FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)
NEW INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS
DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SUPPORT OFFICE (ISSO)
**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for New International Students**  
*(in home country/in Malaysia during Covid-19)*

**VISA MATTERS**

1) **What is Electronic Visa Approval Letter (eVAL)?**
   The eVAL is issued by the Malaysian Immigration Department for new international students/progression students after EMGS and Immigration Department have vetted the application and the student has met the requirements to enter Malaysia. Students are allowed to enter Malaysia, to endorse student pass and attend face to face lessons once the eVAL is ready for download from STARS.

   Due to COVID-19 pandemic, Immigration will halt the process to issue the eVAL until further notice.

2) **When will I obtain my Electronic Visa Approval Letter (eVAL)?**
   As per the latest SOP issued by the government, the Malaysian Immigration Department will only process applications for students who are currently in Malaysia. Immigration Department will halt the application process for those who are not physically in Malaysia until further notice.

   International Student Support Office (ISSO) is responsible to submit your eVAL application through Education Malaysia Global Services’ (EMGS) system. EMGS will vet your application to ensure that you meet the minimum academic requirements, prior to issuing the EMGS Approval Letter.

3) **What is EMGS Approval Letter?**
   The EMGS Approval Letter is a document that confirms EMGS has vetted the application and the student has met the minimum academic requirements needed to pursue his/her intended programme. You can only be allowed to enrol and attend online classes once the EMGS Approval Letter is ready for download from Student Application Registration System (STARS).

   EMGS will proceed to submit the application to the Malaysian Immigration Department once the Malaysian Immigration Department begins processing eVAL application for new students who are outside Malaysia.
ACADEMIC MATTERS

1) Will I be able to enter Malaysia to attend face-to-face classes?
Not at this moment. According to the latest government SOP, the international borders are now open for returning international students only.

You may continue to study with us online once you are enrolled with Heriot-Watt University and obtained an EMGS Approval Letter.

Please contact the International Student Support Office at myinternationaloffice@hw.ac.uk should you need further clarification and the latest updates.

2) I have heard that the University will employ Responsive Blended Learning. What does this mean?
Responsive Blended Learning or RBL combines active, supported online learning with contextually appropriate face-to-face learning opportunities, responding dynamically to the changing external context. This approach enables students to proceed with their studies alongside their peers, whatever pandemic-related restrictions are lifted or imposed in specific contexts.

The RBL approach will allow students to begin the academic year on schedule, wherever they may be in the world. As conditions change, some students may be able to access face-to-face learning whilst others may continue to access learning online. Wherever students access their learning, they will remain part of the same core cohort of learners, sharing and developing their learning together. At the heart of this approach is our Heriot-Watt global learning community, our students and our staff collaborating to inspire learning. More information on RBL can be found here.

3) How will my studies continue if I cannot attend face-to-face classes?
The University is employing Responsive Blended Learning (RBL) to ensure that you are not disadvantaged in anyway if you are unable to be physically present on campus.

4) What are the arrangements like for tests, assessments and examinations?
The University will have no in person assessments in the first semester. All assessments will be either online or through course works.

5) What happens if travel restrictions are still in place as I approach the second semester of my programme?
You can continue with your current courses online. Please contact our International Student Service Office for more information: myinternationaloffice@hw.ac.uk.

6) I am a new student for an upcoming intake. How will Welcome Week (orientation) be conducted?
The Welcome Week will be done fully online. There is a whole host of activities and programmes planned online. Our Admissions team will be in touch with the full agenda once it is ready.
7) I am currently in Malaysia. Will I be able to return physically to campus to start my programme?
   No, you are not allowed to attend face-to-face classes until you receive the Electronic Visa Approval Letter (eVAL) from Immigration. However, you can continue with your courses online until your eVAL is approved. Please check your Heriot-Watt email and report to ISSO once you receive the eVAL.

8) Who should I contact to obtain the latest updates?
   Please contact our International Student Support Office (ISSO) at myinternationaloffice@hw.ac.uk or ISSO 24/7 hotlines at +6012-632 2799 or +6012-667 7140 for the latest updates to ensure that you comply with all the requirements set by the Malaysian government.