

# COVID-19 supporting resources

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## Contingency Planning for Placement Provision

### Introduction

Placements are often a fundamental part of the higher education experience, proving popular with both students and employers. However, because of COVID-19, higher education providers have not always been able to continue placements in situ, and there has been a need to consider alternative placement provision.

This paper builds on QAA's COVID-19 [Thematic Guidance on Work-based Learning](#) by specifically focusing on non-PSRB regulated placements in greater depth. It includes:

- 1 eight contingency planning principles for placement provision
- 2 a suite of tables and reflective questions which providers are able to use when deciding whether to cancel, replace, defer or resume placements
- 3 key themes and discussions regarding contingency planning for forthcoming placements
- 4 practical and applied examples from providers.

This paper considers those placements which are organised by the higher education provider or student. They are likely to involve a formal agreement between the student, higher education provider and work placement provider. These might include so-called 'sandwich' provision in which periods of study are offered before and after a work placement experience. In the placements covered by this paper, students are considered as students first and employees second.

Although this paper does not specifically discuss professional statutory and regulatory body (PSRB) regulated placements, aspects of it may apply to such provision. The [Advice and Guidance for Work-based Learning](#), linked to the Quality Code for Higher Education, also provides a useful reference point.

This paper is accompanied by other QAA resources:

- a [suite of case studies](#) from a range of higher education providers outlining how they have managed disrupted placements and their contingency plans for forthcoming placements.
- a paper relating to [placements that take place outside the UK](#)
- QAA Members are also able to access the recording of a webinar which took place on 15 May 2020 regarding [Contingency Planning for Placement Provision](#).

### COVID-19 and placement provision

As a result of COVID-19, organisations have been forced to innovate and adjust to new ways of working which, in many cases, has led to business transformation. Such transformation may shape the world of work over the long term, rather than being purely transitional. In this context, how we perceive and operate placements is evolving. Within some sectors, an authentic work placement may still demand a face-to-face, in-situ experience, while in others it may become increasingly commonplace to operate in a digital, home-based environment.

The health and safety of students on work placement remains paramount. With the rise of virtual placements and home-based working, there is a need to think holistically about health and safety and risk assessments, incorporating student wellbeing and mental health. Providers will need to be mindful of acting in accordance with government and public health rules and advice as well as evolving and following their own institutional health and safety policies that underpin placement provision.

The material included in this paper is underpinned by eight principles that may help providers in the decision-making process regarding whether to cancel, defer, replace or resume placements.

## Contingency planning principles for placement provision

1. Aim to resume placements whenever possible. Coordinate with relevant agencies and placement providers, and support students to understand their options. Collaborate to ensure opportunities are inclusive, safe and supported.
2. If placements cannot run in situ, aim, where possible, to replace them with a virtual placement, rather than cancel or defer them.
3. Ensure that every module involving a placement has an alternative plan that will be used if COVID-19 restrictions resume. Use virtual placements and modified assessments where necessary.
4. Implement flexible alternative assessments if this will enable placements to run. Ensure such alternative assessments are in line with your provider's existing academic regulations and any specific policies on assessment, such as 'no-detriment' policies.
5. Rely on programme-level learning outcomes when considering alternative learning and assessment needed to replace cancelled or significantly revised placements.
6. Only cancel placement provision if you have explored the possibility of virtual placements, flexible alternative assessments and, if necessary, deferral of placements.
7. Deferring placements could be an appropriate option, but it can create challenges relating to progression and the volume of credit students may be undertaking at any one time. For these reasons, any decision to defer placements will need very careful consideration.
8. Underpin all your considerations with the aim of ensuring consistency, supporting transparency, promoting academic quality and reducing risk for your students and staff.

## Key considerations

**Do credit weightings and scheduled learning hours** need to be adjusted for placements that cannot go ahead?

Due to disruptions in the wider economy, providers have not always had the option of enabling work-based placements to continue in their usual format, leading to concerns about volume of learning and credit. Examples of how providers are adapting placement learning

were discussed in the [Contingency Planning for Placements webinar](#) (access QAA Members only) that took place on 15 May 2020 for QAA Members, further examples are offered in the [Contingency Planning for Placements: Case Studies](#) as well as appearing later in this paper.

