



Office for Life Sciences

Office for Life Sciences Bulletin – 12 February 2021



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 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 nita.bhanot@beis.gov.uk

For any questions on the UK/EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement, please contact euexit@officeforlifesciences.gov.uk



News

NEW – The Government has announced a new £20 million SME Brexit Support Fund. This offers support to help small businesses adjust to new customs procedures, rules of origin, and VAT rules when trading with the EU.

The SME Brexit Support Fund could give you up to £2,000 if your business has up to 500 employees, and no more than £100 million annual turnover.

SMEs who trade only with the EU, and are therefore new to importing and exporting processes, can apply for grants of up to £2,000, to pay for practical support including training and professional advice to ensure they can continue trading effectively with the EU.

For more information on the SME Brexit Support Fund, click [here](#).

For full guidance on how you can use the grant, who can apply and how to apply, click [here](#).



Regulation

NEW – The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency will operate a 150-day assessment route for high-quality marketing authorisation applications (MAAs) containing new active substances. For more information, click [here](#).

NEW – The MHRA has updated the list of medical devices given exceptional use authorisations and the list of devices no longer covered. For more information, click [here](#).



Transition Guidance

UPDATED – The list of trade agreements the UK has concluded that are in effect, and the progress of our discussion with other countries, has been updated. The list now shows Albania as ‘signed but not in effect’, and updates to the St. Kitts and Nevis entry, as they have now ratified the CARIFORUM agreement. For more information, click [here](#).

NEW – Guidance on Inland Border Facilities (IBF) has been added, making it clear what documentation is required at sites; which sites are available across the country; as well as encouragement to utilise alternative sites to Waterbrook. In addition, HMRC have included information on site specific guidance on the functions available at each site. Further information can be found [here](#).

NEW – There are new restrictions on food and drink that you can take in your personal baggage into the EU. Drivers travelling to the EU should be aware of additional restrictions to personal imports. If you are carrying prohibited items in your luggage, vehicle or person, you need to use, consume, or dispose of them at or before the border. More information can be found [here](#).

UPDATED – Guidance about the VAT treatment of transactions of movements of goods, which span the end of the transition period, has been updated with information about goods in a warehousing regime. For more information, click [here](#).

UPDATED – The list of agents and operators who can help submit customs declarations has been updated. For more information, click [here](#).

UPDATED – Guidance has been updated with information about the use of Customs Handling of Import and Export Freight (CHIEF) for declaring goods into or out of Northern Ireland. For more information, click [here](#).

UPDATED – An updated version of the Register of Written Confirmation for UK active substance manufacturers is now available. For more information, click [here](#).



Events

Keep up to date with all the latest available webinars:

- Find videos to support your business during coronavirus disruptions [here](#).
- Watch past HMRC videos on coronavirus [here](#) and UK transition [here](#).
- Find videos to help you learn more about trading with the EU from 1 January [here](#).
- Click [here](#) to view a list of webinars for organisations that trade with the EU you can watch live or on demand.
- The Home Office has created a podcast episode to help you prepare for the points-based immigration system. [Listen](#) now to Business and the Future of Immigration in 2021. Also available on [Spotify](#) and [Apple](#).
- The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is hosting a series of free podcasts to help businesses that make, use or supply chemicals, understand what actions they need to take. To listen to the podcast, just search ‘The HSE Podcast’ on your chosen platform. Audiences can also register to receive notifications for each episode released using [this link](#).

- BEIS has launched a series of on demand videos, to help businesses familiarise themselves with the new rules. Topics include importing and exporting, trade, Rules of Origin, tariffs, data, and audit and accounting. To view the videos, click [here](#).
- The Border and Protocol Delivery Group have produced a video series on border readiness at the end of the transition period on [Short Straits and Landbridge](#) and [Direct Maritime Routes](#).
- **NEW** - DEFRA are hosting a webinar on Importing Products of Animal Origin (POAO) from the EU into GB. It is available on the following dates: [Monday 15th February](#), [Monday 22nd February](#) and [Monday 1st March](#).

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

Various dates – Extension to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme and flexible furloughing webinar. Register [here](#).

Various dates – HMRC webinar on completing customs import declarations. To register and find a date, please click [here](#).



Business Support

NEW – An online portal has been launched to make it even easier for business in the private sector to get involved and find out more about offering rapid testing in the workplace. Business that are open during lockdown can now sign up to rapid testing programmes. For more information and to register, click [here](#).

UPDATED – Bounce Back Loan borrowers will now have the option to tailor payments according to their individual circumstances. Pay as You Grow repayment flexibilities now provide businesses with the following options to extend the length of the loan from six years to ten, make interest-only payments for six months, and pause repayments entirely for up to six months. The scheme is open to applications until 31 March 2021. To apply for a coronavirus Bounce Back Loan, click [here](#).

NEW – You can pay now or get ready to join the VAT deferral new payment scheme. The new scheme lets you pay your deferred VAT in equal instalments, interest free and choose the number of instalments, from 2 to 11 (depending on when you join). Find out more [here](#).

UPDATED – Guidance on ‘What to include when calculating wages’ has been updated to give more information about non-monetary benefits and employer pension contributions under salary sacrifice. To find out more, click [here](#).

UPDATED – Guidance has been updated on the payment of Class 2 National insurance contributions through a Time to Pay arrangement and paying in instalments. To find out more, click [here](#).

UPDATED – Guidance for people who work in or from vehicles has been updated with information on tests and vaccinations. For more information, click [here](#).



Useful Links

- [Gov.uk/transition](https://www.gov.uk/transition) provides a central hub of resources
- You can sign up to email alerts on GOV.UK at this [link](#).
- Sign up for Home Office email updates about 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.
- Register for HMRC's free [Trader Support Service](#) if you are moving goods between Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
- The most up-to-date guidance on the [Northern Ireland Protocol](#) is on GOV.UK, including information on moving goods into, out of, or through Northern Ireland.
- [VAT guidance](#) about the conditions for zero rating VAT on the goods you export, and what you should do when you export goods in specific circumstances.
- COVID 19 key contact details:
 - General offers of help from industry: gcfccovid19enquiries@cabinetoffice.gov.uk, or visit [this](#) webpage.
 - 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