

PD-2021-14  
7 December – 11 December 2020

### **Political Affairs Digest**

A regular digest of House of Commons, House of Lords and higher education sector business. If you would like more information on parliamentary business, or advice on engaging with Parliament or a parliamentarian, please contact:

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Click on the items in the Table of Contents to go straight to the debates, answers, forthcoming business, etc.

## Table of Contents

<b>Parliamentary Business .....</b>	<b>3</b>
Westminster Hall debate on cancelling GCSEs and A Levels .....	3
Lords Science and Technology Committee session on the R&D Roadmap.....	3
Written statement with a further update on the Lifetime Skills Guarantee.....	4
<b>Forthcoming business.....</b>	<b>4</b>
Home Office oral questions .....	4
Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy oral questions.....	4
Lords Science and Technology Committee meeting on innovation Catapults.....	4
Committee on the Future Relationship with the European Union session on the progress of negotiations .....	5
Lords European Union Committee session on progress of UK-EU future relationship negotiations .....	5
<b>Written Questions .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Plans to ensure students returning have access to testing .....	5
Racial diversity training for university staff.....	6
Pay for student nurses whilst on placement during covid-19 .....	6
Life assurance scheme to student nurses on the front line during Covid-19.....	7
Safety and personal finances of student nurses on coronavirus wards .....	7
Funding available for English students studying nursing in Scotland.....	8
Graduate employment rates for those who completed undergraduate in 2020.....	8
Potential loss of earnings to students prevented from returning to part time work .....	9
Expert group looking at variation of impact of the pandemic on students .....	10
Withdrawal of extra grants for PhD students affected by Covid-19.....	11
<b>Sector News.....</b>	<b>12</b>
Universities Minister, Michelle Donelan: letter to international students.....	12
Welsh government publishes January returns guidance for universities in Wales .....	12
Shadow Education Secretary article on the IHRA definition .....	12
Scottish Government announce January return measures.....	13
Scottish government announce plans for summer 2021 Highers and Advanced Higher exams .....	13
Science Minister Amanda Solloway speech at Universities UK conference.....	13
Office for Students release analysis that HE is in a reasonable financial shape .....	14

## Parliamentary Business

### Westminster Hall debate on cancelling GCSEs and A Levels

On Monday 7 December at 6pm, Jonathon Gullis MP held a Westminster Hall debate relating to the impact of Covid-19 on schools and exams. The debate is based on two petitions:

- e-petition [326066](#) that the Government should cancel GCSEs and A Levels in 2021 due to the disruption of Covid-19
- e-petition [550846](#) that the government should Close down schools and colleges due to the increase in Covid-19 cases

Jonathan Gullis, also a member of the Education and Petitions Committees, asked the minister to keep pressure on Ofqual to ensure that advance notice was given by the end of January, and to ensure that the special considerations process had been "stress-tested" prior to exams being sat.

Bill Esterson, Shadow Minister for International Trade, said that due to lost learning time and different approaches in the devolved Administrations, there was a concern that students wouldn't be able to compete fairly for university places – he asked the minister what could be done to mitigate this.

Responding for the Government, Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills, Gillian Keegan, said that the Government had put education first since the pandemic began. She noted clear evidence that missing school had overall negative impacts on educational progress. She said that the Government maintained that the best method of assessing students' abilities was through exam assessments, but also noted that the Government had put measures to mitigate issues in place.

You can watch the session [here](#).

### Lords Science and Technology Committee session on the R&D Roadmap

On Tuesday 8 December, the Lords Science and Technology Committee held a session on the contribution of innovation Catapults to delivering the R&D Roadmap.

Witnesses for this session include Professor Dame Ottoline Leyser, Chief Executive, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), Dr Ian Campbell, Former Executive Chair, Innovate UK, Alexandra Jones, Director of Science, Research and Innovation, Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

Lord Hollick asked the witnesses if Catapults could do more to work with universities. Professor Dame Layser responded that there was huge diversity of levels of engagement with universities within the Catapult landscape. She said however that there was still too much research Balkanisation, with too much incentive on academics to publish in top journals rather than do research in commercial contexts. Leyser added that universities should see outreach to private business as a core part of their work rather than as an add-on.

Dr Ian Campbell noted that Innovate UK knew collaborative R&D yielded better results and always wished to include academic partners in funding. He went on to say there was a challenge in that Catapults could only access 30 per cent of the Innovate UK R&D funding for any one project and could not access broader research council funding – he said this should be less ringfenced.

