

Travel Update

The Secretary of State, Liz Truss, is travelling to the US for a series of essential meetings with the United States Trade Representative, Robert Lighthizer.

They will discuss progress towards a UK-US free trade agreement and the removal of retaliatory tariffs as part of the ongoing Airbus/Boeing dispute.

Apprentices to get jobs boost

A new online and telephone support service for apprentices who have lost their jobs during the Covid-19 outbreak has been launched today by Gillian Keegan, Apprenticeships and Skills Minister (1 August).

[The new Redundancy Support Service for Apprentices \(ReSSA\)](#) will ensure apprentices can access local and national services that can provide financial, legal, health and wellbeing support, and help them to find a new job should they need it. Apprentices can also search and apply for other available apprenticeship opportunities across the country.

From today, [employers large and small are also being encouraged to take advantage of generous new cash incentives](#) designed to create more high quality apprenticeship opportunities so more people, particularly young people, can kick-start an exciting and rewarding career.

As part of the [Government's Plan for Jobs](#), employers are being offered £2,000 for each new apprentice aged under 25 they hire, and £1,500 for each new apprentice they hire aged 25 and over, up to the 31st January 2021. This includes taking on an apprentice who has been made redundant.

Gillian Keegan, Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills said:

Covid-19 has had a big impact on business and the jobs market, and we know that some apprentices have lost their jobs or are facing redundancy as a result.

We are taking unprecedented steps through our Plan for Jobs to protect, support and create jobs, with a clear focus on ensuring people have the right skills to get into work and progress. This includes creating more high quality apprenticeship opportunities to help get our economy moving.

Our new Redundancy Support Service for Apprentices will make sure apprentices who have lost their jobs can get the help and support

they need to get back on track and on the path to a new career.

Employers who have apprenticeship opportunities up for grabs and who are willing to take on a redundant apprentice are also being urged to sign up to the [new service](#) to advertise their vacancies. Apprentices who are looking for new opportunities can then see what is on offer, get support to apply and kick-start a new career.

The new cash incentives for employers are in addition to the existing £1,000 payment for new 16-18 year-old apprentices, and those aged under 25 with an Education, Health and Care Plan.

To support people, particularly young people, affected by Covid-19 the Government has also announced a range of support including:

- £111 million boost to triple the number of [traineeships](#) available across England – the largest-ever expansion of traineeships – to help make sure more 16-24 year olds have the skills, experience and confidence they need to enter the world of work.
- A new £2 billion Kick-start Scheme to create hundreds of thousands of new, fully subsidised jobs for young people across the country.
- £17million is being invested to increase participation in our sector-based work academies, to upskilling job seekers to fill locally identified vacancies.
- A Job Retention Bonus – a one-off payment of £1,000 to UK employers for every furloughed employee who remains continuously employed through to the end of January 2021.
- The Government is providing £111 million to support school and college leavers at risk of becoming unemployed to do a fully funded optional extra year of study.
- [The National Careers Service](#) is also providing high quality impartial advice and guidance to more young people and adults who have been affected by coronavirus.

[Updates to the shielding programme on national and regional levels](#)

Press release

Shielding guidance for clinically extremely vulnerable to be paused from 01 August across England.



From Saturday 1 August, shielding guidance for the clinically extremely vulnerable will be paused across England.

This means those who have been shielding over the course of the pandemic will no longer be advised to do so, and can begin to go back to work and school as long as the sites are COVID-secure.

People will also be able to go outside as much as they like, and visit supermarkets, pubs and shops, with social distancing guidelines still strongly advised.

The latest scientific evidence shows that the average incidence across the country remains lower now than the point when the decision was made to proceed with the pausing of shielding nationally. This has allowed for the relaxation of the guidance.

However, the easing of restrictions will not apply for those currently shielding in:

- Blackburn with Darwen
- Blaby and Charnwood
- Luton
- Leicester City
- Wigston
- Oadby

The government has written out to those living in these areas who are affected setting out the advice that applies locally.

For those living in Greater Manchester, East Lancashire and West Yorkshire, the government and relevant local authorities are acting together in a preventative approach to control the spread of the virus and to stop transmission from increasing further. At this stage our advice is that those living in these areas no longer need to shield from 1 August in line with national guidance (with the exception of Blackburn with Darwen).

Background information

Where incidence and transmission rates are of concern, we can take a more targeted approach to shielding advice (at Local Authority level). This means that there may be different advice in place in different areas of the

country.

The government will write out to those affected when advice is changed and are working closely with Local Authorities to ensure that local guidance is available on Council websites.

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[Foreign Office statement on postponement of Hong Kong elections](#)

Press release

Foreign Office statement in response to the postponement of the Legislative Council elections in Hong Kong.



Foreign Office spokesperson said:

Free and fair elections are essential to the high degree of autonomy and rights and freedoms guaranteed in the Sino-British Joint Declaration.

The Chinese government will need to reassure the people of Hong Kong and the world that elections will be held as soon as possible, and that they are not using COVID as a pretext to further undermine the autonomy of Hong Kong.

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Speed mentoring event coming soon!

News story

We are planning a virtual speed mentoring event for the Government Analysis Function at the end of September.



What is mentoring?

Mentoring is:

Where one person offers help, guidance and support to facilitate the development and success of another individual.

Mentoring event for members of Government Analysis Function

As part of our commitment to support our members in all aspects of their career and development, we are planning a virtual speed mentoring event at the end of September.

We plan on testing the demand for a scheme like this over a two week period.

We will be sharing more information with you in our September newsletter (remember to sign up if you haven't done so already – just email: analysis.function@ons.gov.uk).

Could you be a mentor?

In order to run this event we need mentors! Could that be you?

Becoming a mentor will be open to the entire Government Analysis Function and we will be aiming to pair people from different professions and departments

to provide different perspectives and support.

There are no pre-requisites you need to meet to become a mentor. If you feel you have something to offer please don't hesitate to volunteer.

Mentoring should be relationship based and for this event, it should be fast! As such we will be asking you to commit to a 30 minute mentoring session with your mentee – no paperwork, no contract – easy. We will also be running voluntary briefing sessions to help get you up to speed with the role of a mentor.

We will be utilising feedback and data from this event to decide whether a future mentoring programme within the Analysis Function would help you, our members.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor, helping develop and support others from across government analysis, please register your interest by contacting james.mansell@ons.gov.uk by close of business 31 August 2020.

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