

## **COVID Travel Advice – Term Two**

### **Guidance for Staff Travelling on University Business**

To enable the University to continue to operate as normally as possible the University shall take a risk-based approach to travel whilst upholding its duty of care for all staff and students when they work overseas. Additional consideration to the overall risk potential for COVID 19 must be given, over and above the usual travel risk assessment.

The Government has removed restrictions on international travel, however you should not travel to countries or territories that are placed on the [Government's 'red list'](#). This list is kept under constant review and countries or territories can be added at any time, therefore it is important to check the status of the countries you are travelling through and to, along with the re-entry requirements for the UK.

The following approval requirements for overseas travel are as below:

- Staff must first seek approval from their Head of School / Department for any overseas travel. In addition, all requests involving overseas travel must also be approved by a member of USET.
- Any international travel involving students must be approved by both the Head of School and also the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost
- Travel will only be approved when no virtual-based alternative form of contact/research/experience is available.
- Where travel is proved to be **essential**, the usual travel risk assessment must be prepared in advance of departure.

The University has an existing [Fieldwork Code of Practice](#), this process and template documentation should be used for further guidance and to capture the risk mitigation in place, including to limit the transmission and spread of COVID19.

Completed risk assessments must be emailed to [insurance@hope.ac.uk](mailto:insurance@hope.ac.uk) in advance of travel.

The University's Health and Safety Adviser can also provide further advice on request.

### **International Travel**

International travel is now permitted, however testing and quarantine rules differ by destination, even if you are fully vaccinated. There is a single 'red list' of countries where travel is only advised in the most extreme circumstances. You should not travel to countries or territories on the red list on University business.

### **Travelling in the UK, Ireland and Channel Islands**

There are no restrictions on travel within England.

You should check the rules at your destination if you're planning to travel to Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, or to Ireland or the Channel Islands as there may be separate restrictions in place.

The pandemic situation is still very fluid globally. Surges in infection rates are common which can lead to changes to restrictions in-country and the possibility of a change in the travel

restrictions both in and out of the UK with little or no warning. Travellers need to consider and **document a contingency plan** as part of their [Travel Risk Assessment](#).

In response to Government guidance and national restrictions, the University may withdraw permission for travel at any time.

### **Country Specific COVID Risks**

The following COVID-focused assessment must be considered as part of the approval process for all overseas travel requests.

Overall country risk:

- latest COVID situation ([coronavirus statistics/coronavirus worldometer](#))
- health care infrastructure (ACE/ Red24 travel country report – available on request from [safety@hope.ac.uk](mailto:safety@hope.ac.uk))
- entry / exit requirements of the country ([Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office advice](#))
- [re-entry rules](#) for entering England
- personal risk including pre-existing medical conditions and vaccination status.

### **Personal Accident & Travel Insurance**

The University's insurance does not cover 'claims of Cancellation Curtailment, Change of Itinerary Rearrangement or Replacement of any kind directly or indirectly arising from, relating to or in any way connected with the Coronavirus Disease 19 (COVID-19) (or any mutation or variation thereof) and / or its outbreak'.

This means that the University is directly liable for any costs arising from the need to change travel arrangements, pay for quarantine hotels, book additional flights etc due to changes in COVID restrictions while abroad. This could be a significant cost and will be borne by the School / Department so you are asked to consider this when requesting international travel.

### **International Students**

The University recognises that the pandemic may mean that international students face issues in travelling between their home country and the UK. The University will ensure that international students are kept fully updated on any changes to UK entry requirements. We will also provide support and guidance to any of our students that are unable to travel, due to new travel restrictions being imposed in either their home country or the UK.

### **Travel FAQs**

#### **1. Can I make bookings for hotels and flights now?**

Yes, where approval has been granted for travel you are advised to book refundable fares for all flights and hotels.

#### **2. I am planning a placement in 2022 which includes overseas travel, what does the University advise?**

If this is deemed to be an essential part of the course please consider the guidance above and discuss with your Head of School.

### **3. How do I book and make travel arrangements?**

Travel remains restricted to **essential** trips only. For any approved travel you must book via the Travel Management Company (TMC) 'Selective Travel Management' regardless of the trip value.

All UK Flights must be booked through the TMC. Airbnb and other similar room-letting agents should be avoided as they cannot meet standards of health and safety and insurance standards required by the University.

Selective Travel Management: [hope@selective-travel.co.uk](mailto:hope@selective-travel.co.uk)

### **4. What shall I include in a contingency plan?**

A contingency plan should include, but is not limited to:

- A consideration of the likely healthcare support available should you fall ill during the trip.
- The arrangements in place to cover the cost of this, either via third party insurance or other arrangements?
- Consider whether cash payment may be required upfront for treatment and plan for this.
- If you are unable to return to the UK as planned or your itinerary needs to change at short notice – is there alternative accommodation available?
- If you are travelling with others, including students what plan is in place if a member of the group starts to display COVID symptoms?