Providers may find QAA's COVID-19 [Thematic Guidance on Securing Academic Standards and Supporting Student Achievement](#) useful when making decisions regarding placements and the award of credit. This guidance highlights that the credit volumes associated with the various levels of qualifications set out in *The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (FHEQ) are expressed as 'typical' and awarding bodies have a certain amount of latitude in reaching these judgements. It also offers guidance linked to the mode and timings of assessment and submission dates.

For providers in England, the Office for Students (OfS) offers the following [associated guidance regarding placements](#):

'If placements are disrupted, providers could decide that the placement should no longer be required because students can demonstrate that relevant outcomes have been achieved by other means; this may be appropriate if the placement repeats achievement demonstrated in previous placements or in other assessment that has already taken place.'

Mapping placements that occur throughout the programme, at all programme levels, may highlight the potential to reduce the number of required placement hours, where learning outcomes have already been demonstrated within other modules. However, any learning outcomes that cannot be met due to a reduction in placement hours, will need to be evidenced by other modules or at a programme level.

If there are programme learning outcomes that cannot be met due to disrupted placement provision, where possible, map them at a modular level or across other parts of the programme. If there are modular learning outcomes that cannot be met due to disrupted placement provision, where possible, map them to other modules within the programme and ensure they can be demonstrated at a programme level.

Providers considering a range of alternative approaches are strongly encouraged to engage with their students, work placement providers and governing body, fully documenting and recording their decision-making processes. This should include how they have ensured that no cohort of students has been overly advantaged or disadvantaged in comparison to other cohorts. For placements with a regulatory purpose (those programmes leading to a professional qualification), the QAA [Thematic Guidance on Work-based Learning](#) is likely to be helpful, as PSRBs will have their own requirements that providers will need to consider.

If planned in-situ hours cannot be delivered and the placement will still run, it may be useful to shift the emphasis away from the physical completion of hours and towards a demonstration of meeting the learning outcomes of the module through enhanced virtual learning opportunities and/or skills acquisition. The OfS recognises that the ability of providers to continue to support student placements in light of COVID-19 will be highly variable, and dependent on both the type of placement and an individual student's circumstances. Therefore, refocusing on meeting learning outcomes rather than just completing scheduled hours, is supported by the following [recommendations from OfS](#):

- Amend the planned placement, in terms of time or location to enable it to be completed.
- Substitute an alternative activity which allows students to demonstrate that relevant outcomes have been achieved to enable progression or the award of a qualification.

Any revisions to placement provision should ensure that the OfS ongoing conditions of registration relating to quality and standards (collectively referred to as the 'B' conditions) are fully met.

### **Some placements have a significant volume of hours aligned to modular and programme credit. How can these be accommodated?**

Some placements occur over an extended timeframe, with a significant number of hours aligned to modular and programme credit. When such placements are unable to take place, alternative provision that shifts the focus away from the volume of completed learning hours, and related credit allocation, towards assessment and a demonstration of learning and competency could offer a useful reframing.

Another option regarding placements with a high volume of allocated learning hours could be to offer **portfolio placements**. Rather than one long, extended placement students complete, for example, between five and 10 short placements across the academic year, each with its own discrete assessment.

Several higher education providers are beginning to accept and embed civic duties as a form of placement. For example, if a student is volunteering for a charity or is helping within the community, there may be aspects of the activity that can be aligned to placement learning outcomes and could be accommodated as a replacement for the originally planned placement provision. Higher education providers will need to ensure that the activity and environment in which the student is operating fully meets government, public health, and institutional health and safety policies and protocols. Placements which are associated with credit should be underpinned by formal agreements between higher education providers, placement providers and students. This will ensure that civic duties that are counted as placements are safe and fully supported by the host organisation.

Several business sectors may be slow to restart and offer in-situ placements, such as the leisure, tourism and hospitality industries. Higher education providers are helping students to plan for any delays by working with them to find alternative in-situ or virtual placements within an allied sector, that will help them develop work-based skills.

When deciding on alternative provision for placements, it is essential to consider the provider's assessment policies and, in particular, any 'no detriment' or safety net policy, to be clear about what such policies do and do not enable.

