

UUK statement on tuition fee refunds

20 April 2020

We recognise that students are concerned about the impact of coronavirus on their studies during this unprecedented time. Major efforts are being made by university staff to ensure that teaching, learning and assessment can continue as well as providing careers advice and support for mental health and wellbeing.

Universities are working hard to provide remote teaching and support so that students can achieve the required learning outcomes for their course of study. The ongoing efforts of university staff mean that course modules can be completed, resources can be accessed, exams and assessments can proceed where appropriate, and qualifications can be awarded in line with guidance from the bodies responsible for quality and standards and with the relevant accrediting bodies. Where there is wide-ranging support for active and ongoing learning and progression, students should not expect any fee refund from their university. This has also been made clear by the Universities Minister, Michelle Donelan MP, in her FAQs for university students published on [9 April 2020](#).

There will be some courses at some universities where more significant changes may be necessary, such as dealing with the challenges of finding alternatives to planned practical elements of a course, or where teaching staff are now working for the NHS, or supporting the national effort to combat Covid-19. Changes to such courses will often need to account for the requirements of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies. Where more significant changes are necessary, the university should be communicating directly with affected students to let them know about changes.

Students who have difficulty continuing with their learning next term, perhaps because of illness, caring responsibilities or lack of access to IT, or who are not satisfied with the alternative provision and support they are getting, should make this known to their university in the first instance. Every university will have their own established process for managing complaints, and will be mindful of the extenuating circumstances.

We appreciate that some of the solutions represent major changes to delivery for many students and require some flexibility and adaptation from us all, but this is a unique – albeit temporary – situation. The health, wellbeing and safety of students and staff are paramount and we look forward to the time when our university communities can be reunited again and we can resume normal activities once government and public health advice allows.

ENDS

Note: This statement has been approved by the Universities UK Board.

Resources

The following provides links to guidance on continuation and adaptation of teaching and assessment

Office for Students (England only)

- [Guidance for providers about quality and standards during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)
- [Regulatory requirements during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

Higher Education Funding Council for Wales

- [Latest updates](#)

Scottish Funding Council

- [Dedicated Covid-19 pages](#)

Northern Ireland Department for Economy

- [Information on higher education](#)

Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education

[COVID-19 support and guidance \(being regularly updated and added to\)](#)

- Covid-19: initial guidance for higher education providers on standards and quality
- Covid-19: thematic guidance - securing academic standards and supporting student achievement
- Covid-19: thematic guidance - practice and lab-based assessment
- Covid-19: thematic guidance - work-based-learning (including placements/partnerships/apprenticeships/study abroad)
- Covid-19: thematic guidance - accelerated degrees
- Qaa's advice to degree-awarding bodies on mitigating the disruption of studies to the students caused by the covid-19 (coronavirus) outbreak

QAA Scotland

- [Technology enhanced learning](#)

Office for the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (England and Wales)

- [Complaints arising from Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) disruption](#)
- [Coronavirus - FAQ for students](#)

Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

- [Update for public service organisations](#)

Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman

- [Latest updates](#)