final-capstone-report?utm_source=crm&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Consultancy%200-%20SDCE&dm_i=12ZA,6Y5AT,SOQG5I,RYCML,1)

- IHE is providing QAA with case studies from small and specialist providers focused on strategic planning, management of space and learning and teaching space, plans for assessment and communications. If you would like to volunteer a case study please get in [touch](#).



# Admissions and Recruitment

- UCAS has published data showing that university applications have risen during lockdown; a record 40.5% of all UK 18 year olds have applied.

<https://www.ucas.com/corporate/news-and-key-documents/news/university-applications-rise-during-lockdown>

- Clearing is now open.

<https://www.ucas.com/events/2020-entry-clearing-opens-348886>

- Ofqual has published its annual report for 2019 –2020.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofqual-annual-report-for-the-period-1-april-2019-to-31-march-2020?utm\\_source=a8372ae9-ea52-4a5a-a3de-6081ae6aa5e4&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=immediate](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ofqual-annual-report-for-the-period-1-april-2019-to-31-march-2020?utm_source=a8372ae9-ea52-4a5a-a3de-6081ae6aa5e4&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=immediate)



# Student Welfare and Support

- Emsi has released a paper on the impact of Covid-19 on graduates.

<https://www.economicmodelling.co.uk/2020/07/08/how-are-the-uks-new-graduates-exposed-to-the-impact-of-covid-19/>

- There will be a Class of 2020: #Digiprom on 17 July to celebrate the resilience and achievements of students.

<https://theclassof2020.info/>



# International Students and Visas

- UKCISA published a roadmap of 15 key steps to making the UK the world's most attractive destination for international students.

<https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Research--Policy/Resource-bank/resources/201/Delivering-a-world-class-international-student-experience-how-Government-can-create-the-conditions-for-success-A-UKCISA-policy-position-paper>

- More research from QS shows that 1 in 5 EU students plan to start their studies in the UK early following the Government's announcement on home fees.

<https://thepienews.com/news/20-of-eu-students-plan-to-start-studies-in-uk-early/>

- IHE Commercial partner Carter Thomas published a blog looking at the new academic year and immigration tips for education providers.

<http://independentthe.com/archives/category/blog>



## HE Sector news and opinion

- The IFS published a document on how the pandemic might impact university finances, modelling possible long-term loss figures anywhere between £3 billion and £19 billion.

<https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/14919>

- The House of Commons library published a briefing exploring the possible financial impacts of coronavirus on universities.

<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/cbp-8954/>



# New this week

15 July 2020



# Government update

## Providing apprenticeships during Covid

- Updated guidance to confirm that from 13 July providers can welcome back 19+ apprentices into educational settings, that the flexibility to suspend level 2 functional skills for level 2 apprentices has been extended, and more information on support for redundant apprentices.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-apprenticeship-programme-response?utm\\_source=6afd8180-d3e9-4688-bdb4-085b119b15af&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm\\_content=daily](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-apprenticeship-programme-response?utm_source=6afd8180-d3e9-4688-bdb4-085b119b15af&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=govuk-notifications&utm_content=daily)

## Information for parents and carers

- Updated guidance was released for schools and publicly funded sixth form and further education colleges, independent training providers and special post-16 institutions relating to transport guidance.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>



# Regulation and the OfS

## OfS – National Student Survey 2020

- OfS explored whether responses to the survey made before and during the pandemic were so different that they should be presented separately, and removed from any NSS time series – they have confirmed they could be included with no changes.
- Confirmed a drop in the response rate nationally – 3% change.
- 3% drop in providers with publishable results.
- PT student response rate flattened after pandemic announced.

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/nss-2020-analysis-of-impact-of-coronavirus/>

## OfS updated FAQs

- The updated FAQs relate to how universities and colleges are supporting the needs of vulnerable students during the pandemic.

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



# International Students

## Clarification for COVID-19 Guidance for Tier 4 Sponsors and Migrants and for Short-term students

- 31 July deadlines are still under review.
- Students seeking graduate visas need to arrive before 6 April and complete some study - a full semester is not required.
- New 6-month application window should allow providers to put start date of course on CAS rather than start date in UK – BRP issues will surface but UKVI are planning for this.