### **Examples from practice**

- The validation of shell modules, with specific and repurposed learning outcomes, to enable students who have been unable to complete an in-situ placement to participate in a virtual placement instead.
- Virtual meet-ups with employers, either ad-hoc or on a regular basis, and specific learning episodes with a focused assessment that is devised in discussion with employers.
- Completion of a relevant Massive Open Online Course (MOOC), with specific and focused additional wraparound activities and discussions with employers to explore and test learning.
- In discussion with the academic team, employers set students a specific work-based project which can be completed offsite.

- Providers are repurposing some placements to be completed on campus, where this makes the completion of an in-situ placement more feasible. For example, training students as digital online champions who work with academics, other students and support services to enhance the learning experience.

## **Do transcripts need to note whether the placement has been completed or cancelled?**

QAA has produced a supporting resource outlining the [arguments for and against including a COVID-19 statement on degree transcripts](#).

## **How do providers determine whether to resume, replace, defer or cancel placements?**

When choosing whether to resume, replace, defer or cancel placements, the eight principles outlined earlier offer a good starting point. Placements should only be cancelled if all other options have been fully explored.

Deferring placements may prove complex regarding progression and this option will also need to be considered alongside the reassessment schedule. Any addition of hours across semesters to make up for lost delivery must be fully discussed and agreed, because it has implications on workload for both staff and students. Similarly, extending deadlines for assessments and reassessments could build in pinch points that may be avoided by other means. There is also no guarantee that the placement will be able to run in-situ at a later date as a return to restrictions on movement ('lockdown') or other unforeseen circumstances may hinder such plans. Therefore, flexibility and forward planning are key.

Altering the diet of modules and when they are delivered may offer a pragmatic solution to some of the issues being faced regarding placement provision. However, the key here is flexibility and the consideration of an alternative plan, should lockdown measures recommence.

Semester and year-long placements may prove harder to accommodate virtually. Moving away from a focus on volume of placement hours towards a focus on demonstration of learning and competencies may overcome this issue, as may a move towards portfolio placements. Where placement hours map to modular or programme-credit, the provider has latitude to reduce the volume of hours if there is a strong enough rationale and there is transparency regarding the decision-making process (see above on awarding credit and scheduling learning hours). Where semester and year-long placements lead to a specific award title, if possible, providers should ensure that an alternative award is available and that students are not disadvantaged in the completion of their programme.

The tables in the Annex at the end of this paper present a range of questions, addressed to different audiences, that providers can use to determine whether to resume, replace, defer or cancel placements. The questions are not exhaustive.

## **Can in-situ placements be substituted with virtual placements?**

Several providers have indicated that they are considering replacing in-situ placements with virtual placements for some forthcoming provision. In this context a virtual placement is defined as one that has the involvement of a placement provider from the outset, and which offers the benefits of business and industrial work experience within a digital environment. The student can become part of a new 'community of practice' ([Wenger et al, 2002](#)), while continuing to receive support from their educational community.

## Examples from practice

- Working with students and placement providers to **establish a series of virtual projects that could add value for the placement provider**. For example, students working on writing a marketing, distribution and competitor analysis plan for a local company that is looking to expand nationally.
- Establishing a **virtual community placement working group** with local employers to establish how best to offer meaningful and useful virtual placement activities.
- Establishing a **suite of virtual internships** with employers, which may be supported by the placement provider's 'onboarding' systems and/or software.
- Making use of third-party platforms that provide digital mentoring and link employers with students.
- Using the [InsideSherpa platform](#), which provides free access to virtual work experience programmes with world-leading companies (comprising five to six hours of self-directed learning).

Several providers consider virtual placements have the potential to offer a more flexible approach to the organisation of placement hours and could enhance the contact between employers and students. Virtual placements are also seen as beneficial in supporting students whose personal circumstances may not allow physical attendance at a workplace or the ability to commit to a 'traditional' five-day week, full-time placement experience.

The availability of placements across different sectors may be variable. Some sectors, such as leisure and tourism, may struggle to host placements while others, such as IT, may thrive. In this scenario, providers can still work with placement providers, or industry lead bodies, to establish live briefs, virtual projects and case studies for completion by students through a virtual placement. Although this may not offer the face-to-face experience required of some professions, for example, sports coaching, it does offer the student a useful experience which is more beneficial than cancelling the placement altogether.

