

News story: Ofsted launches new point-in-time questionnaires

The questionnaires are for children and young people as well as parents, carers and staff.

Ofsted has today (Thursday 31 August) issued its annual point-in-time questionnaires about the residential provision of boarding schools, residential special schools, and further education colleges.

Ofsted inspectors want to hear what children and young people, their parents and carers, and staff have to say about the boarding or residential provision of these schools and further education colleges. Their responses will help inform future inspections.

Questions for children and young people include:

- do staff look after you well?
- do you feel safe inside your school or college accommodation?
- can you talk to staff about what you think?

Ofsted is asking for responses by Thursday 12 October.

Schools and colleges should provide children and young people, their parents and carers, and staff with a link to the questionnaire. Alternatively, anyone wishing to offer their views can contact Ofsted on 0300 123 1231 (select option 5 and then option 2) or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

News story: Inspiring new products and services: apply for business funding

Innovate UK has up to £25 million to invest in emerging and enabling technologies that could support UK economic growth in the future.

Projects can be carried out in a range of areas including:

- emerging technologies such as biofilms, energy harvesting, graphene and imaging
- digital technologies
- electronics sensors and photonics
- robotics and autonomous systems
- creative economy and design
- space applications

The aim is to support technologies that have the potential to transform commercial markets or that could make a difference to UK economic growth across many different sectors.

Up to £15 million of the funding has been set aside for research and development projects. A further £10 million is for Knowledge Transfer Partnerships.

- the competition opens on 4 September 2017, and the deadline for applications is midday on 8 November 2017
- research and development projects:
 - must involve at least one SME, working alone or in collaboration
 - must involve at least 2 partners working together if project costs are more than £100,000
 - can vary in size between £35,000 and £2 million and last between 3 months and 3 years
- businesses can attract up to 70% of their total project costs
- funding is available for Knowledge Transfer Partnerships, which link a business with an academic or research organisation and a qualified graduate
- briefing events take place across the UK during September

Press release: UK increasing support to save lives and rebuild north east Nigeria as famine looms after Boko Haram destruction

Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson and International Development Secretary Priti Patel have visited Nigeria to see how the UK is leading the international response to the humanitarian crisis in the north east of the country, helping to avert famine and build stability and security after the destruction caused by militant Islamist group Boko Haram.

On their first joint visit, showing how the UK's response includes both security and humanitarian efforts, they both saw and heard how British military have been providing training to Nigerian soldiers fighting Boko Haram on the front line, and Priti Patel announced a new package of humanitarian support that is saving and changing lives.

Parts of north east Nigeria, including the outskirts of Maiduguri – a city that the Secretaries of State visited – have been decimated by attacks from Boko Haram.

The militant group have killed over 20,000 people, displaced 1.7 million and

left 8.5 million in desperate need of urgent support, in some cases on the brink of famine.

Ongoing attacks continue to destroy communities, with recent reports of children being forced to carry suicide bombs.

The UK's increased support will extend DFID's humanitarian programme in Nigeria over five years (2017-2022) to deliver:

- lifesaving food for more than 1.5 million people on the brink of famine;
- treatment for up to 120,000 children at risk of dying from severe acute malnutrition;
- ongoing support to help keep 100,000 girls and boys in school to get a decent education, providing a brighter future for the next generation;
- safe humanitarian access to transport brave aid workers and deliver aid to the hardest to reach areas, for example using helicopters where roads are blocked or dangerous to use.

The UK has so far trained over 28,500 Nigerian military personnel, of whom a significant number have been deployed on counter-insurgency operations in north east Nigeria.

This includes counter-terrorism cooperation, providing training on response to terrorist attacks, bomb scene management, and improving aviation security.

By tackling the threat posed by terrorism across Africa, the UK government is not only helping ensure long-term security in the area, so that people who have lost everything are kept safe and can rebuild their lives, but also protecting the British public.

International Development Secretary Priti Patel said:

It is catastrophic that at least 20,000 people have been murdered by Boko Haram's terrorist regime, and over five million people have been left hungry and many homeless. Babies' bodies are shutting down and mothers who have lost everything are fighting to keep their children alive.

Global Britain is a country that stands tall in the world and the UK will not turn its back on people living in danger and desperation.

We are leading the way on the international stage through our world-class development, defence and diplomacy, providing a lifeline to over 1.5 million people on the brink of famine, tackling Boko Haram and pushing for global aid reform to deliver help more effectively.

Terrorism knows no borders and the Nigerian Government must now follow our lead to stop innocent people dying and securing the area so that these people can rebuild their lives in safety – reducing the threat of radicalisation and migration for the UK at home.

Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson said:

Boko Haram has generated suffering, instability and poverty on a huge scale, with profound knock on effects far from Nigeria's borders, and I am proud of Britain's commitment to supporting the Nigerian people in tackling terror.

