

[News story: 'Momentum must be maintained' as pound coin changeover enters final weeks](#)

On a visit today (24 August) to one of the UK's largest coin storage facilities, Vaultex UK Ltd, in Dagenham, the Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury, Andrew Jones MP, thanked businesses for their efforts so far in the transition, but urged them to maintain momentum.

Citing findings from the cash centres, the minister warned that businesses must be vigilant when returning coins to centres such as the Dagenham storage facility for sorting. Currently half of the £1 coins being returned are the new 12-sided £1 coin – not the soon-to-be discontinued old one. This confusion slows the process down by removing new pound coins from entering circulation and keeping the old round pounds in our tills and purses.

Speaking at the coin centre, Mr Jones said:

There has been a fantastic effort from both the public and businesses in returning more than 1 billion old round pounds, and I thank everybody involved in this process so far. But there is still more to do before the October 15 deadline.

Businesses must remain vigilant when returning coins and ensure old and new coins are organised in separate packaging to make the sorting process quicker and easier.

We also want cashiers and shopkeepers working at till points, who are truly on the front line of the changeover, to play their part to ensure only new pound coins are given to shoppers in their change.

The government has been working hard with businesses over the last three years to help make the changeover as smooth as possible. Key to this has been reminding business to check all types of equipment that may still be holding old coins alongside regular tills and cash drawers.

[News story: Government to commission](#)

assessment of international students

The government will today commission its independent advisers on migration to complete a detailed assessment of the social and economic impact of international students in the UK.

The commission is part of a series of publications coming out today which will feed into a robust and comprehensive evidence base on the impact of international students.

Alongside the commission, the UK's first publication of exit checks data will provide a comprehensive account of the compliance of international students. In addition, the Office of National Statistics is releasing a report as part of its ongoing programme of work looking at the impact of students on net migration.

Taking action

The government has been clear that it is committed to keeping the doors open to genuine students, while at the same time taking action to crack down on immigration abuse from poor quality institutions that were damaging the UK's reputation as a provider of world-leading education. Since 2010, this has included taking away the ability of more than 900 – often bogus or low quality – colleges to bring in international students.

The [Migration Advisory Committee \(MAC\)](#) will be asked to examine the impact both EU and non-EU students have on the labour market and economy whilst in the UK.

Issues the MAC will be asked to consider will include:

- the impact of tuition fees and other spending by international students on the national, regional, and local economy and on the education sector
- the role students play in contributing to local economic growth
- the impact their recruitment has on the provision and quality of education provided to domestic students

Home Secretary Amber Rudd said:

There is no limit to the number of genuine international students who can come to the UK to study and the fact that we remain the second most popular global destination for those seeking higher education is something to be proud of.

We understand how important students from around the world are to our higher education sector, which is a key export for our country, and that's why we want to have a robust and independent evidence base of their value and the impact they have.

Popular destination

The UK is the second most popular destination for international students, with 4 UK universities in the world's top 10, 16 in the top 100 and international student satisfaction in the UK at 91 per cent for undergraduates.

Last year the UK saw an increase of 6 per cent in visa applications for Russell Group universities while visa applications sponsored by universities are 17 per cent higher than they were in 2010.

This has driven in part by an effective and user-friendly visa system which sees 99 per cent of entry clearance applications decided within the target of 15 days and the grant rate for Tier 4 (General) visa entry clearance applications having increased every year since 2010, with 96 per cent of applications granted in 2016.

Immigration Minister Brandon Lewis said:

We have always been clear that our commitment to reducing net migration to sustainable levels does not detract from our determination to attract international students from around the world.

Since 2010 we have clamped down on abuse, while increasing the number of genuine students that come to the UK from around the world.

The MAC, which comprises of a group of internationally recognised experts in their field, is responsible for providing transparent, independent and evidence-based advice to the government on migration issues. They have been asked to report back by September 2018.

[Press release: HMRC reminds parents to update their children's educational details](#)

As exams results are revealed across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, HMRC are urging parents to inform them if any of their children are aged 16+ and continuing in full-time education or are undertaking an apprenticeship otherwise their payments will stop. Alternatively, if a young person leaves education or training – for example to start full-time work or because their course has ended – claimants must report this change straight away to prevent

the build-up of overpayments which they will have to pay back.

Parents can use their Personal Tax Account (PTA) to update both their Child Benefit and Child Tax Credit information online in a matter of minutes; it's quick and easy, and more than 12 million customers have registered for the PTA so far.

Angela MacDonald, Director General of Customer Services, said:

Congratulations to all students getting their results today. Once parents or guardians know what their child has decided to do it's really important they let us know as soon as possible, so they continue to get the right benefits and credits.

This can be done quickly and simply using the Personal Tax Account, which is available 24 hours-a-day, seven days-a-week. That means that parents can let us know their child's education status, at a time that suits them ahead of the 31 August deadline.

1. Customers can access their Personal Tax Account on any device – PC, tablet or smartphone. It is secure and takes just a few minutes to get started. Those doing it for the first time will need:
 - their National Insurance number
 - either a recent payslip or P60 (a passport can be used if you don't have these)
 - a phone to receive a security access code.
2. There are three simple steps for customers to get started:
 - Go to gov.uk/personal-tax-account and click 'start now'.
 - Set up a Government Gateway account (if not already held) by answering a few simple questions – this is where a payslip or P60 is needed. A security access code will then be sent to the customer's phone.
 - Enter the access code on their phone when prompted, which will take them straight to their account.
3. People can continue to claim for teenagers aged between the ages of 16 and 19 years old if they are in qualifying full-time education or training. Online information about what counts as education and training can be found on GOV.UK.
4. Young people must be accepted onto qualifying education or training before their 19th birthday to be eligible. Child Tax Credit claimants need to confirm their continued eligibility annually for 16, 18 and 19 year olds.

