

Study Abroad

Transcript

Faisal Hussain

So, we will make a start. We will start off with Studio Broad Team. The Studio broad team is actually four assessors who work this workflow. Some of you may know them already. You might have had communications from them. It is Andrew, Charlene, Megan and Margaret. This team was created several years ago to make the process within SLC more efficient for university and students who would be going abroad and required payments to be made outside the normal instalment structure. The main priority for us is to process manual payments for students rather than the standard three instalments.

That, in essence, is what we are about. During COVID, as you may know, COVID did affect a lot of things and unfortunately, it did prevent a lot of students from going abroad.

Basically, what we were offering was a lot of students were doing online studies at the abroad institutes. If the student was still in the UK and was doing studies with the overseas provider, they were still classed as 'doing a year abroad.' Both the universities would still only be able to charge £1,385 abroad rate as the student would be doing- still attending the HEP abroad, but online. The student however, wouldn't get the abroad rate. The student would be getting the elsewhere or parental rate in accordance to the UK as they would be living in the UK.

However, if the student spends more than 10 weeks at the university in the UK, the university can charge up to £9,250. If they did one term in the UK university and did they rest abroad, the HPs can charge up to that amount.

We'll be going through a few examples. The first example is we've got a student who is doing the full year, doing abroad but they're doing it online. This is the one we just mentioned. So, the student in this case would be getting elsewhere or parental rate for all the terms and their tuition fees would be the abroad tuition fees.

The second one we have is, so a student is doing online studies for term one, but then for terms two and three, they are physically attending the university. In this case, what would happen for terms one, when the student is in the UK, they will be able to get the elsewhere or the parental rate maintenance loan. But when they are physically attending their university abroad, the student will get the abroad rate maintenance loan.

Then the final one is, the student for term one is attending the university in the UK. They're not doing abroad studies. Then the other two terms, they are doing with the abroad institute. In this case, the university would be able to charge £9,250. We have some data here and it kind of shows how COVID has affected students going abroad.

In 1920, 82 universities sent in their spreadsheets to us. Over 10,000 students were recorded to go study abroad. Now, you may notice 2021 academic year is not on here. The reason for that is, that is the year COVID prevented a lot of students to go and study abroad.

Therefore, we only- about 150 student actually managed to go off and do study abroad. Now, 21, 22, things did get- some restrictions came off and they started to get better, but we received 67 spreadsheets from the universities and over 8,000 students were recorded. Now, as things are looking better, we do hope that this does go up for the next academic year.

The study board process of evidence. For clarity, this slide just tells you what the assessing teams look for when they're trying to determine if a student is going abroad. The first thing they will do is they will check a spreadsheet called the [HEB? 0:06:27] confirmation sheet. This is what they'll check first.

Those of you who are new or not familiar with this, we will be going through this at a later slide on what HEB confirmation sheet is. If on this spreadsheet, they cannot locate that student and confirm they're going to do study abroad, they would then go and check to see if we received a [inaudible 0:06:53] form or a HEP letter. Again, if that doesn't confirm and we haven't received any of them, we would then go and check the university website and to see, does it offer study abroad for that course? Now, even if we can't get an answer from that, that is when we will change the student to be in the university for all terms in the UK. We will request the student- we will contact them and tell them we need confirmation of their study abroad.

The maintenance for 22, 23 So I'm not going to go through the figures on here. However, the main reason we have this slide is, those of the universities who are based in London, your students will ask you the question why they are getting less maintenance Loan than they did the year before when they're doing study abroad. The reason for that is the London rate maintenance loan is higher than the abroad rate. However, the rest of the universities outside of London, your students will be getting- for abroad rate, will be higher than if they were elsewhere or their parental home.

Placements abroad, they're not classed as a study abroad. Therefore, they will be awarded the reduced rate maintenance loan to the student. However, if the student is on [Erasmus? 0:08:46] or a [inaudible 0:08:47], they will then be able to get the full maintenance loan.

However, if the student has 10 weeks or more at the university, then any part year placement will be paid in the UK rates maintenance loan and not the reduced rate maintenance loan. For example, you have one student who is going into Germany to Mercedes Benz. They're doing the full year there. They're not on Erasmus, they're not on [inaudible 0:09:28], they will get the reduced rate maintenance loan only. But you have another student who is doing the same thing, however, they'll be going only for two terms. For the first term they spend in the UK, and terms two and three, they'll go to Germany. Now, the student in this case, will receive the normal maintenance loan for terms one, two and three one.

