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|  | Nicholson House  Lime Kiln Close  Stoke Gifford  BRISTOL  BS34 8SR  0117 931 7317  [www.officeforstudents.org.uk](http://www.officeforstudents.org.uk) |

9 March 2020

Dear [name of Accountable Officer]

# Information request in relation to COVID-19

I am writing to request information from you on an ongoing basis about confirmed and suspected cases of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) at your institution.

We are asking you to provide the following information about your staff and your higher education students:

* The number of individuals that have reported a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19.
* The number of individuals that have reported symptoms that are suspected to be a result of COVID-19, but where there is not a confirmed diagnosis.

This request does not replace existing reporting obligations relating to COVID-19, for example the requirement to report to Public Health England.

We are also asking you to provide information about actions you are taking in relation to any confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19.

We require this information to monitor and understand in a timely way how COVID-19 may be affecting students and higher education providers, the actions providers are taking in response, and how this might affect the ability of registered providers to continue to deliver higher education and comply with their conditions of registration.

We have sent this letter today to registered higher education providers with the exception of those further education colleges and sixth form colleges that are registered with the OfS and also regulated by the ESFA. For those further education colleges and sixth form colleges, we will rely on information provided to us by the EFSA to fulfil our regulatory needs. We are taking this approach to avoid duplicating the arrangements for collection of similar information that the ESFA has in place.

The Notice enclosed with this letter, and the template annexed to the Notice, contains a more detailed description of the information we require.

We need you to start to provide this information when you become aware of any confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19. Once you have started to submit information, you should provide an update within one working day of becoming aware that the number of confirmed or suspected cases has changed. If the number of confirmed or suspected cases at your institution is, and remains, zero, you will not need to submit any information.

Information about the actions you are taking in relation to any cases should be provided when you first make a report that you have confirmed or suspected cases, and then subsequently when you make material changes to the way you are dealing with cases. Such information should be provided as early as possible after a change is made and no more than 5 working days later.

**Existing requirement for providers to report reportable events**

The requirements set out in the attached Notice are in addition to, and do not replace, the ongoing requirement for all providers to submit reportable events to the OfS. Further information about reportable events is set out in Regulatory Advice 16.[[1]](#footnote-1) If you consider that a report you are making in response to the information requested in this Notice also constitutes a reportable event, for example if you decide to close a campus, please tell us this in the template for your submission. You do not need to report the same information as a separate reportable event.

It is possible that you may need to tell us about a reportable event that relates to COVID-19 that is not covered by the information requested in this Notice (such as reportable events relating to your transnational educational activities). If this is the case, please do so in the normal way using the OfS portal.

**Further information about COVID-19**

The Department for Education has launched a helpline to answer questions about COVID-19 (Coronavirus) related to education. Higher education staff, students and parents can contact the helpline as follows:

Phone: 0800 046 8687

Email: [DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk](mailto:DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk)

Opening hours: 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday)

We will continue to update our [Coronavirus (COVID-19) guidance page](https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/student-wellbeing-and-protection/coronavirus/) with information as further information is received from relevant authorities. We will also periodically update you and other registered higher education providers directly by email.

**Next steps**

The Notice enclosed with this letter requires you to submit the specified information to the OfS. Please do so by completing the annexed template and sending the information to [covid-19reports@officeforstudents.org.uk](mailto:covid-19reports@officeforstudents.org.uk). This requirement applies from the date of the Notice until further notice.

If you have any questions about the requirements set out in the Notice, please email us at [covid-19reports@officeforstudents.org.uk](mailto:covid-19reports@officeforstudents.org.uk).

If you have any questions about the requirements relating to reportable events, please email us at [regulation@officeforstudents.org.uk](mailto:regulation@officeforstudents.org.uk).

The OfS is permitted to disclose information about registered providers to other bodies in some circumstances. In this case, we may share the information we obtain from you about COVID-19 with the Department for Education to support the Government to manage the national response to COVID-19 and ensure Ministers are fully briefed on developments.

I would be grateful if you could ensure that a copy of this letter is passed to the chair of your governing body.

Yours sincerely

**Susan Lapworth**

**Director of Competition and Registration**

**Notice under condition of registration F3(i) requiring the production of information to the Office for Students**

To: the governing body of [PROVIDER NAME] (“the Provider”)

**Whereas:**

(A) The Provider is registered by the Office for Students (the OfS) in accordance with section 3 of the Higher Education and Research Act 2017 on the Register of English Higher Education Providers.

(B) For the purpose of assisting the OfS in performing any function, or exercising any power, conferred under any legislation, the OfS has the power under general ongoing condition F3 (and by virtue of section 8(1)(b) of the Higher Education and Research Act 2017) to compel the governing body of a registered English higher education provider to provide the OfS, or a person nominated by the OfS, with such information as the OfS specifies at the time manner and form specified.