Another benefit of virtual placements is their potential to equip students with useful skills for a changing world and labour market. Students may have the opportunity to engage directly with business transformation and learn about innovation and business resilience within their respective sectors.

## Can alternative curricula and assessments be offered for placements?

Providers may already have made changes to curricula and devised alternative assessments for placements due to COVID-19 restrictions. Some providers may choose to continue with such adjustments, embedding them into module and programme-level provision through documented and formalised programme-level approval. [The Office for Students' guidance](#) indicates that providers in England could:

'Substitute an alternative activity which allows students to demonstrate that relevant outcomes have been achieved to enable progression or the award of qualification.'

When planning forthcoming delivery, providers should consider the pattern of assessment for placement modules to establish whether assessment weightings can be revised, while still meeting module and programme-level outcomes.

## Examples from practice

- **Increasing the focus on work-based skills** such as adding taught sessions on time management, negotiation and influencing skills, team working and other key skills and attributes necessary within the workplace. Assessments are linked to these areas and students discuss them with employers from their chosen career destination. This partially replaces the placement, while still mapping to the module learning outcomes.
- Students receive **embedded support for developing reflective writing skills**. This is viewed as an opportunity to enhance students' understanding and participation within reflective accounts and assessments.
- Students are given a **problem-based learning scenario** based on a fictitious employer. They have workbooks that they have to complete weekly, which are supplemented by directed study to YouTube and other media to stimulate thinking.

Where reflective accounts and summaries are offered as alternative assessments, students may need further support in enhancing their reflective writing skills.

## Do students need particular support with changed placement opportunities?

It is likely that students will need additional support across all scenarios - whether their placement is resumed, replaced, deferred or cancelled. This support may relate to:

- **Practical matters:** for example, helping students rearrange accommodation, finances, relocation.
- **Academic and study skills:** for example, new placement formats may require students to develop additional skills, especially regarding digital technologies. This may require training and support for the enhanced focus on the digital environment. Similarly, students may need academic support in completing alternative assessments.
- **Pastoral and wellbeing:** for example, feelings of isolation may be exacerbated during periods of lockdown, and students may be facing multiple pressures within their home environment, all of which may increase the need for pastoral and wellbeing support.

How additional student support can be accommodated will need consideration within contingency planning for placement provision.

The health and safety of students is paramount. Providers will have their own guidelines regarding health and safety of placement provision. However, students' health and safety within an online environment may need further consideration. Virtual placements have the potential to exacerbate the volume of hours students may be lone working and using computer screens. Therefore, careful consideration will be needed regarding module and assessment design, as well as the support that students may need to discuss aspects of their virtual placement with academic staff.

## Examples from practice

- A centralised Placements Channel has been created and used for all communication with students regarding placements, including policy and process updates. It has become a 'one stop shop' for everything related to placements.

- The frequency of placement visits (both virtual and face-to-face) has been increased.
- Student engagement online is monitored on a daily and weekly basis to check engagement and establish who may be at risk of non-continuation. Where necessary, students are proactively contacted by tutors to ascertain any further support needs and ensure they are progressing.

### **What are the regulatory requirements for placements?**

Under consumer protection law, higher education providers must give students clear, accurate and timely information about their course. The OfS also demands that, as a condition of registration, a provider must demonstrate that in developing and implementing its policies and procedures, it has given due regard to relevant guidance about how to comply with consumer protection law (condition C1). There has been concern from providers that in adapting placement provision they may be contravening Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) regulation as, in many cases, they have been unable to deliver the volume of hours stated within advertising and course literature. At the time of writing, the CMA and OfS had not issued guidance on these specific matters, therefore, this paper only refers to guidance that was published previously and applies that to contingency planning for placement provision.

One of the key considerations of the CMA is the provision of information. There is a requirement for higher education providers to give clear, accurate, comprehensive and timely information to students. Therefore, it is logical that this will apply to placement provision that is deferred, replaced or cancelled. Full and timely communication with students is vital to ensure they are fully aware and can plan for any alterations to their placement.

The Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) highlights that higher education providers in England and Wales may be able to rely on the terms of a force majeure clause to avoid legal liability for failure to deliver their contractual obligations. This will depend on the wording of the force majeure clause and whether it meets the requirements of consumer law, the precise reason the provider is not able to deliver the teaching, and whether the provider has taken appropriate steps to mitigate the disruption. The OIA stresses, 'the importance of maintaining full records of teaching that has been missed and what has been done to make up for it, and to explain to students that the alternative provision is designed to do this. These records will help providers to demonstrate the steps it took to try to minimise the impact of the disruption if students later complain to us'. Further information is available on the [OIA website](#).

### **What about arrangements for managing and monitoring placement provision?**

It is likely that circumstances may change during delivery, for example, there could be a return to lockdown or a change in the circumstances of the placement provider leading to their being unable to offer the placement. Providers should anticipate such circumstances, preparing a step-by-step plan of how these potential future disruptions would be mitigated. Clear, well-planned and timely communication strategies will be key in ensuring seamless progression to an alternative plan should circumstances change.

Given the increased prominence of virtual and other forms of alternative placements, due diligence and a comprehensive risk assessment is important. For example, if new partnerships with placement providers are being established, higher education providers should ensure that the placement providers are fully equipped to offer students a meaningful, fully supported placement experience. For some in-situ placements there will be



a need to ensure that the working environment complies with the most up-to-date government guidance on safe working conditions, for example, social distancing or ensuring that appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) is available. Further information is available on the [Health and Safety Executive website](#).

Everyone involved in a placement has an ethical responsibility to do what they can to reduce the chances of harm to the student and the harm that a student may do to others. Providers are likely to find [ASET's guidance on health and safety for student placements](#) helpful.

Providers considering a range of alternative approaches should document their decision-making processes thoroughly, including the need to ensure that no cohort of students has been overly advantaged or disadvantaged in comparison to other cohorts. Monitoring and comparison of previous years' achievement data may help elicit any adverse patterns between year groups and specified cohorts. In many cases, changes to placement provision have been made swiftly. Providers have held **extraordinary committee meetings** to document and agree such changes and worked with the students' union or guild to ensure student representation.

Uncertainty can be a significant cause of anxiety. Clear, regular and frequent communication is therefore key. Students need to be reassured that, as far as possible, they will not be disadvantaged as a result of self-isolation, illness, or disruption to their course. Information about changes to exams, assessments, placements, and study opportunities should be updated regularly and publicised as much as possible. Engaging with students online, for example, through chat groups, may help to reduce anxiety and feelings of isolation. This may also need extra technical support.

Rapid communication may be necessary should circumstances change or evolve. How providers communicate with staff, students and employers will need advance consideration. Likewise, providers should ensure they are in regular contact with placement providers to ensure early notification of potential changes to provision.

## Resources

**Advance HE:** [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) updates](#)

**ASET:** work-based and placement learning good practice guides, viewpoints and publications: [ASET Resources](#)

**CMA:** [Higher education: consumer law advice for providers](#)

### Health and Safety Executive

[HSE Advice on Protecting Home Workers](#)

[HSE - Risk at Work: PPE](#)

### Jisc

[Transforming assessment and feedback with technology](#)

[COVID-19: Help and information](#)

### Office for Students

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

[Regulatory requirements during the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#)

### Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)

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

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## Annex

### Resuming placements

This table presents potential considerations if deciding to resume placements.

<b>Academic regulations and quality teams</b>	<b>Academic and placement staff</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Employers/placement providers</b>
Do we have a clear and comprehensive picture of the risks of resuming placements?	Do we have a clear and comprehensive picture of the risks of resuming placements?	<p>What are the risks of resuming my placement (for example, finances, accommodation) and do I know who to discuss these with?</p> <p>How much time do I need to make practical arrangements that would allow me to restart my placement?</p>	Do we have a clear and comprehensive picture of the risks of resuming placements?
Have we considered and discussed the decision to resume placements with students and placement providers? Can we fully evidence these discussions?	Have we considered and discussed the decision to resume placements with students and placement providers? Can we fully evidence these discussions?	Have I understood and signed any revised formal agreement or documents associated with the resumed placement? Do I have any questions to ask before I sign?	Have we understood and signed any revised formal agreement or documents associated with the resumed placement? Do we have any questions to ask before we sign?
Have any formal agreements and/or placement-related documents been updated and signed as appropriate?	Have students and placement providers reviewed and signed updated formal agreements and/or other paperwork as appropriate?	Do I have all the information I need to resume my placement? If not, who do I need to proactively approach?	Has the formal agreement between the higher education provider and placement provider been revised accordingly?

