

Courses Management Service

Transcript



Gemma Morrow

Good afternoon and welcome to the Courses Management Service for new staff presentation. My name is Gemma Morrow. I'm a Core Service Lead in Partner Services and I'm joined today by Eleanor Currie who will join us in a moment, who is a Regional Account Manager, also with Partner Services. Now, our main objective today is that you're going to be able to leave this session having acquired the necessary information and tools to successfully upload your course information accurately and on time. We're going to have a gander over your service standards, what we expect from you, what you can expect from ourselves, and the academic year timeline, and how that's going to flow throughout the year. We'll run through some additional roll over process with our validation as well. Then from the screen you can see, we'll dive a bit further into some other products that we have for adding them onto CMS.

Firstly, just a bit of background to CMS, our courses management service- system, sorry, or CMS as I will refer to it, is a single database for our providers to submit their course information. The information will be used to assess the funding for students. Therefore, it's vital that only designated courses be added onto the system and uploaded and making sure that that information is accurate, and it meets our policy regulations.

The students will only be able to see any courses that have been created or rolled over on CMS, but we'll look into that a bit further later when we get to the roll over process. The information on our CMS, it links through to our student information service, as well as our bursary administration service, should you be subscribed to this. Based on the information that's provided, we'll be able to ensure an accurate assessment for funding for students and making sure that their funding is going to be paid and scheduled on time. It gives you a central log for all of your course details in one.

Moving through to our academic timeline. As you can see here, we tend to do a staggered approach when it comes to our course collection, our course validation and applications. Each of these, as you can see, are [inaudible 00:02:17] launch in November. You'll receive a course collection communication, as well as some reminders as the approaching deadline comes up.

What is imperatively important is that the validation exercise, we do this to check the integrity of the course information and making sure that it does align with our policy regulations. How we do so is we will contact you directly from our CMS team via email, so it's imperative that your contact details are up to date on the HE gateway please. Now, planning and working to our timeline are vitally important as this allows the Student Loans Company to complete our checks and open the relevant applications to allow students to apply for their funding.

Then we'll move forward to the student application launch. Again, it's a staggered approach. Likewise, with the course collection. This would be full-time. Again, we expect launch roughly around February, and part-time and postgraduate between April and June or shortly thereafter. These dates are always subject to change simply because they're set by the various [inaudible 00:03:23] authorities.

Now, once everything is in place with regards to the students' application, you'll be able to see the approved application in CIS, and that's where you'll go for sending your confirmation of registration and attendance worklists, and then it moves into our payments system. The joint service agreement between Student Loans Company and our providers, it defines the service measures between us both. An agreement includes the standards for timelines, the accuracy and right first-time submission.

Let's have a gander at your obligations that we expect from you. For full-time undergraduate, we expect 85% of your courses submitted 10 weeks after the course collection has launched. Again, we'll send you reminders for this and the course accuracy rate would need to be 95% by the course collection deadline. So, it means that all of your course details need to be an accurate representation by that point. Similarly, enough, moving into part-time undergraduate, the percentages remain the exact same, it's the timespan that you have that will decrease.

You have six weeks for course collection for part-time undergraduate, again with a 95% accuracy rate by the collection deadline. For postgraduate, fortunately enough, percentages again are the exact same. It just means that you have four weeks to submit your courses through and again, the accuracy- I cannot relay that enough, it has to be as accurate as possible, especially hitting that 95% mark.

Just as a summarization for you, there's up on the screen, just for your kind of deadlines, just rough estimate- well, a collection for you to review rather and take any notes off, should it be applicable. We're going to move into adding your course and what this is going to look like on our system on the CMS itself. When you set it up, you're going to be given several options available.

Further permanent details are required at this point. You would firstly select the courses tab here. You would move onto selecting 'to add a course,' and then you select the undergraduate or the postgraduate option. From this, on the undergraduate or postgraduate, you can see the different domiciles are required for postgraduate, and that depends on the product that would then follow after. I just wanted to give you a view of what exactly that will look like at the start of your journey for adding courses.

Moving on, I'm going to concentrate on the full-time undergraduate just for now this part of the presentation for the sake of how it will appear on your screen, being our biggest product. The course details, again I just wanted to give you a visual representation. I will go through each of the sections and requirements in detail as I go through the presentation.

Now, the term dates themselves, if you notice here on the first box, you can select the same dates for all academic years if that's applicable or if you have, which is quite common, the final year of the course being slightly shorter, you can separate these out and we add a course- an additional- sorry, unselecting 'use these dates for all years.' You can then additionally add further intakes onto the same course.

So, if you have an engineering course that would have a September course that would have a September and a January intake and all of the details are the same bar the term dates, you can then select to add another course intake bar the term dates, you can then select to add another course intake, and it'll bring it on and add it onto your screen there. Again, just wanted to give you a visual representation. Term dates we'll be going through in much more further detail. We actually have three slides of [inaudible 00:07:21] very important. We have some automatic validation in place when you submit an add year course or roll it over.

Should you use any weekend dates, we will ask you to confirm this. This was picked up in our validation exercise last year and accounted for a lot of returned error rates, in which universities had to update their term dates and confirm they were not indeed weekend. This was a feature we were able to add in, and as long as you confirm that, we're not going to query it for you. Likewise, if your course is longer than 30 weeks and 3 days, then you will select to confirm the validation that it is indeed a long course.