On the levelling up agenda, Dame Professor Leyser noted the Strength in Places Fund which was a key UKRI approach to addressing the Levelling-Up agenda by inviting universities to agglomerate to develop local partnerships.

You can watch the session [here](#).

## **Written statement with a further update on the Lifetime Skills Guarantee**

On Wednesday 9 December, the Secretary of State for Education published a written statement with a further update on the lifetime skills guarantee following his initial statement last Wednesday.

The minister stated that starting from April 2021 any adult looking to achieve their first full Level 3 (which is equivalent to a technical certificate or diploma, or two full A levels) will be able to access a fully funded course. The government plan to spend £95 million on this new commitment in one year. The minister provided a list of the areas the government will be offering access to qualifications. A course list will be regularly reviewed to adapt to the needs of the economy.

You can read the area list and full statement [here](#).

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## **Forthcoming business**

### **Home Office oral questions**

On Monday 14 December at 2:30pm, Ministers from the Home Office will answer questions from members of the House.

Labour MP Mary Kelly Foy is tabled to ask a question on what discussions the minister she has had with the Secretary of State for Education on the effect of changes to the immigration system on the UK's ability to attract overseas students.

You can find a list of questions tabled [here](#) and watch [here](#).

### **Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy oral questions**

On Tuesday at 11:30, Ministers from the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy will answer questions from members of the House.

You can find a list of questions tabled [here](#) and watch [here](#).

## **Lords Science and Technology Committee meeting on innovation Catapults**

On Tuesday 15 December at 10:15 am, the Lords Science and Technology Committee will hold a session on the contribution of innovation Catapults to delivering the R&D Roadmap.

Witnesses for this session will include Dick Elsy CBE, CEO, High Value Manufacturing Catapult, Martin McHugh, Interim CEO, Compound Semiconductor Applications Catapult, Nicola Yates OBE, CEO, Connected Places Catapult, Stuart Martin, CEO, Satellite Applications Catapult, Andrew Jamieson, CEO, Offshore Renewable Energy Catapult, Philip New, CEO, Energy Systems Catapult, Dr Jeremy Silver, CEO, Digital Catapult, Matthew Durdy, CEO, Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult, Professor Chris Molloy, CEO, Medicines Discovery Catapult

You can watch this session [here](#).

## **Committee on the Future Relationship with the European Union session on the progress of negotiations**

On Thursday 17 December at 2pm, the Committee on the Future Relationship with the European Union will hold a session on the progress of the negotiations on the UK's Future Relationship with the EU

Witnesses for this session will include Rt Hon Michael Gove MP, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, Cabinet Office, Lord David Frost, Prime Minister's Europe Adviser and Chief Negotiator of Task Force Europe, Cabinet Office.

You can watch this session [here](#).

## **Lords European Union Committee session on progress of UK-EU future relationship negotiations**

On Thursday 17 December at 4:45pm, the Lords European Union Committee will hold a session on the progress of UK-EU future relationship negotiations

The witness for this session is Michael Gove, Lord David Frost, Chief Negotiator of Task Force Europe, Cabinet Office

You can watch this session [here](#).

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## **Written Questions**

### **Plans to ensure students returning have access to testing**

**Rachael Maskell (York Central):** To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what plans the Government has to ensure that students returning from overseas placements for Christmas 2020 have access to no-symptom covid-19 testing. [125276]

**Michelle Donelan (Chippenham):** All universities have been asked to work in partnership with the Department for Education and the Department of Health and Social Care to deliver an asymptomatic mass testing programme. Asymptomatic testing is an important tool to help students adhere to safety measures to protect themselves, their friends, family, and wider community.

All international arrivals, including domestic students on international placement, are required to complete a passenger locator form on arrival in the UK, and passengers travelling from a country not on the national exemption list are required to self-isolate in their accommodation for 14 days. See [here](#).

From 15 December, there will be the option in England to take an accredited COVID-19 test from a private testing provider after 5 days of self-isolation, with a negative result releasing students from the need to isolate from day 6. Students should discuss what provisions are in place to support them in accessing COVID-19 testing.

In addition, asymptomatic testing will be available across participating universities up until the 16 December. Students returning from countries on the national exemption list who would like to take advantage of this provision should discuss what testing provision is available at their university.