And they will get the elsewhere or parental home, on these cases, as this is- so, they won't get the abroad rate as this is not classed as study abroad. The main takeaway from this slide is if your student has been accepted in Erasmus or tutoring, let us know. Contact us and let us know. The difference between the reduced rate maintenance loan and the full maintenance loan is thousands of pounds. During an Erasmus scheme- so, Erasmus is a European funded mobility scheme which allows for students to take part in and exchange scheme between different HEPs.

Now, tutoring is something new which has come in. Now, the main difference is that Erasmus was only for students in Europe. Tutoring covers all students around the world regardless of where they're going. But any students you had who are used to be on Erasmus is the same. Tutoring students will get the same what students on Erasmus would get.

If they accept this scheme, they would receive the full maintenance loan. Manual payments. With manual payments, what we have to do is we have to manually go into the system and override it to give- change your payments dates outside the normal standard structure. Now, there are three types of manual payments we do offer. Now, these do need to be requested. They don't get automatically given and these are requested by the HEPs. The first one is the first paid, so you get the first instalment paid early. Now, there's no restriction where the student's going for this one.

They can be going anywhere in the world, they can get the first instalment paid early. However, with this one though, there's one thing to note. Any student who is down to go abroad for studies, they will automatically get paid 25 days in advance. The system automatically does that. Now, the date the student wants- you've got a date the student wants to be paid. If that falls within the 25 days, you're fine. You don't need to request a manual payment. However, if the student- the debt falls outside of the 25 days, then we would need a manual payment. With that, the 25 days thing is for example, the payments will be made on the 12th of September.

We'll call it a month because it's 25 working days, so we'll call it a month. They'll get paid on 12th of August. However, the student wants to be paid on the 6th of August. Then we would have to do a manual payment for that. The second one we offer is we can pay two instalments. The full entitlement can be split up between two instalments.

Now, this is offered to students who are going anywhere outside of Europe with that one. The final one, we can pay the full entitlement, or we can pay that in one installment. Now, this is only for countries, China, Japan and Russia. With these, the reason we do this is because these are the countries who require for the student to have all of the funding in their bank account before the travel for visa purposes. Again, with these manual payments, these would need to be requested. How can you request the manual payment? We have three options. First one is a study abroad template.

This is the one we recommend. Everyone would have already received a template copy. The second one you can send is a CUB form, so a course abroad form. With this one, you just complete the form for each student and send it in.

Then finally, we can accept letters from the HEP, informing us that the student is going abroad.

Now, the thing to takeaway is the CUB form and the letter, it is important to put on there that you requested a manual payment because if you don't, then the student will just get paid in the normal three instalments. The spreadsheet, however, we ask you to complete it all and it does have a section asking you if you want a manual- if the student needs a manual payment or not. That will prompt you. Overall, out of the three, we do recommend the first one because it's more efficient. You can send multiple students on there. You can send as many different spreadsheets on them.

So, if you've got 150 students, it's easier to be able to just put them on the spreadsheet and get them sent off rather than completing 150 CUB forms or writing 150 letters and sending them in. With this, it is more- with the spreadsheet, that is more easier for yourselves. It's easier for us and for the students, it gives them- it's more efficient for the customer journey as well.

The CUB form, what happens? Once you've sent it off, we will receive it. Once we've received this, this will get scanned onto our system. Then depending on the time of the year, it can take up to six weeks before an assessment team looks at this. Then the assessment team will then look at it and then they'll pass it to the study abroad team, who would then work this.

Now, I'm going to move onto the spreadsheet. If you send a spreadsheet, you skip all those steps. You skip the sending it in via post, the scanning [inaudible 0:17:57] you send this straight to us and we're working within three days. But most of the time, we're working within one working day and we respond back to you. With the spreadsheet, it is firstly- it gets reviewed by the study abroad team.

Any students which are accepted for a manual payment will be added to our master sheet. The reason it gets put on there because at a later date, manual payments will be- we will use that to request manual payments. Then every single student who is going abroad will be added to a HEP confirmation sheet, which I mentioned before. All students get put on there and that HEP confirmation sheet is used for- so, the assessing teams use it and also, travel grant team use it. It's not just for students who need a manual payment or study abroad. We just- we need it- if they're going abroad, we need that information then. What we do, we then send the spreadsheet back to you and it'll be on there, we will say if we accepted them for the manual payment that has been requested.

If we haven't, we put the reason why we haven't done it. Now, we send it back so you have all the information with yourselves so you know which student is going to get manual payments and which ones aren't. The HEP spreadsheets. At the launch of the academic year, early March, we send out a bulk email to the universities we work with.

