

Press release: Over 93% of taxpayers file tax returns by the deadline

A total of 93.68% of Self Assessment tax returns – a new record – were completed by yesterday's midnight deadline, HMRC reveals today.

More than 11.5 million taxpayers were required to file their 2017/18 tax returns by 11.59pm on 31 January. The majority filed on time, but 700,000 customers missed the deadline.

More than 700,000 returns were submitted on deadline day, with the peak hour for filing between 4pm and 5pm when 60,000 filed. The number of taxpayers who filed online reached more than 10 million for the first time.

Mel Stride, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, said:

It is great to see so many people completing their Self Assessment by the deadline. Their income tax contributions have helped towards funding the UK's vital public services including hospitals, schools and the emergency services.

Angela MacDonald, HMRC's Director General for Customer Services, said:

Thank you to everyone who filed on time. This year, we had a record numbers of filers completing their tax returns by the deadline. And for any customers who are yet to file their returns, please contact HMRC – we are here to help.

Any taxpayer who has missed the deadline should contact HMRC. The department will treat those with genuine excuses leniently, as it focuses penalties on those who persistently fail to complete their tax returns and deliberate tax evaders. The excuse must be genuine and HMRC may ask for evidence.

Last month, HMRC revealed the top five weird excuses and outlandish expenses, all of which were rejected. These taxpayers were required to pay a £100 penalty in addition to any tax owed.

[weird excuses](#)

[outlandish expense](#)

Further Information

Self Assessment facts summary (all figures refer to 31 January 2019 deadline):

- 11,564,363 total SA returns due

- 10,833,177 returns received (93.68%)
- 731,186 taxpayers missed the deadline
- 735,258 taxpayers filed their returns on 31 January, peak filing hour was 4-5pm (60,000 returns received)
- 10,129,234 returns were filed online (93.5% of total filed)

The penalties for late tax returns are:

- an initial £100 fixed penalty, which applies even if there is no tax to pay, or if the tax due is paid on time;
 - after 3 months, additional daily penalties of £10 per day, up to a maximum of £900;
 - after 6 months, a further penalty of 5% of the tax due or £300, whichever is greater; and
 - after 12 months, another 5% or £300 charge, whichever is greater.
- There are also additional penalties for paying late of 5% of the tax unpaid at 30 days, 6 months and 12 months.

Help is available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk), from the Self Assessment helpline on 0300 200 3310 and on social media.

[News story: Bionic arm start up secures £4.6 million to go global](#)

Bristol-based [Open Bionics](#) will take its bespoke 3D-printed prosthetic arms to even more children and young people, after attracting £4.6 million from investors.

The [Williams F1](#) team's [Foresight Williams](#), [Downing LLP](#) and [Ananda Impact Ventures](#) co-led the investment with £1.5 million each, with additional funding from [Rathbone Nominees](#).

This deal will allow Open Bionics to scale up its manufacturing capabilities to serve the UK and overseas markets, including the United States.

For the individual

Prostheses for children and young people need to meet their changing requirements as they grow and be suitable for a diverse range of activities while they learn and play.

Open Bionics developed its Hero Arm to meet this challenge. Using 3D printing, it has created a low-cost bionic arm that is lightweight, adjustable and offers multi-grip capabilities.

Control is via sensors that detect and respond to movement in the upper arm

muscles. The device can be used by children as young as 9-years-old.

Used by the NHS and other healthcare providers

Development of the Hero Arm was supported by a contract with [NHS England](#) that used [SBRI Healthcare](#) – part of the Innovate UK [Small Business Research Initiative \(SBRI\)](#), which helps innovative businesses work with big public sector organisations to implement new technologies.

Open Bionics was awarded £697,464 to support clinical trials of its bionic limbs for child amputees. This helped to get the product medically-certified. It is now available through the NHS and other national healthcare systems including in France and Germany, as well as private sales.

The business also enjoys commercial licences with Disney, Marvel and Pixar to accessorise its prosthetics with superhero characters and further its appeal to children.

Reaching a global market

Samantha Payne, co-founder and COO of Open Bionics, said:

This funding enables us to serve multiple international markets.

We're thrilled to finally be able to deliver bionic hands to amputees and people with limb differences in the USA.

[Press release: LGBT History Month: new government support for LGBT groups](#)

Twelve organisations working to improve the lives of LGBT people in the UK have been awarded government funding, as new research published today (1 February) shows how much public attitudes to same sex relationships have changed in 30 years.

To mark the start of LGBT History month, organisations supporting LGBT people in education, healthcare and the community, will receive a share of £2.6million as part of the government's [LGBT Action Plan](#).

Today's announcement comes as new research shows that in 2017 68% of people said same-sex relations were 'not at all wrong', up from 47% in 2012, 39% in 2007 and just 11% in 1987. The report also showed 80% of people age 18-24 thought there was nothing wrong with same sex-relations.

'Attitudes to Equalities: the British Social Attitudes Survey 2017', funded by the Government Equalities Office, also found that the proportion of people viewing same-sex relations as 'always' or 'mostly' wrong, has also declined over time, from 74% in 1987, to 36% in 2007, 28% in 2012, and 17% in 2017.

Minister for Equalities, Baroness Susan Williams at Manchester Pride

Minister for Equalities, Baroness Susan Williams, said:

Everyone should be able to love who they wish to and live their life free from fear and discrimination, and I am encouraged to see how people's attitudes are changing to be more accepting and more tolerant.

However, we still have work to do to make sure our society is truly fair. That's why we are working with charities, schools, GPs, and across government to make sure our Action Plan can bring about real, lasting change for LGBT people in the UK.

