



## **Covid-19 – Guidance from the Department of Education and Skills for students in the English language education sector**

If you are from overseas and have travelled to Ireland to study English in an English Language college, please read this.

There are growing numbers of Corona Virus Covid-19 cases in Ireland. This is changing every day. The Government wants to be sure that all students have the information they need to keep safe.

This information sheet gives you guidance on:

- **Health advice about Covid-19**
- **Immigration Status**
- **Information for Employees and the Self-Employed**

This information was updated on 1st April 2020. If you are reading this after this date, please check [www.education.ie/Covid19](http://www.education.ie/Covid19) to see if this advice has changed in any way.

### **Health advice about Covid-19**

You can help to avoid the spread of Covid-19 by following the advice provided by the HSE.

- Please see [information here in several languages](#), or see [www.education.ie/Covid19](http://www.education.ie/Covid19).
- Get up-to-date information and advice on Covid-19 from [www.hse.ie](http://www.hse.ie) or from official Irish health authority Twitter feeds: @HSELive and @roinnslaite.
- Keep in contact with your English language college. The college will tell you about your courses. You may be able to do college work online.

You may wish to return to your home country. This may get harder as airlines cancel/restrict flights to and from Ireland.

All schools and colleges in Ireland have been closed because of public health advice. More information about this can be found at the website of the Department of Education and Skills [www.education.ie/covid19](http://www.education.ie/covid19). Your college may also provide information.

## **Immigration Status**

If you have immigration permissions, check the Department of Justice and Equality's Immigration Service Delivery advice and updates here:

<http://www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Pages/Home>.

## **Automatic Renewal of Immigration Permissions**

If your immigration permission will expire between 20 March 2020 and 20 May 2020, you will be granted automatic renewal for a period of 2 months.

This renewal is on the same basis as your existing permission and the same conditions will continue to apply.

If this applies to you, we recommend that you visit the Department of Justice and Equality's website here:

<http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/PR20000037>

## **Conditions about Attendance**

Where your English language college has closed due to Government advice regarding Covid-19, you will be considered to have met your attendance requirement for the shutdown period.

## **Conditions about Work**

If you are a student who holds a 'Stamp 2' permission, you can now work for up to 40 hours a week while your English language college has closed due to Government advice regarding Covid-19. This is conditional on you completing your course online if this service is provided by your school/college and represents a short term and temporary measure.

All other rules stay the same.

For further and more detailed information on these measures, please see Department of Justice and Equality's Frequently Asked Questions document here:

[http://www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Immigration-Service-Delivery-Covid-19-FAQ-2\[1\].pdf/Files/Immigration-Service-Delivery-Covid-19-FAQ-2\[1\].pdf](http://www.inis.gov.ie/en/INIS/Immigration-Service-Delivery-Covid-19-FAQ-2[1].pdf/Files/Immigration-Service-Delivery-Covid-19-FAQ-2[1].pdf).

## **Information for Employees and the Self-Employed**

If you have been working in Ireland and have lost your job because of the current pandemic, you are eligible to apply for the Government's Covid-19 Pandemic Unemployment Payment.

Students will need to provide a Personal Public Service number (PPSN) to apply for this payment. The payment will be made at the rate of €350 per week and will be in place for the duration of the crisis up to a maximum period of 12 weeks. Information on this payment and how to apply is available here:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/service/be74d3-covid-19-pandemic-unemployment-payment/>.

There is also a different scheme your employer may use. This is the Temporary COVID-19 Wage Subsidy Scheme. It allows employers to pay their employees during the current pandemic. Employers will be refunded up to 70 percent of an employee's wages - up to a level of €410.

The employer is expected to make their best efforts to maintain as close to 100% of normal income as possible for the subsidised period.

This payment replaces the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection's Employer Refund Scheme announced on 15th March, and any business that received refunds under the current scheme do not need to reapply.

This is being administered by the Revenue Commissioners. This approach helps maintain the link between employers and workers and make the return to work easier. Further information on this scheme is available online at:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/service/578596-covid-19-wage-subsidy/>

**Please contact your English language college with any questions.**

**Ends**