



Guidance on caring for students currently studying at English UK member centres

Covid-19 update | Wednesday 18 March 2020

1. General

- Establish a closure team responsible for managing all aspects of the closure, including ongoing communications with all affected parties and basic business functions such as paying essential invoices or organising the re-opening of the school in due course.
- Make sure everyone affected by the closure is notified at the time of closure and is included in relevant ongoing communications:
 - Students
 - All staff
 - Parents (for under 18 students)
 - Agents
 - Local authority
 - Homestay hosts and other accommodation providers.
- Establish whether students wish to return home within the next few days or whether they wish to stay in the UK for all or part of the closure period.
- We are urgently seeking clarification from UKVI about extending visas due to expire during the closure period. As things stand, students should be reminded that they need to leave the UK if they are able to on or before their visa expiry date. Please contact UKVI for more information: <https://www.gov.uk/contact-ukvi-inside-outside-uk>
- In this rapidly evolving situation make sure that you have contingencies in place for students who may need to make last minute changes to plans in the event that their ability to travel home is curtailed.
- Ensure that you and your staff are clear on the cancellation and curtailment policies and how they will be implemented in the event of a closure that is outside your control.
- You could offer the remainder of the course online or offer a course deferral or credit against a future course.

2. Managing students under 18

- You have an ongoing duty of care to these students and need to ensure that they are safeguarded throughout the period of the school closure, particularly if they are unable to return home for an extended period.
- If the students are staying on with a homestay host, check whether they will be available to supervise the students during the day. It is a British Council requirement (criterion S7) that homestay hosts are normally present with students under the age of 16 on the days they are not at school.
- You may need to combine students into one or more appointed homestays or residences. Note that the normal British Council requirement for no more than four students to be present in a homestay at any one time can be relaxed during the closure period.
- You may be able to offer alternative day time supervision for under 18s – e.g. at the house of a (DBS checked) teacher, other staff member, residence or homestay with other students.
- Make sure parents, agents and group leaders are kept fully informed of all developments.