The reason we have this in place is so that to award students the additional long course loan for their maintenance funding. It's vitally important that should it be a long course, that this is recorded, and if it is not a long course, that you review over the term dates before submitting. Now, it's vitally important that only designated courses are added onto our database. Now, we have validation in place to be able to assist you and be able to give you some guidance and such, and we will question certain things if they look out of place.

However, the onus- the responsibility rather, it does lie with the providers to make sure they are adding eligible courses and that it meets the policy regulations and has all the added required attributes [inaudible 00:08:45]. I'll explain further on attributes later on as well because the attributes themselves are used to determine what type of funding package will be available for the students.

Going to have a quick look at our rollover process. If you're already an existing provider, this is something that will happen year in year out. And even if you're a new provider, the following year you're going to go through a rollover process. The joy of our rollover process is that you don't need to start from scratch every single year for your courses. Any courses that you would have saved the previous academic year, when we open our course collection, they're going to appear as unsaved courses onto the new upcoming academic year.

With the unsaved information, we have some extra features on CMS that makes it a lot easier to see how many courses you have added and how many are still outstanding to be rolled over. In the 'show unsaved' option, you can then see the exact courses that you need to rollover.

Furthermore, on this, you can then also have an export up here, where you can export the current courses that have been saved or the unsaved export, and this can go back to any academic year further back that CMS has available for your providers. It becomes quite a useful tool when it comes to if you have, you know, 1,500 courses to put on and you think that you've completed because you finish your list, and then you're like, "Oh, there's about five or six that have actually been missed out on this." So, very useful. We also have a last edit timestamp.

We have two different ones available. The first one is the last updated, which will be any change you make to a course detail whatsoever, or [inaudible 00:11:09] my username. It can be either or and it will log the exact date, time, and the username for who made the change. This really helps if we've changed the domain and we need to make a contact to query it. Then it means we can actually contact the direct user that's made the change. Furthermore, on the 'academic year create date,' this is when you create a course.

It will log that information, again the date, time, and username. This is also saved when you rollover a course, so if there's a course rolling over to 23, 24 when it's open, it will then have an updated date on that tab, but that timestamp will never change once you've created a course or rolled it over. Now, we move into course validation.

We're going to explore exactly what it is that you can expect from us and the types of validation exercises that are going on at the moment and what the comparison was with last year as well. Now, the accuracy is key to ensuring the correct student entitlement is going to be assessed. We will firstly review over the courses, making sure if they comply with our guidance information and regulations. If there is anything that appears as an inquiry, we will create a tracker on an Excel file with the course details. We'll send it on to the university- institution, sorry.

And then the institution will review and respond to us as soon as possible. It's vitally important that this gets done as soon as possible because the earlier we can make any changes that are required, the less impact it's going to have downstream, and especially if we can get this before student application launch. Where we have already launched student application and changes are made, this has a cannonball effect and creates reassessment requirements down the line throughout our processes.

The course anomalies themselves, this is a current picture of where we're currently at for the academic year 22, 23. So far, we've validated over 84,000 courses. The providers themselves, at the moment, the most concrete figure I want you to kind of note on here is the last one, providers' confirmed errors. That is sitting at a 4.3% error rate in comparison to all the courses we have queried with providers.

For comparison, last year 64% required updating that we queried, mainly linked to bank holidays and weekend dates being used incorrectly. I will follow up with that again through our term dates as well. The exercise from that type of percentage- and you see the difference from where we're currently at, it's entirely essential. We can't ever fault with the validation exercise itself whilst we're still getting results through like this. It's just the extra steps and measures that we can take in place to making sure the

students are indeed going to receive the correct entitlement. So far, I ran through the rolling over your courses, your obligations, and now I want to look at the specific areas to be aware of that may have the potential to cause any issues, should it be captured incorrectly. These were the course details I was referring back to the beginning of this presentation. We've reached term dates.

Our term dates are our payment date driver. The start dates that you enter for term dates for mainly English, Welsh and Northern Irish students will be- obviously, Scottish is paid very differently. But the payment date driver is the first date of the course for the start dates. That's when we're going to schedule those students' payments. for the terms 1, 2, and 3. We're going to aim to get that.

With entering the term dates, this is specifically going to affect the amount of entitlement a student receives through their maintenance funding. I understand that at a lot of universities, you tend run through on a two-semester period when you're delivering courses. At Student Loans Company, we do still require- we need it to be three terms in order for the student finance to be administered in line with the student support regulations themselves. Furthermore, the term dates have to be actual teaching weeks.

That can be anything from attending lectures, the workshops, taking exams for example, but they have to be actual teaching weeks that you're entering. Now moving through, the academic year has four seasonal starts, for the autumn, winter, spring and summer. As you can see from the screen here, these all have specific dates that the term dates cannot start earlier than.

This is also a driver we pick up in validation. We will contact providers should it not be adhering to this information. This is also available on the guidance documents on our HE website. It was also one of the most common errors last year due to providers entering dates prior to the dates shown. Now, key things to note for when you're entering your term dates- well, mainly what to watch out for and mainly avoid if I'm honest.

