

# Easing coronavirus health measures at the UK border

On 8 June, regulations came into force across the UK requiring people arriving into the UK from outside the common travel area to self-isolate for 14 days, with the exception of those on [a short list of exemptions](#). These measures have contributed to keeping the number of COVID-19 transmissions in the UK as low as possible, helping to protect us from a second wave of the virus.

Today (29 June 2020) I can confirm that the government will shortly begin to ease the health measures at the UK border, allowing passengers to be exempted from self-isolation requirements in certain circumstances on arrival in the UK. This will apply to international rail, maritime, and aviation.

The Joint Biosecurity Centre, in close consultation with Public Health England and the Chief Medical Officer, has developed a categorisation of countries and territories from which it is considered to present a lower risk from a public health perspective for passengers to enter the UK, without a requirement for 14 days' self-isolation.

This has been informed by factors including the prevalence of coronavirus within the country and, crucially, the numbers of new cases and potential trajectory in the coming weeks of the disease in the country. This categorisation will inform ministerial decisions about the easing of the current border measures.

I will announce further details including a full list of the countries and territories from which arriving passengers will be exempted from self-isolation requirements later this week. Although people will not need to self-isolate after entering the UK from these countries, they must not be complacent about following the public health advice on hand hygiene and social distancing.

Separately, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office is reviewing its travel advice. Further details will be announced later this week.

Throughout this process public safety has been at the heart of our decision making. We have been guided by the science and worked closely with health and policy experts from across government to ensure the steps we are taking are gradual and will minimise the risk of new COVID-19 cases while helping to open our travel and tourism sector.

---

# COP26 President Alok Sharma at COP26 Business Leaders Event

Good afternoon everyone, and huge thanks for inviting me to this Council for Sustainable Business COP26 business leaders event.

I am really sorry I can't be with you live, so to speak, but as this event is taking place, I am in the House of Commons Chamber, setting out our latest set of reforms to help businesses bounce back from the pandemic.

Of course, governments and businesses around the world are having to respond to the immediate and acute challenges posed by the pandemic.

But what we also know is that the climate crisis has not taken any time off.

Of course we do still have some time left to define the future when it comes to combating climate change.

But we have to act now. For this to be successful, it ultimately has to be a joint endeavour between nations, civil society and businesses.

In response to the pandemic, we are seeing countries around the world bring forward green recovery packages.

I do think this will provide an impetus for positive change.

Here in the UK, working with business, we have shown that green growth is absolutely possible.

Between 1990 and 2018, the UK economy has grown by 75% and at the same time, we have managed to cut emissions by 43%.

We have done this by working together and building entirely new industries.

Let me give you some examples. 20 years ago, the UK had two offshore wind turbines, powering just two thousand homes.

Fast forward to 2020, and the UK has more offshore wind capacity than any other country in the world.

Earlier this year, construction began at the world's largest offshore wind development, Dogger Bank.

This is a project which, when complete, is going to be able to power four and a half million UK homes.

The cost of wind power globally has fallen by almost 50 percent.

The cost of solar power is down by 85 percent since 2010.

Renewables are cheaper than coal power in two thirds of all countries.

And we have made progress because countries, cities, regions, and ultimately business, have led the way.

We have seen a shifting of investment priorities. There's no doubt about that.

We've seen the spurring on of innovation.

The scaling up of technologies

And all of it, driving down costs.

I believe there is a real momentum building

The business community has collectively understood that building a green economy isn't just good for the environment, it's actually also good for the bottom line.

Let me give you some examples from a number of companies at this event which are driving forward their own green agenda.

SSE has committed to spend more than 7 billion pounds on low carbon infrastructure projects over the next 5 years.

Unilever has committed to reach net zero emissions from all its products by 2039.

And Arup has made a commitment to be a net zero organisation by 2030.

I know many of you will have made similar commitments on the path towards net zero.

So as we look forward to COP26 next November, our aim is to ramp up ambition towards a climate-resilient, zero-carbon economy.

We want all countries to submit more ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions, driving further cuts in carbon emissions by 2030.

And we want all nations committing to reaching net zero emissions as soon as possible.

Ahead of the summit, we have defined five areas which need particular attention: clean energy, clean transport, nature-based solutions, adaptation and resilience, and tying the whole thing together, finance.

Your contribution will be central to driving change in these areas.

I have four concrete asks from you.

First on clean energy.

Business has already played a big part in the clean energy transition.

But we need more companies to commit to 100 per cent renewable sources by

2050 at the latest, through the 'RE100' initiative and the Powering Past Coal Alliance.

So please, sign up to both initiatives.

Second, zero emission road transport. We must accelerate on this path.

The government, as you know, is consulting on bringing forward the end of the sale of new petrol, diesel and hybrid cars and vans from 2040 to 2035.

Or indeed earlier, if faster transition is feasible.

So we want manufacturers and businesses to accelerate this transition.

Join the EV100 campaign and commit to all of the vehicles you own or operate being zero-emission by 2030.

Third, for all you bankers, asset managers, financiers and insurers at this event, we want to see further progress on the Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures agenda.

We need you to continue to sign up to the recommendations of the TCFD to build a greener and more resilient financial system.

