

# Course Management Service Webinar Transcript

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# Transcript

**PAUL SMITH:** Hello, and welcome to SLC's third, annual webinar on the Course Management Service.

My name is Paul Smith, I'm Head of Partner Services and I'm SLC's senior responsible manager for all our service partnerships.

This hour-long webinar will start with a pre-recorded masterclass on the collation and use of course information for student finance applications, assessments, and payments, and followed by 15 minutes of live question and answers.

When you are ready to supply course information for academic year 21/22, you will be able to re-run this recording and refer to the FAQs and Guidance that will be made available on the HEP Services website.

Course and Provider information is used by us, the Student Awards Agency for Scotland, and the Northern Ireland Education Authority.

Over the last three years HEPs and SLC have together achieved two significant continuous improvements. Firstly, there are fewer students reporting problems finding their course when they apply to us and secondly, the accuracy error rate of your course information has dramatically reduced and we seek to eradicate both problems, because the time, resources and costs required to fix these problems are major, for both you and for us and they also create a poor experience for our students.

It is your responsibility to ensure that your course design complies with the guidance on eligible courses, and it's important to check that the correct details have been added to CMS and we want to give you confidence that the courses you offer will be eligible for student finance.

So, I hope this webinar is valuable to you, and I'm pleased to welcome Jonathan Newby and Sam Stokell from our Account Management Services team, who will take you through the masterclass. Thank you.

**JONATHAN NEWBY:** Thank you, Paul.

Hello everyone, my name is Jonathan Newby. I'm the HE Account Services Manager at the Student Loans Company and I'm here with my colleague Sam Stokell HE Account Manager within the Partners Services team.

The main purpose of this webinar is to assist providers with right first-time submission of courses. Our assessing bodies need critical course and provider information to make a student finance assessment. When course information is incorrect, it can have significant financial impacts for the student and for the provider.

There are couple of points to note before we start – as Paul has said, this presentation will be available on our HEP Services website shortly after this webinar, so please don't worry about taking a lot of notes!



There will also be a live questions and answer session at the end, so if you do have any questions please submit them as we run through the presentation using the form below.

In this session we are going to cover your Provider Profiles, so these are the details that are rolled over on CMS and we will talk about how this information links up with your registration with the Office for Students. We'll then look at the Service Standards, providing you with the key dates you need to be aware of, outline the course validation processes that we undertake, and explain how we measure your performance.

Next, we'll spend some time going over the key course information to ensure you are setting up your courses correctly for fulltime and part time undergraduate, and postgraduate study. We'll also highlight the importance of setting term dates, phasing courses and using the appropriate course attributes.

We'll talk about some of the changes you may need to implement this year as a result of the COVID pandemic affecting your 20/21 programme structures and we'll finish off by updating you on the most recent developments that have been incorporated into CMS, ahead of the course collection for 21/22.

Since the Academic Year 19/20 all Providers in England need to be registered with the Office for Students in order to access Higher Education funding.

This requirement has impacted on what level of funding Providers and their students can access from SLC, as well as how Higher Education Providers interact with our systems.

As you will see from the table, once a Provider is registered with the OFS, all eligible courses are automatically designated for English domiciled students.

However, if the Providers OFS status is 'Approved' only, then designation must be sought separately with DFENI at specific provider level for Northern Irish students and for Welsh students at course level with HEFCW - the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales.

We are only able to create a Provider profile within CMS or roll over a Providers' profile from the previous academic year after the OFS has formally notified us of successful registration.

Once we have received your designation decision from the OFS, it is important to consider what other domiciles you would like to access funding from. You will need to liaise with SLC and the other designation authorities because the OFS is the regulatory body for England only. Each authority makes its own decisions on designation and has different criteria and processes that you must follow.

For course collection in 20/21, all Providers who are awarded an Approved or Approved Fee Cap status, were able to upload and promote their own course data within CMS. This includes those Private Providers who previously had restricted access to CMS. We granted access to providers to upload their own courses as long as they completed the mandatory training we rolled out back in October and November 2019.

If you haven't had training, or are a new Provider, or if you've been granted time limited designation or teach-out, we'll still add your course data to CMS for you, so you must complete and submit a data capture form to our Practitioners Team by email to [ssin\\_queries@slc.co.uk](mailto:ssin_queries@slc.co.uk).



Over the next few months, we will be looking at our future engagement programmes and how we will deliver CMS training. For those providers who are still using the data capture form process, and for providers who have a high error rate following our course validation, you will be invited to attend these training sessions.

Let's take a look at the situation for Providers in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland.

Automatic designation of full-time higher education courses only applies for Welsh Providers who are 'recognised educational institutions', as per the definitions that you can see on the screen. If a higher education course is not automatically designated, you will need to contact the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales before any students can apply for financial support. And this will be considered on a course by course basis rather than approval granted at an institutional level. This could mean that you have some courses that may be approved for funding and some may not.

Public Providers in Northern Ireland and Scotland are automatically designated for students from all UK domiciles. Private Providers will have to seek specific course level designation from the Department for Education from Northern Ireland or from Scotland.

We'll now move on to Course Management Service Standards.

The joint SLC and HEP service standard agreement was created to help improve accuracy and efficiency across the sector and to ensure that Right First-Time assessments are at the heart of student finance assessment and payment. This means SLC and higher education Providers work together, to minimize the risk of incorrect assessments and overpayments to students.

SLC take additional measures to ensure that course data is accurate and whilst we will be moving on to our course validation process in more detail shortly, it is worth highlighting that through this validation we've corrected around twenty thousand student assessments, removing the risk of payments being made for incorrect entitlements.

To view the entire service agreement, please head to the HEP services website where you will find outlined your obligations, as agreed on behalf of the sector by the Academic Registrars Council, and other sector representative bodies.

For full time undergraduate there are two measures – firstly, the timeliness of the courses being uploaded on to CMS, and secondly, the accuracy of the information that's captured.

We encourage providers to meet both service measures, but you should not rush your course submission. We want you to take care in meeting the first key measure by submitting your course data quickly and accurately. If rushed and incorrect however, this will not only involve administrative rework for you, but potentially impact on student funding assessments resulting in overpayments.

For the first measure - Providers have ten weeks from the launch of course collection to upload their full-time undergraduate courses. SLC has set this deadline because we need your course information to launch the student application cycle. If we do not have your course data at this time, students will not be able to fully link their application to their course and your institution. We also need to have a deadline so we can carry out the essential validation work prior to the cycle launch.



The second measure is to ensure that at least ninety-five percent of the information is correct by the deadline, and that everything is one hundred percent accurate by the application launch. This measure is designed to ensure that from a course perspective the student has been assessed against the correct entitlement. Some courses attract different rates depending on their structure and the attributes you have selected.

There are only certain amendments that you are able to make to a course once the course has been promoted in CMS. So, please ensure that your course data is correct before you click the save button. Please bear in mind that your individual user preferences will also have an effect on your term dates and fees, which will pre-populate each unsaved course.

We will discuss service standards for part time undergraduate courses and postgraduate master's and doctoral loans a little later.

SLC's CMS team carries out a validation exercise against every course within CMS. Their task is to identify any courses which don't meet our course guidance criteria or where the course data looks inconsistent with previous years.

The CMS validation team will get in touch with the CMS administrators at your institution to check the data and highlight where we think any amendments may be required. We really appreciate the time that you make available to us during this period to address these issues and help us resolve them as quickly as possible. The validation exercise for the current academic year found that over half of Providers who submitted courses had anomalies that needed to be checked, accounting for just under forty-six thousand courses.

In addition, since student applications opened in February, there were a further seventeen thousand additional course changes made, that's nineteen percent of all full time undergraduate courses.

If you do not respond to the CMS validation teams request to confirm or amend the course data there is a possibility that we will close the course to ensure no payments are made to students.

On this slide you can see the number of errors on the courses that we identified at the validation stage for 20/21 courses. We queried over forty-five thousand courses across three hundred and forty-seven providers. Courses can have more than one error, which in 20/21 took the number of potential errors to just over fifty-five thousand anomalies. Providers were very helpful in engaging with us during the validation process and we were able to confirm that fifty-one thousand of these anomalies were in fact correct, and that the provider had changed the course structure. Four thousand courses were amended before the start of the academic year to prevent overpayments to students.