You want to avoid Freshers Week. Freshers Weeks are not included unless of course, they're actual study weeks themselves. What would be best practice take holiday periods out of the overall duration over the course, any holiday period should not be included. That tends to be a good breaker for splitting your courses up into three term dates though, is where you have like a Christmas break and Easter break, that's when it tends to for most providers for the autumn intakes.

Now, the Easter break itself is little bit tricky because the autumn term 3 start can't be before the 1st of April. But as we know, the Easter breaks tend to just move along that time period itself. If anyone is waiting as well for any exam results, do not include those dates. Only up to the date the exam is taken essentially.

Please avoid using bank holiday dates should you not be in attendance on that date for the students- sorry, to be in attendance. The reason being is that our system will schedule the payment earlier than when it is due because it would be a bank holiday naturally, so we'd have to schedule it earlier, and it won't be in line with what the student would need to expect. Furthermore, that also applies to weekends. But as we've got the additional validation in place, you're going to be notified if you've entered a weekend date.

The reason we weren't able to do that for bank holidays is the difference between our different countries. Like Scotland will have their different bank holiday dates to England and such. There isn't a specific way for us to be able to capture that automatically. Finally, the long course loan. Just to make sure of course, that that is only applicable to students where it is the course is indeed going to be long and more week support than what is initially advised. We're now moving to the attributes and the flags that we will have that are required.

These attributes are assessing factors. These will impact the search for entitlement or what funding a student is going to receive. The placement year itself mostly has an adjusted fee amount because the student will be on a placement for the whole year for example. That can be applied to more than one year if the course has more than one year of placement study.

The distant learning flag is vitally important. The reason being is students can only receive a tuition fee funding package for distance learning courses for undergraduate. They will not be able to be eligible for any maintenance funding. If the distance learning flag hasn't been selected, then the student may be awarded incorrectly a maintenance loan, in which case that would be an overpayment that would be immediately tried to be drawn back from the student once they've actually been corrected.

So, it's very important your distance learning courses have the attribute applied to them. The Allied Health Professional courses, they have a variety of different attributes depending on what type of course it is as well. Now, these are really important, again, for the assessors to accurately award the funding. But it's because the funding packages available can vary depending on what type of Allied Health Professional course that you're running. The main thing, you cannot select the NHS bursary, along with the medicine and dentistry.

Your medicine and dentistry students will fall into issues with their funding applications. They can only select the medicine and dentistry attribute. Now, there's quite a lot of times where you would be running a course and then it's going to be no longer run, no longer attracting any new students, just going to phase it out and have returning students. We have available course years function for this, and you can set it to 'all students,' 'returning students,' or 'no students' for undergraduate.

The great thing about this, again, if you want to phase out your course, you set it to return 'returners only' and 'no students for the first year' for example. You can also, if you want to phase in a course, it's the same thing with having the first year set as 'new and-' or 'all students' rather, and the second and third year is set as 'no students' to make sure no student incorrectly links to the course. Very vitally important for phasing out your courses though.

We have the locations section on the course details for you to add on. The locations themselves will be the ones that you will use to deliver your courses. These will be campuses or franchise locations, but either or, would need to be set up before creating a course and being able to link to these locations. Your locations needs to be set up firstly.

The postcode itself is extremely important because this is where we would determine for the London rate of funding, and that's what our assessment department would use, is the actual location itself. And if you are a London Institute, it would have to be set up as a London postcode. You unfortunately cannot add or delete a location to a course once you've created the course. Once it is created, that is a non-editable function either on your end or ours, we cannot edit it. What would have to be done is another course created with the correct location if a mistake was made.

Moving onto our qualifications. At the moment, when you add a course the drop-down options for qualifications will appear. It will be a full drop-down menu option and you select the qualification that is most applicable to your course. The new education qualifications that have appeared on our system now are specifically surrounding for all of our providers, for the teacher training courses.

It's to closely more align with what exactly it is the student will be achieving through doing the PGCE for example. The only institutes that are able to use the ITT with QTS qualification are our skip providers. There is no other providers that would be eligible to use so. With the postgraduate healthcare, for level 7 Allied Health Professional courses that are preregistration and full-time for English students domiciled in England, minimum two years of study for undergraduate.

They can select for postgraduate health care courses. These are funded as undergraduate. They will be added as such, but the postgraduate healthcare qualification is an option for you to select on the undergraduate when you add the course. Again, to make sure the students are going to be assessed correctly. Moving on, we have our fee rates that you're going to set for your courses. Now, these can vary depending from your full-time and part-time.

But they will have a fee cap applied to your provider page where you cannot enter a higher amount than that fee cap amount, and these are set out by the specific awarding bodies that you can see on the screen, the OFS, HEFQ, DFENI and [SAS? 00:23:48] The fee caps are going to be set for both full time and part time where it is indeed applicable.

If you are a provider that you require a further tuition fee than the maximum that is available is your responsibility to communicate that to the students and to make sure they're very aware that the maximum for those type of providers, for England for example, the maximum full-time amount is £6,000. You wouldn't be able to exceed that, with the exception of accelerated courses of courses, and that's 1.2 times the fee amount if you run an accelerated course.

We also have different amounts that would be entered, for example, the final year cap amount. If you have any courses that have a placement or study abroad, then that would tend to be an updated fee amount, would be a much smaller amount, potentially zero. There's also the foundational years that may be attached to your courses that may have a smaller fee amount than the rest. And you can split this out when you're setting up your course details.

