



Office for Life Sciences

Office for Life Sciences Bulletin – 22 May 2020



OLS Introduction

The Office for Life Sciences (OLS) is a joint unit between the Department of Health & Social Care (DHSC) and Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS).

This bulletin aims to keep the life sciences sector up to date on the latest guidance whilst the UK is in the transition period and during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, providing you with information from Government to help your members and networks prepare.

If you would like to be added to the distribution list, please email Anisha.Visram@beis.gov.uk

EU Negotiations update

The Government has published its draft UK-EU Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement legal text, please find it [here](#). This document was shared with the EU's Task Force for Relations with the United Kingdom as a draft negotiating document.

The Government has also published the UK's approach to the Northern Ireland Protocol, setting out how the UK will implement the Protocol while upholding Northern Ireland's place in the UK and respecting the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement. Please find it [here](#).

To receive the regular BEIS Transition Bulletin please [subscribe](#) by visiting Gov Delivery Subscriptions: i) Add Subscriptions, and ii) check 'Transition Bulletin' to subscribe to receive regular email updates.

UK Global Tariff regime

The Government has announced the UK's new Most Favoured Nation (MFN) tariff regime, the UK Global Tariff (UKGT). This will replace the EU's Common External Tariff on 1 January 2021 at the end of the Transition Period. Please find more information [here](#).



Events

Government departments are hosting a series of free webinars to help businesses understand the support available. Keep up to date with all the latest available webinars [here](#).

Various dates – [Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme – How to make a claim](#)

Various dates – [Coronavirus COVID-19 Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme](#)

Various dates – [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) – Self-Employment Income Support Scheme \(SEISS\)](#)

27 May – ABHI Webinar: Regulation in far from Regular Times, register [here](#)

Make your workplace COVID-secure:

- **Wednesday 27 May**, 11am: [Factories, plants and warehouses](#) – Guidance for people who run factories, plants and warehouses.
- **Thursday 28 May**, 11am: [Shops and branches](#) – Guidance for people who run shops, branches, stores or similar environments.
- **Thursday 28 May**, 3pm: [Vehicles](#) – Guidance for people who work in or from vehicles, including couriers, mobile workers, lorry drivers, on-site transit and work vehicles, field forces and similar.
- **Monday 1 June**, 3pm: [Labs and research facilities](#) – Guidance for people who run indoor labs and research facilities and similar environments.
- **Tuesday 2 June**, 11am: [Offices and contact centres](#) – Guidance for people who run offices, contact centres and similar indoor environments.
- **Tuesday 2 June**, 3pm: [Homes](#) – Guidance for people working in, visiting or delivering to home environments as well as their employers.

You can also review recorded webinars:

- for topics that cover support from HMRC, [watch recorded sessions](#)
- for international trade, [watch recorded sessions](#)
- for small businesses and changes to reporting, regulation and tax, [watch recorded webinars](#)



Support for research

NEW – As the number of new cases of COVID-19 is declining, the time is right to work towards the restoration of a diverse and active portfolio of research funded and/or supported by the NIHR. To help initiate this process, the NIHR has developed a 'Framework for restart', which is a guidance document to support local decision-making. Please find more information [here](#).



Workforce

NEW – Everyone in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland with coronavirus symptoms can now get a test. Find out more information [here](#).

NEW – Guidance for households with possible COVID-19 infection, including new information about symptoms, can be found [here](#).

UPDATED – guidance for employees, employers and businesses on working safely during COVID-19 can be found [here](#).

UPDATED – Information on early years and childcare providers during the outbreak, including a new section clarifying the position on children returning to early years settings from 1 June 2020, information on when childminders can reopen to more children, information on testing for essential workers, and information for parents on temporary changes to the 30 hours free early education entitlements. Please find more information [here](#).

UPDATED - Guidance on what parents and carers need to know about schools and other education settings during the coronavirus outbreak, please click [here](#).

UPDATED – Apprenticeship guidance with information on training and assessing apprentices in line with the Government’s new safer working guidelines, calculating wages for furloughed apprentices, off-the-job training, and redundant apprentices, can be found [here](#).



Support to business

NEW – Apply [here](#) for the Coronavirus Future Fund, which will provide UK Government loans to UK-based companies ranging from £125,000 to £5 million, subject to at least equal match funding from private investors. The fund opened for applications from Wednesday 20 May 2020.

