

[PM meeting with Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison: 15 June 2021](#)

News story

Prime Minister Boris Johnson met Prime Minister Scott Morrison at Downing Street.



The Prime Minister welcomed Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison to Downing Street this morning, following the G7 meeting in Cornwall.

They signed off on the main elements of a historic UK-Australia Free-Trade Agreement, boosting commerce, investment and mobility between our two countries.

More broadly, the leaders agreed to strengthen cooperation on defence and security, noting the exciting opportunities offered by the UK and Australia's joint work on the Type 26 Frigate programme.

They discussed issues around digital and tech regulations and progress on a planned Clean Technology Partnership, which will support green growth.

On climate change, the Prime Minister encouraged Australia to commit to Net Zero by 2050 and submit an increased National Determined Contribution ahead of COP26 in Glasgow in November, with ambitious emissions reductions by 2030.

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[Our commitment to global disability](#)

rights and inclusion

Distinguished delegates,

The United Kingdom strongly supports the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

We are committed to improving the lives of disabled people and will soon publish the National Disability Strategy. It will focus on the issues that disabled people say affect them the most in all aspects of life. The strategy will take into account the impacts of the pandemic and include commitments which tackle barriers and increase opportunities.

We welcome this conference's focus on COVID-19 response and recovery. The UK Government is fully committed to supporting disabled people. We regularly engage with disabled people to ensure their needs are considered in the Government's COVID-19 response. We are ensuring that disabled people continue to have access to financial and other support, and accessible communications.

Furthermore, we are actively working on policies to prevent health-related job losses and are already helping disabled people stay in, and enter work. In response to the pandemic, we have provided specialist employment support remotely, and made programmes easier to access.

We will publish a Health and Disability Green Paper informed by the views of disabled people. This will explore how our welfare system can better meet the needs by: improving claimant experience of our services, enabling independent living and improving employment outcomes.

The UK remains committed to global disability rights and inclusion. The UK's Integrated Review, setting our international priorities, reaffirms our work to protect human rights for all throughout our diplomacy and development activities. The second Global Disability Summit monitoring report demonstrates excellent progress against the 170 sets of global disability commitments, including by the UK.

In 2021, the UK will launch an enhanced Disability Inclusion Strategy, expanding to include new pressing global issues, such as responses to COVID-19 and climate change. It will reflect our wider global footprint allowing us to work with more partners across the world. To support implementation, we will: create a new External Disability Board, deliver new commitments at the 2022 Global Disability Summit and work across UK government to embed disability inclusion considerations across our entire Official Development Assistance spend.

Universities Minister at Going Global Conference

Thank you for inviting me to speak at this year's Going Global. I'm really happy to be joining you virtually today, of course next time I hope we are able to connect in person.

It is amazing to see how we can continue to virtually unite, meaning more people than ever before have the opportunity to attend fantastic events such as this.

The past months have seen the cautious easing of the lockdown restrictions in the UK and we're now able to further imagine what the future will look like, both personally and professionally. As countries around the world face their Covid-19 journeys, this future is what we are here to talk about.

Of course, we still face challenges. We must continue to work together, to overcome the devastating impacts of Covid-19.

In the UK, we have taken a leading role in the COVID-19 global health response, both in addressing the direct health impacts, and also in keeping essential services going. We've championed COVAX, including through contributing £548m to its Advance Market Commitment to help supply 1bn vaccine doses for up to 92 of the most vulnerable countries.

We simply cannot solve the world's current problems with past solutions, and we need to work globally if we are to make real progress.

International partnerships in education have played a vital role throughout this crisis. Research is conducted across subjects, borders and continents. Scientific expertise has helped advance global understanding of the Coronavirus disease, including through genomic sequencing, therapeutics, and vaccine development.

This pandemic has brought home the value of these partnerships and now is the time to build on existing foundations and interconnectedness.

Of course, our objective for Going Global is to re-imagine international tertiary education for a post-pandemic world.

As we look across the globe, much remains uncertain. However, I think we can be sure of one thing – that the shape of higher education has been changed irreversibly. And despite the global uncertainty, amazing things have been achieved. To meet the challenges of this pandemic providers around the world have delivered fantastic and innovative examples of high-quality online and blended learning.

Take Brighton and Sussex Medical School, who securely livestreamed footage of cadaveric donors being dissected – becoming the first medical school in the UK to extend its provision of anatomy and surgical training in this way.

While the pandemic will leave scars around the world for some time to come, I do believe it is our responsibility to look at what positive lessons can be taken, including the accelerated shift towards digital learning, teaching and connectivity.

I passionately believe that the UK's high-quality offer, resilience and adaptability will ensure we are at the forefront of driving this innovation, working closely with our international partners, of course. In the UK, we have taken this opportunity to consider how we might continue to expand and diversify our provision through online to reach even greater audiences of prospective students and improve the accessibility of our learning offer.

