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28 April 2022

Dear <accountable officer>

## Funding to support Ukrainian students

The government has announced £4 million for the 2022-23 financial year to support Ukrainian students studying at English higher education providers. The funding is intended to help Ukrainian nationals and Ukrainian-domiciled students who have been financially affected by the events in Ukraine.<sup>1</sup>

I am writing to notify you of the approach the Office for Students (OfS) is taking to distribute this funding. This letter:

- a. Asks each provider in the Approved (fee cap) category to submit information on the numbers of Ukrainian nationals and Ukrainian-domiciled students registered in the 2021-22 academic year. The deadline for receipt of submissions is **23 May 2022**. We will use the data collected to distribute the £4 million of available funding.
- b. Notifies each provider in the Approved (fee cap) category of a partial and provisional distribution of funding, totalling £2 million, which has been informed by equivalent student data for the 2020-21 academic year. We will pay this allocation next week, but it is provisional because the distribution of the full £4 million will be based on the 2021-22 data that we collect.

In this letter:

- 'Financial year' means the 12-month period from 1 April to 31 March.
- 'Academic year' means the 12-month period from 1 August to 31 July.

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<sup>1</sup> See Guidance to the OfS on the Higher Education Strategic Priorities Grant for the 2022-23 Financial Year (March 2022), available at [www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/regulation/guidance-from-government/](http://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/regulation/guidance-from-government/).

- 'Ukrainian students/student numbers' includes both Ukrainian national and Ukrainian-domiciled higher education students (including research students).

## Approach to distribution of funding

We recognise that many of these students will be experiencing immediate financial challenges which are likely to continue over the summer months and beyond. Our priority is to distribute the funding quickly to providers so that they can make it available quickly to those students in greatest need. We also want to ensure it is distributed to reflect the numbers of Ukrainian students currently registered with providers in England.

Our approach therefore is to collect information on the numbers of Ukrainian students that providers have in the 2021-22 academic year and distribute the £4 million pro rata to those numbers. This data collection process means that we cannot finalise allocations until June 2022. To avoid delay in funding reaching providers with significant numbers of Ukrainian students, we will make a provisional payment of £2 million (from the £4 million total) at the beginning of May 2022 based on the numbers of Ukrainian students registered with a provider in the 2020-21 academic year. We will allocate and pay the full £4 million in June 2022, and payments to providers will be adjusted to reflect any share of the provisional distribution they have received. Where a provider's provisional allocation is greater than its final allocation, we will reclaim the balance.

An Excel template is available on the OfS portal to all providers in the Approved (fee cap) category, which:

- a. Collects information on Ukrainian students registered in the 2021-22 academic year.
- b. Shows any share of the provisional distribution of £2 million that we are making and the 2020-21 academic year student numbers that have informed that funding.

Annex A to this letter sets out:

- a. Guidance on the population of Ukrainian students in the 2021-22 academic year that providers are asked to submit **by 23 May 2022** and the process for submitting it using the Excel template.
- b. Guidance on our calculation of the provisional distribution of £2 million and on the final distribution of the full £4 million.
- c. The terms and conditions that apply to the funding.

Annex B provides guidance on accessing the OfS portal.

We will publish the final allocations for all providers on our website once these are confirmed in June 2022.

## **Monitoring arrangements**

We will run a monitoring exercise at the end of the 2022-23 financial year to confirm providers have distributed this funding to eligible students in compliance with the terms and conditions set out in Annex A. We will recover funding that has not been used by 31 March 2023 in line with those terms and conditions. Providers that anticipate they cannot use all the funding allocated to them should notify us as soon as possible, by emailing [recurrentgrant@officeforstudents.org.uk](mailto:recurrentgrant@officeforstudents.org.uk), so that such funding can be redistributed to other providers.

We also intend to collect information in the Higher Education Students Early Statistics survey for 2022-23 (HESES22) on the numbers of Ukrainian nationals and Ukrainian-domiciled students registered with each provider in that academic year.

Further details will be made available closer to the time of monitoring.

## **Further information**

If you have any questions, please email [recurrentgrant@officeforstudents.org.uk](mailto:recurrentgrant@officeforstudents.org.uk).