UPDATED – From Tuesday 26 May, small and medium-sized employers, with fewer than 250 employees, will be able to apply to recover the costs of paying coronavirus-related Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) payments they have made to their employees. Employers will be able to make claims to the [Coronavirus Statutory Sick Pay Rebate Scheme](#) through a new online service.

NEW – Government has extended the maximum loan size available through to Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme from £50 million to £200 million. Please click [here](#) for more information.

NEW – Employers, the self-employed and people in control of premises have a duty to identify and control risks associated with legionella. Please find further information [here](#).

NEW - Get a payment deferral or deregister from money laundering supervision due to coronavirus if you are a business with an annual fee due between 1 May and 30 September 2020. Find out more information [here](#).

NEW - Government invests £35 million to protect critical freight routes, ensuring there is enough freight capacity to prevent disruption to the flow of critical goods, such as food and medical supplies. Find out more [here](#).

UPDATED – Guidance for the freight transport industry on international travel can be found [here](#).

NEW – National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) has published guidance to support businesses [moving from physical to digital](#) delivery as part of the ongoing Covid-19 response. The guidance has been created specifically to support businesses who are relying more heavily on IT services to run their business.

UPDATED – Government response to the Capacity Market: proposal to relax the rules temporarily in response to COVID-19 consultation has been published. Please find it [here](#).

NEW – The NI Executive has launched a new NI Micro-business Hardship Fund to help Northern Ireland based micro-businesses and social enterprises unable to access other regional and national COVID-19 support measures. Please find more information [here](#).

NEW – The Corporate Insolvency and Governance Bill will put in place a series of measures to amend insolvency and company law to relieve the burden on businesses during the coronavirus outbreak and allow them to focus all their efforts on continuing to operate. Please find more information [here](#).

NEW – The Innovate UK coronavirus business support package has been published, including details on how businesses can access the scheme providing continuity grants, loans for existing award holders and additional business advisory support services. Please find more information [here](#).

Guidance from MHRA

NEW – The British Pharmacopoeia (BP) and the European Pharmacopoeia (EP) have worked together to make supportive pharmacopoeial texts (monographs, general chapters, appendices and supplementary chapters) available for a limited time at no cost to users. Please find more information [here](#).

NEW – A [CE marked SARS-CoV-2 NAT reagent](#) intended for use in diagnostic laboratories is now available from the [National Institute for Biological Standards and Control](#) (NIBSC). This complements the Institute's [SARS-CoV-2 RNA research reagent](#).

UPDATED – Guidance on [pharmacovigilance flexibilities](#).

UPDATED – Guidance on the different types of tests and testing kits for COVID-19, and the specifications for manufacturers can be found [here](#).



Useful Links

- [Gov.uk/transition](#) provides a central hub of resources for the transition period
- You can sign up to email alerts about the transition period on GOV.UK at this [link](#).
- Sign up for Home Office email updates about developments on the status of EU citizens in the UK after we leave the EU and the next steps for EU citizens in the UK at this [link](#).
- Access the 'Check How to Export Goods' tool [here](#) for the information you need to export goods out of the UK market.
- Click [here](#) for more information and advice on exporting.
- Click [here](#) for updated information on the Covid-19 response from the Department for Health and Social Care and Public Health England.
- Click [here](#) for a list of Business Representative Organisations and Trade Associations you can speak with to get advice.
- 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.
- COVID 19 key contact details:

- General offers of help from industry: gcfccovid19enquiries@cabinetoffice.gov.uk, or visit [this](#) webpage.
- To offer your support producing ventilators please contact the Business Support Helpline for England on 0300 456 3565 or ventilator.support@beis.gov.uk.
- If you have already offered to assist on the ventilators project but not received a reply, please contact existing.ventilators@dhsc.gov.uk.
- Share the impact COVID-19 is having on your organisation with intel@beis.gov.uk
- To provide feedback on MHRA engagement please contact engagement@mhra.gov.uk
- To call the Business Support Helpline in England please dial **FREEPHONE 0800 998 1098**, Scotland 0300 303 0660, Business Wales 0330 060 300 and Invest Northern Ireland 0800 181 4422