

Media Release

Date: 28 October 2020

Extra flights to be operated from regional airports to support students

Flights to support off-island students who want to return home for Christmas will be operated from a variety of UK regional airports this December.

States of Guernsey staff have worked closely with Aurigny, which has been proactive in ensuring that suitable travel options are available to support students – this includes non-university students such as those attending boarding schools or specialist provision.

Students are being given priority bookings on all of the additional flights that Aurigny are operating. The booking of the flights will go live from Thursday 29th October (00.01am) and be exclusively available for students to book for seven days. After this, they will be made available to the general public.

An email has been sent today to all students who receive some States-funding, plus the additional 150 students who made contact with the Higher Education Grants team in order to complete the recent survey run by the States. The email provides a promotional code that will allow students to access the flights for the next seven days before they become available to the general public.

Any off-island student who has not received this email is asked to contact the Higher Education Grants team via studentfinance@gov.gg if they would like to receive this information.

The additional flights have been scheduled to give students enough time to self-isolate for 14 days before Christmas, should that be the legal requirement on the date that they travel. Students have been notified that they must ensure they are aware of the latest self-isolation requirements when they travel.

Aurigny is operating additional flights to Guernsey between Tuesday 1st December and Sunday 6th December, with return flights running between Sunday 3rd January and Sunday 10th January, from six regional airports:

- Manchester
- Gatwick
- Southampton
- Exeter

- East Midlands
- Bristol

Following the seven-day exclusivity period for students to book, ending at 00.01am on Thursday 5th November, the flights will be opened up to the general public. The flights will appear on Aurigny's website from tomorrow but will initially only be accessible with the promotional code sent to students.

Students have also been sent a letter that they can pass on to their university if they require help in explaining to their tutors that there are significant differences between the way Guernsey is managing the pandemic and the arrangements in the UK. This follows feedback from some students concerned that their university may be reluctant to help facilitate an early finish to support their need to travel home.

Additionally, The Guernsey Institute will provide students with library services, study spaces and pastoral support while they are in the Bailiwick. Any student who is keen to access this support, once they have completed any required self-isolation, should email theguernseyinstitute@gov.gg.

Deputy Andrea Dudley-Owen, President of the Committee *for* Education, Sport & Culture, said:

'A significant amount of work has been undertaken by staff in Education, the wider States of Guernsey including Public Health and Aurigny to ensure our off-island students have access to flight options from a variety of regional airports. Students away at university or boarding school remain resident in the Bailiwick while studying off-island and it is important that we did everything we reasonably could, to enable them to come home for Christmas.

'Any student coming home for the Christmas holidays will of course have to follow all self-isolation requirements. Whilst we don't know what those legal requirements will be in December, given the fast-changing circumstances of managing the pandemic, we have made it clear to students that they must ensure they are aware of the latest self-isolation rules before they travel.'

Ends