Academic regulations and quality teams	Academic and placement staff	Students	Employers/placement providers
What additional student support and/or training may be required to help students resume their placement? How will this be accommodated?	What additional student support and/or training may be required to help students resume their placement? How will this be accommodated?	Which student services can support me in returning to my placement?	What additional student support and/or training may be required to help students resume their placement? How will this be accommodated?
What communication structures are in place that enable swift communication between all parties should the placement be disrupted?	What communication structures are in place that enable swift communication between all parties should the placement be disrupted?	What communication structures are in place that enable swift communication between all parties should the placement be disrupted?	What communication structures are in place that enable swift communication between all parties should the placement be disrupted?
Are health and safety considerations and risk assessments still valid?	How can students be supported in understanding their placement provider's current context if this has changed?	Who else will be in the same position and who can I get peer support from?	Are health and safety considerations and risk assessments still valid?
	What placement work has been missed and how can it be accommodated within the remaining timescale?	What placement work have I missed and how can it be accommodated within the remaining timescale?	What placement work has been missed and how can it be accommodated within the remaining timescale?
	Have students been given all the information they need to ensure a smooth transition back to their placement?		Will any changes need to be made to induction and onboarding to create a smooth transition?
	Have students been given enough time to rearrange practical considerations such as other work commitments and accommodation?		What internal communications are needed to smooth onboarding, particularly if other staff are undergoing associated challenges?

## Replacing placements

This table presents potential considerations if deciding to replace placements.

Academic regulations and quality teams	Academic and placement staff	Students	Employers/placement providers
Do we have a clear and comprehensive picture of the risks of (a) continuing the placement in-situ and (b) replacing the placement? Have we made a balanced assessment of both in arriving at the decision to replace placements?	Do we have a clear and comprehensive picture of the risks of (a) continuing the placement in-situ and (b) replacing the placement? Have we made a balanced assessment of both in arriving at the decision to replace placements?	What are the risks of my placement being replaced (for example, finances, accommodation) and do I know who to discuss these with?  How much time do I need to make practical arrangements that would allow me to restart my placement?	Can we protect our reputation by making a clear and rational case for replacing the placement based on factors that can be understood from outside the organisation?
Have any formal agreements and/or placement-related documents been updated and signed as appropriate?	Have students and placement providers reviewed and signed updated formal agreements and/or other paperwork as appropriate?	Have I understood and signed any revised formal agreements or documents associated with the replaced placement? Do I have any questions to ask before I sign?	Have we understood and signed any revised formal agreements or documents associated with the replaced placement? Do we have any questions to ask before we sign?
Have we been reassured that placement providers have appropriate safety measures in place regarding alternative placement provision? Can we be assured of student safety?	Have we been reassured that placement providers have appropriate safety measures in place regarding alternative placement provision? Can we be assured of student safety?	Do I need any additional academic, career or pastoral support and/or training to complete the revised placement? How and where can I access this support?	What additional resource, if any, is needed to enable the replaced placement? This could relate to the digital infrastructure, staffing, staff development or employee input to the student experience, for example.

