

EXCEPT FROM U.K.

FOREIGN STUDENTS CAN RETURN IN 2021

Current and new students allowed to enter Malaysia as long as they secure accommodation before arrival

DHESEGAAN BALA KRISHNAN
KUALA LUMPUR
news@nst.com.my

FOREIGN students, except those from the United Kingdom, will be allowed to return to their respective university campuses here in Malaysia for the 2021 academic year.

Announcing this yesterday, Se-

nior Minister (Security Cluster) Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob said current and new students were allowed to enter the country, provided they secure their accommodation prior to arrival.

"They must ensure all the necessary things for their stay here first. The standard operating procedures (SOP) will apply to them.

"The students must take a Covid-19 swab test three days before departing to Malaysia. Once they arrive at our airports, they must take another swab test.

"If the test results are negative, they will be sent to quarantine centres to observe a 10-day mandatory quarantine.

"The cost of testing and quarantine is to be borne by the students," he said during a Facebook live session yesterday, adding that the Higher Education Ministry would release a detailed SOP on this soon.

He said the National Security Council (NSC) had also agreed that students in international schools would be allowed to return to Malaysia with their guardians starting Jan 1.

"However, this permission is only for the current batch of students who have obtained a visa from the Immigration Department. The SOPs for them are similar to the ones for international university students," he said.



Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob

Asked if Malaysia would suspend flights from the UK following reports that a new, more virulent strain of Covid-19 had been detected there, Ismail Sabri said the NSC would make a decision after the Health Ministry conducted a risk assessment on the situation there.

"Our international borders are still closed to all foreign countries except in certain cases.

"We will discuss this at the NSC level and if there are updates, the Health director-general or I will make the announcement."

Meanwhile, Ismail Sabri announced that the Amber Court Apartments and Ria Apartments in Bentong, Pahang, will remain under the Enhanced Movement Control Order (EMCO) until Jan 6.

However, the EMCO for the Rumah Kongsu Kampung Semaut locality ends today.

All three localities, which are linked to the Genting cluster, were placed under EMCO since Dec 10 and the control order was slated to end today.

Ismail Sabri said the Amber Court Apartments had logged 381 positive cases after 1,183 individuals from the locality were screened. Another 85 individuals are still waiting for their swab test results.

"As for Ria Apartments, the Health Ministry has conducted 1,041 screenings and confirmed the risk of new transmissions, which requires close contacts to positive cases to undergo screening.

"The ministry has also conducted screenings of all residents at Rumah Kongsu Kampung Semaut in Bentong. Only three individuals were symptomatic but they tested negative in the subsequent RTK Antigen test."