

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Businesses and Employers Bulletin – 11 March 2021

This bulletin is issued by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and provides the latest information for employers and businesses on coronavirus (COVID-19). All coronavirus business support information can be found at [gov.uk/business-support](https://www.gov.uk/business-support)

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BEIS: Delivering the Budget's commitments – Protecting jobs and livelihoods, and backing business

Following the Budget announcement on Wednesday 3 March, Business Secretary, Rt Hon Kwasi Kwarteng MP, outlined in his [statement](#) that the Department for Business will have a key role to play in delivering the Budget's commitments, aimed at protecting the jobs and livelihoods of the British people through the COVID-19 pandemic. The Business Secretary said, "Recognising the critical role our innovators and wealth creators will play in driving our economic recovery, Government has unveiled a raft of measures to stimulate private investment, including a radical new super-deduction to cut companies' tax bills if they invest in Britain's future". Other highlights were:

- £5 billion for new Restart Grants
- a new UK-wide Recovery Loan Scheme to make available loans between £25,001 and £10 million
- the business rates holiday in England has been extended by an additional 3 months
- For the hospitality and tourism sectors an extension to the temporary 5% reduced rate of VAT until 30 September 2021
- SMEs will continue to be able to reclaim up to two weeks of eligible Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)
- the trading loss carry-back rule will be temporarily extended from the existing one year to 3 years

Further information can be found [here](#).

Further support for commercial tenants

Government has announced that the ban on commercial evictions has been extended to 30 June 2021 to ensure businesses are supported as they re-open. Further information can be found [here](#).

Financial Support

Recovery Loan Scheme: The Recovery Loan Scheme ensures businesses of any size can continue to access loans and other kinds of finance up to £10 million per business once the existing COVID-19 loan schemes close, providing support as businesses recover and grow following the disruption of the pandemic and the end of the transition period.

- The finance can be used for any legitimate business purpose, including growth and investment.

- The government guarantees 80% of the finance to the lender to ensure they continue to have the confidence to lend to businesses.
- The scheme launches on 6 April and is open until 31 December.

For more information on the scheme, click [here](#).

Find out if you are eligible for Self-Employment Income Support Scheme fourth grant which will cover the period February 2021 to April 2021:

- grant will be set at 80% of 3 months' average trading profits, paid out in a single instalment, capped at £7,500;
- grant will consider 2019 to 2020 tax returns and will be open to those who became self-employed in tax year 2019 to 2020;
- to be eligible for the fourth grant you must be a self-employed individual or a member of a partnership.

For more information on the scheme, click [here](#).

Deferred VAT Payments: Find out how to pay VAT payments deferred between 20 March and 30 June 2020. You can pay now or join the VAT deferral new payment scheme. If you're on the VAT Annual Accounting Scheme or the VAT Payment on Account Scheme, you can join the scheme from 10 March 2021. Further information is available [here](#).

Update on Kickstart Gateways: [Guidance](#) has been updated with information about funding schedule and employers get an initial payment of £1,860, that includes £360 per job placement for admin costs, and more detail added to the steps in getting the young people into the job placements.

Application deadline for Closed Businesses Lockdown Payment: [Guidance](#) has been updated to reflect the deadline for the application closing date for Grant scheme and confirmed details of new subsidy allowance.

Local Restrictions Support Grant (for closed businesses): [Guidance](#) has been updated with the Grant scheme closing date and confirmed details of new subsidy allowance.

Local Restrictions Support Grant (for open businesses): [Guidance](#) has been updated with information on the closing date and details of new subsidy allowance.

Sector and workplace guidance

Testing for homecare workers: [Guidance](#) on the section for 'A testing service for homecare workers in England' has been replaced with an updated version of the document.

Workplace testing: Register interest by 31 March to access regular free workplace testing: All businesses regardless of size are now able to register to order free workplace testing kits for their employees who are unable to work from home. As around 1 in 3 people with coronavirus do not have symptoms, regular testing will be vital to support the gradual easing of restrictions. Businesses can register [here](#) for tests – all businesses, including those that are currently closed, need to register by **31 March 2021**.

New start date for Driving theory tests: Theory tests are suspended in England because of the [national lockdown](#). Theory tests will restart on 12 April 2021. For more information on theory tests, click [here](#).

Date correction on when driving lessons and tests can resume: [Guidance](#) has been updated with car and trailer driving tests beginning from 12 April. Tractor and specialist vehicle training and tests from 29 March in England.

Travel

Mandatory form for international travel launched


- **New Guidance:** From 8 March 2021, passengers travelling internationally will need to carry a new form that sets out their trip is permitted under the [stay at home restrictions](#). The [simple form](#) must be downloaded, signed before travel, and carried or downloaded onto a mobile phone.
- **Updated Guidance:** Some people are exempt from completing the declaration form because of the job they do. Find out about [which jobs are exempt and the conditions that apply](#).
- **Travelling to Europe for work? Business Travel:** A new short explainer document has been produced to help you understand the new rules that are in place for business travel to Europe for work. These rules apply to you if you are travelling for work in Europe regardless of whether you are attending a conference or providing services. For more information on entry requirements, luggage, earnings, qualifications, and insurance pertaining to your travel, [view the full explainer document](#).

Requirement for transport Operators: [Guidance](#) has been updated for transport operators to ensure provision of coronavirus information to passengers travelling to England.

Update on tests for HGV or van driver: [Guidance](#) has been updated with information on test timeframes for round-trips between the UK and France, and the time-stamped document drivers will receive to help verify how much time they have spent in the UK.

Other

 Calling all small businesses based in the North of England

Are you interested in practical solutions to help achieve your low-carbon goals? 

Join the Department for Business virtual event, focused on the North of England on Friday 19 March

Limited places available. Register  [here](#) #TogetherForOurPlanet 

Cyber Aware Campaign:

The National Cyber Security Centre have launched a self-assessment tool to help sole traders and micro businesses check how safe they are from cyber threats, and to give advice on areas of improvement. To use the [toolkit](#) and for more information, visit [CyberAware.gov.uk](#).

NEW RULES FOR BUSINESS

WITH EUROPE ARE HERE

**USE THE BREXIT CHECKER TOOL
FOR BUSINESS ACTIONS**

**ACT NOW AT
GOV.UK/TRANSITION**



Business Support Helpline

There are new rules for businesses doing business with the EU from 1 January, and you need to take action now. To help you, a helpline has been set up. For English businesses, the Business Support Helpline can help you identify the actions you need to take. Similar helplines are available for Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.

For more information for businesses in England, call 0800 998 1098. For businesses in Scotland, call 0300 303 0660. For businesses in Wales, call 0300 060 3000 and for businesses in Northern Ireland, call 0800 181 4422. For more information, including opening hours, click [here](#).

Other useful links

Some aspects of business support are devolved. Specific information for businesses and employers in [Northern Ireland](#), [Scotland](#) and [Wales](#) is available. In England, [Growth Hubs](#) can advise on local and UK Government business support. You can also find helpful business case studies and other useful information on the [Coronavirus Business Support Blog](#).