## **Racial diversity training for university staff**

**Lord Taylor Of Warwick:** To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the report by Universities UK Tackling racial harassment in higher education, published on 24 November; and what steps they are taking to increase racial diversity training for university staff. [HL10720]

**Lord Parkinson Of Whitley Bay:** The government is committed to levelling up the nation and maximising opportunity for all. As part of that important work, on 16 July 2020, my right hon. Friend, the Prime Minister announced the establishment of the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities, more information about which can be found [here](#).

Our world-leading higher education sector is an engine of social mobility and provides life-changing opportunities for thousands of students from all backgrounds every year. We do not agree with the Universities UK report in every respect, but firmly agree that we must stamp out racism wherever it exists, including in universities and higher education institutions.

## **Pay for student nurses whilst on placement during covid-19**

**Bill Esterson (Sefton Central):** To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the potential merits of placing student nurses on pay Band 4 while on nurse placement during the covid-19 outbreak. [118522]

**Helen Whately (Faversham and Mid Kent):** The Government appreciates the challenges faced by student nurses whilst completing their clinical placements. We are therefore keen to ensure that they have access to the support they need.

On 13 November, the Chief Nursing Officer for NHS England and the Chief Nurse for Health Education England, published a letter to all nursing and midwifery students to inform them of the support available, which includes appropriate access to personal protective equipment, testing and wellbeing support whilst on placement.

In terms of financial support, eligible nursing students will continue to receive payments from the student loans company and also access the Learning Support Fund from the NHS Business Services Authority, which includes a non-repayable grant of at least £5,000 for eligible students, travel and dual accommodation expenses and parental support.

The Government has no further plans for paid placements during the current COVID-19 outbreak.

**Bill Esterson (Sefton Central):** To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment his Department has made of the safety of student nurses working on covid-19 wards; and what assessment he has made of the effect on the finances of student nurses of being at a high risk of having to self-isolate and lose the ability to do other part-time work . [118521]

**Helen Whately (Faversham and Mid Kent):** The Government appreciates the challenges faced by student nurses whilst completing their clinical placements. We are therefore keen to ensure that they have access to the support they need.

On 13 November, the Chief Nursing Officer for NHS England and the Chief Nurse for Health Education England, published a letter to all nursing and midwifery students to inform them of the support available, which includes appropriate access to personal protective equipment, testing and wellbeing support whilst on placement.

In terms of financial support, eligible nursing students will continue to receive payments from the student loans company and also access the Learning Support Fund from the NHS Business Services

Authority, which includes a non-repayable grant of at least £5,000 for eligible students, travel and dual accommodation expenses and parental support.

The Government has no further plans for paid placements during the current COVID-19 outbreak.

**Lord Taylor Of Warwick:** To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to reintroduce paid contracts for student nurses on placements in NHS hospitals. [HL10647]

**Lord Bethell:** The Government has no current plans to reintroduce paid placements for students during the current COVID-19 outbreak.

Eligible nursing students will continue to receive payments from the student loans company and also access the Learning Support Fund from the NHS Business Services Authority, which includes a non-repayable grant of at least £5,000 and further travel, dual accommodation expenses and parental support.

### **Life assurance scheme to student nurses on the front line during Covid-19**

**Mr Clive Betts (Sheffield South East):** To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the implications for his Department's policies of the Royal College of Nursing's campaign for Government to provide a life assurance scheme to English student nurses working on the front line during the second wave of the covid-19 outbreak. [113493]

**Helen Whately (Faversham and Mid Kent):** The Government holds all healthcare students in the highest regard and greatly appreciates their contribution to the National Health Service.

The NHS and Social Care Coronavirus Life Assurance Scheme provides additional financial protection for frontline staff who are employed to deliver care for people and work in environments that carry an increased risk of contracting coronavirus.

Whilst the scheme is designed to cover employed staff, the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care recognises the importance of the role students on placement play in supporting frontline health and social care services and so can exercise his discretion and consider cases from individuals who meet the appropriate eligibility criteria.

The Secretary of State will review each case to decide whether to exercise this discretion and if the other eligibility criteria are met.

### **Safety and personal finances of student nurses on coronavirus wards**

**Bill Esterson (Sefton Central):** To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what assessment he has made of the (a) safety of student nurses on coronavirus wards and (b) effect on the personal finances of those nurses of being at a high risk of having to isolate and lose the ability to do other part-time work. [123580]

**Helen Whately (Faversham and Mid Kent):** The Department of Health and Social Care has indicated that it will not be possible to answer this question within the usual time period. An answer is being prepared and will be provided as soon as it is available.