It's already been sent this year. However, if you have not received this bulk email, you could contact us on our email address and will be giving at the end, and we can get that sent to you. But every single university who has or does normally send us spreadsheets, you would have received this already. This needs to be fully completed and it needs to include all students. Regardless if they're doing study abroad, they're doing placement abroad, or if they need a manual payment or not. We want all of them on there. The spreadsheet has five tabs. The first tab is just a guidance tab. The second one is a scenario index.

It gives you an idea what the student is entitled to based on the circumstances. The third one is a guidance on how to complete the spreadsheet. Now, the fourth tab is a 25 days calculator. It's going back to when we were talking about when the system pays you 25 days in advance. What you can do, you can have the date where- if you put in the date when the student would get paid, that calculator will let you know when the student would get paid. Then you can determine if you need to request a manual payment or not. The final tab is the tab you complete and send to us, which should be on the next slide. This is what the spreadsheet looks like. The first slip in the pink, that is what we complete.

That's for study enroll team to complete and that is where- we will put it on there if we have accepted the student for manual payment or if we haven't, and we will put a reason why. The example we've got up here is early payment not required as the system will pay the student on time. In this example, the date what's being requested, the system will already pay it at that date or before that date. We will need the student's full information on the spreadsheet. We would need the course title, so the course they're going to do, where they're going, what institute they'll be at, what year they're on. Then we will need the start dates, the end dates of each of the terms and we would need what they're doing.

Do they study abroad? Are they doing placement? We need that information on there. The bit there, 'comments, additional information,' this one is- I would just recommend you just leave that blank unless you have a student who has some circumstances which are outside the norm. Otherwise, you don't have to put anything in there. The pink section, SFE comments, that again is for us to complete and that is- so, including the first bit and this, this is where we- when you get the spreadsheet back you have this information, and most of the time we will put in something in the comments there in regards to each student. The communication to the student. The student will continue to get the notification of entitlement.

They can still view their payment dates online. However, these will be incorrect as- if the student has been accepted on manual payment, they will be paid at different dates and installments. To correct this, what we do, once we receive the students and the ones who have been accepted on manual payments, we will send them an email. They'll contact them and let them know that they're been accepted.

Then when the application's fully processed and approved, we will then send them another email and we will let them know the dates they'll be getting paid.

The students will have all the information from us, and therefore, they will not need to ask you any of this information. If you have a student for example- if your student comes to you and asks, "I received a notification of entitlement but it says I'm going to get paid in three installments but I'm meant to get two." Just ask them the question if they receive their email from us. Most probably, they have. If they have, just tell them to refer to that. All the information's there. If you some reason the student's deleted the email from us or they've said they haven't received it, you can email us, and we can arrange that for you. How can you help? Firstly, promote early applications from the students. All the information you receive, we submit that as soon as practical. You don't have to wait for all the students. You can send them on different spreadsheets.

We even have one university who sends in their spreadsheet every single day and that absolutely fine because soon as they send them in, we get the information and we get it processed. September is when the normal start course- the course will start. However, students will go away in July and August.

So, it's very essential that we have all this funding in place before they go. July is- I mean, it's April now, but July's around the corner. That's why we say, "Students to apply as soon as possible," so the universities can send us their information when we have that. Again, any queries, anything you need, you could email us and you can contact us. If you would require a phone call and you find that more beneficial, if you drop us an email, we will call you back. Common requests. The common requests we get are- so, you have been asked for a CUB form when you've already submitted the spreadsheet.

Now, if-For the student you've been asked for the CUB form, if that student you have already sent on the spreadsheet, you don't need to send a CUB form. The reason you might have been asked for it is maybe someone from the [inaudible 0:27:44] or a contact center, when they've had a look, they haven't located the information and therefore, they've followed the process and asked for a CUB form. If in doubt though, you can drop us an email or we can have a look and we can confirm that we've received the details from you. Another one is that the student has contacted us stating that their funding is incorrect. In these cases, again, email us the information over and we will review the applications.

Withdrawal suspensions. Due to certain circumstances, things change and not all students are able to complete their study abroad. If you have students or if they decide they don't want to go and they stay in the UK or for some reason they can't go, if the student returns during the year to the UK or the student suspends their course during the year, we need to be informed. You can email us on our email address. A lot of these- you remember, during COVID, a lot of this did happen when students were coming back or they weren't able to go, they suspended. Regarding suspension though, I would say that we need to be informed as the study abroad team. However, you still require a change of circumstances sent in for the suspension for audit purposes. What happens is, if we- as soon as get this information, we can prevent over payments for the students because their fundings will change if any of these happen.