Today's grant funding from the GEO has been awarded to:

- Barnardo's, Diversity Role Models, Equaliteach, National Children's Bureau, Stonewall and The Diana Award will split £1million of the funding to extend work that protects children from homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying. Currently the initiative, delivered by Barnardo's and Stonewall, has supported 1200 schools in England, with the grant funding set to help that continue until March 2020
- Advonet, LGBT Foundation, London Friend, Mind in the City, Hackney and Waltham Forest, and the Royal College of General Practitioners which have been awarded a share of £1million to improve LGBT people's health and social care
- The LGBT has been allocated £200,000 to deliver training and development to LGBT sector organisations to help them grow, mature and become more sustainable over time. The Consortium will also distribute up to £400,000 of grant funding to voluntary and community groups to support LGBT community initiatives across England including annual Pride events

As part of the Action Plan the GEO will also be commissioning research on:

- Homeless LGBT people – in partnership with the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government , GEO has commissioned research with homeless LGBT people and housing and support providers. This research will be used in the annual refresh of the Rough Sleeping Strategy, due in autumn 2019
- Conversion therapy – this research will involve speaking to people who have experience of conversion therapy in the UK, following government's promise to end the abhorrent practice of conversion therapy

The LGBT Action Plan, published in July last year, made more than 75 commitments to tackle discrimination and improve the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in the UK. These included commitments to end

the practice of conversion therapy, continue to tackle homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying in schools, and establish an LGBT Advisory Panel to guide the government on decisions affecting LGBT people.

The plan was published alongside the results of the [largest national survey of LGBT people ever undertaken](#). The survey, which had over 108,000 respondents, shows LGBT people are experiencing prejudice daily. A new tool, which will allow academics, journalists and the public to access anonymous data from the survey for their own analysis will be launched 7 February.

Notes to editors:

- [Attitudes to equalities: the British Social Attitudes Survey 2017'](#) includes full results for questions funded by the GEO in the National Centre for Social Research's annual British Social Attitudes Survey, including questions on same-sex relations, prejudice against transgender people, and body image. Selected findings, relating to gender division of labour, occupational segregation, and harassment were previously featured in NatCen's annual British Social Attitudes [report](#), published in July 2018
- The 2017 British Social Attitudes survey consists of 3,988 interviews with a representative, random sample of adults in Britain. Interviews were carried out between June and November 2017. The 2017 figure featured in this press release is based on responses from 3004 people NatCen interviewed in England, Scotland and Wales
- The LGBT survey was launched in July 2017. The LGBT Action Plan can be found [here](#)
- The organisations awarded bid funding will start work immediately

[Press release: New Charity Inquiry: The Albayan Education Foundation Limited](#)

The Charity Commission, the independent regulator of charities in England and Wales, has opened a statutory inquiry into The Albayan Education Foundation Limited ([1128083](#)). The inquiry was opened on 13 December 2018.

The charity, whose objects include the advancement of education and the

relief of individuals living in the UK and overseas who are in need or hardship, also runs a school in Birmingham. That school has been issued with a number of critical reports by Ofsted, and statutory notices by the Department for Education under section 114(5) of the Education and Skills Act 2008.

None of these issues triggered the trustees to report a serious incident to the Commission, as would have been expected under our [serious incident reporting regime](#).

The regulator has previously engaged with the charity, issuing an action plan to the charity's trustees aimed at improving the governance, management and administration of the charity.

However the trustees have failed to implement the action plan fully leading the Commission to have serious concerns about the ongoing viability of the charity; as a result, the Commission has opened an inquiry which will examine the governance, management and administration of the charity by its trustees, including:

- whether the trustees have complied with and fulfilled their duties and responsibilities as trustees under charity law;
- whether the trustees have complied with the requirements of other regulators, in particular the DfE;
- the financial controls and management of the charity's funds and accounting procedures;

It is the Commission's policy, after it has concluded an inquiry, to publish a report detailing what issues the inquiry looked at, what actions were undertaken as part of the inquiry and what the outcomes were. Reports of previous inquiries by the Commission are available on [GOV.UK](#).

Ends

Notes to Editors

1. The Charity Commission is the regulator of charities in England and Wales. To find out more about our work see the [about us](#) page on GOV.UK.
2. Search for charities on our [check charity](#) tool.
3. Section 46 of the Charities Act 2011 gives the Commission the power to institute inquiries. The opening of an inquiry gives the Commission access to a range of investigative, protective and remedial legal powers.

[**News story: How long is that winch?**](#)

Almost 300ft!!



We got the callout just minutes before 4pm on 30 January from police Scotland who had received a report that there was a fallen climber in the Cairngorms with a suspected broken ankle.

The Inverness coastguard helicopter – which was out training at the time – took a little over 10 minutes to arrive on scene in a bid to reach the casualty before the weather closed in.

With the assistance of Cairngorms mountain rescue team, they used the full length of their winch cable – 296ft – due to the extreme turbulent conditions to airlift the climber, who was safely roped onto steep ground.

The casualty was then flown to Raigmore hospital. A second climber, who was the injured man's climbing buddy, was uninjured but cragfast had to be assisted down the mountain by the Cairngorms mountains rescue team.

Speaking after the rescue, the Inverness coastguard helicopter crew said: "Trying to land a helicopter in these conditions is just not going to happen. Getting any closer to the mountain and we would have risked causing an avalanche. It must have seemed like a long time for us to reach the climber but this was the safest thing we could do under these treacherous conditions. This was a great team effort between us and the Cairngorms mountain rescue team, who we think are real heroes for bearing the conditions so well and taking the second casualty off the mountain."

[Cairngorms rescue](#)

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