Typically, anomalies relate to submissions that either don't fit in with our guidance or where the course data has varied considerably from the previous year.

The most common reasons are inconsistency of fees from year to year, change of course length, for example term dates amended from a long course to a short course and vice versa. And where term dates fall outside of the set seasonal guidance that regulations dictate.

Both of these examples have an impact on the student's entitlement and the amount of funding that they can receive. We want to ensure that the student has been assessed correctly when it comes to applying for their course.



The majority of student reassessments are completed automatically, however there are certain student applications that will need to be assessed manually. Automatic reassessments take place within forty-eight hours of the changes being made but manual assessments can take up to thirty working days.

Before we move on to the next section, where we will look at the key course information, please take a moment now to enter any questions that you have on the topics we have covered so far.

OK, let's look at the key information we need about your courses.

We rely on you to make sure your courses are eligible to attract funding in line with the Student Support Regulations and that only eligible courses are captured on CMS.

Ultimately, whilst we do try to pick up anomalies and inconsistencies when undertaking our validation exercises, it's your responsibility to ensure that a course is set up correctly and accurately reflects the course structure and study programme. This includes ensuring that intakes, duration, term dates, fee attributes, and placement or sandwich details are all correct, so that there are no mistakes when assessing student's funding entitlement.

Errors can significantly affect a student's entitlement and may result in under or over payments, so please always check and if need be double check that the details that have been added to CMS correctly

You will find guidance documents including a full user guides and quick reference guides on our website under the HEP Services tab.

If you are unsure about anything, please speak with your Account Manager or the Partners Support Desk.

It's probably best to start with seasonal intakes and look at some of the different types of course variations and what you should consider when entering your course information. The academic year is strictly defined in the Regulations as a twelve-month period, beginning on either the first of September, the first of January, the first of April or the first of July – depending on when the course starts.

It's important that your seasonal intakes meet policy regulations, so we ask Providers to make sure that when you are submitting term dates – they follow this guidance and you don't input term dates that overlap within the same academic year. Please remember that depending on your seasonal start, you can't start your terms any earlier than indicated on the screen now, so for example, a Winter start course cannot have a Term one start date earlier than the first of January, Term two before the first of April, and Term three before the first of July. Not only does this ensure compliance with the student support Regulations, but also ensures that the student maintenance payments, which are scheduled on these dates, are spread out across the academic year as well.

There are a few exceptions however, but it's generally it's worth noting that a student will remain on the same intake for the duration of their studies.

As an example, if a student was to start their course on the twelfth of January, they'd be classed as being on a winter start course and their tuition fee and maintenance funding awarded to them would cover their academic year from the first January to the thirty first of December.



This student would not be able to receive a second year of tuition fee and maintenance funding until the end of the full academic year period. Meaning not before January the first of the next calendar year.

Please remember term start dates cannot be weekends or bank holidays.

As a result of the COVID pandemic, the disruption at the end of the 19/20 academic year and the continued difficulties that you are still facing, we understand there are many challenges with the delivery of courses as Autumn 20/21 commences.

This could mean students studying online from home for the first term, limited teaching hours on campus per week or, in some cases, even postponing the start of the course until after the New Year.

As you know, from our previous slides, seasonal intake changes are not usually allowed in terms of the Regulations, however, an exception has been made, for this year only, due to COVID to allow you greater flexibility.

You should already be aware of the temporary changes in place for seasonal intakes, but we'd just like to reiterate the process for you again

On CMS, you can set up a winter intake in addition to offering the normal Autumn course – so, it's not one or other, you can offer both, because some students may opt to stay on the Autumn intake and others choosing to delay.

The new winter version should be created as a copy of your Autumn course but must have 'Rescheduled' in the course title, the three terms should be compressed, running from January 2021, ensuring the course end date is no later than the thirty first of August 2021 to allow the student to move back on to the Autumn intake from 21/22.

This is not to be confused with any existing winter intake courses you may already offer. Students can apply to these courses in the normal way and will remain on the winter intake as they progress throughout their studies, there is no change to this process.

If you do decide to take up the option please read the full guidance documents on our website and make sure you have contacted the affected students to let them know about the changes, before you submit any course transfer CoCs via SiS.

If you need to edit a course after the student application cycle has opened and students have been assessed, then please contact our Partners Support Desk by emailing [hep\\_services@slc.co.uk](mailto:hep_services@slc.co.uk) to notify them of your changes.

When editing term dates, please ensure they reflect the course start and end date for the correct year and intake. Editing course details may trigger reassessments where there is an impact on student funding.

As a result of the changes due to the COVID pandemic you may have already changed your term dates for your Autumn intakes. However, looking ahead at future intakes for academic year 20/21 you may need to adjust your term dates. The actions you will need to take will depend on the length of this change.



If the start date change is less than five days from the original start date, then you DO NOT need to update your term dates on CMS.

If you are extending your course and making it longer than thirty weeks and three days, students from England, Wales or Northern Ireland will then become eligible for a long course loan.

If your term start date will be changing by more than five days, but is within the same calendar month, then you will be able to make the changes to the term dates yourself, however you should agree these changes in advance with your Account Manager and notify the Partners Support Desk once they've been amended.

Moving a start date to a different calendar month cannot be edited by yourselves in CMS. You will need to contact your Account Manager to discuss the implications of making the change, and if you still wish to proceed, we will send you a proforma to complete and our course service team will then apply the changes on your behalf.

As mentioned earlier, with any course changes you must ensure that you are communicating with your students, as they will receive a new notification of entitlement from SLC along with a new payment schedule.

The available course year functionality is useful when you are phasing a course out and want to prevent students inadvertently applying for the wrong version of the course.

The system will always default to 'all students' by setting the indicator to either 'no students' or 'returners only' it restricts the students who can apply.

This links into the student's application and they will only be able to see a relevant course on offer. We recommend doing this instead of closing courses in CMS, which impacts previous academic years. You can also change this at a later date if you need to.

We will now look at determining the length of a course, the impact of what is classed as a long course and how these should be structured in CMS.

Students funding entitlement is based on a standard full-time course of up to thirty weeks and three days, so any course which is longer is deemed to be a long course. Students may receive support for additional weeks beyond the standard course length. They will be assessed automatically, and any additional eligible support will be awarded to those following means testing.

Whilst studying a long course, students will be entitled to additional funding per week from thirty weeks and three days up to forty-five weeks, where they then become entitled to the full year rate.

Please note however, term dates need to accurately reflect your teaching weeks. This includes attending lectures, undertaking course work, or sitting exams.

Awaiting results should not be considered part of the course structure.

Freshers weeks are not counted as weeks unless your students are engaged in learning activities, such as attending lectures.

Holiday periods should always be taken into account.



As part of our validation process, if course length seems abnormal for the qualification, we will query this with you and ask you to confirm the course structure.

It's your responsibility to confirm dates are an accurate reflection of the teaching provided to students attending the course.

When adding a course, you will see the overall number of weeks appear as you enter the term dates - this will help you check it's correct. When you submit the course, if you have added a 'long course' you will see another message appear to confirm that it is a long course.

We will identify courses with non-standard durations as part of our validation process, and we may contact you to verify this, particularly if, as we have mentioned already, it appears to be inconsistent with the duration of the same course in a previous academic year.

It is the responsibility of the provider to ensure the correct attributes have been added to a course. Course attributes can significantly affect the student's entitlement. It is therefore important to check the correct attributes have been added.

Nursing, Midwifery and Allied health profession courses no longer receive Bursary funding from the NHS. Students on these courses now receive regular Student Finance England support, in the same way as students studying non-NHS courses.

This should not be confused with the new NHS additional funding, which is available to some English domiciled students from 20/21. Students on an eligible course can also apply for additional NHS financial support, however they do this through the NHS, not through SLC.

So, ensuring the correct NHS flags are attributed to your NHS courses is vital – because how the course is set up in CMS determines how the students are assessed for support. The distance learning flag should only be added to a course where the course is fully delivered by distance learning. Students studying from home remotely due to COVID will not be classed as distant learners if the course is meant to be delivered on campus.