We can assess and process and then that can prevent their overpayments. Student Finance, Wales, study abroad. They offer the same process as we do. The same spreadsheet which you would have received. That spreadsheet you can email direct to them. I would say though that any students you've got for Student Finance England, not to put them on the Student Finance Wales spreadsheets and vice versa because we can't access each other's students. Then the email address is here. It is S-F-W_resolve_team@SLC.co.uk.

I would say at this point, any email addresses which I'm giving out today on this slide, these are for the universities use only. Not to be given to any students or copied into any of the emails as the student will have their own means of contacting us. If the students did start getting hold of these email addresses, that's just going to delay our response time to the universities. Travel grants.

Travel grants are not dealt with by the study abroad team. They have created a document which would have been sent with the bulk email, which you could review for guidance. Their email address is also here travel_grant_query@SLC.co.uk.

This is our email address study_abroad@SLC.co.uk. You can contact us from this email address if you have any queries.

If anyone- I'm going to come down to some questions. If anyone has any queries that you can put through the app. I will be getting to you back- replying to you. I would say though, if you put your name on them and not anonymous, so I can reply back to you. I will take some questions in the room if anyone has them. If you have any questions and if you raise your hand, Sam or else someone from his team will give you the mic if anyone's got any questions.

Audience member

You mentioned about sending emails for changes and so forth and earlier in the year, you send emails. You mentioned about using email addresses. When we have queries, we'd normally ring the HEP services team. Also, if there's any changes, we sent [inaudible 0:33:39] rather than [inaudible 0:33:40]. Do you still need a HEP services letter, even though we send this [inaudible 0:33:45] or do you need both?

Faisal Hussain

It's only if they've suspended, we need to know. But if you've already sent the letter or change of circumstance, then we don't need it. We still need to be contacted though so we know, as the study abroad team.

Audience member

It's not about the suspension. It's about basically, so the application- so we get the correct fee because if you don't receive the usual study abroad details, the students, when they go and how long, and so forth, they get the standard fee instead of the correct fee.

Faisal Hussain

Yeah. In regards that, anyone who's going to study abroad or they're going abroad, we need to be contacted. You can call us but you'll have to email us and we'll call you back. But in regards to- anything you pass to the HEP services and stuff, that'll get logged. But if it's any changes or something that'll affect the abroad, then we need to know as a team.

Audience member

Sometimes the student doesn't provide the study abroad details, so we try to provide it either by a HEP services letter or [inaudible 0:35:18]?

Faisal Hussain

Yeah. If you send a HEP letter, that will come to us. If you confirm on there but also, if they need a manual payment, if you wrote on there that they need the manual payment, that will come to us.

Audience member

Can we do away with the HEP services letter we've just sent [inaudible 0:35:33] instead with all the information? Because that's what we've been advised when we ring HEP services.

Faisal Hussain

Okay. I think- because we need to put all this information onto the spreadsheet. The one before [inaudible 0:35:53]. If you sent in through a change of circumstance, that won't come to our team. That can take, depending on time of year, that can even take up to six weeks but if you send it straight to us, we would probably get it within a day. We'll process it within a day. Because otherwise, you would have to send that for each student. You'd have to send a change of circumstance for each student, informing that they'll go and study abroad. It is easier to just send it that way because there's no guarantee that it'll get to us for the student to get paid in time.

Audience member

Another question is, we have students that- do you know the payment is automatic? Basically, you'd only confirm registration, and it gets paid automatic. Later down the line we find out that the student hasn't enrolled. Therefore, to get them enrolled, we try to contact the student but if they don't enroll, we'll have to suspend the student. That's when the student contacts us saying, "Why has my payment stopped?" Because the student hasn't fully registered?

Faisal Hussain

Yeah. If the student was going to study abroad, and you've suspended- we've received the information, you've suspended, but they've come back to you, but the application, we do have the application, if you come back to us and confirm- if you email us direct to our inbox, we will go into that student where we can resume it.

Audience member

No, no. What I mean is that students go abroad. They don't realize that they have to be enrolled into the university because they've got to enroll so that we can upload their marks and everything when they complete their study abroad. But we find out that the student hasn't enrolled, so we sort of like put a stop to it by sending suspension if the student doesn't enroll. And then they contact the university to say, "Why have you stopped that payment?" "Because haven't enrolled. We'll resume it as soon as you register.

Faisal Hussain

As soon as they get in touch and let you know that, and as soon as we know, we can get that sorted for them.

Audience member

Yeah. It's just because it's automatic, that's- so the student just assumes they don't need to do anything so they just get their payment but we do at our intervention.