5. Those unable to access the internet can also inform HMRC of changes on the phone by calling 0300 200 3100 or sending a letter to: Child Tax Credits: Tax Credits Office, Preston, PR1 4AT and/or Child Benefit: Child Benefit Office, PO Box 1, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE88 1AA.
6. Claimants could be given a penalty for failing to report a change, or even prosecuted for benefit fraud if they are found to have deliberately claimed money they were not entitled to.
7. If customers need help defining what counts as education, the government's website contains information to help them. Some of the educational options available to 16 year olds include GCSEs, A/AS levels, national diplomas and NVQs up to level 3, as well as apprenticeships or traineeships. The qualifying education level is non-advanced, so studying for a degree at university or a BTEC Higher National Certificate does not count.
8. HMRC's Flickr channel can be found [here](#)
9. Follow HMRC's press office on Twitter [@HMRCpressoffice](#)

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[Consultation outcome: Salmon fisheries in England and on the Border Esk](#)

Updated: Published Managing Salmon Fisheries in England and on the Border Esk – Summary of initial consultation responses.

The Environment Agency want to understand how they can better manage salmon fisheries in England and on the Border Esk. The outcome of this consultation could affect people whose livelihoods and interests depend on salmon.

This is a chance to give your views on how salmon fisheries are managed and help shape the future of salmon stocks in England.

The responses from this consultation will help develop a better way to protect salmon stocks.

If the best way to protect salmon stocks includes new byelaws or Net Limitation Orders, the Environment Agency will advertise and consult on these so you can make further comments.

[Press release: Metropolitan Police's use of Facial Recognition Technology at the Notting Hill Carnival, 2017](#)

Paul Wiles, Biometrics Commissioner writes about the use of Facial Recognition Technology at the Notting Hill Carnival.

This kind of biometric technology (Facial Recognition Technology) has the potential to be a really useful crime fighting tool but we are not there yet. It needs to be properly tested and evaluated if it is going to be effective and it will need to be handled carefully by the police and the government if it is going to be trusted by the public.

Key messages

1. There is a public benefit in the use of such technology if it can be shown to help prevent the problems that there have been at previous carnivals by assisting the police to catch offenders or prevent crime.
2. Tests of facial matching for spotting individuals in large crowds have so far had very poor success – hence the Metropolitan Police's trial. It is good that they have made their trial public but they must carry out a proper evaluation and publish the results.
3. The police already hold over 20 million facial images but there is as yet no single, shared policing system for storing and searching police held images nor an evaluation of its accuracy and usefulness.
4. Police forces need to work together to agree on a single facial recognition system that has been proved to work in the field and government needs to create a legislative framework for its use, with independent oversight to provide public assurance, as it has done for DNA and fingerprints.

5. The previous Biometrics Commissioner made similar points as have others, such as the Science and Technology Select Committee, and we have yet to see what the government proposes as their Biometrics Strategy has been delayed for some time.

Broader explanation

1. Police already hold over 20 million facial images on both the Police National Database and in separate force systems. Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary (Scotland) recently commented unfavourably on this situation since it means that different standards are being applied across the UK. Most of these facial images are custody images. The courts held in 2012 that these holdings were unlawful and the Home Office responded to that judgment in 2017. I have [commented on this response elsewhere](#).
2. Current police interest in facial matching has moved on from custody images to whether it can be used to identify individual offenders in public places. The capability to do this is still unproven since tests in such situations have shown very poor match rates unlike match rates in controlled environments.[1]
3. The police are conducting a number of trials to see if facial searching and matching technology can be employed effectively in crowded public places. Such experiments should be properly designed and evaluated, preferably involving external experts, and the results published. The police should also evaluate their use of facial images generally in order to demonstrate that they have a useful and cost-effective purpose, based on adequate matching quality. They also need to explain how they will deal with potential false matches.
4. There is limited research on this area and most of it has been conducted in the USA. Evaluations should include not just the behaviour of the matching algorithms but how they work in the total criminal justice system and how human decision making in such systems affects the accuracy of match rates.[2]
5. Facial matching systems have improved significantly recently and the use being explored by the Metropolitan Police may, at some point, reach acceptable quality for operational use but presently that remains to be demonstrated.
6. The use of facial images, especially in public places, is very intrusive of individual freedom, especially because images can be captured without the subject being aware. The public benefit of the use of such an intrusive technology must outweigh the interference in individual

privacy. Such a difficult balance between public benefit and individual privacy should not be decided by the police but is best decided by Parliament through informed debate and legislation. As is currently the case for DNA and fingerprints the legislation should include independent oversight to reassure the public that their privacy is being properly protected.

Paul Wiles, Biometrics Commissioner

[1] The most extensive evaluations of the facial matching capabilities of different systems have been carried out by the [US National Institute of Standards and Technology \(NIST\)](#).

[2] See e.g. [D. White et al: Error Rates in Users of Automatic Facial Recognition Software, Plos One, 2015, 10 \(10\): eo 139827](#), showing how human error can reduce further the effectiveness of facial recognition systems.