Any Dental Hygiene or Dental Therapy courses should also be highlighted with this flag, as these are assessed in a different way from some of the standard NHS courses.

The paramedic courses indicator should be used to highlight any paramedic courses at your institution. Some attract NHS support, whereas others do not. Assessors will then manually check applicants on these courses.

The Medicine-Dentistry Flag can be set to show that a course is medicine or dentistry, and whether the entry level for this course is undergraduate or graduate entry. Based on this, the support will vary for students.

The NHS Bursary indicator cannot be used at the same time as the Medicine or Dentistry attribute.

We often get asked about placement years.

A placement year or sandwich course is an attribute related to method of attendance and allows the placement year to be flagged.



It consists of alternate periods of full-time study and periods of work experience. The placement attribute can also be applied to more than one year of an individual course.

Placements can be sometimes reduced in fee, so please be aware of this as you enter a fee against your placement years.

Once you enter the placement attribute, the fee value will continue to exist until you amend it. If replaced, the new fee will be defaulted on all unsaved courses with this same attribute. We have received several questions around how to offer these courses, and how to correctly build the course content to meet the designation and eligibility requirements for student funding.

Providers will need to ensure that a minimum of at least 50% of the degree is studied within the UK.

Many course years offered abroad can run longer than those here in the UK. The amount of tuition fee support is up to 15% of a full year's fees, unless the student attends the provider in the UK for 10 weeks or more in the academic year. Where a full year is studied abroad, or Erasmus is attended, even if it's two Academic Years, the fees will be capped at 15% for both years. SLC is closely monitoring dual degrees and courses offered in partnership with overseas institutions – to ensure that providers adhere to designation requirements.

During the academic year 20/21 as a result of COVID, it has been necessary to review and update the guidance regarding students studying abroad or attending placements. As a result, our guidance has been updated, and has been made available on the HEP Services website, to provide an overview of how placement years and study abroad attributes affect a student's funding, and we have also provided a few scenarios that can be found in the guidance.

Before I hand you over to Sam to take us through the next section on CMS Development, please use the next few minutes to reflect upon these topics and enter any questions that you may have.

SAM STOKELL: Thank you Jonathan, welcome back everybody.

Over the past academic year, we have launched new functionality in CMS. You will be aware of some of the new functions having submitted your 20/21 courses, however there are also new functions that were released over the summer months and I will update you on these new features now.

Last year we added three new qualifications to the existing list for full & part time undergraduate.

These are:

Certificate in Education.

Postgraduate Certificate in Education.

And Professional Graduate Certificate in Education.

The new ITT related qualifications that have been added are intended to replace the existing qualification in CMS. We aim to phase out the current ITT courses that still have the 'with QTS' qualification.

You may notice that there are some postgraduate qualifications that are on the undergraduate qualification drop-down list. This is because these courses are not eligible for postgraduate loans because they still attract undergraduate funding.



User preferences have now been improved to work on a month-to-month match rather than a seasonal match – to help with data integrity. When you roll over a course with the same start month of a previous course you've saved, the course you are rolling over will be pre-populated with the date, month and year from your previously saved course.

Where you're rolling over a course with a different start month to a course you've previously saved, CMS will pre-populate the months and years based on the course details from the previous year – but the date fields will remain blank for you to complete. If you have courses set up with multiple intakes, some intakes may have the term dates completely pre-populated at the rollover stage – because you've already saved a course with the same start month.

We've also embedded a new course length calculator into CMS, which will automatically calculate course length and display it on screen. The length will be driven by the term dates you enter on CMS.

This enhancement will apply to undergraduate and postgraduate courses. This will assist you when determining course length and allow you to easily spot anomalies in term dates. This will be particularly useful when identifying courses that are eligible for the long courses loan.

On course closure, we've enhanced the validation process to ensure courses can't be closed by accident – and that no students are attached to courses being closed.

If the course has no approved applications, then the course is closed pending a second confirmation 30 minutes later.

A message is displayed to the user saying, "This course has been closed pending confirmation that no students are awaiting process approval, please check back in 30 minutes".

If the second confirmation returns saying there are approved applications on the course, then the course is reopened automatically.

If you attempt to close a course in CMS that has students with an approved application, then a validation message is displayed saying "This course cannot be closed as there are approved student applications on the course".

We also introduced an enhancement in 20/21 for postgraduate courses where you can accurately select the correct course length. There are 13 options – as you can see on the screen.

This means that your students' payments will be adjusted to be paid within this course duration as opposed to being paid out of course.

A popular request from providers has been whether we could implement a tool to hide unsaved courses.

Unsaved courses will continue to roll over each academic year and can make your CMS worklist appear untidy.

For 20/21 we have introduced a new feature to help you clear up your worklist so you can just view your promoted courses by hiding unsaved courses from the course list screen.



Unsaved courses are shown to users by default, however by swiping the toggle to the left, this will remove unsaved courses from your course list view. They will still exist within your CMS profile, but it will make it much easier to view your saved courses.

Now we are going to look at Part Time Validation.

Part Time course collection usually opens in late February to March with eighty five percent of courses being submitted with the deadline being six weeks later. As with full time undergraduate, the service standard is ninety five percent accuracy by this date, increasing to one hundred percent by the time the student application cycle launches.

The process of submission and validation is similar to full time undergraduate courses with a few differences, which we will look at now.

For part-time undergraduate courses, the categories that we validate are: Term Dates, Credit Values and Full-time Equivalent Values.

The highest anomaly is course credits. Course credits and intensity have a direct impact on the student's assessment in part time funding, so it is critical that these are correct before saving the course and students begin to apply.

Whilst anomalies were identified on over six hundred courses, nearly fifty percent of these were confirmed as correct, so the overall error rate was three percent.

In academic year 19/20 HECoS codes replaced the JACS code system. These are unique identifiers which are added to courses which SLC use as part of the assessment process and can affect a student entitlement.

One example of this is where the HECoS code aligns the course to one of our part time undergraduate exception's courses. This means students who already have an equivalent level qualification undergraduate degree can apply and receive funding for another undergraduate degree part time.

You can add multiple HECoS codes to a course on CMS. To find out further information on HECoS codes please see the HEP services website.

There are minimum and maximum credit values – of thirty credits and six hundred credits respectively.

The credits should reflect the full time equivalent for the course qualification, for example, one hundred and twenty credits for a full time one year course and three hundred and sixty credits for a three year degree, not the number of credits that a student is planning to study part time. As mentioned, we need the full credits displayed here in order to calculate the student's intensity and funding entitlement based on the number of credits the student is planning to study on their application.

You can find more information on this in our part time undergraduate credit guidance on the HEP Services website.



Moving onto postgraduate and doctoral courses.

Postgraduate Masters & Doctoral courses involve the same submission and validation process as full time and part time undergraduate courses.

Course collection for Postgraduate Masters & Doctoral courses usually opens in April. We need eighty five percent of your courses submitted within four weeks of course launch and a ninety five percent accuracy rate.

The categories we validate for Postgraduate Masters & Doctoral courses are: Designation & Policy, Postgraduate Healthcare, and Course Duration.

This is the Second year you will be able to add Scottish postgraduate courses using the Postgraduate functionality. This helps ensure the HEP is submitting accurate course data within CMS as opposed to the adding the course as an undergraduate course.

Scottish Postgraduate courses can be added at the same as full time undergraduate courses due to SAAS having a different assessment timetable and deadline to other domiciles.

Adding a postgraduate course for Scottish students is simple, just like adding your other postgraduate courses.

When you select 'Add a Course', then choose postgraduate, you can select Scotland from the domicile options, as shown on screen. You should select this option then the relevant study mode for the course you are creating.

Once you have clicked Continue, you can enter the course details as you would for your other courses. For qualifications, you will have three options: Postgraduate Diploma, Research Masters and Taught Masters. Once you have selected the qualification, the relevant duration options will be available.

Full time postgraduate courses for England and Wales can be a total duration of one or two years.