Now, our Disabled Students Allowance courses, we previously had these setup and we required you to set these up. This is no longer the case at all, and we set this up in the background of our systems. From the academic year 2023, you will no longer need to add a DSA course whatsoever. We set this up in the background. Now, where you are a new provider and you require a DSA only application course, you'll contact your account manager or our support desk and request that we add this function on.

This is done in-house with ourselves in the background. Where a disabled student would be applying for the DSA on top of their funding package, this is linked into their original application, and they don't need the additional course details because we have the confirmations through the actual application. Any of you that would have previously or do have a DSA course currently on CMS, again, that's already been taken care of in the background in advance of our course collection launching for 22, 23.

Now we've added some validation for our closed courses when you select to close a course. The main reason is to avoid courses being closed that has students attached on them. Where you closed a course previously and there was a student attached, if there was a COC to work, we weren't able to process it, if a course is closed we can't do anything with a student's application that is linked to a closed course.

So, we put in an additional validation option, that it gives us a 30-minute window to check the approval and our system will automatically check if any students are linked to the course that you're attempting to close. If there are any active students links, it will reject your request and it will reopen the course. Moving into our part-time undergraduate in itself.

You might be wondering what constitutes part-time study. Now, by process of elimination on our guidance and policy documents, full-time is at least 24 weeks. For part-time study, anything [inaudible 00:27:16] with that underneath. The minimum intensity needs to be 25% for a student to attain funding for their course. The course duration is captured as a full-time equivalent duration.

Where you have a one-year full-time course, you'll enter this as one year full-time equivalent because it will be studied over two years.

Likewise, if you have a four year full-time equivalent studying at 25% intensity, this would be the full package of funding over the 16 years total, which is the maximum amount they can apply for. The full-time equivalent durations themselves, as you can see here, I've listed out the most common qualification options that tend to apply to the actual duration themselves.

This information, again, is on our guidance, and is to make sure that you're actually capturing the correct timespan and duration for the courses themselves. Now, the credit value itself is very important because this is how we would assess, along with the intensity, how much a student's maintenance loan is now available for part-time undergraduate.

Now, we have generalized amounts that we know that specific courses tend to fit into, so by the duration to the credit amount. If this has anything that pops up and we think it's a little bit out of line, we're going to query this with you in our part-time validation exercise as well because validations spans across all of our products.

Moving into postgraduate. We'll start by our products loans by the domiciles that they have. Now, firstly for then postgraduate masters for England and Wales, they can receive the funding package direct to the students' page.

For Northern Ireland, is it a tuition fee loan that is paid direct to the providers, and for Scotland it would be a combination of both, but mainly the tuition fee that would need to be entered in and for living costs? In comparison, postgraduate doctoral is only available for English and Welsh students. It's not currently available to any other domiciles.

Now, the designation, when you select the designation option it's going to automatically select England and Wales when you select the first screen for postgraduate and then you England and Wales as the domicile. It's an automatic feature, so you've just got to tick both designations. You need to review this prior to adding the courses on because it would need to be applicable for whether it is indeed both domiciles or if it is just England or just Wales. The differences can apply specifically with part-time. They need to be set up separately. I'll run into that now.

Now, again, likewise with undergraduate, the term dates are our payment driver. They're going to schedule in what the payment dates for the students to expect and it's how they're able to budget and schedule forward for their years of study in the postgraduate field. Again, you enter the same three term dates reflected in the study patterns and we also have 'a month' feature, where if your course is for example, 16, 18 months long, you'll have to enter this in as an option of 2 years but then you would enter the exact amount of months of study as well as an additional indicator for us to make sure that course integrity is up to date.

Now, the qualifications- I'm going to concentrate again, just on England and Wales. I'll move onto Northern Ireland and Scotland in a moment, but the main focus for this England and Wales.

The difference in what is eligible to be added or not against the durations is really important. The qualifications that can be selected are only taught and research masters, cannot be any other qualifications. It can be full-time between one and two years for both England and Wales. For part-time, it can be up to the full-time equivalent options that are available. For Wales, there is the 'no full-time equivalent. That's the separation out.

When you're selecting just Wales, you'll have to select the 'no full-time' equivalent because that regulation is not applicable to Wales. It is, however, very applicable to England. Now, the reason that I want to take a little bit of time to go over this a bit slower, is that if you have a part-time, no full-time equivalent course for masters, you'll not be eligible to add a one-year full-time variant of that course. It cannot, it is against the regulations.

The reason being is you cannot complete a part-time course in, A, longer than double the amount it would take to complete the full-time version. I've added a couple of scenarios for you just to run through to give you a bit of a picture idea. If you've got a one-year full-time course, you have the one year part-time, no full-time equivalent version and that meets the regulations, that's going to be completed within the double duration period. The second scenario here is that you have an Engineering masters studied over three years part-time.

Whilst that course is open and running, there's not a chance you can add a one-year full-time version of that course. It will then be in breach of the regulations. However, you are able to offer the same course over a two-year full-time period because again, that would be within our remit for the regulations because the course would be completed within double the time period.

