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**Education and childcare during coronavirus** 

**<u>Coronavirus (COVID-19)</u>** Guidance and support

Department

for Education

Guidance Student number controls: further

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# guidance Updated 23 June 2020

regulator in England.

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Students included in student number controls In England, the student number controls (SNCs) apply to students at approved (fee

cap) higher education providers. These are providers which are subject to a fee limit

condition of registration by the Office for Students (OfS), the higher education

This guidance is in addition to that set out in the **Student number controls** policy

statement published on 1 June. It does not supersede or replace all or any part of

that Statement and should be considered alongside it.

### The SNCs will apply to all students who are: • in full-time undergraduate study, including studying foundation years

• UK/EU domiciled <sup>1</sup> entrants starting at higher education providers in an academic year commencing on or after 1 August 2020 and before 1 August 2021

undergraduate students for academic year 2020 to 2021 - new providers can enter

the market as planned.

Part-time, apprenticeship, postgraduate and international students are not included in the scope of SNCs. In addition, there are two further exemptions: • students taking A levels or equivalent level 3 qualifications in autumn 2020 students at new providers which are entering the market and recruiting new

Both self-funded and students funded by the Student Loans Company (SLC) who meet the criteria set out above are included in the SNCs. For institutions in the devolved administrations, the SNCs apply to (and only to) all

England-domiciled students who start full-time undergraduate study in an academic year commencing on or after 1 August 2020 and before 1 August 2021, including studying foundation years, and have been paid or approved a tuition fee loan by Student Finance England.

Providers transitioning from the approved to approved (fee cap) registration category that have not received an outcome yet

registration as at 4 May 2020 and which have submitted a Higher Education Students

For the purposes of SNCs, only providers in the approved (fee cap) category of

Early Statistics (HESES) return to the OfS have been included.

Definition of full-time students for the purposes of SNCs A student studying at an English provider is considered to be studying full-time, for the purposes of HESES19 returns  $\frac{2}{3}$  (which were used to calculate SNCs), if both the following criteria are met:

a) the student is required to attend the provider, or elsewhere, for periods amounting to

at least 24 weeks in the relevant academic year and during this time they are expected

to undertake periods of study, tuition, learning in the workplace, or sandwich work

placement (but not the sandwich year out) which amount to an average of at least 21

### hours per week b) full-time fee limits apply to the relevant academic year For institutions in the devolved administrations, the SNCs apply to (and only to) all England-domiciled students who start full-time undergraduate study in an academic

following criteria are met:

relevant academic year

academic years

provider.

new entrants.

entrant.

a) the student is required to attend the provider, or elsewhere, for periods amounting to at least 24 weeks in the relevant academic year and during this time they are expected to undertake periods of study, tuition, learning in the workplace, or sandwich work placement (but not the sandwich year out) which amount to an average of at least 21 hours per week

b) the maximum loan amounts applicable to designated full-time courses apply to the

year, for the purposes of SLC data (which were used to calculate SNCs), if both the

**SNCs** For providers in England, a student is classed as a new entrant, for the purposes of HESES19 returns<sup>2</sup> (which were used to calculate SNCs), if both the following criteria are met: a) the higher education course is recognised for OfS funding purposes

b) the student has not been active at the same broad level (level 4 and above

undergraduate study) as a student at the same provider in either of the previous

A student repeating the first year of a course at the same provider would not be a new

entrant, but students entering directly into the second or later year of a course could be

Students studying for a Higher National Certificate (HNC) who then go onto study for a

Higher National Diploma (HND) at the same provider are not new entrants. If they go to

a different provider to study for the HND, they would be a new entrant at the second

Definition of 'entrants' for the purposes of

#### Students who transfer onto a pre-registration nursing, midwifery or allied health profession course from a course that is not pre-registration course (for example transferring from a bachelor's degree onto a pre-registration course) are not counted as

Foundation years are included if both the following criteria apply:

(for example if they transfer from another provider).

same provider; b) progression to the recognised higher education course is guaranteed, subject to satisfactory completion of the foundation year.

A student who tops up to a full-time bachelor's degree in the following year, having

For institutions in the devolved administrations, classification as a new entrant is

previously studied for a foundation year at the same provider, is not counted as a new

a) the student is already registered for the recognised higher education course at the

dependent on whether the student has applied for, and been determined as eligible for, student support for the first time in respect of the current course. This does not include students who start their current course having transferred their eligibility from a previous course.

Accordingly, if a student has not previously applied for student support in respect of the

current course, and has not transferred their eligibility from another eligible course to

The SLC data may therefore contain small numbers of continuing students who have

the current course, they are considered to be new entrants.

has reported these students correctly in the HESES data return.

totals for the institution which is paid the tuition fee.

teaching providers' SNC will change.

self-funded in previous years, but will not include students starting the first year of a course having transferred from a previous course. Franchised students included in the SNCs

For providers in England, students who are registered at a provider are counted in that

Students who are taught by the teaching provider (not the registering provider) are not

counted in the entrant totals for the teaching provider providing the teaching provider

For institutions in the devolved administrations, students are counted in the entrant

If a franchise agreement is terminated, neither the sub-contracting providers or

provider's entrant totals even if the teaching is sub-contracted to another provider.

**Apprenticeships** 

Equivalent level 3 qualification for those

recorded as studying full-time in the Higher Education Students Early Statistics

to have exceeded it by virtue of the number of apprenticeship students it has.

For HESES20, OfS will provide guidance on how apprentices are recorded in the data

When monitoring potential recruitment above an SNC, a provider will not be considered

(HESES) data, which is used to calculate and monitor SNCs.

return, which will allow all apprenticeship places to be identified.