From academic year 18/19 part time course durations for English-domiciled students remains as it was. A part time postgraduate master's course for SFE-domiciled students can be set up with a duration of one or two years 'full time equivalent' or two or three years 'fixed duration' if there is no full-time equivalent course.

More information on this can be found on the HEP services website where we have created a guidance document on part time postgraduate courses with specific examples to assist you in setting up these courses.

And now let's look at the next steps.

Our full-time course collection will be open for course submission for academic year 21/22 from late November. Once we have the CMS launch date for the new academic year, we will advise providers that it is open and you can begin submissions.

All your saved courses from the previous year will be rolled over into the new academic year 21/22 tab. Your courses will be rolled over with the same course code and the totals, which are dynamic, will change as you work through your list to reflect the number of saved and unsaved courses.



Each course must be saved individually to ensure data integrity; however, we have implemented user preference within CMS that will allow you to pre-populate certain information, such as term dates and fees. Please bear this in mind when you are entering your course details.

You should only add designated courses that are valid for statutory financial support to CMS. A course that has been designated under the Student Support Regulations allows eligible students on this course to access loans and grants from the Student Loans Company.

Data capture forms should be completed by providers that do not have the access rights to upload these themselves.

Our course validation work begins as soon as the HEP has submitted 85% of their total course volume or the course submission deadline has passed.

The process is as follows:

The Course Service Management team will review all course details submitted against the guidance and identify anomalies that could impact student entitlement. Examples of this include term dates, fees and flags.

The validation team will then contact each provider individually to advise of the course details which we are querying.

The provider should then review the course detail and advise SLC as to whether the course details and structure is correct, or if you will be making changes to the course.

At this point, there may be additional information requested by our CMS validation team regarding course structure.

Once anomalies have been confirmed as correct, or the courses have been amended, they will be removed from the validation worklist.

Although much of our validation work will take place in the two weeks after the course submission deadline, it is an ongoing task throughout the year. As providers add or change courses SLCs validation team will continue to check course details to ensure that they comply with our guidance.

We appreciate the time you make available to us during the validation period and we ask you to incorporate this work into your calendar for each academic year.

We also thought it would be beneficial for you to see what your course details look like on the students online account. How you label your courses can have an impact on how the courses appears to the students when they search for the course name.

Students are asked to provide their course details on the online application. When they search for the course, a list is displayed for them to select their course along with a list of options.

If their course has not been added to CMS, or the student is unable to locate it, they will be able to enter it manually. At this point the student will be advised that we will be unable to progress with their application until the course details have been matched correctly. The email address that you have provided as part of the HEP's contact information will be visible to students who are unable to find their course when completing their application.



The student should be able to get in touch with you quickly if they need help at the application stage, to minimize delays and ensure that they can be assessed for eligibility, before the start of their course.

The student can continue with their application if course details are entered manually, but the application cannot be approved for funding until the course is amended and then linked to the student's account.

When you set up your bursary awards you can also utilise your course codes and qualifications within CMS to be used within your bursary award criteria. Students can either be included or excluded from automated awards based on what course they are studying.

The HEP Services website is full of useful information, guidance and example scenarios covering many of the common issues we have talked about.

You will also find information on other topics for undergraduate full time and part time courses, postgraduate masters and doctoral courses and accelerated degrees.

Don't forget, you can contact the partner support desk or your regional account manager if you have any questions.

Please also keep an eye out for our CMS bulletins and on the SLC events website for future CMS events.

Thank you.



## QUESTION & ANSWERS – 5 NOVEMBER 10:30

SAM STOKELL: Hi everyone, I have been joined today by Bev McDonald for this live Q and A. We've received lots of questions and will answer as many as we can in the next 15 minutes. I will hand over to Bev for our first question.

BEV MCDONALD: Thanks, Sam,

Okay, so the first question is from Jane and Jane has asked "Would you be able to confirm if a date has been agreed yet for when the full time undergraduate courses for 21/22 become available on CMS for us to start working on and when the deadline will be for completing this task?"

Okay Jane, we don't have a definite date that I can confirm right now, but we are expecting course collection to go live for full time undergraduate courses week commencing the 23rd of November, and you will have ten weeks, that's ten weeks to submit those courses from the date the course collection opens.

SAM STOKELL: Okay, thanks Bev, so the next question we have here is from Ahmed and Ahmed has asked, "Can you please clarify who is responsible for ensuring all courses are uploaded correctly on CMS."

That's a great question, Ahmed. You as the provider are responsible for ensuring that all of your courses are uploaded correctly and that the information you upload complies with SLC's term date guidance and lots of other guidance that you will have seen on the webinar.

BEV MCDONALD: Okay, the next question then from Joanne, "Please can we have some sort of timeline for when CMS will be open for all of 21/22 courses."

Okay Joanne, that's a really good question. We can't give specific dates, only because course collection opens in line with the application cycle. So what I would suggest is, bearing in mind the times that we opened course collection last year, they will be round about the same time, so you have already got the expected date of week commencing the 23rd of November for your full time undergraduate courses, and then we look to move part time and then postgraduate later in the year but once we know more date wise, we will of course be in touch.

SAM STOKELL: Okay so the next question here is from Brian, and Brian has asked "If a course on CMS is right to be closed, as this is no longer running, do they ever get deleted?"

Unfortunately, that's not a function that we actually offer on CMS at the moment, Brian. But what we can do is, we will take that back to our CMS team. We have a CMS team back at SLC and also a product team and put that forward as a suggested enhancement.

BEV MCDONALD: Okay the next question then and this is from Angela and it's "What is the service standard for courses, how long do we have to submit them?"

Great question Angela and it's really good to hear that you are already thinking about the service standards and those targets that you are aiming to meet. Well, you will actually have ten weeks, that's ten weeks to submit your full time undergraduate courses from the date the course collection opens.



SAM STOKELL: Okay so we have another question here and this one is from Yvonne, very similar to the question Brian has just asked, "Unsaved courses do not appear when we export on CMS, is there any way these can be visible?"

Again, Yvonne, this isn't something that we currently have on CMS at the moment, but it's a great suggestion and it's something we do get asked quite a lot, so again, what we can do is, we can take this back to the CMS team back at SLC and put it forward as a future enhancement.

BEV MCDONALD: Our next question then is from Sarah and Sarah asks, "In what circumstances would a student receive a higher rate of maintenance entitlement?"

Okay Sarah, there's a couple of scenarios where a student would receive a higher amount of maintenance, the first one being if it was actually based in a London campus, that postcode for the London campus will automatically attract a higher element of maintenance. You have also got those students who may be living elsewhere, rather than the parental home, that's also a key factor that will lead to an increased amount of maintenance and also if the course is what we class as a long course, which you will have seen some details on when you just watched the webinar. Those students that are means tested and are on a course that's over 30 weeks and three days, that's what we class as a long course, and those students would be eligible for a higher amount of maintenance loan.

SAM STOKELL: Okay so we have a question from James, and James has asked "With regards to 18-month PGT courses, do we enter them at 18 months or two years?"

The system now, James, allows you to be able to add the course as 18 months, so the second year of a course, you will be able to condense down so it reflects the shorter term which makes up the overall 18 month length of the course.

BEV MCDONALD: So our next question then from Ann and Ann has said that, "This is my first year using CMS so this has been really useful." Oh that's great Ann, really glad you found it helpful. "I can't seem to find in the guidance whether weekends are included when calculating the duration in weeks."

Okay Ann, well I can confirm that the duration is calendar days, so hopefully that helps clarify that for you.

SAM STOKELL: Okay so the next question is from Adam and Adam has asked, "How many intakes can you add to a course once it has been saved?"

The short and sweet answer to that Adam is none. Once a course has been saved, it is locked down and there's very little that can be edited. So in that situation, you would need to create a new course with the correct intake on.

BEV MCDONALD: Okay the next question then from Tim. "In the past we've always had to fill in and send back a data capture form. Does this now need to be done another way?"

BEV MCDONALD: Great question Tim, we've actually got some really, really good questions so thanks everyone. You may have remembered that last year, we rolled out some CMS training for those providers who didn't have full access to CMS and that was to enable those providers to be able to get full access so you could start uploading courses yourselves. Now, unfortunately, due to the pandemic and of course the situation that we find ourselves in we haven't been able to run that training this year.



