

Advisory on traveling to Sri Lanka

1. Duration of quarantine in Sri Lanka

The duration of quarantine is two weeks in approved facility and 2 rounds of PCR testing followed by 2 weeks of home quarantine which is mandatory to all returnees and will be overseen by the Government of Sri Lanka as per the information from the universities.

2. Quarantine facility in Sri Lanka

The quarantine facilities can be in a non-paying facility or paying facility in approved hotels, however, non-paying quarantine facility is only for the Sri Lankan nationals and not applicable for foreign nationals as per the confirmation received.

3. Costs to be incurred for quarantine

As per the information from the universities, cost for the quarantine in the facility quarantine will have to be borne by students which ranges from LKR.7500/ day for sharing to LKR.12500/per day for single occupancy.

4. Quarantine for KDU students

As per the information received from the university, DAHE has been informed that quarantine for the KDU students can be arranged in the university premises including for those who are not residing in the hostel.

5. Home quarantine

Universities of Kelaniya and Peradeniya have indicated that home quarantine can be arranged in the university premises.

6. What happens if tested positive for Covid-19

In case anybody is tested positive for Covid-19, he/she will be treated in a special government hospitals designated for that purpose. They are not allowed to be treated in the private hospitals.

7. Academic session

As per the notification from the UCG, universities have been allowed to resume academic session from 6th July 2020, accordingly, medical universities in Sri Lanka have notified the schedule for resuming academic session and the examinations. The universities have informed that they will be *“continuing with academic programmes, unless students return they will miss the practical and clinicals. If they miss a lot of practicals and clinicals and are unable to catch up with their batchmates, they will have to join the junior batch once they return. If the students do not want to return, they will have to officially write to the dean for leave of absence”*.

8. Covid-19 situation in Sri Lanka as of 4th August 2020

Overview:

- Total confirmed cases: 2828
- Total recovered: 2517
- Total death: 11

- Total active cases: 311

9. Procedures for returning

As informed by the partner universities, returning of students to Sri Lanka is to be coordinated by respective governments through their embassy or consulate in Sri Lanka and the Presidential Secretariat.

10. DAHE's role

For students wishing to travel back to their universities the Department of Adult and Higher Education will facilitate in seeking travel clearances and the possibility of flight arrangement from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. If travel clearance is accorded and flight arranged by MFA, DAHE will then liaise with the universities on the travel of the students and request for ground support upon arrival.

11. Decision to travel

DAHE will seek updates and other necessary information from the partner universities and embassies and share the information to the students and parents. After analyzing the situation and weighing the pros and cons based on the inputs received, parents and students will have to make their decision on whether to undertake the travel or not.

Updates received from RBE, Dhaka:

Last week, Kutshab had a telephonic conversation with the Honorary Consul in Sri Lanka to discuss the overall COVID-19 situation in Sri Lanka and the resumption of academic sessions for medical students. HC informed Kutshab the following:

- Due to the stringent measures put in place by the government, Sri Lanka has managed to contain the COVID-19 spread, with only 2,811 infections and 11 deaths. As a result, life has returned to normalcy and schools are going to be reopened in the first week of August. Universities will soon follow suit.
- Regarding the return of medical students to Sri Lanka, as it is applicable to all arrivals, they will have to undergo 14 days of mandatory quarantine in designated facilities, which are hotels, on a payment basis. The daily quarantine cost ranges from Sri Lankan Rs. 5,000/- to 7500/- per person.
- While the COVID-19 situation is under control for now, in the event of a spike in infections or community transmission, lockdowns could be imposed.
- In view of the above realities shared by HC, RBE Dhaka is of the view that ultimately the returnees will have to exercise their discretion by weighing the trade-off between resuming their studies and facing the fallout should the situation deteriorate. And then there is also the matter of mandatory quarantine, the cost for which is substantial, which would have to be considered when making plans to return. Having said that, Sri Lanka has been relatively successful in its fight against the pandemic.