Yours sincerely,

**Nolan Smith**  
**Director of Resources and Finance**

## **Annex A: Allocation of funding to support students impacted by events in Ukraine**

### **Terms and conditions of funding**

1. The allocation of funding is subject to the general terms and conditions of funding for 2021-22.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the funding must be distributed to Ukrainian nationals or Ukrainian-domiciled students registered with English higher education providers and who are facing hardship because their financial means have been affected by events in Ukraine. The funding must be used by providers by the end of the 2022-23 financial year. We will monitor providers' use of the funding and recover sums that are not used in compliance with the terms and conditions of grant within the time available.
2. The OfS will pay funding in two instalments: a provisional allocation in the first week of May 2022 and a full allocation in June 2022, payment of which will be adjusted to reflect sums already paid provisionally in May. Providers must inform the OfS as soon as they are aware if they believe they will not be able to use their full allocation by 31 March 2023. Providers must also complete such monitoring reports on their use of funds as the OfS may require. The OfS reserves the right to recover funding during the 2022-23 financial year if it believes the provider will not use it in compliance with the terms and conditions of grant during the year, so that it can be redistributed to other providers within the year. Such redistribution may occur to reflect notifications and monitoring reports submitted by the provider, or where the provider fails to complete any monitoring submission required.

### **Guidance on use of funding**

3. This funding is being provided to support Ukrainian students particularly where it is needed to support their continuation of study and successful outcomes. It must not be used to meet providers' own costs.
4. Providers are required to distribute the funding to Ukrainian students and, in doing so, they should not place constraints on how students use the funding or the form in which they offer support. For example, students may choose to use this funding to meet accommodation costs with providers, but they should make this choice freely without pressure from the provider – preferably with separate financial transactions into and from a student's bank account. Where providers can use their purchasing power to secure greater value for money from the funding available (for example in offering vouchers or pieces of equipment), the benefit of that greater value must rest entirely with the student, not the provider, and a cash alternative should be offered. Where funding is used to provide pieces of equipment to students, that equipment must become the property of the student, not offered on loan.
5. Funding is provided to support higher education students studying in the UK and registered with an English provider. It should not be paid to individuals who are not studying at higher education level (Level 4 or above) or towards a higher education qualification. Funding can be paid to students studying on a foundation year that is an integrated part of a higher education

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<sup>2</sup> See [www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/terms-and-conditions-of-funding-for-2021-22/](http://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/terms-and-conditions-of-funding-for-2021-22/).

course and to students on research programmes. In general, 'studying in the UK' means that the student spends no more than half of their active study time for the whole of their course outside the UK (including through distance learning).<sup>3</sup> Providers can, in exceptional circumstances, provide hardship funding to Ukrainian students who are not studying in the UK, but only if the student is temporarily and unavoidably outside the UK, for example because of events in Ukraine or the coronavirus pandemic.

6. Funding to support students affected by events in Ukraine distributed by the OfS is intended to support students who are actively studying. However, by exception, providers may also support students who have temporarily suspended their studies because of events in Ukraine. In all cases, any funding distributed should be informed by a student-specific assessment of need, reflecting the effect of the events in Ukraine, and the provider should expect that the student will continue with their course.
7. Providers should also ensure that funds are available on an equal basis to eligible students who are registered on courses that they subcontract out for teaching by other providers.
8. Providers should distribute funding to Ukrainian students where need is greatest. They should alert eligible students to the availability of this funding and ensure that their application processes are rigorous enough to prioritise those in greatest need, while avoiding bureaucracy that might deter applicants.