So what that does means is those providers who have still got restricted access who didn't complete the training last year or were unable to get access to submit the courses yourselves, you are going to need to follow the same process where you complete that data capture form. So they will be sent out to you, you will complete the form and you will send it back to our partner support desk and then what happens is they will upload the courses on CMS on your behalf.

SAM STOKELL: So, the next question we have is from Sam, and Sam is asking "If we make a mistake by not entering an additional intake, how can this be amended?"

So again, Sam, what you would need to do is because you can't edit a lot of the functions of the course once it's been saved, you would need to create a new course and add the correct intake in.

BEV MCDONALD: Okay then, so the next question is from Jenny and Jenny has asked "How many campus locations can you add to CMS?"

Okay Jenny well with your campus locations, you can really just add as many as you need. Some providers only have a very small amount of campuses, whereas some providers actually have quite a large amount. The availability on CMS is there for you to add as many campus locations as you need.

SAM STOKELL: Okay so we've got another question here from Stephen, again this is around campus locations. Stephen has asked "If we have two courses offered over multiple campuses can we just upload once with one campus location?"

So the answer here Stephen is you can, but there are some things you probably would need to consider, such as if the campus location is London, and you don't add it, the students wouldn't get the higher rate of maintenance loan and also from an application perspective, it could be quite confusing to the students, so there are some things to consider, but you can do that if you do so wish.

BEV MCDONALD: Our next question then is from Jan. "If a course has been saved and we want to make a change, what do we need to do?"

Great question Jan and this is actually one we get quite a lot. What I would say is, ideally we want your courses to be right first time upon submission. However, we do know that sometimes changes need to be made. It could be that maybe term dates have been slightly incorrect, that you have been given from academics or different academic schools so we do understand that, but what I would really, really stress is that if you do need to make a change, you first of all get in touch with the partner support desk. Let them know the details of the change, because it's vital that we can then inform the assessors, because they will need to make any reassessments for students that have already applied against those courses so if there's anything you do notice that needs changing, get in touch with that team first and they will give you the go ahead to make the changes.

SAM STOKELL: Okay so the next question here is from Steve and Steve has asked "What happens if we don't change information for a course on time?"

Okay Steve so with anything, if it's not changed on time, there are implications further down the line and really the biggest implication if course information isn't changed on time is the student's funding. So whenever an update to a course is made it almost always triggers a reassessment for the student which can affect their funding and also in some circumstances their eligibility, so like Bev just said, it's really important if you can get your course information right first time, but we do appreciate that things do change.



BEV MCDONALD: Okay, question then from Salwa who has asked “Can you explain the available course years function?”

Okay so the available course years function is really there for you to be able to phase in or phase out a course, as we do know that your course catalogues can change. It may be that you’ve only got a course that’s running for continuing students going forward. You can use the function to select whether you want a course to be available to all students, maybe no students as a certain year of the course you have completely phased that out, you don’t want any students to be able to apply against that, or you can set it to continuing students only so it’s a really useful tool to be able to phase in or phase out a course.

SAM STOKELL: Okay so the next question we have is from Nicky. Nicky has asked “How would we advise SLC that a course is delivered by distance learning?”

Great question. So when you are submitting your courses on to CMS, you’ll see that there are different attributes that you can add to a course, and this will have been discussed in the webinar as well. So we do have a distance learning attribute, so it looks like a little flag, so you can tick that and that tells us at SLC that that course is going to be delivered by distance learning.

BEV MCDONALD: Okay a question from Michael and Michael has asked “How many credits generally make up a standard year?” .

Okay Michael, so a general standard year is usually 120 credits.

SAM STOKELL: Okay so this is the final question that we've got come through from Karen. Karen has asked, “Which domicile requires PG pre registration healthcare courses to be added as undergrad?”

So quick and easy answer here for you Karen is the domicile is England, so if you have any of those courses or you are running those pre reg healthcare courses, they do need to be added as undergraduate because they do attract the undergrad funding package.

BEV MCDONALD: Wow, that was a fast 15 minutes there. We've got lots of questions so thank you very much for joining us today. We have received lots and lots of questions. If yours hasn't been answered please don't worry, we will post answers to all of your questions on the HEP services website. The video on demand recording of this webinar will be available soon and we will let you know as soon as it can be accessed. If you have any more questions after today, don't forget, you can always get in touch with your regional account manager so that just leaves me to say, keep well, stay safe, and we look forward to seeing you again as soon as we possibly can. Take care. Bye Guys.



## QUESTION & ANSWERS – 5 NOVEMBER 14:30

SAM STOKELL: Hi everyone, I've been joined today by Bev McDonald for this live Q and A. We've received lots of questions and we will answer as many as we can in the next 15 minutes. So, to answer our first question I'm going to hand over to Bev.

BEV MCDONALD: Thanks Sam. Okay, so the first question we've got is from Mohammed, and Mohammed has asked, "Is there a way to phase out courses that only have all students as an option on CMS?"

Thanks Mohammed. Well there is a function within CMS and that's the available course years function and you can use that to either phase in or phase out a course. You can set it to no students, all students or continuing students, so that function would support the scenario you are describing.

SAM STOKELL: Okay, so the next question we have here is from Craig. Craig has asked, "How do I submit information for distance learning courses with start dates in September, January and April?"

Okay Craig, so what you would need to do in this instance is add the course, add all of your intakes in, so for September, January and April, and also tick the distance learning flag attribute.

BEV MCDONALD: The next question we have then is from Steph and Steph asks "Where a course needs to be 50% in the UK, is this in physical dates or credits?"

So what we look for here is physical attendance, so 50% physical attendance in the UK.

SAM STOKELL: Okay so the next question we have is from Vicky, and Vicky has asked "Why if you close a course in error, why can this not be reinstated?"

So Vicky, the simple answer here is we don't actually have that functionality on CMS. It's why that when you go to close a course, you do get a box that pops up almost like an error message, to make sure that you definitely want to go ahead and close the course.

BEV MCDONALD: The next question we've got is from Joanne and Joanne asks, "When do we receive the e mail from you ready for validation?"

Okay Joanne, so we'll come out to you first of all to confirm when course collection is going to be opening. We're expecting that around about week commencing the 23rd of November. Once you start submitting your courses, that's when our CMS team start work with validation. They will begin the validation and then they will e mail you and contact you with regards to those courses that we need you to check for us.

SAM STOKELL: Okay so the next question we have here is from Sanja and Sanja is asking "SCITT courses are postgraduate courses, but they are classified as undergraduate funding. This causes a huge misunderstanding for the candidates. Can this be corrected to reflect the correct course level?"

Unfortunately Sanja you can't or we can't, the course itself actually attracts undergraduate funding so whilst the qualification may lead to a postgraduate qualification the funding for these courses is undergraduate which is why we ask you to put the course on as an undergraduate course so we make sure the student gets the right funding.



BEV MCDONALD: And a further question then from Sanja, "Will you give us specific guidance for SCITT course management?"

Okay Sanja, well we do understand there were some difficulties in the previous academic year for you uploading your courses and some varying information and guidance, so this something we are looking at quite closely and we are hoping to be able to give you some more support and some more specific guidance this year.

SAM STOKELL: Okay, so the next question that we have is from Hilary and Hilary has asked, "Validation for funding from Wales for courses running in England was incredibly slow this year and very late. Could we request that decisions are made in a more timely fashion next year?"

Absolutely Hilary. This is a really good point you have brought up. SLC are working very closely with the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales or HEFCW as you might know them as to try and align SLC's processes and timeline with HEFCW so that we can work more consistently, that is ongoing at the moment. But hopefully we will be able to make some progress in this area.

BEV MCDONALD: The next question from Christine, "Have the dates for the 21/22 course collection for undergraduate full time courses been confirmed yet?"

Well Christine, we don't have a definite date, but as I did mention earlier, we are expecting course collection for full time undergraduate courses to open week commencing the 23rd of November.

