

UK Covid-19 Inquiry: 31 August - latest update

On 31 August 2022, the Covid-19 Inquiry provided further information about its progress and opened up a further window for Core Participant applications.

Baroness Hallett, Chair of the Inquiry, advised at the outset that the Inquiry intends to approach the evidence in a modular/phased way, to assist in the management of the Inquiry, with interested parties being invited to apply for Core Participant status on a module by module basis. The Inquiry has emphasised that applications submitted outside of the set timeframes will not be considered unless there is an acceptable explanation for the deadline having been missed.

Modules will follow the chronology of the events as they unfolded. Module 1 will look at the resilience and preparedness of the UK for a pandemic, and the deadline for applying for Core Participant status in this module has therefore now closed. **There will be a preliminary hearing for Module 1 on 20 September**, with the Inquiry planning to start hearing evidence in Spring 2023.

The Inquiry has also now released details of Module 2. This module will **examine core political and administrative decision-making of the UK and devolved governments**, in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic. The timeframe under scrutiny is early January 2020 until February 2022, when the remaining Covid restrictions were lifted. This module will therefore look at some of the critical decisions made by Government and devolved administrations during the pandemic, such as imposing lockdowns and other social restrictions.

Potential Core Participants may include not only those organisations and individuals whose actions may be under examination, but also those that want to examine and scrutinise those actions. As a Core Participant, they would have the ability to propose questions to be asked of witnesses and have access to relevant material being considered by the Inquiry.

Module 2 is divided into four segments, examining the individual responses of the UK, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. There will be a particular focus on the decisions taken by the Prime Minister and Cabinet, as advised by the Civil Service, senior political, scientific and medical advisers, and relevant Cabinet sub-committees.

Preliminary hearings for Module 2 are scheduled to be held from late Autumn 2022, with witnesses starting to give evidence in Summer 2023.

The application deadline to become a Core Participant for Module 2 is 23 September 2022.

Once again, those organisations and individuals looking to proactively engage in the Inquiry's work in Module 2 will need to act swiftly if they want to be involved.



Contact us for more information



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Further reading

Our Inquiries & Investigations team have written extensively about the Covid Inquiry. Read the previous articles in the series on our dedicated Covid Inquiry Hub.



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