As I'm sure you will all agree, students across the globe, as well as institutions, have demonstrated incredible resilience and flexibility over the past year.

Their response has been absolutely remarkable, and I am truly thankful.

The UK Government took early action to offer learning flexibility to ensure international students were, wherever possible, able to take up and continue their education uninterrupted.

From comprehensive visa concessions, to ensuring international students have access to additional hardship and mental health support; we have taken our moral duty to support international students seriously, and we hope that introducing these measures will demonstrate our commitment to incoming international students.

I am proud that so many international students choose to study here, in the UK, each year.

Looking to the future, we will continue to work together to make the UK as attractive as possible to international students, who will always be valued for the contribution that they make to our society, the ideas they bring, and the culture they share with us.

The Graduate Immigration Route, for example, will launch this year. This route will allow students to apply for a visa to remain in the UK for up to two years or three years after their studies so they can look for work or start work at any skill level. We are also ensuring that international students can access a COVID-19 vaccine whilst they are here.

And for students who might choose to access a UK education from their home country – there is, of course, the UK's leading transnational education, or TNE, offer. This offers a variety of models of provision, providing benefits to students, institutions, the UK and our partner countries.

With the acceleration of digital and blended forms of online learning, I see great potential for TNE – and great scope for international partnership in developing pioneering models of provision with countries around the world. As you can see, we remain committed to our aspirations to be an internationally-minded, truly Global Britain. Education, as one of the UK's soft power strengths, has a pivotal role to play in developing this ambition.

This is why, the UK government published the International Education Strategy in 2019 and why in February, I was proud to have launched the 2021 update to the strategy, together with the Department for International Trade.

Through this update we made clear that we remain an outward looking country, committed to the achievements and the ambitions set out in a 2019 document – to sustainably recruit at least 600,000 international students per year and increase the value of education exports to £35 billion per year, both by 2030.

Internationalism of education has always been – and indeed remains – absolutely vital.

We must continue to forge lasting relationships across the globe and encourage our education providers to do the same, with quality, innovation, student experience and developing global citizens at the heart of our global educational vision.

I am thrilled to be supported in this mission by Professor Sir Steve Smith, appointed last year as the UK's International Education Champion, to support the development of lasting international relationships and partnerships, and tackle barriers facing UK providers overseas.

As well as bringing global talent to the UK, and supporting UK institutions in their internationalisation, we want our own young people to become truly global citizens, too.

That is why we launched the new Turing scheme in December 2020 – named in honour of the renowned pioneering scientist, Alan Turing. He was an internationalist of global renown and also, himself, studied himself abroad at Princeton University.

Turing is known for true academic excellence and the impact of his life's achievements are still felt today. The scheme will support students from across the UK to take advantage of the benefits of studying and working abroad from September 2021.

The Turing scheme will be backed by a budget of £110m, and will provide funding for around 35,000 students in universities, colleges and schools to go on placements and exchanges across the world for the upcoming academic year.

This is a truly global programme, with every country in the world eligible as a destination for UK students. International exchanges open up new and exciting possibilities for students, enabling them to develop cultural awareness and broaden their horizons, whilst building key transferrable skills.

Mobility, and the opportunities this opens for our young people should not be limited to a privileged few. Through study or work experience abroad, we want this new generation to become more globally mobile and culturally agile.

To support the UK government's agenda of levelling up across the entire UK,

we have designed this scheme for everyone. No young person should be excluded from expanding their horizons because of their family's income or other disadvantages they've experienced in their lives. These life-changing experiences will be accessible to students across the country, whatever their background.

Offering short-term four week HE placements, which were not previously available, will ensure students with commitments such as caring for children, or relatives, and those working to support their studies, are not left out. The Turing scheme is UK-wide and we want these life-changing opportunities to be accessible to everyone, across the country.

This pioneering scheme represents a landmark step in achieving our vision of a truly Global Britain. I have been engaging extensively with potential partners around the world to discuss the opportunities that the scheme provides. This includes international government organisations and institutions, in the US, Canada, Germany, France, Spain, Switzerland, Australia, India, and amongst many more throughout the Commonwealth. It has been excellent to see such positive engagement, and I look forward to seeing how UK providers will continue to build and strengthen collaborative partnerships overseas.

The application window for Turing Scheme projects for the upcoming year has now closed. I am delighted to say that we have received a strong number of applications with an appetite for mobility across the world. I'm extremely eager to see UK students beginning to access this new opportunity and begin their international journeys and I'd like to thank the UK sector for all they have done in helping to assist the introduction of the Turing Scheme to ensure it's success.

