Dear Erasmus+ students,

Sorry not to get this information to you yesterday as promised, we’re trying to keep you informed whilst at the same time being keen to provide clarity rather than ambiguity where there is so much uncertainty for you all.

The following is an update based on the latest information we have received from the Erasmus+ UK National Agency:

- The European Commission has waived the minimum duration requirements (2 months for work placements/3 months for study placements) for all placements that have commenced. You will therefore remain eligible for funding if your placement was shorter than the minimum duration as a consequence of disruption due to Covid-19. You do not need to take any action to secure approval for the short duration.

- If you are undertaking a study placement and remain in your host country and are able to continue your placement either in person or online you will continue to be funded for the days you complete as normal.

- If you are undertaking a work placement and remain in your host country and are able to continue your placement in person you will continue to be funded for the days you complete as normal. We are waiting for confirmation that work placement remote/home working undertaken in the host country will also be funded as normal and anticipate this will be the case but the guidance that we have received is ambiguous.

- If you have returned to the UK/your home country (if this is not the UK) and are continuing to engage with your study placement through online provision by the host organisation you are eligible to keep your funding for the days you were on placement in the host country. In addition, the European Commission have indicated that students will be able to claim some additional expenses as the result of placements ending early due to Covid-19. This will likely include additional travel costs incurred, accommodation costs where students could not be released from their housing contract etc. These expenses will then be offset against any grant overpayment. We are working through the details of this at the moment and will provide an update as soon as we understand more about this. We anticipate that the above position will also apply to work placements but we are currently awaiting confirmation.

- If your study or work placement has ended early and there is no remote provision you are eligible to retain the funding for the days you were on placement in the host country. End of placement documents should be completed as normal wherever possible however there will be much more flexibility with regards to deadlines for these. In addition, the European Commission have indicated that students will be able to claim some additional expenses as the result of placements ending early due to Covid-19. This will likely include additional travel costs incurred, accommodation costs where students could not be released from their housing contract etc. These expenses will then be offset against any grant overpayment. We are working through the details of this at the moment and will provide an update as soon as we understand more about this.

- If you have remained in your host country but are not able to engage with your placement in person or online and are either undertaking alternative provision provided by The University of Manchester or have no provision in place you are eligible to retain the funding for the
days you were on placement. We are awaiting further guidance from the commission as to whether any further funding may be possible.

- If you travelled to your host country but your placement was cancelled before the start date – we are awaiting further clarification from the Erasmus+ UK National Agency as to whether any funding can be provided.

I am sorry not to be able to provide certainty for all of your different situations yet but we will keep you updated as soon as we receive further clarity and information from both the UK Erasmus+ National Agency and the European Commission.

In relation to evidence for placement end dates, additional expenses incurred etc. PLEASE ensure that you keep receipts, flight boarding passes/ticket information, housing contracts and emails regarding refunds or otherwise, communications from host universities regarding closures etc. We are not yet clear exactly what the European Commission will require for compliance purposes so please retain everything.

Please be assured that once we’ve worked through the additional expenses process, if there is a need to reclaim any grant overpayment from you we will do so with as much flexibility as possible with respect to timescales etc. IF you are fortunate enough to be in a position where you have grant funds remaining on your Mastercard Cash Passport that you have not yet spent and you are in a position financially where you do not need to draw on them we would encourage you not to do so if you can clearly see that you will not be eligible to retain your original grant entitlement.

Best wishes and take care,

Alison Mewes & Victoria Rowlands
University of Manchester Erasmus Team
erasmus@manchester.ac.uk