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



# International Students

## **New Points Based Student Route addresses COVID needs**

- Confirms graduate route.
- Extension of application window to 6 months.
- More students from more providers can switch and extend in-country.
- Removal of time limits for study (PG only).
- Streamlined application system.

*There will be IHE Webinar on the PBS in early August.*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-points-based-immigration-system-further-details-statement>



# International Students and Visas

## Students willing to quarantine: New research from IDP Connect

- 77 % of international students stated they would be willing to take part in quarantine programs if it meant commencing on-campus learning sooner.
- Student confidence has increased since the last survey, with 74 % now expecting to commence their studies as planned, up from 69 % in April.

<https://www.idp-connect.com/newspage/international-higher-education/international-students-willing-to-quarantine-if-they-can-start-f2f-learning-sooner/>



# International students

## **Call for UK universities to complete Europe-wide admissions and recruitment survey**

- International Education Services Wider Europe team is requesting UK universities to complete their recently launched survey addressing admission and recruitment strategies during Covid-19.

<https://education-services.britishcouncil.org/>



# Admissions and Recruitment

## Discover Uni: New Resources

- Discover Uni has launched new resources to help students consider their options when they receive their results and enter clearing this year.
- Booklets contains advice on choosing to go to university or college, reviewing course choices and planning for unexpected grades, along with information on deferrals and consumer rights.
- Designed to support students without access to IAG from schools and other closed resource centres.

<https://discoveruni.gov.uk/how-do-i-choose-course/downloadable-resources/>

## Access Platform

- The Access Platform are offering three months' free usage, of all features, for all new partners.

[https://share.hsforms.com/1YEs\\_w4vrT2ahjMBYvLBgGg1fc7h](https://share.hsforms.com/1YEs_w4vrT2ahjMBYvLBgGg1fc7h)



# Teaching and learning

## **AdvanceHE event – ‘Practicing safer flex’**

- Taking place on 30 July, this event will examine structured flexibility for learning post-Covid and consider good practice that goes beyond simply ‘choice’ in learning.

<https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/programmes-events/calendar/practising-safer-flex-why-structured-flexibility-might-be-solution>

## **AdvanceHE twitter conversation**

- AdvanceHE will be holding a twitter chat to on 16 July to discuss their report on Creating Social Distanced Campuses.

<https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/consultancy-and-enhancement-services/creating-socially-distanced-campus-and-education-project#webinar>



# Parliament

## Committee on Petitions - Student fee refunds

*The Petitions Committee is set up by the House of Commons to look at petitions submitted to the House of Commons.*

- The Committee released its report on tuition fee refunds, calling on the government to take urgent action in the face of what it calls the “greatest challenge [universities] have faced for generations”.
- There were over 347,000 signatures to the e-petition calling for the government to reimburse all students’ fees due to both strikes and Covid-1.
- The Committee recommended that the Government provide greater support to universities and clarifies how students can claim refunds.
- Committee also recommended making additional funding available to students who might want to extend their education after the outbreak, and to provide ongoing employment advice and support beyond graduation.

<https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/326/petitions-committee/news/147325/report-petitions-committee-calls-for-government-increase-support-for-universities-and-students-amid-huge-covid19-disruption/>



# HE Sector news and opinion

## **Ofqual to investigate International Baccalaureate results**

- The watchdog will investigate thousands of results that were significantly lower than expected, or ended in failing the Diploma entirely, following a petition that has been signed by 20,000 students.

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2020/07/12/ofqual-steps-thousands-students-miss-expected-ib-diploma-grades/>

## **UCU & YouGov poll on attitudes to universities**

- Voters in 30 battleground 'university constituencies' back government funding to protect universities from the financial impact of the Covid-19 crisis.
- Over three-quarters of those polled said their local university was important in creating local jobs (76%) and important to the local economy (79%) and supply key skilled staff for local services like school and hospitals (75%).

<https://www.ucu.org.uk/article/10888/Voters-in-marginal-seats-fear-local-damage-from-university-cuts-and-want-government-to-intervene?list=1676>



## Contact IHE

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