SAM STOKELL: Okay, so the next question we have is from Marion and Marion has asked "Why are part time courses/applications later in the cycle, from our experience the applicants for part time programmes have more complicated circumstances which take longer to process. Our part time students are often affected by long processing or approval decisions?"

So there's probably a couple of parts to this answer, Marion. The first is that part time students is a smaller demographic of students. We also see that because there is there isn't a UCAS deadline, part time students do tend to leave it later to apply for their funding and secure their places at the institutions of their choice but this is definitely something that we can take back to the operational departments and feed back.

BEV MCDONALD: The next question is from Hilary and Hilary has asked, "Some trainees accidentally put the wrong provider on their application. What is the process for rectifying this?"

Okay Hilary, well, if the course hasn't started yet, and we refer to that as pre liability, the student can actually go into their online application and they can make the change themselves, so they can actually change their provider and correct it themselves. If the course has actually started and this needs to be corrected, we refer to this as post liability, and what that means is the student can't go in and make the change themselves. So what you would need to do in this case is on SIS you would need to submit a transfer COC and that would move them to the correct provider. So a transfer in to bring that record to the correct provider.

SAM STOKELL: Okay, so the next question is from Sharon and Sharon has asked, "We are an FE college and our term dates coincide with our FE students, so longer than the 30 weeks, will it automatically generate additional funding for students?"

So the answer Sharon here is yes, if your term dates reflect the actual study length and if that is longer than 30 weeks and three days, the students will be entitled to additional maintenance funding.



BEV MCDONALD: The next question then from Amy. "You mentioned that term cannot begin on weekends or Bank Holidays. Does this also apply to postgraduate doctorate courses? "

Yes this does. All of the courses have that ruling with regards to weekends and also Bank Holidays.

SAM STOKELL: Okay so the next question we have is from Dorothy and Dorothy has asked, "Are you going to take us through the setting up process step by step, as I have never done this before and I'm replacing a member of staff who is no longer with the college."

So we are unable to take you through a step by step on this webinar Dorothy, but what I will say is that on our HEP services website under the CMS section, there is a guidance document which does explain the process step by step. However, if you require some additional training, please do get in touch with your regional account manager.

BEV MCDONALD: The next question then we have is from Ahmed and Ahmed has asked, "Can you please clarify who is responsible for ensuring all courses are uploaded correctly on to CMS?"

Okay Ahmed, this responsibility does lie with you, the higher education provider. Now we provide lots of guidance and support on the HEP services website under the CMS section. We have a full user guide that you can find lots of information in there. We also break that up into separate quick guides to look at term dates, length of courses, attributes and flags, all those kinds of things, so you will find a lot of support there. Now, once your courses have been submitted, I mentioned earlier about the validation process. The CMS team will begin validation on your courses. So if there are any anomalies or things we need to check with you that maybe don't reflect our guidance, the CMS team would be in touch to make sure that those courses are correct but what we try and aim for is that you always submit your courses right first time, as accurately as possible, is key.

SAM STOKELL: Okay so the next question is from Sarah and Sarah has asked, "In what circumstances would a student receive a higher rate of maintenance entitlement?"

This is a really good question, Sarah. One that we get asked quite a lot, so again, there's a couple of strands to this answer so the first is that if you have a campus location in London the student can receive a higher rate of maintenance entitlement. If they indicate on their application form that they are living away from home, they will receive a higher rate of maintenance loan and also if you put on to CMS what we class as a long course, they would also get additional funding past the 30 weeks and three days, which is the standard length of a course.

BEV MCDONALD: Adam has asked, "How many intakes can you add to a course once it has been saved?"

Well Adam, once you have actually saved a course, you can't then add another intake. If you need another intake and you realise that after you have already saved a course, what you would need to do is add that intake separately.

SAM STOKELL: Okay so the next one here we've got through is from Hanh and Hanh has asked, "How are term dates worked out?"



So really Hanh, the term dates and what they look like and how they are worked out is up to you as an institution and what your structure looks like and what the teaching looks like. However, SLC does have guidance which we ask you to adhere to when you are setting up your term dates for your courses on CMS. Just so that we can pay the student in a timely manner and we can ensure they are getting the funding in line for when they are actually in study.

BEV MCDONALD: The next question from James, asks, "With regard to 18 month postgraduate courses, do we enter them with 18 months or two years?"

Well James, an enhancement actually went into CMS to allow you to input the course over the 18 months, rather than the two years, so that we can pay students in line with what they are actually studying. So when it comes to the second year, you can condense your term dates to cover the 18-month period all in total.

SAM STOKELL: Okay, so this is the final question that we've got time for today and the final question has come from Jenny and Jenny has asked, "How many campus locations can you add to CMS?"

So really easy one to finish on and the answer Jenny is that you can add as many campus locations as you like.

BEV MCDONALD: Well, thank you very much for joining us today. We've received lots and lots of questions so if yours hasn't been answered, please don't worry, we will post answers to all questions on the HEP services website. The video on demand recording of this webinar will be available soon and we'll let you know as soon as it can be accessed. If you have any more questions after today, please don't forget, you can get in touch with your regional account manager so that just leaves me to say please keep well and stay safe and we look forward to seeing you again as soon as possible. Bye Guys.



## QUESTION & ANSWERS – 10 NOVEMBER 10:30

SAM STOKELL: Hi everyone. I have been joined today by Bev McDonald for this live Q&A. We have received lots of questions and we will answer as many as we can in the next 15 minutes, so to answer our first question, I am going to pass over to Bev.

BEV MCDONALD: Thanks Sam. Okay, so our first question is from Jan. And Jan has asked, "If a course has been saved and we want to make a change, what do we need to do?"

Okay Jan, great question. Thank you.

So, what we always ask for is that you strive for right first time call submission. It is really important that you submit your courses accurately prior to the application cycle opening. This is because students will apply and if you then need to make a change after the application cycle has opened and students have applied, any changes could have an impact on the students' entitlement. We do understand though that in some cases you do need to make changes after the application cycle has gone live and once you have submitted your course. So what we do ask is that you don't make any change until you have contacted the HEP services team, they'll then instruct you when you are able to make the change because they will need to link in with the assessment team to manage any re assessments.

SAM STOKELL: Okay, so the next question we have here is from Zohra, and Zohra has asked, "Will the slides be distributed to us after this webinar?"

Well, the good news is, Zohra, that they will, they won't be distributed to you individually. The slides, along with the live Q&A, will be hosted on our HEP services website, along with the Q&A document of the questions that have been asked and our answers.

BEV MCDONALD: The next question we have is from Karen and Karen has asked, "Please can we have a link on the CMS portal to the guidance as it is not very accessible."

Thanks Karen. Okay, so the CMS guidance document is actually available on the HEP services website. I do appreciate that you have to actually go into the CMS section and then go into the full guidance document and then also the quick guide, so it does take you a few clicks to get there; but what we can do is we can take your suggestion back to the courses service manager within the business and see whether we can get that link set up for you.

SAM STOKELL: Okay, so the next question we have is from Alex and Alex has asked, "Are there any plans to provide a bulk update feature on the courses management service it would make the rollover process for each academic year run more smoothly, and will probably limit errors in data input."

Okay, Alex. So for those of you who are familiar with our old CMS system that is how we used to do it. However, to ensure that the information that you are saving on your courses is accurate and up to date and also to protect data integrity, we do ask now that they are saved individually.

BEV MCDONALD: The next question then that we have from Jane is, "Would we be able to confirm if a date has been agreed yet for when the full time undergraduate courses for 21/22 become available on the CMS for us to start working on and when the deadline will be for completing this task?"



Okay, Jane. Well, we don't have a definite date yet, but what I can confirm is that we are expecting the full time undergraduate course collection to open week commencing the 23rd of November and once we have a definite date that will be communicated to you, and you will have ten weeks, so that's ten weeks to get those courses submitted from the date that we open collection.

SAM STOKELL: Okay. So the next question we have is from Ahmed and Ahmed has asked, "Can you please clarify who's responsible for ensuring all courses are uploaded correctly on to CMS?"

Okay, Ahmed. So, it's a really simple question. It's you as the provider; it's your responsibility to make sure that the courses and the information is uploaded correctly on to CMS, and then those courses are then saved again just as a reminder to protect data integrity.