For best practice for England and Wales for masters funding, is that the student applies once. In order for them to get their payments for any additional years- sorry, further than the first year. Then you need to make sure you save the courses and roll them over. It's vitally important, otherwise, we're not going to be able to make any payments and it's a way to keep the course active. If you don't want to offer the course out to any new students, you can set the course to 'no students,' and once it's set to 'no students,' no other applicants will be able to view that course and link their application to that.

But your returning students who will be expecting their payments, they will be able to receive that information because you've rolled over the course. Do not close the course under any circumstances, mainly for that reason. That's the main reason behind it. We would like you to just phase out the courses themselves. You would set it to 'no students,' and then let the students that are currently in attendance run the duration of the course.

Then once there's none attached at all, you can certainly close down the course should it be required. You also need an open course should you have any change of circumstances to action for your students. If a student for example, is suspending study to then resume in a different academic year, if that course isn't saved, they're not going to be able to link to a return for a resumption.

Moving onto Northern Ireland for postgraduate study. A tuition fee loan, the qualifications that are available are a little bit further field than just the tour and research masters. They have a postgraduate certificate and postgraduate diploma option as well. The amount of funding is £5,500 tuition fee loan and it's over the duration of the course. This, however, is not an apply once product like the previous for England and Wales. This, the students have to apply each and every year.

You would have to definitely have your courses rolled over and available for all students, or specifically just the returning, but it would need to be available.

Audience Member

Is that available to on campus students and distance learning do you know?

Gemma Morrow

Yes. There's no variation for postgraduate.

Audience Member

Great. Thank you.

Gemma Morrow

Moving on. If any of you have any questions, by all means, please do the same thing and just point quickly and you can interrupt. I'd rather we can have a slight conversation as well. There is of course going to be a Q&A session at the end, and we'll be able to have moving over of the microphone to make sure any of our online people will be able to-

Audience Member

[inaudible 00:36:14]

Gemma Morrow

Could one of you by any chance turn down the temperature? It's a little bit hot with the thermostat.

As she said that, I literally felt my temperature go whoop, so that's great. Just going to have a sip of water. If you do have any questions, just raise your hand so that we can get a microphone over to you. Again, it's just for the online participants because they won't be able to hear you or any information. Although, I think a temperature change is okay, personally. Moving into the Scottish domicile for postgraduate study.

Now, this is only available for postgraduate diplomas, masters, research and talks. The duration again, can be full-time or part-time between one to two years. The full-time and part-time options are only available for Scottish institutes. You cannot add a part-time Scottish postgraduate course if you are out with Scotland under no circumstances. There's been no area for change in that either.

That is a set regulation policy from SaaS themselves. The tuition fee loan is paid direct to the provider, like all of our other tuition fee products. Specifically, you need to add the fees onto CMS for us to be able to view that and they need to be split equally over each academic year that the course runs. That would be a request through directly from SaaS. Moving into our postgraduate doctoral.

This is one of our more- I would say more simpler products that we offer. This is an apply once product. It is paid directly to the students. It's not maintenance- income contingent rather. The main things doctoral to remember is that you do not use a generic name for your courses. Don't just write postgraduate doctorate, or doctoral, or PHD.

These are the different variations we tend to sometimes see. You need to have it course specific. If it's a doctorate in engineering- which would be odd, but if it was, then you'd do a doctorate in engineering for the course title, you'd say engineering. There's only one qualification available as it is a doctorate, and the duration is between three years and a maximum of eight years. Only again, it's available to England and Wales. It's currently been running and available, I believe for three years now.

This is the fourth year we're about to fall into. I think we'll be seeing several of the doctorate students actually moving to graduation and repayment for the first time since we launched the product. Now, I understand that when you're adding your courses, we're all human and we make little mistakes. These can happen and it happens so often, especially with my line and my job role, I experience it day in, day out quite a lot.

Now, this is okay because mistakes do happen and you can update your course details, even throughout the academic year. What we ask you to do is that when you do update your course details, it's important to link it in right first time. You want to contact your account manager if you're going to make a change. If you're unable to get contact with your account manager, or you're not getting a response as quick, or just very quickly you want to get it off, you can send it to the partner support desk.

The HEP services team and they will be able to add the change specifically and make it if you're unable to make it yourself. But if you make any changes at all, you have to let us know please. Now, the lifecycle for right first-time errors is that our service standards are against the accuracy rate. As I mentioned, the mistakes will happen, specific potentially. But the main feature is to get it rectified as soon as possible.

Again, like I said, the sooner we get something resolved, the less impact it's going to have downstream especially if student applications have launched themselves. The main areas that you're able to change on your course details will be your fees, term dates, the course name, and you can add or remove the placement attribute itself.

If you have any large changes, for example you happen to have added all 3,000 courses and you're like, "Ug, I put in a date for an October. It's actually September," then again, these things happen. Contact your account manager at the earliest convenience and they'll be able to advise you further on what process we can follow to get those courses updated for you. That's the type of change that we would like to know about in advance if possible. Have a question, did you?

Audience Member

Sorry, just based on that I just wanted to ask a question around a rolled over course that had two intakes, so one in September, one is January, when it's rolled over we no longer have the January intake. That's not something that we change ourselves, is it? We need to [crosstalk].

Gemma Morrow

No, so unfortunately that's not an editable feature at all, not from within our company. We're not able to do it. It's not a feature we can change. Now, with that, we understand obviously that can be quite frustrating, especially if you've got a September and a January intake.