### **Provisional allocation of funding to support students affected by events in Ukraine**

9. The distribution of Ukrainian students across providers is not even. Using 2020-21 individualised student data (based on the HESES20 population), we have identified 1,179 Ukrainian students studying with 127 English providers. Of these:
  - 76 per cent are at 40 providers that had at least 10 such students each
  - nearly 90 per cent are at 65 providers that had at least five such students each.
10. The distribution between providers was similar in the 2019-20 academic year. We therefore believe that the 2020-21 data gives a good indication of the likely distribution of Ukrainian students in the current year and is suitable to inform a provisional allocation of funding.
11. The provisional allocation totals £2 million and is distributed between those 65 providers that had at least five Ukrainian students in the 2020-21 academic year. The allocation is based on the number of students who are Ukrainian nationals or Ukrainian-domiciled in the provider's 2020-21 individualised data return that it submitted to either the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) or the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).<sup>4</sup> This provisional allocation enables us to distribute funding quickly to providers that we expect to have Ukrainian

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<sup>3</sup> See Higher Education Students Early Statistics survey 2021-22 (HESES21), Annex A paragraph 3c, available at [www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/heses21/](http://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/heses21/).

<sup>4</sup> Ukrainian students are counted if they fall within the population covered by the Higher Education Students Early Statistics survey 2020-21 (HESES20).

students in the current year, but it is provisional because distribution of the total £4 million available will be calculated based on 2021-22 student numbers.

12. All providers can view their provisional allocation in an Excel template in the 'Funding to support Ukrainian students in financial year 2022-23' portal area. Guidance on accessing this part of the portal is available in Annex B.

### **Guidance on collection of data on Ukrainian student numbers in the 2021-22 academic year and finalisation of funding**

13. The Excel template on the OfS portal also contains a cell for providers to enter the number of students who are Ukrainian nationals or Ukrainian-domiciled at their provider in the 2021-22 academic year. Providers should only include students who are in the population covered by the Higher Education Students Early Statistics survey 2021-22 (HESES21).<sup>5</sup> The template, complete with data, must be uploaded to the same portal area **by 23 May 2022** for a provider to be eligible for the full allocation. The form also asks for contact details of the individual who has completed the data return and confirmation that the submission has been signed off by the provider's accountable officer. The data return may be subject to audit.
14. Providers in receipt of the provisional allocation are required to complete the data collection. All other providers in the Approved (fee cap) category with students who are Ukrainian nationals or Ukrainian-domiciled in the 2021-22 academic year are invited to complete this data collection.
15. Providers will receive a share of the £4 million if they have at least one Ukrainian student in the current year.

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<sup>5</sup> See [www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/heses21/](http://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/heses21/).

## **Annex B: The OfS portal for support for Ukrainian students**

1. This annex gives guidance on how to access the OfS portal to download your Excel workbook template and how you should submit the completed workbook. Some common issues are also listed.

### **Assigning yourself to the ‘Funding to support Ukrainian students in financial year 2022-23’ portal survey area**

2. To access your workbook, you will need to download it from the OfS portal.<sup>6</sup>
3. You will need to be a registered user of the OfS portal to be assigned to the ‘Funding to support Ukrainian students in financial year 2022-23’ survey area, from which you will download your workbook.
4. If you have not registered on the OfS portal before, you will need to ask the nominated OfS portal user administrator at your provider to create an account for you. Each person who requires access to the workbook will need to be registered with their own account.
5. You will need to be assigned to the ‘Funding to support Ukrainian students in financial year 2022-23’ survey area by the nominated OfS portal user administrator at your provider. The user administrator can find guidance on how to add portal users to portal areas on the main portal login page. If you are the user administrator, you will still need to assign yourself to the ‘Funding to support Ukrainian students in financial year 2022-23’ survey area.
6. If you do not know who your user administrator is, you can view the user administrators at your provider by logging onto the OfS portal. Select ‘My account’ towards the right-hand side of the yellow banner, and then click ‘Activate an access key’. The names and contact details of the user administrators at your provider will be at the top of the page. If you are not registered and do not know who your user administrator is, please contact [portal@officeforstudents.org.uk](mailto:portal@officeforstudents.org.uk).

### **Common issues with accessing the portal**

#### **I cannot log in to the OfS portal**

7. If you receive an error message while trying to log in, you may be entering an incorrect email address or password, or your account may be locked. Ensure that the email address you are using is correct, and then request a new password. You will be sent a new password, which you will be asked to change when you log in. You can also ask your user administrator to reset your password.
8. If this new password does not grant you access, it is likely that your account is locked. Contact your user administrator, who can unlock your account for you. It is advisable that you also request a password change at the same time. If you or your user administrator have any problems, please contact [portal@officeforstudents.org.uk](mailto:portal@officeforstudents.org.uk).

