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## Reopening of the ELE sector in line with Govt. Roadmap

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**International Education Providers** <internationaleducationproviders@justice.ie>  
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Bcc: peter@flireland.com

10 September 2021 at 16:40

Dear Provider,

Please find below an announcement which issued today from DFHERIS through the ELE Working Group.

In line with the contents of the notice, in advance of the recruitment of new International non-EU/EEA students, ELE providers are required to notify the ILEP Unit of their reopening plans and to confirm that they have the capacity and capability to safely reopen, to safely bring students into the State in accordance with relevant travel restrictions and advices, and to safely provide for their full cohort of students and to fully comply with any and all relevant public health guidelines.

Further guidance in relation to student immigration and ILEP requirements will be provided to the ELE sector in due course.

Kind Regards

ILEP Unit

Dear ELE Working Group Members,

On 31st August 2021, the Government published COVID-19: Reframing the Challenge, Continuing Our Recovery and Reconnecting, Ireland's plan for the next and final phase of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This phase, taking place over the course of September and October, will see the majority of Covid-related restrictions gradually lifted and replaced by guidance, underpinned by a focus on public health advice, personal judgement and personal protective behaviours, to enable the wider reopening of Irish society.

The plan represents a significant shift in the State's public health management of the pandemic and entails a change from protection at the population level, through regulations and restrictions, to protection at a personal level enabled by supportive measures implemented in relevant settings.

This plan now provides a roadmap to reopening for all sectors of the economy including for the resumption of activity in the English language education (ELE) sector initially from 20 September 2021 and incrementally expanding in line with the changes to restrictions following 22 October 2021. ELE providers should make necessary preparations for the safe resumption of activities in accordance with the provisions of this plan while ensuring compliance with public health guidelines alongside all

relevant travel restrictions and advices as they evolve. This is noting, that the Government's roadmap does not currently address a plan for the lifting of current travel restrictions which will be kept under ongoing review.

While, subject to the ongoing review of the public health situation, many regulations and restrictions will be lifted over this period, it remains incumbent on ELE providers to ensure that they maintain their duty of care for the health and wellbeing of their staff, their students and their wider communities as levels of activity increase in the coming weeks and months. It is key that efforts continue to be made to mitigate the spread of Covid-19 and that providers do not reopen nor expand their current levels of activity unless ready to do so in a safe manner. To this end, it is essential that all ELE providers:

- Review and keep all sectoral reopening protocols, outbreak management procedures and the associated adaptation framework up to date and in line with evolving public health advice and the national Work Safely Protocols. This is to include relevant updates to arise from the signalled review of the Work Safely Protocols alongside the HSE's upcoming review of the public health response to Covid-19 which will address testing, contact tracing, outbreak management, surveillance and sequencing,
- Continue to review on-site operations in line with the overall progression of disease control and mitigation measures through appropriate risk assessment and engagement,
- Consult with staff and students on their wider reopening plans,
- Ensure that all relevant protective measures, such as mask wearing and physical distancing, are in place and remain in alignment with evolving public health advice,
- Ensure that sufficient resources and capacity are in place to meet the needs of both existing and any prospective, new students,
- Establish robust procedures for the safe arrival of new ELE students into the State, ensuring that relevant supports and information are in place to assist students to comply with travel restrictions and advices on arrival including where any restriction on movements or mandatory hotel quarantine is required,
- Promote and encourage vaccine uptake among existing, new and prospective students to the greatest extent possible,
- Ensure that all staff and students are aware of the locations of nearby facilities for PCR testing, are encouraged to get tested if displaying any symptoms of Covid-19, not to attend in person if displaying symptoms and to self-isolate in the event of a positive test,
- Ensure that every effort is made to support and to comply with the needs of public health officials in the event of an onsite Covid outbreak.

It is also important that the sector as a whole should continue to coordinate its efforts to collectively support its members to manage and

ensure a safe and successful reopening.

To facilitate the implementation of the Government's roadmap and the resumption of the recruitment of new International non-EU/EEA ELE students, the Department will be engaging with the Department of Justice to review the conditions which have been applied to the student immigration system including the Interim List of Eligible Programmes (ILEP) over the period of the pandemic to date. Further guidance in relation to student immigration and ILEP requirements will be provided to the ELE sector once this engagement has been completed.

However, in advance of the recruitment of new International non-EU/EEA students, please be aware that ELE providers will be required to notify ILEP of their reopening plans and to confirm that they have the capacity and capability to safely reopen, to safely bring students into the State in accordance with relevant travel restrictions and advices, to safely provide for their full cohort of students and to fully comply with any and all relevant public health guidelines.

Regards

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