## **Funding available for English students studying nursing in Scotland**

**Sir Alan Campbell (Tynemouth):** To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what funding is available for English students studying nursing at a university in Scotland. [121172]

**Helen Whately (Faversham and Mid Kent):** English domiciled students studying nursing in Scotland can receive maintenance loans and tuition fee loans from Student Finance England to contribute to their costs of study, subject to meeting the eligibility requirements.

The National Health Service learning support fund, including the new non-repayable training grant of at least £5,000 per academic year, however, is available only to students studying at English universities.

Decisions about the NHS workforce in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, including the funding that they provide for students, are a matter for the devolved administrations of those countries.

## **Graduate employment rates for those who completed undergraduate in 2020**

**Emma Hardy (Kingston upon Hull West and Hessle):** To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what information he holds on graduate employment rates for people who completed an undergraduate degree in 2020. [123685]

**Michelle Donelan (Chippenham):** Statistics on graduate employment in the calendar year 2020 will be published in our annual “Graduate Labour Market Statistics” release in April 2021.

Statistics specifically relating to the 2020 graduating cohort and their outcomes 15 months after graduation will be published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency from their “Graduate Outcomes (GO) survey” in mid-2022.

We recognise that a number of 2020 and 2021 graduates will face challenges gaining employment due to the adverse impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on the UK labour market and economy.

The Recruitment and Employment Federation has found an increase in the confidence of bosses to start hiring again, and we are doing all we can to help people find roles if they are at the start of their career journey. Our nationwide network of Work Coaches is supporting jobseekers and matching them with employers who are recruiting.

As part of the government’s Skills Recovery package plan for jobs, we are investing an additional £32 million in the National Careers Service up to March 2022. This investment will provide individual careers advice for 269,000 more people whose jobs or learning have been affected by the COVID-19 outbreak.

Many higher education providers have developed new and innovative ways to support students and graduates who are looking to continue their studies or to prepare for employment. The Department for Education is working with Universities UK, the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services, the Institute of Student Employers, the Office for Students and the higher education sector to identify and help promote the overall range of support offered to graduates who are looking to enter the labour market or continue their studies at this challenging time.

**Emma Hardy (Kingston upon Hull West and Hessle):** To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what information he holds on the rate of graduate employment for people who finished university in summer 2020. [123684]

**Michelle Donelan (Chippenham):** Statistics on graduate employment in the calendar year 2020 will be published in our annual “Graduate Labour Market Statistics” release in April 2021.

Statistics specifically relating to the 2020 graduating cohort and their outcomes 15 months after graduation will be published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency from their “Graduate Outcomes (GO) survey” in mid-2022.

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### **Potential loss of earnings to students prevented from returning to part time work**

**Emma Hardy (Kingston upon Hull West and Hessle):** To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the potential loss of earnings to students prevented from returning to their term-time jobs by plans for a staggered return to universities in the 2021. [124852]

**Michelle Donelan (Chippenham):** We are committed to prioritising education and want to enable all students who have travelled home for the winter break to return to their universities and resume blended learning. While we are confident that face-to-face teaching as an element of blended learning can be done in COVID-secure environments, the mass movement of students across the country has been identified as a possible transmission risk by public health experts. In order to manage this risk whilst reducing disruption to education, we advise that students return to university during a period staggered over five weeks. Further details can be found in the ‘Students returning to higher education for spring term guidance’ published on 2 December and available [here](#).

We realise that this year has been incredibly difficult for students and we are aware of the disproportionate impact the crisis will have on some students. In these exceptional circumstances some students may face financial hardship. Students experiencing financial hardship as a result of COVID-19 should contact their higher education provider.

The department has worked with the Office for Students (OfS) to clarify that providers are able to use existing funds, worth around £23 million per month for April to July this year and £256 million for academic year 2020/21, towards hardship support. On 2 December, we announced that we will be making available up to £20 million on a one-off basis to support those that need it most, particularly disadvantaged students. Further detail will be set out in due course, and we will work with the OfS to do this.

