

## Adapting the England and Wales 2021 Census design due to the Covid crisis

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The census conducted in England and Wales is adapting its 2021 design to account for known and possible future impacts of Covid-19. We had planned to do a field address check this summer, so we had to cancel that and increase the scope of a clerical desk-based check. The collection operation is adapting by bringing in personal protection equipment (PPE), increasing call centre staffing and making other design changes. Our media and communications approach is being modified. We are considering the impact on the questions we are asking - for instance on the location of students if they have had to move back home, and on how different the population will look in 2021 from the previous decade, and post-Covid. We are also putting contingency plans in place should any local areas be put into a more restrictive lockdown during the census period: including what we do during collection, and what we need to have in place for statistical contingencies should data collection not prove adequate in those areas.

The census in Northern Ireland is also making equivalent plans. However, the Scottish Government has decided to move the census in Scotland to 2022 - this means we are having to consider how we produce UK outputs given the different contexts and timings.