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Guidance

Coronavirus: travel guidance for educational settings

Updated 5 May 2020

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This publication is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-travel-advice-for-educational-settings/coronavirus-travel-guidance-for-educational-settings>

This guidance is for students, staff and children in the education sector planning to travel in the UK or overseas, and for those who are already overseas.

1. Travel for children under 18 organised by educational settings

1.1 Overseas trips for children under 18 organised by educational settings

The government advises against any overseas trips for children under 18 organised by educational settings.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) is advising British nationals against all non-essential international travel for an indefinite period. The latest guidance on social distancing (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-social-distancing-and-for-vulnerable-people/guidance-on-social-distancing-for-everyone-in-the-uk-and-protecting-older-people-and-vulnerable-adults>) also recommends avoiding all non-essential domestic trips and use of public transport, where possible.

1.2 Domestic trips for children under 18 organised by educational settings

The Department for Education is currently advising against domestic trips (residential and non-residential) for children under 18 organised by educational settings.

1.3 Overseas trips for children under 18 organised by educational settings currently taking place

From 23 March, FCO is advising British people travelling abroad to return to the UK immediately, while commercial routes are still available.

International travel is becoming very limited as air routes cease, land borders close and new restrictions are put in place that prevent flights from leaving.

Any overseas trips for children under 18 organised by educational settings currently taking place should arrange for the trip to end and for participants to return. You will need to take account of the fast-moving situation and plan accordingly, including the fact there are currently fewer commercial routes available.

While overseas, if someone in the travelling group develops coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms (a new, continuous cough or a high temperature over 37.8 degrees), they should seek medical assistance and follow the advice of the local authorities. They should be ready to comply with local isolation, testing or quarantine requirements, and will need to rely on the local health system.

Educational settings should refresh their risk assessments and ensure measures are in place and agreed with parents in case children or adult supervisors exhibit symptoms that require self-isolation.

Whilst overseas, you should be prepared for border closures or lockdown measures being introduced at short notice. You must follow the advice of local authorities and also follow the latest FCO travel advice (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>).

FCO teams around the world are working urgently to ensure that governments have sensible plans to enable the return of British and other travellers, and, crucially, to keep borders open for a sufficient period of time to enable returns to take place on commercial routes, wherever possible. FCO is also working

with airlines to ensure as many people as possible can get commercial flights home.

UK travellers abroad should keep up to date with travel advice for the country/territory they are in.

FCO has published advice (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus#if-youre-abroad-and-you-want-to-return-to-the-uk>) for British nationals overseas who do not have immediate departure options available to them.

You should contact your airline, tour operator and travel insurer to find out what support they can offer.

If you are a UK national who needs emergency help from the UK government while overseas as the country you are in will not allow you to travel back to the UK or there are no commercial travel options available, you can contact the nearest British embassy, consulate or high commission

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/world/embassies>) or the FCO in London

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-office>) on 020 7008 1500 for help or advice 24/7.

Read guidance on what you can do if you need financial help

(<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/financial-assistance-abroad>) and who you can contact for support when abroad (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-for-british-nationals-abroad-a-guide>).

You can subscribe to email alerts for the country or territory you are in via the 'Get email alerts' link on each travel advice (<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>) page. You should also consult the latest PHE Public Health matters guidance (<https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/category/coronavirus-covid-19/>).

2. Travel for students over 18 and staff organised by educational settings

2.1 Students and staff considering travelling overseas, including to start or continue full courses

The FCO is advising British nationals against all non-essential international travel for an indefinite period. The latest guidance on social distancing (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others/full-guidance-on-staying-at-home-and-away-from-others>) also recommends avoiding all non-essential domestic travel and use of public transport, where possible.

International travel is becoming very limited as air routes cease, land borders close and new restrictions are put in place that prevent flights from leaving.

You should consult the latest FCO travel advice (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>) before you travel. You can subscribe to email alerts for the country/territory you are planning to visit, via the 'Get email alerts' link on each travel advice (<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>) page.

Before you travel, read the latest health advice (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>) and follow guidance for travellers (<https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/news/499/novel-coronavirus-covid-19-general-advice-for-travellers>) to reduce your risk of exposure to coronavirus (COVID-19). You should also consult Public Health England (PHE) Public Health matters guidance (<https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/category/coronavirus-covid-19/>) before you travel.

You should be aware that travel advice may change whilst you are overseas. You are advised to regularly check all relevant GOV.UK guidance, including before you return to the UK.

If you are travelling overseas with, or on behalf of, an educational setting or institution, you should speak to them before you depart for advice on whether your trip should go ahead.

2.2 UK students and staff already studying or working overseas

All UK students and staff currently studying on exchanges (for example, Erasmus+, or terms abroad) or working temporarily overseas are advised to return to the UK now, while commercial routes are still available

If UK students currently overseas for longer periods, for example those studying full degrees, are considering returning to the UK, they should do so while commercial routes are still available.

International travel is becoming very limited as air routes cease, land borders close and new restrictions are put in place that prevent flights from leaving.

If you are considering returning to the UK, you should contact your airline or travel company now, and keep up-to-date with FCO (<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>) travel advice (<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>).