## **Expert group looking at variation of impact of the pandemic on students**

**Wes Streeting (Ilford North):** To ask the Secretary of State for Education, when the expert group set up to look at differential learning and monitor the variation in the impact of the pandemic on students across the country will report its findings. [124805]

**Nick Gibb (Bognor Regis and Littlehampton):** The Department recognises the challenges faced by schools, teachers, and students, and knows that disruption has been felt differently across the country, between schools and colleges in the same area, and between students within individual institutions. In addition to the package of measures announced to ensure exams are delivered fairly next summer, the Department has also confirmed the launch of an expert group to monitor and advise on lost and differential learning due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The Department is working to finalise the membership of this group and will ensure that membership is representative of the sector, and geographically diverse. The group is expected to make initial recommendations in the early spring and remain in place to monitor the ongoing situation due to the COVID-19 outbreak for the rest of the academic year, reporting regularly.

The package of measures to ensure the fair delivery of exams can be accessed [here](#).

**Wes Streeting (Ilford North):** To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how often and how many times the expert group set up to look at differential learning and monitor the variation in the impact of the pandemic on students across the country plans to meet. [124804]

**Nick Gibb (Bognor Regis and Littlehampton):** The Department recognises the challenges faced by schools, teachers, and students, and knows that disruption has been felt differently across the country, between schools and colleges in the same area, and between students within individual institutions. In addition to the package of measures announced to ensure exams are delivered fairly next summer, the Department has also confirmed the launch of an expert group to monitor and advise on lost and differential learning due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The Department is working to finalise the membership of this group and will ensure that membership is representative of the sector, and geographically diverse. The group is expected to make initial recommendations in the early spring and remain in place to monitor the ongoing situation due to the COVID-19 outbreak for the rest of the academic year, reporting regularly.

The package of measures to ensure the fair delivery of exams can be accessed [here](#).

**Wes Streeting (Ilford North):** To ask the Secretary of State for Education, how many times the expert group set up to look at differential learning and monitor the variation in the impact of the pandemic on students across the country has met to date. [124803]

**Nick Gibb (Bognor Regis and Littlehampton):** The Department recognises the challenges faced by schools, teachers, and students, and knows that disruption has been felt differently across the country, between schools and colleges in the same area, and between students within individual institutions. In addition to the package of measures announced to ensure exams are delivered fairly next summer, the Department has also confirmed the launch of an expert group to monitor and advise on lost and differential learning due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The Department is working to finalise the membership of this group and will ensure that membership is representative of the sector, and geographically diverse. The group is expected to make initial recommendations in the early spring and remain in place to monitor the ongoing situation due to the COVID-19 outbreak for the rest of the academic year, reporting regularly.

The package of measures to ensure the fair delivery of exams can be accessed [here](#).

## **Withdrawal of extra grants for PhD students affected by Covid-19**

**Esther McVey (Tatton):** To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, what assessment he has made of the effect of UK Research and Innovation's decision to withdraw extra grants for PhD students whose research has been affected by covid-19 on (a) those students and (b) long term research environment in the UK. [120863]

**Amanda Solloway (Derby North):** UKRI have acted to support PhD students during the pandemic. In March, UKRI worked to ensure that all the students it funds would continue to receive their maintenance stipend during the lockdown and would not have to suspend their studies; UKRI-funded students in receipt of a costed extension will continue to receive this stipend during their extension period. In April it was announced that UKRI-funded PhD students in the final year, whose studies have been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic would be provided with additional support.

A review of the initial UKRI COVID-19 extension policy was published, bringing together evidence from students, grant holders and university management teams. On the 11th November, UKRI provided a further £19.1 million of funding, which particularly aims to support students who have recently gone into their final year of study (funding end date before or on 30 September 2021) and those with ongoing support needs. Students with ongoing support needs include disabled students, students with a long-term illness, those who are neurodivergent or those with caring responsibilities.

Combined, these two interventions have meant that UKRI has made over £60 million of financial support available to students most impacted by the pandemic. It is estimated that this funding is available for up to 12,000 students (over half of the students that UKRI funds). We are encouraging all PhD students to discuss with their supervisors how projects can be adjusted to complete their doctoral education within their funded period. We will continue to monitor how the pandemic is affecting PhD students and the wider research system.

In regard to the long term research environment, all UKRI funded PhD students are guaranteed their funding within their funded period. The support noted above should ensure the vast majority of students are able to complete their studies on time, or later with support, and able to embark on the next step of their research career.

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## Sector News

### Universities Minister, Michelle Donelan: letter to international students

On Thursday 3 December, Universities Minister, Michelle Donelan, wrote a letter to both current and prospective international students. It thanks international students for their patience and understanding during this challenging period, and signposts them to the latest information in line with the latest announcements in England, including winter travel and return in January.

You can read the letter [here](#).