I also want to show my gratitude for our host, the British Council, for all their work in supporting the delivery of the scheme as well as promoting it overseas to our international partners.

Despite the impact and uncertainty, we have all seen from COVID-19, I am proud to say that our collective, global efforts are supporting a new generation of young people to access and enjoy life changing international experiences wherever they study.

We will come out of this pandemic together, and stronger.

In doing so, we are changing the shape of tertiary education around the globe, informed by innovative partnerships, collaboration and learning from others. I look forward to seeing what comes from the sessions and discussions in the next days of Going Global, and stepping into the future that these ideas will shape. Thank you.

First anniversary of the Race to Zero, with more urged to join the campaign ahead of COP26

Greetings to you all.

And thank you to the UN Global Compact for organising this important event.

Friends, 2015 was a major year for the world.

In September that year, world leaders adopted the Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 13: taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.

And just three months later, the Paris Agreement was signed, achieving what many thought was out of reach, global consensus on the enormous threat posed by climate change and a shared framework to address it, including the headline commitment to try to limit the average rise in global temperatures to below 2 degrees and close to 1.5 degrees.

And that 1.5 degree target is critical.

Because every fraction of a degree makes a difference.

The science shows that a temperature rise of two degrees, rather than 1.5, would mean hundreds of millions more people affected by climate change.

And indeed, twice as many plant, and three times as many insect species losing vast swathes of their habitat.

But since the Paris Agreement was signed, the world has not done nearly enough.

And now, to keep 1.5 degrees within reach, to keep 1.5 alive, we must halve global emissions by 2030.

And to do that, we must act now,

And make COP26 the moment that every country, and every part of society, embraces their responsibility, to protect our precious planet.

To achieve this, as COP26 President, I am pushing for action on four keys goals:

Firstly, to put the world on a path to driving down emissions, until they reach net zero by the middle of this century.

And this is essential to keep the 1.5 degree limit within reach.

Secondly, to protect people and nature from the effects of our changing

climate.

Third, to get finance flowing to climate action, both public and private.

And fourth, working together across borders and across society.

And we are urging every country to act, to make net zero targets, and short term emissions reduction targets to take them there.

And of course to tackle vital areas like power, like transport and like nature.

And we urge them to consign coal power to history, end the sale of polluting vehicles, and tackle deforestation.

However, governments alone cannot achieve the change we need.

We need action across the real economy.

And so Race to Zero is central to our COP26 Presidency.

We are urging companies and investors, cities and regions, organisations of all kinds, to sign-up.

To play their part in keeping 1.5 degrees within reach.

And to make clear to governments that climate action will be welcomed and not resisted across the economy.

What is so important about the race to zero that it requires companies to set short term targets based on the science to get them there to net zero.

So, net zero is not just some vague aspiration but a concrete plan.

I am hugely grateful to Nigel and Gonzalo for all the work they have put into making it such a success.

And of course to UN Global Compact for driving the Business Ambition for 1.5C commitment, through which so many companies have joined the Race to Zero.

What we are seeing is a real change in the global economy.

In 2015, when the Paris Agreement was signed, and the SDGs were adopted, a movement was just beginning for businesses to set emission reductions targets.

Today we have over 3000 companies and 170 investors signed up to the Race to Zero.

But a huge range of sectors represented, from fashion to food, from cars to cement.

By signing up to Race to Zero, companies make to investors and customers that they are serious about their role in tackling the climate crisis and that

they are determined to take the enormous opportunities presented by the move to clean economies.

Which are of course, enormous.

But even as we reduce emissions, the impacts of our changing climate will continue to intensify.

And so it is vital that we protect people and nature from its effects.

That is central to Sustainable Development Goal 13, and to the Paris Agreement, and is another key goal for our COP26 Presidency.

Again, we are urging all countries to act, and we are inviting organisations, cities, and investors to join the Race to Resilience, the sister campaign to Race to Zero.

Because, if we all play our part, governments, business, civil society and more, we can protect people and nature and keep 1.5 degrees alive.

And make 2021 the year that delivers for the planet.

Thank you.

[More than 30 million people vaccinated with second dose](#)

- More than 30 million people in the UK have been vaccinated with a second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, giving them the fullest possible protection
- More than 79% of people in the UK now vaccinated with a single dose
- Public urged to come forward for second doses to help protect against the threat of new variants

41,831,056 people across the UK have now been vaccinated with a first dose (79.4%), while 30,209,707 people have had both doses (57.4%).

New analysis by Public Health England (PHE) shows for the first time that 2 doses of COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective against hospitalisation from the Delta (B.1.61.2) variant. The analysis suggests the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine is 96% effective and the Oxford/AstraZeneca vaccine is 92% effective against hospitalisation after both doses.