Academic regulations and quality teams	Academic and placement staff	Students	Employers/placement providers
What are the insurance requirements for students working remotely? Are these requirements covered by the higher education provider, the placement provider, or both?	What are the insurance requirements for students working remotely? Are these requirements covered by the higher education provider, the placement provider, or both?		What are the insurance requirements for students working remotely? Are these requirements covered by the higher education provider, the placement provider, or both?
What additional student support and/or training may be required to help students transition to an alternative placement? How will this be accommodated?	What additional student support and/or training may be required to help students transition to an alternative placement? How will this be accommodated?	How can I make up any shortfall in career development between a standard placement and a replacement learning opportunity?	What additional student support and/or training may be required to help students transition to an alternative placement? How will this be accommodated?
Will any programme or module learning outcomes need revision?	Will any programme or module learning outcomes need revision?	Have I been informed of any revised safety measures (where appropriate) relating to a replaced placement?	Do we have appropriate insurance in place (if appropriate) that covers students who may be working remotely as part of a replaced placement?
Can any learning outcomes that cannot be met be mapped to a programme/module level as appropriate, or revised?	Can any learning outcomes that cannot be met be mapped to a programme/module level as appropriate, or revised?	Do I require any additional support and/or training to help me transition to a replaced placement? Who can help me with any additional support needs?	Do we have appropriate safety measures in place regarding alternative placement provision and/or remote working?
What additional resource, if any, is needed? This could relate to the digital infrastructure, staffing, staff development or employer input, for example.	What additional resource, if any, is needed? This could relate to the digital infrastructure, staffing, staff development or employer input, for example.	Are there any opportunities made possible by the replacement offered? How can I best capitalise on these?	

What additional student support and/or training may be required to help them transition to a replaced placement? How will this be accommodated?	What additional student support and/or training may be required to help them transition to a replaced placement? How will this be accommodated?	Who else will be in the same position and who can I get peer support from?	
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### Deferring placements

This table presents potential considerations if deciding to defer placements.

<b>Academic regulations and quality teams</b>	<b>Academic and placement staff</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Employers/placement providers</b>
Do we have a clear and comprehensive picture of the risks of (a) continuing the placement and (b) deferring the placement? Have we made a balanced assessment of both in arriving at the decision to defer placements?	Do we have a clear and comprehensive picture of the risks of (a) continuing the placement and (b) deferring the placement? Have we made a balanced assessment of both in arriving at the decision to defer placements?	What are the risks of my placement being deferred (for example, finances, accommodation) and do I know who to discuss these with?  How much time do I need to make practical arrangements that would allow me to restart my placement?	Can we protect our reputation by making a clear and rational case for deferring the placement based on factors that can be understood from outside the organisation?
Have any formal agreements and/or placement-related documents been updated and signed as appropriate?	Have students and placement providers reviewed and signed updated formal agreements and/or other paperwork as appropriate?	Have I understood and signed any revised formal agreements or documents associated with the deferred placement? Do I have any questions to ask before I sign?	Have we understood and signed any revised formal agreements or documents associated with the deferred placement? Do we have any questions to ask before we sign?



Academic regulations and quality teams	Academic and placement staff	Students	Employers/placement providers
Have we considered and discussed the decision to defer placements with students and placement providers? Can we fully evidence these discussions?	Have we considered and discussed the decision to defer placements with both students and placement providers? Can we fully evidence these discussions?	How can I sustain the ongoing recruitment relationship I have with an employer even though my placement has been deferred?	Are there any alternatives to deferring the placement that can be created either from inside the organisation, or by collaborating with the higher education provider?
Deferral of placements assumes they will recommence at some point in the future. What plans are in place if they cannot resume?	What institutional policy has been created, or decisions made, within higher education provider governance, relating to other deferral requests? How may these be helpful?	Have I considered the impact of a deferred placement on my programme of study? Will there be any overlapping in my commitments that may be difficult to manage? How can I mitigate against this?	
Has the governing body had the opportunity to comment on deferral plans for placement provision?	If the placement is integrated, how will other elements of teaching be delivered during any overlap?		
What additional academic and pastoral support needs may students have given their placements have been deferred?  How will any additional support needs be accommodated?	If the placement is intercalated and takes place before the final year, how will we engage students who are completing their placement after completing the taught part of their degree?		
What are the implications of deferred placements on staff and student workload?	What are the implications of deferred placements on staff and student workload?		

<b>Academic regulations and quality teams</b>	<b>Academic and placement staff</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Employers/placement providers</b>
What are the implications of deferred placements on timetabling?	What are the implications of deferred placements on timetabling?		
	<p>What additional academic and pastoral support needs may students have, given their placements have been deferred?</p> <p>How will any additional support needs be accommodated?</p>		

### **Cancelling placements**

This table presents potential considerations if deciding to cancel placements.

