

## Measures of inflation

News story

Latest blog by GAD in which we look at measures of price inflation, at how inflation was affected during the pandemic, as well as the RPI consultation conclusion.



Inflation is a key indicator of the health of an economy but with no single approach to measuring inflation, there's debate about which methodology is most appropriate. In this blog we look at the outcome of a consultation to reform the UK's longest standing measure of inflation, the Retail Price Index (RPI). [Measures of Price Inflation: RPI, CPI, and CPIH](#).

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## Form: Declined newborn blood spot screening: letter templates

Letter templates to confirm a parent or carer has declined newborn blood spot screening.

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## More than 1,300 VTQ penalties issued

## in 2019 to 2020

### News story

1,381 malpractice cases among more than one million awards, Ofqual report shows.



Awarding organisations issued 1,381 penalties in the last academic year, a new Ofqual report, [Malpractice in vocational and technical qualifications](#), says. These are among one million certificates issued in the same year for the types of qualifications covered by the report.

Ofqual, the regulator for vocational and technical qualifications (VTQs), gathers this data from 40 awarding organisations. We have decided not to compare 2019 to 2020 figures with those for previous years due to the exceptional impact of COVID-19.

Catherine Large, Ofqual Executive Director for Vocational and Technical Qualifications, said:

“These qualifications really matter. They are the passport to a job or more training, so it’s important that we trust their value. That is why we require awarding organisations to have procedures in place to prevent, investigate and act when they find malpractice. I am pleased that the number of penalties is small in relation to the one million or so VTQs that were awarded in 2019 to 2020.”

This report also says:

Students, at 78%, received most of the penalties, while no penalties for examiners were reported.

973 penalties were issued for performance table qualifications.

The number of penalties was highest in paper-based exams (73%), followed by online exams (19%) and, lastly, performance-based tasks.

For students, plagiarism was the most common type of malpractice, while the most common type of penalty was a warning followed by a loss of marks. A loss

of marks was the most common penalty when a student was found with a mobile phone or other communication device. A 'loss of aggregation or certification opportunity' was most common for 'collusion'.

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## [Motorists urged to check tyres before setting off this bank holiday](#)

Motorists are being encouraged to check their vehicles before setting off this August Bank Holiday.

Only one in six drivers remembered to check their tyres before setting off on a long journey, according to research commissioned by National Highways (formerly Highways England).

Yet one in five motorway breakdowns are caused by worn or incorrectly inflated tyres and nearly a third of drivers confessed that they're not confident checking tyre pressure. And with National Highways lifting almost 990 miles of roadworks this bank holiday, meaning around 98 per cent of England's major A-roads and motorway network will be free from roadworks, the message is to plan ahead and carry out some basic vehicle checks before setting off.

Dave Harford, Traffic Officer for National Highways, who patrols the M5, M42, M50 and other major routes said:

This is the last bank holiday of the summer, so we expect the roads to be busy with people looking to make the most of a long weekend. But the last thing anybody wants on the way to their destination is to have a vehicle breakdown. It's really important people spend a few minutes checking the condition of their tyres before setting off.

The advice from National Highways is simple – check your tyre pressure, tread depth and tyre age including the spare, before you set off on a long journey.

Look out for cuts or wear over the full width of the tyre and don't forget to check the sidewall.

Dave added:

Although the legal limit for tyre tread depth is 1.6mm, we

recommend you don't let the tread get that low. Changing the tyre at 2mm in summer and 3 mm in winter is good practice and maintains overall good tyre performance in all conditions. To check your tyre pressure, visit most fuel and service station forecourts, which have an air machine for checking and inflating your tyre pressure.

If you are stopped by the police and found with illegal tyres, you could receive a £2,500 fine and 3 penalty points per tyre.

National Highways says simple checks are a way to make sure the vehicle is roadworthy. Things to consider are:

## **Tyres**

Ensure tyre pressures are suitable for the load and check the condition of tyres, including the spare. Look out for cuts or wear across the whole tyre including sidewall.

## **Engine oil**

Check oil levels regularly and top up if needed. Take your car back to the garage if you're topping up more than usual

## **Water**

Always keep your screen wash topped up with a good ratio of water and screen wash to maximise the cleaning efficiency so you can clear debris or dirt off your windscreen easily.

## **Lights**

If your indicators, hazard lights, headlights, fog lights, reverse lights or brake lights are not functioning properly, you are putting yourself and your family at risk. In addition, your vehicle may fail its MoT

## **Fuel**

Before setting out make sure you have enough fuel to get to your destination. Running out of fuel can put you, your family and other road users at risk unnecessarily.

If you experience problems with your vehicle and you can't leave the motorway you should always try to go left – to an emergency area, a hard shoulder, motorway services or slip road hard shoulder.

But if that is not possible and you have stopped in a live lane or feel your life is in danger you must stay in your vehicle with your seatbelt and hazard lights on and call 999 immediately.

Drivers should also take a few minutes to plan their journeys in advance. Live updates on traffic flow can be found on [Traffic England](#)

Visit our website for more information on [checking your tyres](#).

## **General enquiries**

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

## **Media enquiries**

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

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# **Special Session of the Human Rights Council on Afghanistan: UK Statement**

Madam President, High Commissioner Bachelet, Colleagues,

The United Kingdom welcomes this session and wishes to add its thanks to the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation for requesting it.

The United Kingdom – like other partners and countries – remains gravely concerned about the human rights situation in Afghanistan.

And I am particularly grateful to Shahrzad Akbar [Chairperson for the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission] for her insights that she has provided to the Council today.

Over the last twenty years, the United Kingdom and our NATO allies have worked to promote human rights in Afghanistan, especially for women and girls.

Twenty years ago almost no girls went to school, and women were banned from positions of governance. Now, 3.6 million Afghan girls are in school, and women hold over a quarter of the seats in Afghanistan's parliament.

Maternal mortality has almost halved, and infant mortality has decreased faster than in any low income country.

These gains must not be reversed.

We therefore urge the Taliban to ensure the protection of civilians, to refrain from reprisals, and to uphold human rights, especially those of women, children and members of minorities, including all ethnic and religious communities – a point well-articulated by the High Commissioner.

Those who have worked tirelessly to improve human rights in Afghanistan, including civil society, human rights defenders, and members and staff of the

Human Rights Commission: they must not be harmed.

We urge the Taliban to allow the safe and orderly departure of foreign nationals, and those who wish to leave Afghanistan.

Madam President, the Taliban need to make a political decision to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms. And they must understand that they will be held accountable if they do fail to do so.

We also call for a coordinated and concerted effort from the international community to address the humanitarian emergency, which has been exacerbated by famine, COVID and internal displacement.

And let me assure you of this, Madam President, finally: the UK will play its part. We have already announced a doubling our humanitarian aid and development assistance commitment to Afghanistan, to £286 million.

Madam President,

The Council has a crucial role to play. The international community has a crucial role to play in holding the Taliban to account – their actions must match their words. And collectively, we must give the human rights situation our total and utter focus, sustained attention in future sessions.

Thank you.