**Therefore:**

Pursuant to general ongoing condition of registration F3, the Provider is required to provide the OfS with the Specified Information in the Specified Time and in the Specified Manner.

**Definitions**

*Specified Information*

1. The Specified Information is the information set out in the template annexed to this Notice.

2. The information must not include any personal data regarding individuals who are or may be affected by COVID-19 (such as their names or job titles). The Provider should ensure that it complies with UK data protection legislation in this regard.

*Specified Time*

3. The Specified Information must be first provided when the Provider becomes aware of any confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19 among its staff or higher education students located in the UK. The Provider must make subsequent reports:

1. Within one working day of becoming aware that the number of confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19 at the Provider has changed; and
2. As early as possible after a material change is made to the way it is dealing with these cases and no more than 5 working days later.

*Specified Manner*

4. The Specified Information must be submitted using the template annexed to this Notice, by email to: [covid-19reports@officeforstudents.org.uk](mailto:covid-19reports@officeforstudents.org.uk).

**Signed on behalf of the OfS and authorised for that purpose**

**Susan Lapworth**

**Director of Competition and Registration**

**Date: 9 March 2020**

**Annex: Report of information relating to COVID-19 (Coronavirus)**

Please use this template to provide information about confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19 among staff and higher education students studying in the UK at your provider. Please also use this template to tell us about actions you are taking in response to these cases.

We are requesting this information to monitor and understand how COVID-19 may be affecting students and higher education providers, the actions providers are taking in response, and how this might affect the ability of registered providers to continue to deliver higher education and comply with their conditions of registration.

Please email a completed template to [covid-19reports@officeforstudents.org.uk](mailto:covid-19reports@officeforstudents.org.uk) each time you need make a report.

If you have any questions about this template, or the requirements set out in the accompanying Notice, please email us at <mailto:covid-19reports@officeforstudents.org.uk>.

**Provider information**

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| --- | --- |
| Date of report: |  |
| Provider’s name: |  |
| Provider’s UKPRN: |  |
| Contact details for the person making this report | |
| Name: |  |
| Job role: |  |
| Email address: |  |
| Contact telephone number: |  |
| Previous reports made to the OfS relating to COVID-19 | |
| Number of previous reports: |  |
| Date of last report: |  |

**Part A – Number of confirmed and suspected cases of COVID-19**

You need to provide this information when you become aware of any confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19 among your staff or higher education students located in the UK. Once you have started to submit information, you should provide an update within one working day of becoming aware that the number of confirmed or suspected cases has changed. If the number of confirmed and suspected cases at your provider is, and remains, zero, you do not need to submit any information.

Please do **not** submit any personal data about individuals who are, or may be, affected by COVID-19 (such as their names or job titles).

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| **Staff and higher education students located in the UK who have reported a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19** | | |
| Number of new cases, since your last report, of individuals who have reported a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, including those previously reported as suspected cases. | Staff | Students |
|  |  |
| Total current number of individuals who have reported a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19. | Staff | Students |
|  |  |
| If you have campuses or teaching locations in more than one city or town in the UK, please provide information about whether these cases are associated with your activities in a particular city or town. | | |
| **Staff and higher education students located in the UK that have reported symptoms that are suspected to be a result of COVID-19, but where there is not a confirmed diagnosis.** | | |
| Number of new cases, since your last report, of individuals who have reported symptoms that are suspected to be a result of COVID-19, but where there is not a confirmed diagnosis. | Staff | Students |
|  |  |
| Total current number of individuals who have reported symptoms that are suspected to be a result of COVID-19, but where there is not a confirmed diagnosis. | Staff | Students |
|  |  |
| If you have campuses or teaching locations in more than one city or town in the UK, please provide information about whether these cases are associated with your activities in a particular city or town. | | |

**Part B – Actions taken in relation to confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19**

You need to provide this information about the actions you are taking in relation to any cases of COVID-19 when you first make a report that you have confirmed or suspected cases, and then subsequently when you make material changes to the way you are dealing with cases. Such information should be provided as early as possible after a change is made and no more than 5 working days later.

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| Please provide information about the actions you are taking in relation to any confirmed or suspected cases of COVID-19. If you have campuses or teaching locations in more than one city or town in the UK, please provide information about actions you are taking in relation to different locations. |
| Is there any other information you want to give us in relation to COVID-19 that we have not asked for in this report? |
| If you consider that any of the information contained in this report constitutes a reportable event as defined in the OfS’s Regulatory Framework, please explain the reasons for this here. You do not need to submit a separate reportable event if you complete this box. |

It is possible that you may need to tell us about a reportable event that relates to COVID-19 that is not covered by the information requested in this Notice (such as reportable events relating to your transnational educational activities). If this is the case, please do so in the normal way using the OfS portal. If you have any questions about the requirements relating to reportable events, please email us at [regulation@officeforstudents.org.uk](mailto:regulation@officeforstudents.org.uk).

1. See <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/regulatory-advice-16-reportable-events/> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)