BEV MCDONALD: Angela has asked, "What is the Service Standard for courses and how long do we have to submit them?"

Okay. So, once we open full time undergraduate course collection you're going to have ten weeks, so that's ten weeks to submit those courses from the date that we open collection.

SAM STOKELL: And the next question comes from Sarah, and Sarah has asked, "In what circumstances would a student receive a higher rate of maintenance entitlement?"

So that's a great question, Sarah. So there is quite a few answers to this. So to start off one way that a student can receive a higher rate of maintenance loan is if they are studying and living in London. So a campus location based in London they will receive a London rate of maintenance loan which attracts a higher amount. The other is if they indicate on their application form that they are living away from home as opposed to the parental home, so they might be living in halls of residence they get a little bit more maintenance funding. And the other is if you add a long course loan, sorry, long course to the system that attracts what we call a long course loan.

BEV MCDONALD: The next question then is from James and James asks, "With regards to 18 months postgraduate courses, do we enter them 18 months or two years?"

Great question, James. We actually brought an enhancement into CMS, so that if you do have an 18 month postgraduate course you can actually condense your term dates for that second year, so it reflects the actual teaching time that the student is actually going to receive the funding over, so you can condense that second year so it covers the full 18 months rather than the two years.

SAM STOKELL: Okay so the next question we have is from Adam and Adam has asked, "How many intakes can you add to a course once it has been saved?"

So the short and sweet answer to this, Adam, is none. If you needed to add an additional intake you would have to create a new course and put that intake in.

BEV MCDONALD: Jenny asks, "How many campus locations can you add to CMS?"

Well, Jenny, you can add as many as you need; for some smaller providers you might not have that many locations, but for those larger providers you might have various different campuses and so CMS allows you to use as many as you need.

SAM STOKELL: Stephen has asked us "What happens if you, as a provider don't change information for a course on time?"



So the answer here is there can be implications really from the student's end, so it can change their entitlement. Generally when you make any changes to a course it triggers a re assessment, so SLC will perform a re assessment and again depending on where they are within the academic year, that can have significant implications on the student's funding. So again, as Bev said, we do ask you to try and get your courses submitted and that they are correct, right first time. But again if you do have to make any changes we ask that they are made as soon as possible to limit any implications to the student.

BEV MCDONALD: The next question is from Nicky, and Nicky asks, "How would we advise SLC that a course is delivered by Distance Learning?"

Well, Nicky, you may have seen on the webinar that we have various flags that we class as attributes within CMS and there is a Distance Learning attribute, so you would just tick that and that would indicate the course is Distance Learning.

SAM STOKELL: Okay. So the next question is from Sanja and Sanja's asked, "Will you give us specific guidance for SCITT course management?"

So, Sanja, we do appreciate that there have been some difficulties with some of your courses, specifically around those that are non salaried and getting those sorts of applications approved. So whilst there isn't any specific guidance at the moment, we are going to take that back to our courses service manager and have a look at that for you.

BEV MCDONALD: We have a question from Marion, and Marion has asked, "Why are part time courses and applications later in the cycle?"

Really good question. Well, we open course collection in line with the different applications cycles opening. So that's always the first factor. Now part time students tend to be a smaller demographic, and also as there is no UCAS deadline we tend to see part time students actually applying later; so hence why the applications cycle opens later and obviously our course collection opening is in line with that.

SAM STOKELL: Okay, so the next question we have is from Hilary and Hilary is asking, "Why validation funding from Wales for courses running in England is slow and is always very late."

So Hilary, that is something that SLC are aware of and we are in the process of working very closely with HEFCW which is our Higher Education Funding Council for Wales, to work more in a timely manner, so that our processes link in with theirs and so that is something that we are working on and hopefully we will have an update for you shortly.

BEV MCDONALD: A further question then from Hilary, and Hilary has said that "Some trainees accidentally put the wrong provider on the application and what is the process for rectifying this?"

Okay, Hilary. So, if this happens prior to the academic year starting, we refer to this as pre liability. The student can actually go on to their on line account and make that change quite simply themselves. Now if the course has started we refer to that as post liability, and then what needs to happen is we need a transfer in CoCs, submitted on SIS by the provider.

SAM STOKELL: So, the next question we have is from Emma and Emma has asked, "Do you provide on line training for new users and who will be responsible for the system?"



Okay, Emma. So, prior to the Covid situation it would have been the responsibility of the Account Manager to come and do some sort of face to face training with you. Also, generally by this point in the year we would have ran face to face CMS training for those providers who needed it. But what I will say for now is there is an awful lot of guidance available on our HEP services website, and you can also utilise your regional Account Manager should you need any further support, but hopefully coming in to sort of the New Year and early next year we will be able to get back up and running with delivering some face to face training for you.

BEV MCDONALD: We have a question from Sam. "If we make a mistake by not entering an additional intake, how can this be amended?"

Okay Sam, well once you have actually added a course on to CMS, you can't then add an additional intake. What you would need to do is set that up as a separate course on CMS.

SAM STOKELL: Okay so the next question we have is from Brian. And Brian has asked, "If a course on CMS is right to be closed as this is no longer running, do they ever get deleted?"

At the moment, Brian, they don't, but this is something that we can take back to the business and put forward as a suggested enhancement with our CMS team.

BEV MCDONALD: Karen has asked, "Which domicile requires postgraduate pre registration healthcare courses to be added as undergrad?"

Okay, it's England. So for English domiciled courses those are the ones you need to add as an undergraduate course rather than postgraduate.

SAM STOKELL: Okay, so the next question is our final question; 15 minutes has flown over. So the final question comes from Michael, and Michael has asked, "How many credits generally make up a standard year?"

So a nice and easy one to end on there Michael and the answer is 120 credits.

BEV MCDONALD: Wow, that's flown by. Thank you very much for joining us today. We have received lots of questions, so if yours hasn't been answered please don't worry we will post answers to all questions on the HEP services website. The video on demand recording of this webinar will be available soon, and we will let you know as soon as it can be accessed. But if you do have any more questions after today don't forget you can get in touch with your regional Account Manager.

So that just leaves me to say, keep well and stay safe and we look forward to seeing you again as soon as we can. Bye guys.

SAM STOKELL: Good bye.



## QUESTION & ANSWERS – 10 NOVEMBER 14:30

SAM STOKELL: Hi, everyone. I've been joined today by Bev McDonald for this live Q&A. We have received lots of questions and will answer as many as we can in the next 15 minutes so to answer the first question, I'm going to hand over to Bev.

BEV MCDONALD: Thanks, Sam. Okay, so the first question is from Emma and Emma has asked, "How do I find out who our account manager is?"

A really good question, Emma. If you are unsure who your account manager is, if you go to the HEP services website and under the Engagement section you will find regional support and there on that page, it will list all of the regions and will indicate who your account manager is. It will give you their email address and also their mobile telephone number.

SAM STOKELL: Okay so the next question we have is from Claire and Claire has asked, "We have PG courses that are structured for three years, but some students study quicker and complete in two years. What is the best way to manage this?"

Okay, Claire, so the best way to manage this would be to transfer the students on to a two year version of the course. It would be great if you could do this in advance of them completing, if you know at that point, just so we can then recalculate the funding and make sure that they receive the money while they're still studying.

BEV MCDONALD: The next question is from Minesh and Minesh has asked, "I wanted to find out if it was possible to add a noughts section or field for every programme on CMS. This is particularly helpful since this task is completed annually."

Well thank you, Minesh. It is a good question and also a good enhancement idea. I appreciate that you might need the need for noughts so what I'll do, I will take this back to the business and the CMS service manager and put that on our enhancement log.

SAM STOKELL: Okay so the next question is from Jane and the question is, "Would you be able to confirm if a date has been agreed yet for when full time undergraduate courses for 21/22 become available on CMS for us to start working on? And when the deadline will be for completing this task?"

Okay Jane, a great question this. Throughout our broadcast, this has been one that has been asked the most. So, whilst we don't have a definite date, we can confirm that course collection is scheduled to open week commencing the 23rd of November. Like I said, we don't have a specific date but as soon as we do, we will communicate that with you. However, it is likely to week commencing the 23rd. And you will have ten weeks to get all of your courses added on to the system.