What you can do is phase out that course that has both intakes and you can setup the course with just the one intake for new students to apply to. So, that's the course that they're going to move forward on moving forward and it's only your returning students that would be going to the previous course to phase that out. Before we run into any- for our questions and answer session, I just wanted to give you a little bit of further guidance documentations for CMS, and such will be available on our website.

There's the contact email and telephone number should you require any further assistance from our HEP team. Again, you've always got the contact of your regional account manager who would be delighted to hear from you all. Thank you. Have we got any further questions?

Eleanor Currie

Okay, so we've been getting through some questions online from the people that are watching at home.

Eleanor Currie

We've got a couple of them coming through, so I'll just take a couple of them and then if you're in the room, if you can wait till I come with the microphone because if you don't then the people that are at home can't hear you. First question, an easy one. Give you a bit of a break, Gemma. Can term dates include an induction week? The answer to that is I during your induction week, the students are required to do something in connection with their course, maybe meet some of their course leaders, course tutors and there's some course element involved and that's important for their course, then the answer is yes. But if the induction week is purely scheduled for a student's social activities and that kind of thing, then no, you can't include the induction week within the term dates. The next one, moving on. I think you can[crosstalk].

Gemma Morrow

Are the term dates adjustable once validated on the CMS portal? Yes. You can edit your course details and you can adjust the term dates. If it is a term month change for the start month, that's when you will have to contact your account manager for a specific process for changing the start month because you won't be able to do that.

Eleanor Currie

Great. Any questions from the room?

We'll take another.

Audience Member

I have 1,000 questions. If you have a course where you have registration one year and the next year the course isn't running but it will be running the year after, do you just leave it unsaved for the rollover?

Gemma Morrow

No. You can save it over because you're planning on still running the course in the next academic year. Set the available course years to 'no students' and then no students will be able to view that at all when it's set to 'no students.' When they're making their application, they cannot locate or link to that course whatsoever. It won't appear for them.

Audience Member

I can't remember seeing that on the course page.

Gemma Morrow

It's the available course years section.

Audience Member

Okay.

Gemma Morrow

In where it says, "available course years," you have 'all students,' 'returning students,' and 'no student' options. That's the three options for setting and you can set that again to each academic year for undergraduate.

Audience Member

Thank you.

Unnamed Female

Also, if it's more than a one

Unnamed Female

year course, then you would need to, as Gemma said, rollover because the second years will still need to be able to attend.

Gemma Morrow

I've just got one question from Laura Brown on here. Do you need to submit postgraduate courses that start in January by the end of April? Yes, you have your service standards as I've mentioned. For postgraduate, that is four weeks. You have four weeks to put all of your post graduate courses on. That's the service standards that you agree to, and that's what it has to be met by.

Unnamed Female

I'm happy to take the next one, Gemma. What about if the course has a blended learning option, would they be considered distance learners? Now, the answer is most likely, no. We'd need to see the kind of structure of the course. Blended learning is not something that the regulations really recognize, but what it does say in the regulations is if there is a standard pattern of kind of in-person attendance required, then that would not be considered distance learning. It's important to understand that in distance learning courses, the students don't get any maintenance. They only get their fees. They can only apply for a fee loan. It's very important to get the definition and understand the difference between distance learning and what you might call blended learning or a mix between online and in attendance.

Really, if there is a regular pattern of attendance on the campus, even if that's only once a month or whatever, then it certainly wouldn't be considered distance learning. Distance learning is really a course that is set up to be wholly online really.

Gemma Morrow

Have we got any questions from the room at all? Right, we've got a few.

Unnamed Female

Right, well I'll put it to someone else.

Gemma Morrow

We'll come back to you, don't worry.

Anneke

Hi. My name's Anneke. My question is if a course is a distance learning full-time delivery, is there a chance of students getting a maintenance loan?

Gemma Morrow

Not if you've selected the distance learning attribute, they're not eligible. At distance learning, they're not eligible for maintenance loan because the way to kind of think about it is the maintenance funding is to support the student's study pattern and their living expenses, their living costs.

if it's part-time or distance learn- well, if it's distance learning, you are doing that at your own pace etc., so it's not a product that's currently available but we have introduced it for part-time study. If they're in attendance, they can attain a maintenance loan.

Audience Member

Thank you.

Unnamed Female

Anyone else in the room over the [inaudible 00:48:20]?

Audience Member

Hi. I just wanted to double check, we have a course, and I can't remember off the top of my head whether it's taught or research, but it runs for 42 months, and I put it as four years as the duration because I couldn't select a specific month. I just wanted to double check that was right because obviously it's more than three years if that makes sense.

Gemma Morrow

Sorry, just repeat the course details again, so a 2 year...

Audience Member

It runs for 42 months. I think it's a doctoral course, but I can't remember off the top of my head

Gemma Morrow

If it's a doctorate course, that's between three- and eight-years duration you can have for a doctorate course full or part-time.

Audience Member

Because it runs for 42 months, so it's between the three and the four mark, put it as the four? Yeah. That's what [crosstalk]

Gemma Morrow

If it falls over- if your course has months like that, if it falls into a new academic year, it's got to be an additional academic year added on.

