

HMS Enterprise to deploy to Port of Beirut as Defence Secretary sets out package of support to Lebanon

News story

Royal Navy survey ship HMS Enterprise will sail to Lebanon as part of a wide-ranging package of military support made available today by Defence Secretary Ben Wallace



Stock image of Royal Navy Survey vessel HMS Enterprise

The survey vessel will travel to Lebanon to assess the damage of Beirut's port following Tuesday's explosion and help return it to normal operations. The deployment of the ship will complement an immediate package of military and civilian support and £5 million worth of aid.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said:

At the request of the Lebanese Government I have authorised the sending of HMS Enterprise to help survey the Port of Beirut, assessing the damage and supporting Lebanon rebuild this vital piece of national infrastructure.

We have a close and enduring friendship with the Lebanese people, our military is ready to support them in their time of need.

The Port of Beirut is crucially important for the economic stability of Lebanon and receives the majority of the country's imports.

HMS Enterprise is currently docked in Limassol and will make her way to Lebanon in due course. The UK is working with the Lebanese authorities to

determine the optimum time for the ship's deployment.

The UK Armed Forces is also deploying a small team to the UK Embassy in Beirut to help identify requirements and coordinate the package of wider support to the Lebanese Armed Forces. This includes the offer of tailored medical support, military air transport assistance and engineering and communications capabilities.

The UK's Chief of Defence Staff General Sir Nick Carter called General Joseph Aoun, Commander of Lebanon's Armed Forces, on Tuesday evening to offer his condolences.

Published 6 August 2020

[Appeal arrangements for AS, A levels and GCSEs](#)

News story

Arrangements confirmed for appeals on AS, A level and GCSE grading in summer 2020.



Exams and assessments were cancelled this year due to coronavirus (COVID-19) but most students will still receive grades in time to progress to further study or employment.

Where students do not receive the grade they expected, it is important they understand their options – including the possibility of an appeal, where their school or college thinks something has gone wrong in their case. [We have published further information](#) to help students and their families understand how appeals will operate this summer. We have also published our [final statutory guidance for exam boards on appeal arrangements for GCSE, AS and A levels this summer](#). We are confirming the grounds for appeal as set out

in our consultation, and following consultation are providing additional examples of the circumstances in which appeals might apply.

Appeals

Students:

- can ask their school or college to check whether it made an administrative error when submitting their centre assessment grade or position in the rank order and if it agrees it did, to submit an appeal to the exam board

Schools and colleges can appeal:

- if they believe something has gone wrong in processing their results – for example, if a centre believes it has made an error when submitting its information; or similarly, that an exam board made a mistake when calculating, assigning or communicating a grade. We expect that any such mistakes will be quickly found and corrected
- if they can evidence grades are lower than expected because previous cohorts are not sufficiently representative of this year's students

For example:

- if a single-sex school has changed to co-educational
- if the centre has had a significant change in leadership or governance and can provide objective evidence that its previous grades are not a reliable indicator of its 2020 results
- where a centre experienced a monumental event (flooding or fire which meant students has to re-locate) which affected one year's results in the historical data used in the model
- or where – because of the ability profile of the students – a centre was expecting results this year to show a very different pattern of grades to results in previous years. That could include where the grades of unusually high or low ability students been affected by the model because they fall outside the pattern of results in that centre in recent years. In most cases, this will only be apparent by reviewing centre wide data. Therefore centres, rather than individual students, will be best placed to consider whether this has occurred

Complaints about bias, discrimination, malpractice or maladministration

We recognise and take seriously concerns about risks of bias in judgements used this summer. Although our initial analysis of results suggests that at a national level there will generally be no widening of the gaps in attainment between different groups of students, it is likely that at an individual level some students may wish to make a complaint about bias or discrimination. We have previously committed to making the process straightforward for them and the material we have published today includes information to help students understand whether they might have reason to

complain about bias or discrimination. While we believe such cases will be rare, this is important to address any such concerns and for the confidence of students in general, in the arrangements this year. Students can also contact the Equality Advisory Support Service for advice if they think they have evidence of discrimination.

Our helpline, along with the National Careers Service Exam Results Helpline, will be available to students and their parents or carers to talk about the appeals process and any other questions they may have about their results this summer. You can find full contact details in our student guide.

Published 6 August 2020

[Joint statement from the UK Government and European Commission following a meeting of the Specialised Committee on Citizens' Rights](#)

Press release

A joint statement following the meeting of the Specialised Committee on Citizens' Rights between the UK Government and European Commission via video conference.



The second meeting of the Specialised Committee on Citizens' Rights was held today, co-chaired by officials from the European Commission and UK Government. A number of EU Member States also attended. The Committee has been established by the Withdrawal Agreement to monitor the implementation and application of the Citizens' Rights part of the Withdrawal Agreement for EU citizens in the UK and UK nationals in the EU and their family members.

The EU and the UK exchanged updates on the implementation of the Citizens' Rights part of the Withdrawal Agreement. The updates included details of residency systems across the UK and the EU and progress being made to issue a new residence status to UK nationals living in the EU and EU citizens living in the UK. Useful technical exchanges took place on dual nationality, declaratory systems across EU Member States and status under the UK's EU Settlement Scheme.

Updates were exchanged on both sides, regarding plans for documentation that will be issued to Frontier Workers and social security coordination was also discussed. External representatives from "British in Europe", representing UK nationals in the EU and "the3million", representing EU citizens in the UK, were invited to present their views to the Committee in conformity with the rules of procedure.

The UK Government continues to publish statistics on the performance of the EU Settlement Scheme and the European Commission has published a consolidated list of residency systems, deadlines and information for all EU Member States. In addition, the Committee is working on a joint statistical report on residency under the Withdrawal Agreement.

The EU and the UK reiterated their commitment to complying with the legal obligations under the Withdrawal Agreement that protect Citizens' Rights and to continue working very closely to ensure correct and timely implementation.

The UK and the EU agreed to meet again before the end of the transition period.

Published 6 August 2020

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