BEV MCDONALD: The next question then is from Joanne and Joanne has asked, "Would it be possible for the course search for students to be updated so they have an option to search for the SLC course code and not just the course title or the UCAS code?"

Some great ones coming through here, not just questions but more enhancement ideas so thank you. We have actually heard of this before because it can be difficult sometimes for students to locate the course and the SLC code is that unique identifier. So, again, we will take this back to the business and speak to the courses service manager and get it added to the enhancement log.



SAM STOKELL: Okay so the next question we have is from Joanne and Joanne has asked, "Please can we have some sort of timeline for when CMS will be open for all 21/22 courses?"

So, like I've just said for full time undergraduate, we are scheduled to open week commencing the 23rd of November. Now, for the other products, we don't have definitive times, dates sorry at the moment so if you look back to the previous academic year and follow that timeline, so for part time we would say around March we will open the course collection for part time, and then around May/June we will hopefully open it for postgraduate masters and postgraduate doctoral courses.

BEV MCDONALD: We've got a question from Tim who asks, "In the past we have always had to fill in and send back a data capture form. Does this now need to be done in another way?"

Okay, Tim, so last year we came out to providers and offered some hands on CMS training for those providers that had restricted access that weren't able to add the courses themselves on to CMS. Now obviously, because of the pandemic and the situation we're in this year we haven't been able to do that, unfortunately. So what it means is if you didn't complete the training last year to be signed off as competent to add your own courses to CMS, you will still need to fill in and return the data capture form. So, you will continue to use that process.

SAM STOKELL: Okay, so the next question we have is from Anne and Anne has said, "This is my first year using CMS. However, I can't seem to find in the guidance whether weekends are included when calculating the duration in weeks."

The answer is yes, as it's calendar days.

BEV MCDONALD: The next question we have then is from Steven and Steven has asked, "If we have two courses offered over multiple campuses, can we just upload once with one campus location?"

Well, Steven, you could choose to do it this way. However, you need to just think that maybe there is a London campus and that would attract a higher rate of maintenance loan, but also it can become quite difficult for students to locate the correct course if you don't have them separated at the different campuses. So, we'd always say, for best practice to add them separately.

SAM STOKELL: So the next question we have comes from Kat and Kat has asked, "How can we transfer provider for doctoral loan if they were approved in past years under other institutions?"

So, what we would advise in this situation Kat is that you do a transfer in COC.

BEV MCDONALD: The next question is from Antonia who has said that, "My connection to the live webinar video stream isn't that strong and it does keep buffering so will a recording of the webinar be available to watch afterwards?"

Sorry about that Antonia, I think it's difficult isn't it, we're all working from home and we're all using our home internet which isn't always great but don't worry, what will happen is the webinar recording will actually be uploaded on to the HEP services website and we will let you know as soon as that's available and you will be able to watch it back there.

SAM STOKELL: So the next question we have is from Cassandra and Cassandra has asked, "Does this apply to postgrad?"



So, the webinar as a whole as you will have just seen applies to higher education, which does include postgrad and doctoral. There was a second on the webinar where we talked you through postgrad masters and postgrad doctoral, however, if you felt like some of your questions were not answered or you still have some queries, there is a lot of guidance on the HEP services website. If you would like to ask any questions, you can go to our partner support desk or as always you can contact your regional account manager.

BEV MCDONALD: Our next question is from, Kathy and Kathy has said, "This year, did the system go live at the same time that students could apply and is this normally ten weeks?"

Okay Kathy, so what happens is, we would open course collections or CMS would go live for uploading your courses around about November time, that usually happens every year. And that's really in advance of the application cycle opening, that's usually around February time for full time undergrad. The reason we ask you to get those courses in as early as we do is really so we can get them submitted, you will have ten weeks to get them submitted and then what will happen after that is we will go through validation checks and our CMS team will be in touch if there is any anomalies or anything we need you to clarify. They will all be corrected and rectified well in time for the application cycle going live.

SAM STOKELL: So the next question is from Laura and again it is, "What is the deadline for completing the full time undergraduate CMS for 21/22?"

It is good to see that you are all eager to get your courses on! Just as a reminder, we are hopeful that this will open week commencing the 23rd of November.

BEV MCDONALD: The next question is from Dorothy and Dorothy has asked, "Are you going to take us through the setting up process step by step as I have never done this before and I'm replacing a member of staff who is no longer with the college?"

Okay, Dorothy, so, I mentioned earlier that in an ideal world we would have been able to do hands on and face to face live interactive training for CMS and that would have been able to take you through adding a course step by step. It is very difficult to do that via a webinar. What I will say is if you go to the HEP services website and under the CMS section, there is the full CMS user guide and that will go through each step of adding a course and all of the extra things you will need to know so I would direct you there as your first port of call.

SAM STOKELL: So the next question we have is from Joanne and Joanne has asked, "When do we receive the email from you ready for validation?"

So like you will have seen, Joanne, in the webinar we talked an awful lot about the validation process, the work that goes into this and why we have the validation process. Now, when you start to upload your courses, like we have mentioned, you have ten weeks to get those uploaded or saved on to the system and at that point, what happens is our CMS team at SLC will start to look at the courses that you've put on, the attributes, the fees and term dates. It is at that point they start to validate those. The team will come out to you if something doesn't look quite right. Your work with them is really appreciated.

BEV MCDONALD: The next question is from Steph who asks, "Where a course needs to be 50% in the UK, is this in physical dates or credits?"

Well, Steph, what we look for here is 50% actual physical attendance.



SAM STOKELL: So the next question we have is from Sanja and Sanja has asked, "SCITT courses are postgraduate courses but they are classified as undergraduate funding. This causes huge misunderstanding for the candidates. Can this be corrected to reflect the correct course level?"

Unfortunately, Sanja, completely appreciate and understand that the qualification is postgraduate, but because the course actually attracts undergraduate funding, this is why we ask you to put the courses on as undergraduate as that's the package of funding that the students are entitled to.

BEV MCDONALD: The next question is from Vicki who asks: "Why if you close a course in error, can it not be reinstated?"

Well, Vicki, I'm afraid that CMS doesn't have that functionality. We have built into CMS really a safety catch so if you do go to close a course in error, it will come up with a message just making sure are you sure you really want to close this course because what that will do is it will close the course all of the way back from the date it was actually entered on to CMS, so if it has been running for four or five years, it will go all the way back to the start and it will have an impact on students' applications. So, ideally, we don't want you to close courses unnecessarily. As I say, we don't have that system functionality to be able to just reopen a closed course.

SAM STOKELL: Okay, so the next question we have is from Jenny and Jenny has asked, "How many campus locations can you add to CMS?"

A great question, Jenny, especially for those of you that are maybe new to CMS. The answer is that you can add as many as you like.

BEV MCDONALD: The next question we have is from Suzanne who asks: "How can we tell which courses are entitled to the NHS bursary attribute?"

Well, Suzanne, we provide you with the functionality to be able to add the NHS attribute but the information really comes from yourself as the provider, so you would need to indicate to us which courses attract NHS funding and then you would use the appropriate attribute.

SAM STOKELL: Okay, so the final question comes from Phil. Hi Phil because you're one of our Providers and Phil has asked, "We have optional sandwich courses in CMS, we have input these courses twice, one version as three years full time without placement, and the other as four years with sandwich, is this correct?"

Absolutely, Phil. Dead short and sweet, that is the right way you would do this in CMS.

BEV MCDONALD: Well, that 15 minutes flew by! So, thank you very much for joining us today. We have received lots of questions so if yours hasn't been answered, please don't worry, we will post all answers to the questions on the HEP services website. The video on demand recording of the webinar will also be available soon and we will let you know as soon as it can be accessed. If you have any more questions after today, please don't forget you can get in touch with your regional account manager. So, that just leaves me to say please keep well and stay safe. We look forward to seeing you again as soon as we possibly can.  
Bye.

SAM STOKELL: Bye guys.





**For more information:**

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