### Decisions about how to stay within the SNC are the choice of the franchising organisation to make after discussion with their sub-contractors. For all practical purposes, apprenticeships will be excluded from SNCs. Apprenticeships are jobs with a sustained element of training, so this provision is delivered in conjunction with local employers, where the apprentice is employed. Relationships between these employers and providers are usually well established, so they are unlikely to be vulnerable to aggressive recruitment practices and pose little or no threat to the stability of the sector. However, despite apprentices being in full-time employment, they are sometimes also

### students taking A levels or equivalent level 3 qualifications in autumn 2020

An equivalent level 3 qualification is one that a higher education provider might accept

instead of A levels for entry onto a course of higher education which is covered by the

SNC. It is for individual providers to determine which level 3 qualifications should

provide access to higher education courses according to their admissions criteria.

Offers already accepted

therefore 120 and it has not been exceeded.

the SNC is therefore 115 and it has not been exceeded.

this because your SNC level is increased to this level. For example, if the notified SNC is 100 but 120 places were accepted before the notification date: a) If all those 120 students start their course in academic year 2020 to 2021, the SNC is

b) If only 115 of those 120 students start their course in academic year 2020 to 2021,

c) If only 115 of those 120 students start their course in academic year 2020 to 21, but

the provider/institution has also made subsequent offers to five more students who

If a provider/institution exceeds the SNC level notified to it because of offers accepted

notification), it will not be subject to reduced fee limits/fee loan amounts as a result of

<sup>3</sup> before the notification date (and not any offers accepted after the date of

## Higher education providers in excess of their SNC before the notification date which do not recruit via UCAS

and nurses, or where we have a current shortage within a profession or sector. Within this, for the purposes specifically of the SNCs, the government has considered factors including subjects which relate to skills or professions at risk of shortage in the economy, or that generate positive economic returns for the individual and the taxpayer. This ensures that additional growth is for the benefit of both students and

Providers can only apply for ITT places if they have an existing ITT allocation which, if

Fee and loan reductions for providers that

filled, would cause them to exceed their SNC. These applications are not subject to the

eligibility criteria for the strategic priority courses. Applications will be validated against

The specified subjects are those where the government is keen to see greater growth

over the next year, for example to support public sector workforces such as teachers

Fee limit reductions The reduced fee limits will apply to all English approved (fee cap) providers. The fees will be reduced in all cases by percentages, depending on the extent to which the provider has exceeded its SNC. The reduced fee limits will apply in respect of all fulltime students at the provider on courses currently covered by the fee limits regime, in the academic year 2021 to 2022.

The Secretary of State for Education has the power to amend the maximum fee limits,

not the actual amount charged if it is lower, although in some cases a reduction in the

fee limit may result in a new fee limit which is lower than the fee which was previously

# shortly. Ҽ

within these Schedules. 🗠

Transition period: get ready for 2021

Coronavirus (COVID-19) The UK has left the EU Coronavirus (COVID-19): guidance and support

## start their course, taking the total number of starters to 120, the SNC will still be 115, and there will be 5 students in excess of the level. This timing of the relevant offers/acceptances will be ascertained if it appears during monitoring that the provider/institution has exceeded its SNC. If recruitment in apparent excess of the SNC is identified, DfE will engage with individual providers to identify when the excess recruitment took place, and will reach a view based on the available evidence.

**Monitoring** 

### Applying for additional places The application process opened on 18 June. Providers and institutions which meet the eligibility criteria set out in the policy statement can apply from that date, using an online application form.

(HECOS) codes, including a link to those for ITT provision.

wider society. No further courses will be added to this list.

Initial teacher training (ITT) courses

Courses chosen by DfE as strategic priorities

Applications should be broken down by course heading, as set out in the list at

paragraph 31 of Student number controls – this is reflected in the design of the

application form. Annex B of the policy statement provides a list  $\frac{4}{2}$  of eligible courses

under each subject umbrella using their higher education classification of subjects

10,000 additional places

## Subject to Parliamentary approval of the Higher Education (Fee Limits and Student Support) (England) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020.

existing ITT allocations by DfE.

exceed their SNC

Fee loan amount reductions For institutions in the devolved administrations, the same percentage reductions will be applied to the maximum fee loan amounts available to English domiciled students starting their course in the academic year 2021 to 2022.

Regulations 2011. References to international students are to students not falling

2. As explained in the Policy Statement, OfS HESES19 data were used to calculate

SNCs for English providers. This data is available on the OFS website.  $\leftarrow$   $\leftarrow$   $^2$ 

3. Any offer that has been accepted and results in a student starting a course, without

accepted. This does not include the situation where, after exam grades have been

published in August, a provider agrees to give a student their place even though they

modification of the conditions of the offer being made after the offer has been

have not met the conditions of their offer (in line with existing practice).  $\stackrel{\frown}{}$ 

4. Please note that Annex B of the <u>Student number controls</u> policy statement did not

contain a comprehensive list of subjects that are eligible for the additional 5,000

# non-healthcare places. Annex B will be updated to include a full list of HECOS codes No Is there anything wrong with this page?

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Transparency and freedom of information

### 1. For the purposes of SNCs, UK/EU domiciled students means (i) in relation to tuition fee limits, students falling within the Schedule to the Higher Education (Fee Limit Condition) (England) Regulations 2017, and (ii) in relation to tuition fee loan amounts, students falling within Schedule 1 to the Education (Student Support)

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