The government met its target of offering a vaccine to the most vulnerable by 15 April and is on track to offer a first dose to all adults by 19 July, 2 weeks earlier than planned. NHS England has today extended the offer of a vaccine to everyone over the age of 23.

By 19 July, all those aged 50 and over and the clinically extremely vulnerable will have been offered their second dose.

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

Second doses are increasingly vital, so this is an incredibly important milestone. Day after day, our vaccination programme reaches new heights. With over 30 million people across the UK now receiving a second dose, we are giving the fullest possible protection to our loved ones in the face of new variants.

The strength of the union has never been clearer than in the UK vaccination effort. All 4 corners of this country have pulled together for one common purpose – to get the jab and fight this virus.

I want to pay tribute to everyone right across the country who has answered our call to arms and rolled up their sleeves to get the jab. I encourage everyone over 23 to come forward and get the jab.

Our successful vaccination programme is weakening the link between cases and hospitalisations, but the latest evidence shows that 2 doses are needed to provide effective protection against the Delta variant.

To ensure people have the strongest possible protection against COVID-19, second doses for all over 40s will be accelerated by reducing the dosing interval from 12 weeks to 8 weeks. All over 40s who received a first dose by mid-May will be offered a second dose by 19 July.

The move follows advice from the independent experts at the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI), which has considered the latest available evidence and has recommended reducing the dosing interval to counter the threat of new variants of concern.

The government and its scientific experts are monitoring the evolving situation and rates of variants closely, and will not hesitate to take additional action as necessary.

Vaccines Minister Nadhim Zahawi said:

I am delighted that we have reached another poignant milestone in our vaccines programme, with over 30 million people receiving the fullest possible protection from this virus.

In the space of 6 months, the UK has made history after not only deploying a licensed vaccine to the first person in the world, Margaret Keenan, but also to tens of millions of others in the largest vaccination programme in our history.

I encourage everyone to come forward for the vaccine, and for the

crucial second dose when the offer comes. It could save your life and protect your loved ones.

UK Government Minister for Wales Simon Hart said:

Today's fantastic milestone of 30 million second doses administered further demonstrates the success of the UK-wide vaccination programme. The union has helped Wales to provide one of the fastest programmes in the world.

It's encouraging to see so many people doing the right thing and coming forward to receive their jabs when called upon. We have achieved so much already and I urge everyone who is yet to receive their jab, to do so when eligible and together we can help to ensure the highest levels of protection and safety for all.

UK Government Minister for Scotland Iain Stewart said:

The UK government is supplying vaccines for people in all parts of the United Kingdom and this milestone is further welcome evidence of how effectively we are pulling together to protect ourselves and our community.

With 30 million people across the UK already having had their second doses, I encourage everyone in Scotland to come forward when the offer comes to get their second vaccination and maximum protection from the virus.

Vaccinated people are far less likely to get COVID-19 with symptoms. Vaccinated people are even more unlikely to get serious COVID-19, to be admitted to hospital, or to die from it and there is growing evidence that they are less likely to pass the virus to others.

Data from PHE's real-world study shows the vaccines are already having a significant impact in the UK, reducing hospitalisations and deaths, saving 14,000 lives and preventing 42,000 hospitalisations in England.

Data published by YouGov shows the UK continues to top the list of nations where people are willing to have a COVID-19 vaccine or have already been vaccinated.

ONS data published on 9 June shows that more than 9 in 10 (94%) adults reported positive sentiment towards the vaccine.

Approved vaccines are available from thousands of NHS vaccine centres, GP practices and pharmacies. Around 98% of people live within 10 miles of a vaccination centre in England and vaccinations are taking place at sites including mosques, community centres and football stadiums.

Health Secretary Matt Hancock [delivered a speech in Oxford on 2 June](#) praising the 'vaccine heroes' and reflecting on the lessons learned from the vaccination programme.

View the [latest UK-wide vaccination statistics](#) and NHS England's [vaccine statistics for England only](#).

View the [latest PHE analysis on the efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines](#). PHE's [latest study on household transmission](#) is also available.

View the [ONS survey on 'Barriers to COVID-19 vaccination'](#).

The [YouGov data comparing uptake rates in countries around the world](#) is available.

To date, the government has invested over £300 million into manufacturing a successful vaccine to enable a rapid roll-out.

The UK government is committed to supporting equitable access to vaccines worldwide. The UK is one of the largest donors to the COVAX facility, the global mechanism to help developing countries access a coronavirus vaccine, and has committed £548 million in UK aid to help distribute 1.3 billion doses of coronavirus vaccines to 92 developing countries this year.

This week, we announced the UK will donate at least [100 million surplus coronavirus vaccine doses](#) within the next year, including 5 million beginning in the coming weeks.

Visit the NHS website for advice on [how to book or manage a COVID-19 vaccination appointment](#).