



Office for Life Sciences

Office for Life Sciences Bulletin – 24 April 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 Sonia.Davies@officeforlifesciences.gov.uk

Update on EU Negotiations

Round Two of negotiations began on Monday 20 April by videoconference and lasted until Friday. They included further constructive talks with the aim of making progress ahead of June, building on the talks to date which have identified the major areas where we agree and disagree.

Please find more information about the EU negotiations, and the timetable for future rounds, [here](#).



Support for research

UPDATED – Guidance on how investigators and sponsors should manage clinical trials during COVID-19 can be found [here](#), including updates on accountability of investigational medicinal products and urgent safety measures, managing ongoing and halted trials, remote monitoring and signatures.



Support to business

NEW – **The Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme** opened for applications on 20 April. Employers can now claim online for a grant for 80% of their furloughed employees' salaries, up to a maximum of £2,500 per employee. Please [click here to make a claim](#).

HMRC have produced this [step by step guidance](#) on how to make a claim. There is also a [calculator](#) to help you work out your claim.

The Chancellor has also announced one [month extension](#) to the scheme. This means that the scheme will be open until the end of June, to reflect continuing lockdown measures.

HMRC are holding live webinars providing an overview of the scheme to help employers and employees deal with the economic impacts of coronavirus. Register for a live webinar [here](#).

NEW – The Chancellor announced a new £1.25 billion government support package to help UK businesses driving innovation and development through the COVID-19 outbreak. The comprehensive package includes a new £500 million loan scheme for high-growth firms, called the Future Fund, and £750 million of targeted support for small and medium sized businesses focusing on research and development. Please find further details [here](#), and apply for the Future Fund [here](#).

NEW – The new Business Support Checker Tool will help businesses and self-employed people across the UK to quickly and easily determine what financial support is available to them during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please find the tool [here](#).

NEW – Guidance on financial support available for education organisations can be found [here](#).

NEW – Please find the speech, slides and datasets for the Chancellors 20 April COVID-19 update [here](#) and [here](#), and from 21 April [here](#).

NEW – BEIS have created the [Coronavirus Business Support Blog](#) to help business get the support they need to help with the impact of COVID-19. The blog includes case studies from businesses who have or will be accessing government support, and posts from people across government and business.

UPDATED – the Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Load Scheme is now open for applications, please apply [here](#).

NEW – the British Pharmacopoeia have published a dedicated page to provide customer updates during the pandemic, including information products and services and free access to supportive pharmacopoeial texts. You can find more information [here](#).

UPDATED – Please find guidance on coronavirus testing for essential workers who are self-isolating [here](#).

Guidance from MHRA

NEW – The MHRA approved the COVID-19 Oxford Vaccine Trial request in a little over one working week, please see the press release [here](#).

UPDATED – MHRA work to identify regulatory flexibilities continues in dialogue with industry, DHSC and other stakeholders. Additional flexibilities on inspections and good practice have been published [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](#).
- EU citizens and other interested stakeholders can 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