

Covid 19 - Inquiry



The Inquiry is to 'examine the UK's preparedness and response to the COVID-19 pandemic and to learn lessons for the future'

What we know so far

- Chair - Baroness Hallitt.
- Counsel to the Inquiry - Hugo Keith QC.
- Director of Inquiry Set Up - Ben Connah.
- Solicitor to the Inquiry – Martin Smith.
- The [website](#) has been established.
- Draft Terms of Reference - consultation available for members of the public to share their views.

What is still awaited?

- Panel Members
- Location
- Format of the Inquiry – IICSA
- Infrastructure
- Evidence
- GDPR
- Terms of Reference – May 2022

Draft Terms of Reference

- [Draft Terms of reference](#) currently out for public consultation
- It is also thought that there will be a focus on the following
 - Communications and leadership. This will include between central and local government and also between the government and the population
 - The initial response
 - Waves two and three
 - Hospital discharges
 - Proportionality of lockdowns and policing
 - Test and trace
 - The ending of the lockdowns
 - The return to schools [including one day in January 2021]
 - Christmas 2020 and Christmas 2021
 - Alpha, Delta and Omicron variants
 - Economic impact

Draft Terms of Reference cont.

- Insurance company responses
- Immigration
- Democratic oversight
- Care homes
- Transport
- Media and social media
- Hotels, leisure and Gyms
- Social care work
- Justice and prisons, some prisoners on remand have now spent more time on remand than they would have served as a sentence as result of delayed trials
- Vaccination programme and take up
- Diversity issues
- Preparedness and biosecurity

Likely Phases of the Inquiry

1. Information Gathering. The terms of reference will be very broad and information gathering will be lengthy. The main point of the terms of reference is to examine the response and prepare details of lessons learned.

In examining the response there are three main headings

- Central, devolved, local government and public health
- Health and social care
- Economic response

Likely Phase of the Inquiry cont.

2. Oral hearings, there will be opening and closing submissions which will be a summary of the evidence and also examination of witnesses although only Counsel to the inquiry and panel members will be able to ask questions without permission
3. The inquiry report. This will be a factual narrative account identifying any lessons learned in a timely report.

Who could be a Core Participant?

1. Anyone who played a direct role
2. Anyone with a significant interest in the issues
3. Anyone who may be criticised in either the hearings or in the report

How and when can someone become a core participant?

- Identified from the outset or in the early stage.
- Identified as disclosure requests are responded to.
- Organisations that request core participant status themselves after dealing with disclosure.
- Those affected by the issues for example the bereaved and survivors.

Rights of Core Participant

- Legal representatives can be appointed. However cross examination is likely to be extremely restricted and only with the permission of the chair
- The right to make opening and closing submissions
- A core participant can be warned of criticism in the report
- There is a right to see the final report before it is published

How to prepare for the Inquiry

- Be proactive and prepare robustly for the Inquiry.
- Record keeping - store documents and materials that may be relevant and make sure they are findable and accessible.
- Document retention - do not destroy anything that may be relevant.
- Have a single point of contact.
- Decide your own narrative and accept your own failings, if there are any, and decide how to respond to those failings.
- Ensure that the positive actions are also highlighted