Audience Member

Do we have to put the duration anywhere? Like maybe in the course title or-

Gemma Morrow

What would be best for that would be- I believe you should be able to enter the months. I mean, off the top of my head- that's one's caught me off. You should be able- sorry. I keep forgetting I'm [inaudible 00:49:43] up. You should be able- the students should be able to fill in on their application when it is that they expect to end and you can also send- this is going to be like four years down the line once a students applied.

Then their end of study date and when they finish and hand in their dissertation etc., for the doctorate, that's going to vary for a lot of different students. I believe that that's still in the works to have confirmation forward for, but you can manage that with a COC. If you've got majority of your doctorate students on that course that are going to finish in the same month, that's perfect. As long as we're getting the right time for them to fall into repayment, which is the 1st of April after they finish their studies.

Audience Member

Okay. Thank you.

Unnamed Female

Gemma, there's another doctoral question that's just been coming online.

Gemma Morrow

No. Sorry, that's the answer. You mentioned not using generic course names for doctoral courses. Is it possible to use generic names for undergraduate, postgraduate courses, i.e. bachelor degree placement year three? No, no. Please, under no circumstances use a generic name whatsoever. We need some indicators for the course and also, for your students when they're applying. When they're applying on their application online, they're going to enter the course name that they are going to be studying and we want that to match up and align so that they can select the correct course and run through the process for application as smoothly as possible. Anyone else in the room? We had one, two more?

Audience Member

Me again, sorry. Hypothetically speaking, if there is a course that is new this September, that we've only just been told about, so it doesn't fit your deadlines, we still put it on as a course now even late in the day?

Gemma Morrow

Yeah, absolutely. You can submit courses. That tends to happen quite a lot. Like with the question, we do want you to obviously meet your service standards and the requirements, but we understand that's not always applicable. Mainly, for example, for our colleges instead of our universities, they tend to be a bit more of a later submission as well, simply because of the resources that would be available to them at the time for their course information. Yeah, it's absolutely fine. If you've got a new course that you're starting, by all means add it. If it's starting even this month, for 21,22, you could add that course. It's not an issue.

Audience Member

My institution has [inaudible 00:52:16] entry awards, but students can then progress onto a full masters. Are they entitled to- I thought you might say that. Are they entitled to any funding?

Gemma Morrow

Unfortunately, not. The reason being is that a student needs to be studying a course that will obtain a master's qualification and they cannot transfer any credits whatsoever into that course for completion of study. Unfortunately, no.

Audience Member

Okay, thank you.

My last question, I promise. I'm new, so forgive me with this question. We have postgraduate courses that lasts for 12 months. But that doesn't fit into the sort of termly structure of the university. Do we need to give you term dates that include that 12-month period? Does that make sense? Like we've got a course that starts in September, our three terms are September, January, April. But April goes on to finish in end of May the students finish end of August.

Gemma Morrow

End of August? That's absolutely fine. You put in the dates for the third term up to the [crosstalk]. As long as for postgraduate, 12- well, really any course, 12 months constitutes one academic year. As long as it doesn't fall into the start of the next academic year, it should be fine [inaudible 00:53:39] I'm so sorry. I've lost where I was.

Audience Member

We would put the end date as August?

Gemma Morrow

Yes, yes. For the 12-month period. As long as it doesn't go over 12 months, it's no longer then going to fall into a new- next academic year.

We are specifically reviewing over the processing for postgraduate courses, for example that start in October and then they would finish in September, which would be like 11 months, but it goes into the next academic year, which is why we have the month function that needs to be kind of utilized as much as possible.

Unnamed Female

There's a very similar one just coming online in regard to postgraduate full-time course, is a 13 months course a 2-year course?

Gemma Morrow

Yes. Because it falls into over the 12-month period. That falls into a new academic year- another academic year, so unfortunately it would be a case of that and if it was only one month of study into the new academic year, the student will have all three payments scheduled within that one month. Another question at the back? I'm liking this. You have quite a lot of questions. Keep me on my toes.

Audience Member

Hi. We have term three intakes with doctoral students and for some reason, on the January, February starters, we have sort of unusual term dates on our course database. The person that normally deals with it has been off for quite some time. I'm not quite sure why that is, unless it's probably to do with holiday times, but do doctoral students have the same issue as undergraduate students with the teaching or would you just assume that they're doing 12 months full?

Gemma Morrow

Well, for doctoral the in attendance isn't specifically relevant at all. It could be distance learning, it can part-time. I haven't had one I believe so far yet for distance learning I don't think, but for the doctoral, no, it shouldn't be an issue at all.

Audience Member

The three start students should really have the same pattern of payments really, should they?

Gemma Morrow

Yeah. As I mentioned, it's the term start date. That's going to be the payment driver itself for what date for the students to expect their second and third instalments in [crosstalk].

Audience Member

Yeah. Okay. Thank you.

Audience Member

Hi. If a student starts in a masters course and then halfway through decides, actually I want to change my [inaudible 00:56:19] towards be a postgraduate diploma or CERT, what do you do? Do we get the payment back?