While overseas, if you develop coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms (a new, continuous cough or a high temperature over 37.8 degrees), you should seek medical assistance and follow the advice of the local authorities. You should be ready to comply with local isolation, testing or quarantine requirements, and will need to rely on the local health system.

FCO teams around the world are working urgently to ensure that governments have sensible plans to enable the return of British and other travellers, and, crucially, to keep borders open for a sufficient period of time to enable returns to take place on commercial routes, wherever possible. FCO is also working with airlines to ensure as many people as possible can get commercial flights home.

UK travellers abroad should keep up to date with travel advice for the country/territory they are in.

FCO has published advice (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus#if-youre-abroad-and-you-want-to-return-to-the-uk>) for British nationals who do not have immediate departure options available to them.

FCO is working with airlines to keep routes open and is calling for international action to keep routes open to enable British people to return home on commercial flights. We are also working around the clock to support those British travellers who are experiencing difficulties coming back to the UK.

You should continue to monitor the travel advice (<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>) issued by the FCO and comply with any coronavirus (COVID-19) control measures put in place by your host nation.

You should also contact your educational setting to advise them of your plans and they can provide you with the latest guidance.

If you are a permanent resident overseas and you plan to remain in your country of residence, you should follow the advice of the local authorities in the country in which you live.

If you intend to return to the UK, you should use appropriate methods of travel. You need to take account of the fast-moving situation and plan accordingly, including the fact there are currently fewer commercial routes available.

Travellers currently overseas should be prepared for border closures or lockdown measures being introduced at short notice.

If you are abroad, you must follow the advice of local authorities and also follow the latest FCO travel advice (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>). You must be ready to comply with local isolation, testing or quarantine requirements, and will need to rely on the local health system. You should contact your airline, tour operator and travel insurer to find out what support they can offer.

You can subscribe to FCO email alerts for the country/territory you are in via the 'Get email alerts' link on each travel advice (<https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice>) page. You should also consult the latest PHE Public Health matters guidance (<https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/category/coronavirus-covid-19/>).

If you are a UK national who needs emergency help from the UK government while overseas as the country you are in will not allow you to travel back to the UK, or there are no commercial travel options available, you can contact the nearest British embassy, consulate or high commission (<https://www.gov.uk/government/world/embassies>) or the FCO in London (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-office>) on 0207 008 1500 for help or advice 24/7.

Before you travel, read the latest health advice (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>) and follow guidance for travellers (<https://travelhealthpro.org.uk/news/499/novel-coronavirus-covid-19-general-advice-for-travellers>) to reduce your risk of exposure to coronavirus (COVID-19).

Read guidance on what you can do if you need financial help (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/financial-assistance-abroad>) and who you can contact for support when abroad (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-for-british-nationals-abroad-a-guide>).

3. Participants already on Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps exchanges

If you are currently on a placement, you are advised to return to the UK now. From 23 March, FCO is advising British people travelling abroad to return to the UK immediately, while commercial routes are still available.

International travel is becoming very limited as air routes cease, land borders close and new restrictions are put in place that prevent flights from leaving.

Contact your provider to let them know of your plans. You will need to take account of the fast-moving situation and plan accordingly, including the fact there are currently fewer commercial routes available.

While overseas, if you develop coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms (a new, continuous cough or a high temperature over 37.8 degrees), you should seek medical assistance and follow the advice of the local authorities. You should be ready to comply with local isolation, testing or quarantine requirements, and will need to rely on the local health system.

Where this travel is funded through the Erasmus+ or European Solidarity Corps programmes, the Force Majeure clause in your contract may apply. See the National Agency's website (<https://www.erasmusplus.org.uk/news/travel-advice-for-regions-affected-by-coronavirus>) for more information.

If you are a UK participant who needs emergency help from the UK government while overseas as the country you are in will not allow you to travel back to the UK, or there are no commercial travel options available, you can contact the nearest British embassy, consulate or high commission (<https://www.gov.uk/government/world/embassies>) or the FCO in London (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-office>) on 0207 008 1500 for help or advice 24/7.

Read guidance on what you can do if you need financial help (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/financial-assistance-abroad>) and who you can contact for support when abroad (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/support-for-british-nationals-abroad-a-guide>).

4. Travel insurance

The Association of British Insurers (ABI) has produced information on travel insurance implications (<https://www.abi.org.uk/products-and-issues/topics-and-issues/coronavirus-qa/>) following the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. If you have any further questions about your cover or would like further reassurance, you should contact your travel insurance provider.

5. More information

- Updates on coronavirus (COVID-19) (<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>)
- Guidance for educational settings (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19>)
- Immigration guidance for individuals affected by travel restrictions associated with coronavirus (COVID-19) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-immigration-guidance-if-youre-unable-to-return-to-china-from-the-uk>)
- Scotland: advice for educational settings (<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-social-distancing-in-education-and-childcare-settings/>)
- Wales: advice for educational settings (<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2020-02/guidance-to-educational-settings-about-covid-19.pdf>)
- Ireland advice: for educational settings (<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/education-minister-issues-covid-19-guidance-educational-settings>)