In Maiduguri I met casualties of Boko Haram violence, including bomb and gunshot victims, and saw for myself the displacement of people that brutality and poverty have created.

Our military, diplomatic and development assistance is making a big difference. The British military has to date trained 28,000 Nigerian troops, equipping them with skills to turn the tide against Boko Haram, while our humanitarian aid is alleviating widespread suffering. This is about helping a Commonwealth partner in its time of need as well as addressing the root causes of international challenges such as migration.

The new package of emergency relief announced today also includes the restoration of key infrastructure and services in north east Nigeria.

This includes giving children living in conflict zones an education, improving access to health care, helping smallholder farmers to restore their livelihoods and produce food to generate higher incomes, and introducing innovative solar energy to power schools and health centres.

This longer term restoration work combined with our military support will enable the poorest and most vulnerable people to stand on their own two feet and rebuild their lives in safety.

Notes to Editors:

- The £200 million support is an allocation of DFID Nigeria's budget for four years from 2018 – 2022, building on our existing £100 million of humanitarian support for 2017 that the International Development Secretary Priti Patel announced earlier this year.
- The programme will be delivered through capable and cost effective partners including the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC); UN agencies such as UNICEF, WFP, United Nations Humanitarian Air Service; INGOs and private sector partners.
- This is part of a wider UK Government package of support in the north east including political, military and intelligence support to tackle Boko Haram, and reduce conflict and bring stability to the area – helping to reduce the threat of radicalisation and migration to the UK.
- So far 500 UK military personnel have provided training to the Nigerian Armed Forces
- Over 40 UK military personnel have been deployed to Nigeria on an enduring basis
- Over 28,500 Nigerian military have been trained by the UK to date

[Press release: MMO and BSAC to review rules for lost, abandoned and discarded fishing gear removal](#)

The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) is pleased to announce that it will be working with the British Sub Aqua Club (BSAC) on behalf of UK recreational divers to further review and clarify the guidance and licence requirements associated with the removal of lost, abandoned and discarded fishing gear from the sea bed.

[On 17 August](#) the MMO provided an update to the existing rules for recreational divers that are on the BSAC website and this update is also available on the MMO website. In response to public feedback the [MMO also published a blog post](#) which provided additional explanation on the latest update to the rules.

In both news releases the MMO set out its intention to work with stakeholders to further review the licensing requirements for recreational divers, specifically around the removal of marine litter and fishing equipment, in order to make the licensing process as clear and simple as possible. This engagement has now started and initial discussions between the MMO and BSAC have taken place.

Commenting on the matter Trudi Wakelin, MMO Director of Marine Licensing, said:

We appreciate the work of the diving community and other stakeholders in their efforts to remove lost, abandoned and discarded fishing gear from the sea bed. These people volunteer their time and expertise because they share our passion to protect our seas.

We want to support these activities where possible, but need to ensure that they are carried out in a way that minimises the risk of any unintentional damage to the marine environment. This is why we are delighted to announce that we have already started discussions with BSAC as the UK's leading dive club and the sport's National Governing Body.

The initial discussions have been extremely useful and we look forward to building on this, to find a route that is beneficial to all parties going forward.

Endorsing the collaborative approach Maria Harwood, BSAC Vice Chair, said:

The diving community sees at first hand the damage that marine litter and abandoned fishing gear can cause to the marine environment, and we want to encourage recreational divers to help to clean our seas, without financial penalties.

We welcome the MMO's willingness to engage and to refine this process, and look forward to some constructive discussions.

[News story: Personal applicants can now apply for probate online](#)

HMCTS details how personal applicants can now apply for probate using new online service.

The Probate Service is now accepting online applications from personal applicants based on the criteria below:

1. Only one executor is applying
2. There is an original will available and the person who died did not leave an update to the will (codicil)
3. The person who has died classed England and Wales as their permanent home or intended to return to England and Wales to live permanently

The online application form will continue to be developed to cover a broader range of probate applications in the future.

What the new online application provides

The new online application form includes:

- a new statement of truth for you to declare that the information provided is correct, which removes the need for you to swear an oath in person
- The function to pay the fee online removing the need to post a cheque to the Probate Service
- A 'save and return' function allows you to save and revisit an application if you need to find further information. This allows a part finished application to be saved and completed later.

Online applications will be extended for solicitors and other professionals to apply later in 2017.

What is required in order to submit an online application?

The online application form is easier to understand but you will still be required to provide supporting documents as per the current process. These are:

- The original will and two photocopies
- The death certificate
- The associated inheritance tax forms and figures
- Any other supporting documents relevant to the case (e.g. a renunciation form)

We are looking to enhance this in the future, potentially through links with other departments to gather this information automatically as part of the process.

If you meet the criteria and would like to apply online please contact the [HMRC helpline](#) who can provide you with the details to apply online.