



ASCL, LGA, NAHT and NEU Joint School Workforce - Joint Guidance on International Travel **27 May 2021**

1. School leaders, teachers and staff have worked hard to keep schools open and minimise the disruption to our children's safety, wellbeing and education over the last 15 months. We know that staff continue to be committed to minimising the disruption for children. This guidance is designed to help maintain continuity for children as much as possible as we continue to manage our way out of the pandemic.
2. The easing of restrictions on the Government's roadmap includes a change to the measures in place for international travel. Mindful of the proximity of half term and the summer holidays, we felt it would be useful to update the guidance we published on 19 June 2020.
3. Current Government advice on international travel includes:

"We continue to advise against all non-essential international travel to some countries and territories. You should [check the country page](#) for your destination. We also currently [advise against cruise ship travel](#). We are monitoring the international situation closely and keeping our advice under constant review, so that it reflects our latest assessment of risks to British people."

4. Travel abroad and then returning to England is currently based on a system of lists (denoted by colour) depending on the country you are travelling to. These are green, amber and red list countries. The rules on each are set out here [Red, amber and green list rules for entering England - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

You can find out more about [Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office travel advice, here.](#)

Please refer to separate advice regarding international travel to and from [Scotland](#), [Wales](#) and [Northern Ireland](#).

5. Our key recommendation in relation to this issue, is that school leaders and managers have conversations with all the recognised trade unions, their teaching and support staff as early as possible, about the potential impact of these new international travel rules.
6. Clearly the biggest concern in schools is likely to be if staff take holidays abroad requiring quarantine on their return which could impact on the start of the school term.

7. Although it has never been necessary for the majority of school leaders and managers to be aware of staff's personal plans outside of school terms, schools are now in a position where the current international travel requirements on return has the potential to impact on the ability of school staff to physically return to work in school at the start of the school term. Therefore, managers should have open conversations with staff about the potential impact of this, and how it can be best managed locally, if staff are considering travelling outside England whilst these restrictions are in force.
8. To assist these individual conversations, the following NJC and Joint teachers' guidance is as follows:

Current government guidance is very clear that you should not travel to [red list countries or territories](#). However, should an employee set out to travel to or through a red list country, they will be doing so in full knowledge of the **requirement to quarantine** in an approved hotel on their return. Therefore, the period of that quarantine should be taken into account in order to ensure they are available to attend school on the first day of term, as per the above referenced joint guidance published on 19 June and NJC 5 June 2020 advice.

Current government guidance is very clear that you should not travel to [Amber List countries or territories](#). However, should an employee set out to travel to or through an amber list country, they will be doing so in full knowledge of the **requirement to quarantine** for ten days (at home) on their return. Therefore, those 10 days should be accounted for in their leave plans ensuring they will be available to attend school at the start of the term, as per the joint teacher guidance issued 19 June and the NJC guidance issued 5 June 2020.

From 17 May, travel will be allowed directly to / from [Green List countries](#). There is no requirement to quarantine on return but a COVID test must be taken on arrival or within two days two of arriving back home. If that test returns a positive result, then the employee will be **instructed to self-isolate**, in which case longstanding joint advice will apply: stay at home (working if possible, although we recognise this may be difficult to accommodate in the school environment and should be agreed prior to making any travel plans) on normal full pay until either (a) further tests return a negative result and they can return to work or (b) they go on to develop COVID symptoms and are unfit to work, at which point they move onto sick leave and the usual provisions of the scheme apply.

9. The COVID-19 pandemic is expected to continue to affect international travel for some time. No travel is risk-free, and many countries have closed their borders, restricted entry to UK travellers and introduced requirements for a negative test result and/or quarantine measures. Therefore, anyone can expect that any country may further restrict travel or bring in new quarantine rules at short notice, for example due to a new COVID-19 variant.

10. This is a challenging situation for leaders, teachers and all staff who will want to guard the start of term carefully, considering the impact on children of the previous two academic years. Therefore, we recommend that line managers talk to their staff to plan carefully, following local advice and avoiding any unnecessary risk wherever possible. Line managers may need to account for situations where the manager had agreed travel plans to a given destination that was permitted at the time of booking, but where the status of the destination changed whilst they were travelling.

11. School leaders and managers may want to remind their staff that under the current restrictions someone who has recently travelled abroad must follow relevant requirements to quarantine or self-isolate on their return. As a result, a staff member could be unable to attend school when contractually required to do so.

Staff should therefore check the requirements in advance to ensure that there is sufficient time to complete any period of quarantine or self-isolation before the return to work date. Where requirements for those returning from abroad are known in advance, any period of term-time quarantine or self-isolation resulting from foreign travel may have to be taken as unpaid leave, unless permission has been agreed with the relevant line manager in advance.

12. There will be a number of considerations that need to be taken into account to ensure the school's policy is clear, applied fairly and consistently, and is reasonable in relation to individual contracts of employment and personal circumstances. The recognised trade unions should be consulted on any proposed changes to the school's policy prior to implementation.

13. These arrangements must be clear to the employee before they embark on leave that will require quarantine.