Faisal Hussain

We have, with our payments it depends because we need to have a confirmation from the university of attendance before we release payments. It's a registration, so the university [inaudible 0:38:44]. Then obviously, it tells our system it's been confirmed. A lot of the time, with the university, the university will send it through and then we will release the payments if that answers your question. Normally, it's got to do with-

Audience member

No, what I'm saying is, it's automatic. There's no registration to confirm. The payment's automatic, that's what I'm trying to say for the study for our students.

Faisal Hussain

Is it?

Audience member

Yeah.

Faisal Hussain

The only way would be to contact us if you could. That's the only way we can sort that out for you.

Audience member

Okay.

Faisal Hussain

Okay.

Audience member

Hello. My question is regarding the COC worklist. We have a lot of students who are stuck on there because they have pre-Erasmus registered but then they've changed because that's gone downhill and they've switched to a UK placement. Often the fees do get stuck with the Erasmus grant included, the 1385 rate. When I call I get different advice with how to solve that. Some advisors would say, "Just send a COC, your manual one and explain what's happened in there." Other people say that they need a particular letter with the placement details. I just wondered what the best resolve to that is. Would it be to email this study abroad team the address you provided or not?

Faisal Hussain

If you just contact us straight, that skips all the steps of sending this or ringing up or anything because if you email us and let us know, the students details this is it, we'll go in and change it. But if we need anymore, we'll email you. Then you've got us emailing you back, and you're not ringing up or sending changing circumstances, which are waiting for weeks. I think that's one good thing that we've got that there so we can just communicate with you and get- it's because the main reason is to get students paid on time, so they're not abroad without any money, basically.

Audience member

Yeah. That's brilliant

Audience member 2

Thank you for this. A few alarm bells and red flags going off in my head because there's a lot that we're not doing right now, it seems that need to be happen. Just to kind of reiterate to me, obviously, the spreadsheet we could look into to start doing but if we are doing a change of circumstance for a student on a study abroad, either because they've withdrawn, they're suspended, or perhaps they've changed to not study abroad, do we then need to follow up with an email to yourself?

Faisal Hussain

Yeah, but that's only if- that will be if when you start using the spreadsheet. If I could just- in could speak to you at the end to give you more information in regards to that. But regards- so we still require a suspension as normal. It won't give you an option to put study abroad. You just say, "The student suspended their course. However, if you drop us an email and say, "This student has suspended from the course," then we can go and review it, and sort that out for him. But for audit purposes, we will still the COC.

Audience member 2

One other scenario is that we've got a course that offers abroad year and it's optional. We currently have on CMS, one option of the course with the study abroad year and one with. If the change their mind and then we're moving them over to the other variation, so it's just a transfer COC, again, do we need to let you know or will the fact that we're changing that change their entitlement automatically?

Faisal Hussain

If they're changing from not doing it, to doing it or the other way around, you send in a transfer task so it'll be turned around. But then you would send that students details on the spreadsheet to us because that student- so we can put it and have it on our HEP confirmation sheet because the student might ask for travel grants. That information is there, or when someone's assessing that application that's come past it, to confirm it, they can look at that. confirm it, they can look at that. Then if the student does require early manual payment, we can do that as well.

Audience member 2

Okay, brilliant. Thank you.

Audience member 3

I've never seen the spreadsheet. Is there a way to get a copy of it because I'm not sure that our institution's processing it?

Faisal Hussain

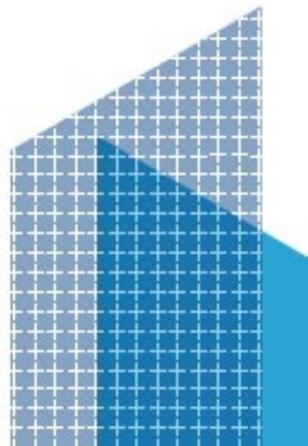
The-

Audience member 3

I've just checked my emails and I don't get copied into it.

Faisal Hussain

Have you noted our email address down?



Audience member 3

Yes.

Faisal Hussain

If you drop us an email, they'll send you all the information. They'll drop you an email and then if you have any questions regarding it, they'll answer them as well.

Audience member 3

It's just to make sure because I think somebody else does it in our institution, but I suspect they use the letters and not the spreadsheet

Faisal Hussain

The spreadsheets are actually easier but if you drop an email, they can have a look and tell you if they're already received it from you or not

Audience member 4

I'd be interested- like the lady over there, I'm just concerned we're not doing what we should be doing timely. Hopefully we are but I'd like to know.

Faisal Hussain

We've [inaudible 0:44:43] let you know. Does anyone else have any other questions? Thank you very much everyone for coming and enjoy the rest of your day



For more information:

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