Gemma Morrow

No. What would happen is where the student has initially undertaken a masters course and they have the full intention of completing the course to attain their masters, that's the criteria for them to apply for funding for the course. Throughout that course, if they decide they're going to withdraw, suspend etc., these things happen. We're going to claw back any money as long as the date would be after a payment date that's already gone. The only exception to that is for example, say you sent it through for a December that a student was meant to withdraw or finish up their course and leave. Then you didn't send us a notification until February, they would get an overpayment and we would immediately try claw that back and they would go into an over payment. Yes. Another question

Audience Member

I feel like while you're here, we need to ask you. Following on from that, the student's not going to withdraw from university so we wouldn't send a withdrawal, would we because that would put them into early repayment. What would we do to let you know that-

Gemma Morrow

If they would be leaving their course to attain like- if they're leaving the course to get a certificate or diploma, they're finishing the course. They're leaving off the course, so they're no longer entitled to any funding.

Audience Member

What if they're just staying on to study but at a lower level?

Gemma Morrow

They have to be withdrawn because they're no longer studying that masters course. They'd have to withdraw from the course.

Audience Member

We'd just send the withdrawal COC and-

Gemma Morrow

Yeah, there's no kind of variation with that. It has to be a masters qualification that they're studying towards. If they then change and like, "Oh, actually I'm going to just work towards the certificate," then you have to withdraw the student. Do you have anything further from anyone?

Unnamed Female

I think there's one more similar question online.

Gemma Morrow

What is the correct way to submit term dates for a full-time postgraduate course that runs beginning October to the end of October the next academic year from the beginning to the end? Two academic years, that would need to be setup as over two academic years, so two-year course because again, it's running from the beginning of October to the following end of October. That's over 12 months technically. Have we got one more?

Audience Member

I have one more question to this PG certificate and master courses where we for example, have like let's say three different courses where one is a certificate, and one is a diploma and one is master. We seem to have sometimes problem with the students not being assigned to the right course from the beginning, so they are sometimes on a certificate but they actually have applied for the loan and we have been advised by the department that they would like to have a loan for the master, they would like to study a master but we then don't confirm the registration because they are not on the correct course and we inform them but you need to move them to the correct course because if we don't withdraw the application for the loan straight ahead and then later on- because when they finally get them on the correct course, the date might not always match with the start of the course but the student actually intended to do the master. It's just where our student records might have a delay. What should we do that because when we just submit the registration, it goes from the beginning? But because we haven't withdrawn the course from the SLC before then we don't have a chance to put a note in there that the student actually transferred the course on a later point if that makes sense.

Gemma Morrow

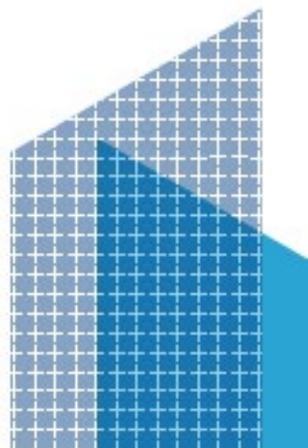
Again, that would be if a students studying a postgraduate certificate and then they're transferring into a masters, if their intention was always supposed to be the masters and their application states their masters and the correct course, then it be a case of you confirming the registration to the correct course. That's it and it means the student would be eligible. But if they started on an actual postgraduate certificate, they could not get any funding for that course. It's not funded for an SFE for England and Wales.

Audience Member

Thank you.

Gemma Morrow

I also have time for one to one. If anyone wants to book those for more in depth questions I still have some availability tomorrow. Please feel free.



Audience Member

Can we have your mobile?

Gemma Morrow

I don't have a work telephone number. So no, but I can happily give you my email address. Actually, it's quite important to mention. I can't believe I haven't put it on the slides. We have a course as management service mailbox. Now, this is the mailbox that's going to contact you for validation or anything. It's courses service management. Please do not ask why it was that around setup and not courses management service. We weren't in control of setting up the mailbox, unfortunately. But SLC.co.uk, our normal domain. You can send any inquiries into them with regards to validation specifics. If obviously- the timing at the moment, if we're very peak period, we'll forward that on to the relevant HEP services. If it's specific and you're one of our providers that we spread out across the team, and we have direct continuous communication with, we'll most likely contact you back and let you know give you some updates.

Eleanor Currie

Any more questions in the room?

Audience Member

Is it still correct to say a course should be starting on a Monday and preferably finishing on a Friday?

Gemma Morrow

No. It's up to you. When a course starts is at your discretion. Absolutely. That's what I mean by with the bank holiday dates. We request that you avoid bank holidays dates because nine times out of ten, if it's a bank holiday, the students are indeed not actually in attendance. And they're not studying that day. It's a bank holiday. We request that's normally going to be then a Tuesday. That you would enter as the start date for example. But yeah, any date. It can also be a weekend date, as long as the course is starting on a weekend. We just need to make sure that is indeed that is the correct start date because likewise with a bank holiday, if it starts on a Saturday, the payments going to go through before that Saturday. That's the reason behind it.

Gemma Morrow

We have a 16-month masters course. How would they be funded in the second year? Would they get 12 months of funding in the last four months or is there something else that we would have to do as they are labelled as 16-month courses?

The student receives 50% in one year and 50% of their funding in the next year. If it's a two-year course, that is set out. That is simply as it will be. The student will receive three payments within those last four months, and they will have the first 12 months, the three payments split over them.

Eleanor Currie

Okay, any final question from the room? No, I think that's us then.

Gemma Morrow

Thank you very much.



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