### Welsh government publishes January returns guidance for universities in Wales

On Monday 7 December, the Welsh government announced its plans for students returning after the Christmas break.

The new guidance sets out the planned approach for January including:

- Students will be invited to return to campus over a four-week period, starting from 11 January, with a phased return to in-person teaching.
- Universities will have to prioritise students who most need to return early, such as those studying in healthcare professions, those on placements or who need access to campus facilities.
- The continuation of the lateral flow testing pilots in Welsh universities, for asymptomatic students, which began in late November.

On testing, the guidance states that students will be asked to take a lateral flow test when they return to their university accommodation, before being asked to avoid meeting socially for three days. Those students will then take a second test. Students not taking a test will be advised to 'lay low' and not mix for 14 days. The guidance also covers travel and responsible student behaviour during this period.

You can read the announcement [here](#).

### Shadow Education Secretary article on the IHRA definition

On Monday 7 December, the Shadow Education Secretary Kate Green MP wrote an article in the Jewish Chronicle on the adoption of the IHRA definition.

In the article she said that any university with concern about freedom of speech should look to their peers who have adopted the definition, recognising it is not a barrier to free speech but a framework in which to recognise and react promptly to antisemitism.

She also said that it is a cross party issue and references the Office for Students' announcement that they will explore what can be done to ensure adoption of the definition, including the possibility of placing further conditions on funding but she hopes this action is not needed.

You can read the full article [here](#).

## **Scottish Government announce January return measures**

On Tuesday 8 December, the Scottish Government announced that universities in Scotland will stagger the return of students to campuses over 'at least' six weeks.

The announcement states that students (with some limited exceptions) should initially plan to restart their studies at home and only return to campuses and term-time accommodation when notified to do so by their universities. It also states that students will continue to be offered lateral flow Covid-19 testing.

Other student measures outlined for Term 2 will include:

- any student who has remained in university and other accommodation during the holiday can continue to do so, whilst observing the relevant levels restrictions
- universities and other student accommodation providers should plan for how best to manage shared accommodation in ways that reduce the risk of transmission of the virus between students and between households, drawing on lessons learned from the autumn term
- universities and providers should offer additional support for any students who may have to self-isolate upon their return.

You can read the announcement [here](#).

## **Scottish government announce plans for summer 2021 Highers and Advanced Higher exams**

On Tuesday 8 December, Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Education John Swinney MSP announced to Holyrood that Highers and Advanced Highers exams will be cancelled next year. This follows the same [decision](#) made by the Welsh government on 2021 exams in November.

The decision means that no exams will take place in Scotland next summer, instead students will receive grades based on teacher assessments of classroom work throughout the year. The Scottish Government's statement also confirmed that the assessment model will be based on the approach agreed for National 5 awards, details of which can be found on the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) [website](#).

You can read the announcement [here](#).

## **Science Minister Amanda Solloway speech at Universities UK conference**

On Thursday 10 December, Science Minister Amanda Solloway made a speech at Universities UK's online event on research and innovation conference.

The minister outlined the interventions the Government have made to support research and innovation during the pandemic, including the £280million made available to protect research in June and the extension in funding for UKRI PhD students. She highlighted the £14.6 billion investment in research and development next year as set out in the Spending Review and the three year commitment for core research budgets in UKRI.

The minister said she wanted to see the UK play a greater part in global innovation expanding our share of innovative markets, leading the world in the transformative technologies and sectors of the future.

The minister spoke of the government's Places Strategy, stating that it will not just be about how much is allocated in each area but rather about outcomes, therefore the focus must be on the impact of the R&D system can have across the country. The R&D Places Strategy will be set out in detail next year.

On supporting scientists and researchers to collaborate with their peers globally, the minister highlighted reforms to the immigration system, which includes the introduction of the Global Talent Visa and that as part of the R&D Roadmap they will be working to associate to Horizon Europe, or to put in place alternatives that keep supporting global collaboration in innovation and research.

Finally, she welcomed Universities UK's recent report on 'Managing Risks in Internationalisation'

You can read the full speech [here](#).

### **Office for Students release analysis that HE is in a reasonable financial shape**

On Friday 11 December, the Office for Students published analysis which found that English higher education is "in reasonable financial shape" despite the impact of the pandemic. It states, however, that there is significant variation in the position of different providers.

The report finds that strong cash balances, increased but sustainable borrowing including through government-backed loans, and the fall in income from international students' fees being less than feared, have combined to leave the sector in a reasonably stable financial position.

You can read the report [here](#).