



27 March 2022

Dear Colleagues,

We are writing to you regarding the recent events in Ukraine and the actions we are asking Higher Education Providers (HE providers) to look into in light of Russia's unprovoked attack. We also want to ensure that the sector is properly sighted on the work that the government is doing to ensure that our investment and academic links with Russia are appropriate.

The government has taken the decision to suspend publicly funded research and innovation collaborations with Russia, including universities and companies. Our aim is to introduce measures that will negatively impact the Russian state, and individuals and organisations with strong links to the Kremlin..

We are therefore today taking action.

1. All payments for projects delivered through UK public research funds with a Russian dimension have been temporarily paused. The Secretary of State has commissioned an assessment, on top of the existing and strong due diligence processes of UK public research funders to isolate and freeze activities which benefit the Russian regime.
2. We will not fund any new collaborative projects with Russia through our research and innovation organisations.
3. We have suspended existing government to government dialogue through our science and innovation network team in Russia including their collaborative science projects.
4. Where the UK is a member of multilateral organisations, we are working at pace with partners to respond appropriately – holding Russia to account for its actions while diminishing and isolating its influence.
5. We are standing up a £3m package of support for Ukrainian researchers at risk. This will be delivered through a fellowship programme that will support researchers and their families at UK research institutions. Further information will be made available by the British Academy during the next week, and enquiries can be directed to researchersatrisk@thebritishacademy.ac.uk.



We are asking our research community to review their partnerships with Russia and take appropriate action, based on their governance structures, the international situation and government guidance published on gov.uk.

The UK collaborates within a number of multilateral organisations that execute brilliant science; where Russia is a member, we will work with the multilateral organisations and other partners to agree an appropriate response. We are urgently exploring ways to provide support for Ukrainian academics, both to enter the UK, and to pursue their valued work. We are also exploring ways to enable universities in the UK to partner with Ukrainian universities in order to teach Ukrainian students remotely who are close to graduating, and we are opening our universities' doors to Ukrainian students.

Whilst taking action on research is vital to our universities, we also want to ensure we are looking at broader investment and reputational issues. We are pleased to hear that the higher education sector appears to already be taking a proactive approach when it comes to reviewing their financial arrangements connected to Russia. However, we do still ask that you continue to conduct your due diligence when entering international partnerships and accepting foreign investment in line with UUK guidance on ['Managing risks in Internationalisation'](#). Please review your partnership and investment arrangements to ensure they remain appropriate, given the current circumstances. Institutions will of course be bound by new rules restricting Russian investment in line with other British businesses.

You should be aware of the prohibitions of making funds or economic resources available for those on the sanction list. The sanctions apply to any services provided in the course of completing an education programme run by the HEP, and also includes any payments / support from the HEP that is made available to any student (e.g hardship). The Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation (OFSI) has published [guidance on UK financial sanctions](#) and has also published [Russia specific guidance](#).

We also know that those of you engaged in transnational education partnerships with Russian institutions may be considering ceasing this provision and are concerned about the regulatory implications of this. Due to the current exceptional circumstances, the Office for Students has also written to the Accountable Officers of HE providers, providing reassurances for those providers considering withdrawing from delivering transnational education in Russia.

In addition, we ask that you carefully consider who is being awarded honorary degrees. We would expect any existing honorary degrees awarded to Russian individuals on the sanction list to be revoked and to not be recipients of these accolades going forward.



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy



We are grateful for all the work you have already done to ensure your staff and students are being supported in this incredibly difficult time. We hope you continue to engage with us at our regular forums, including the DfE HE taskforce. Please do get in touch if you need clarification or have any concerns.

Yours sincerely,

**Minister for Science, Research and Innovation
George Freeman MP**

**Minister of State for Higher and Further Education
Rt. Hon. Michelle Donelan MP**