<b>Academic regulations and quality teams</b>	<b>Academic and placement staff</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Employers/placement providers</b>
Do we have a clear and comprehensive picture of the risks of (a) continuing the placement and (b) cancelling the placement? Have we made a balanced assessment of both in arriving at the decision to cancel placements?	Do we have a clear and comprehensive picture of the risks of (a) continuing the placement and (b) cancelling the placement? Have we made a balanced assessment of both in arriving at the decision to cancel placements?	<p>What are the risks of my placement being cancelled (for example, finances, accommodation) and do I know who to discuss these with?</p> <p>How much time do I need to make practical arrangements that would allow me to restart my placement?</p>	Can we protect our reputation by making a clear and rational case for cancelling the placement based on factors that can be understood from outside the organisation?

Academic regulations and quality teams	Academic and placement staff	Students	Employers/placement providers
Have any formal agreements and/or placement-related documents been updated and signed as appropriate?	Have students and placement providers reviewed and signed updated formal agreements and/or other paperwork as appropriate?	Have I understood and signed any revised formal agreements or documents associated with the cancelled placement? Do I have any questions to ask before I sign?	Have we understood and signed any revised formal agreements or documents associated with the cancelled placement? Do we have any questions to ask before we sign?
Have we considered and discussed the decision to cancel placements with students and placement providers? Can we fully evidence these discussions?	Have we considered and discussed the decision to cancel placements with both students and placement providers? Can we fully evidence these discussions?	How can I sustain the ongoing recruitment relationship I have with an employer even though my placement has been cancelled?	Are there any alternatives to cancelling the placement that can be created either from inside the organisation, or by collaborating with the higher education provider?
If the decision to cancel placements is not mutual between all parties, have we considered how we will communicate this decision in a way that will protect ongoing relationships?	If the decision to cancel placements is not mutual between all parties, have we considered how we will communicate this decision in a way that will protect ongoing relationships?	Have I discussed and considered all the options made available to me by (a) my higher education provider and (b) my placement provider?	If the placement is part of a recruitment strategy, how will we make up this part of our selection process by other means? Will students whose placements were cancelled be given exceptions within the process?
Has the governing body had the opportunity to comment on cancellation plans for placement provision?	What support could the careers and placements team offer to students regarding cancelled placements?	Do I need to reassess my career thinking, career plan and development of employability skills because of a cancelled placement?	
Will the student's transcript acknowledge a cancelled placement?	What information can a placement provider offer to support final assessment decisions?	Can I gain work experience in other allied professions? Who can I discuss this with?	

Academic regulations and quality teams	Academic and placement staff	Students	Employers/placement providers
<p>Have all other options been fully explored to the satisfaction of:</p> <p>(a) the institution and (b) students</p> <p>Can placements be deferred or is there scope to offer virtual placements and/or repurposed assessments to enable the placement to continue?</p>	<p>Have all other options been fully explored to the satisfaction of:</p> <p>(a) the institution and (b) students</p> <p>Can placements be deferred or is there scope to offer virtual placements and/or repurposed assessments to enable the placement to continue?</p>	<p>Do I need any additional support with (a) career planning (b) mental health and wellbeing (c) employability and academic skills? If so, where can I go for support?</p>	
<p>Will cancellation of placements be temporary or is there a need to consider programme-level changes over the longer term?</p>	<p>Will cancellation of placements be temporary or is there a need to consider programme-level changes over the longer term?</p>		
<p>What additional academic and pastoral support needs may students have, given their placements have been cancelled?</p> <p>How will any additional support needs be accommodated?</p>	<p>What additional academic and pastoral support needs may students have, given their placements have been cancelled?</p> <p>How will any additional support needs be accommodated?</p>		
	<p>Have the careers and placements team (where appropriate) been involved in discussions about the cancellation of placements?</p>		

Academic regulations and quality teams	Academic and placement staff	Students	Employers/placement providers
	Can we help students find alternative placements in other allied professions? (if appropriate)		
	Will the placement hours that a final-year student has accomplished to date provide sufficient evidence of meeting the intended learning outcomes to enable them to graduate as planned?		
	How will learning outcomes related to the cancelled placement be mapped to other modules and/or across the programme as appropriate?		

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