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<sup>6</sup> See [extranet.officeforstudents.org.uk/Data/](https://extranet.officeforstudents.org.uk/Data/)

## **The 'Funding to support Ukrainian students in financial year 2022-23' survey area has not appeared on my login page even after I have been assigned to it**

9. Once you have been assigned to a survey, you may need to log out and then log back into the portal for the survey to appear under 'Home'.

### **Downloading your workbook**

10. Once you have been assigned to the 'Funding to support Ukrainian students in financial year 2022-23', log in to the OfS portal and you will see a link for the 'Funding to support Ukrainian students in financial year 2022-23' portal area under the 'Home' section. This link will take you to the workbook.
11. To download the workbook, click on the 'Download' button. You will receive a zipped file, which will contain your workbook. You may need to unzip the file before accessing the workbook. You may also need to click on 'Enable editing' on the yellow banner if it appears on your screen when you open your workbook. You can download this empty workbook as many times as required.
12. Save the workbook to a memorable location on your computer. If there are any issues with downloading your workbook, please contact us at [portal@officeforstudents.org.uk](mailto:portal@officeforstudents.org.uk).

### **Completing your workbook**

13. The workbook is provided as an Excel file with the extension '.xlsx'. You should not attempt to alter the format of the worksheets by adding or deleting columns or rows. Only the cells where data is required should be edited. The workbook is protected to ensure that the data submitted is accurate and is only entered into the relevant cells. The workbook contains information critical to accurate loading of the data; it is essential that this is preserved. We will refuse to accept any workbooks that have been unprotected or tampered with.
14. We recommend that you do not copy and paste data into your workbook, as this can cause formatting issues. If you wish to copy and paste data, ensure that you use the 'Paste values' option. This will not copy the formatting of the data you are pasting and will preserve the formatting of the workbook.

### **Uploading your workbook**

15. Once you have completed the workbook, you will need to submit it to the 'Funding to support Ukrainian students in financial year 2022-23' survey area on the OfS portal. You should ensure that:
  - your workbook has not been saved so that zero values are displayed as blanks
  - links to other spreadsheets are removed
  - only one worksheet is selected when the completed workbook is uploaded



- the workbook is not zipped.

Otherwise, the workbook may not upload successfully.

16. Submit the workbook as follows:

- a. Navigate to the 'Funding to support Ukrainian students in financial year 2022-23' survey area on the OfS portal.
- b. Click on the 'Upload' button.
- c. Browse for your workbook which is saved in your memorable location.
- d. Click 'Upload'.
- e. The workbook may take some time to upload if the portal is busy. The page will automatically refresh to show if your workbook is waiting to be processed, being processed or has completed successfully.
- f. Check below the status bar for the log of your submission. The 'Outcome' will display as a 'Success' if there are no issues with the uploaded workbook.

17. Once you have successfully submitted your workbook, check the results package by clicking on the 'Results' button. The results package contains the workbook that you have submitted, which has now been processed.

18. Completed workbooks can be uploaded any number of times until the deadline for submissions, when we will take the latest uploaded version as the final version for submission.

## **Common issues while uploading the workbook**

### **My workbook contains validation errors**

19. The workbook includes several validation checks. Please check your workbook carefully and complete the sign-off fields on the 'Sign-off' sheet before uploading it. You will still be able to upload your workbook if it is invalid, but we will not accept it as a valid submission.

### **The 'Comments' section of the portal shows errors and no results package is generated**

20. Your workbook has failed to process. There can be many reasons for the workbook not processing correctly. One common error is that the workbook has been zipped. Before uploading, please ensure that the workbook is not zipped as this will make it more likely to process successfully. A second common error is a change in the file extension of the workbook; it must end with '.xlsx'. If you have unprotected the workbook in any way, this may also cause the upload to fail.

### **My colleague has uploaded a workbook but I cannot view the results package**

21. The results package can only be downloaded and viewed from the same OfS portal account that uploaded that specific workbook. To view the results package for a specific workbook you will need to upload the same workbook using your own portal account. Note that this will increase the submission number.