Please, join the Coalition for Climate Resilient Investment to help transform infrastructure investment, by integrating climate risks into decision making.

My fourth and final ask is to urge you to join the Race to Zero Coalition.

This initiative launched by the High Level Champions for COP25 and COP26 a month ago is the largest ever alliance of businesses and non-state actors committed to reaching Net Zero by 2050 at the latest.

And let me assure you, if you sign up, you're going to be in pretty good company.

Around one thousand companies around the world have already signed up.

We all understand that we are in a difficult place in terms of the global economy right now.

But it is always darkest before the dawn.

And I fervently believe that COP26, and the footsteps leading towards it, can be the moment when the world comes together to ramp up momentum towards a climate-resilient, zero-carbon economy.

Business is absolutely an integral part if our journey is to be successful.

So thank you for all you are doing, and let's renew and re-energize our efforts.

Thank you.

---

# Universities can bid for more healthcare course places

Press release

More students will have the opportunity to apply for places on nursing, midwifery or allied health professional courses in England, following unprecedented demand.



Even more students will have the opportunity to apply for places on nursing, midwifery or allied health professional courses in England, the Health Secretary has announced today, following unprecedented demand.

On 4 May the Education Secretary announced new measures to protect students and universities, including an additional 5,000 ring-fenced places for nursing, midwifery or allied health courses to support the country's vital public services.

Large numbers of students are applying to study healthcare courses, and the government has now agreed to extend the timetable for universities to apply for the extra places to Friday 17 July, and to cover additional bids over the initial 5,000.

Health and Social Care Secretary Matt Hancock said:

Following the fantastic news last Thursday that we have over 12,000 more nurses working in our NHS compared to last year, we have seen huge demand from universities for the additional places we've made available on nursing, midwifery or allied health courses.

This pandemic has demonstrated just how important our healthcare professionals are, and the demand for places shows that there are thousands of prospective students looking to train for rewarding careers in our NHS.

So far there has been significant demand for additional places across a range of courses including adult, mental health and learning disability nursing, midwifery, paramedicine and radiography.

As universities have indicated that there is more demand for places, this extension will give them more time and allow them to bid with the confidence that there will be clinical placement capacity.

- Higher education providers who want to bid for additional healthcare places can now do so up until 5pm on 17 July.
- According to the latest NHS workforce stats, over the last year (March 2019 to 2020) the number of nurses has gone up by 12,131, from 282,422 to 294,553. This figure does not include any staff who returned to the frontline during the pandemic.

Published 29 June 2020

---

## [New funding call for UK Earth Observation sector](#)

News story

More than £800,000 is available to the UK space sector as part of European Space Agency (ESA) support for innovative commercial projects related to Earth Observation.



The programme, InCubed, aims to support industry-led initiatives that will open new market opportunities. The call will bring innovative systems and products to market faster and help Earth Observation businesses compete in the global marketplace.

Unique elements of the programme include the opportunity for organisations to work with ESA, benefitting from its expertise, while boosting further growth in the UK's world-leading space industry, which already employs nearly 42,000

people.

Alasdair Gow, Industrial Sector Lead for Earth Observation at the UK Space Agency said:

We depend on observations of the Earth from space in every day life, as they underpin weather forecasting, monitoring climate change, mapping our environment, and much more.

I'm looking forward to seeing the innovative new Earth Observation products and services that the UK space industry will develop thanks to the InCubed programme.

The UK has a fast-growing and world-class Earth Observation sector and our commitment to ESA programmes will continue to build these capabilities.

Published 29 June 2020

---

## [Students in Wales can apply now for postgraduate funding](#)

Press release

SLC launches student finance application service for postgraduate students in Wales



The Student Loans Company (SLC) has launched its student finance application service for post graduate students in Wales.

Eligible postgraduate master's students can apply for a combination of loans and grants to help with course fees and living costs. While postgraduate doctoral students can apply for a Postgraduate Doctoral Loan.

Derek Ross, SLC Executive Director of Operations said: "I'm pleased to announce that applications are open for postgraduate students in Wales. Students should apply [online](#). Applying as quickly and correctly as possible is the best way of making sure funding is in place before the new term starts." Key facts about Postgraduate Master's funding

1. Postgraduate Master's funding is a mixture of loans and grants. The amount of grant and loan you get is determined by your household income.
2. All eligible students are entitled to a grant of at least £1000 which doesn't have to be paid back.
3. You only need to apply for postgraduate master's finance once, even if your course is longer than a year.
4. You start repaying your Postgraduate Master's finance the April after you finish your course but only if your income is over the repayment threshold. You repay 6% of what you earn over the repayment threshold which is currently £21,000 per annum. If you have other student loans you repay these at the same time.
5. Extra help is available if you have a disability or have children or adults who are financially dependent on you.

To find out more watch our [short film on Postgraduate Master's finance](#)

Key facts about the Postgraduate Doctoral Loan

1. You can get up to £26,445 to help with course fees and living costs.
2. The loan is paid directly to you. It will be spread out over the academic years of your course.
3. Postgraduate Doctoral Loans are not based on your household income.
4. You can apply in any year of your course but you may not get the maximum amount if you apply after the first year.
5. You start repaying your Postgraduate Doctoral Loan the April after you finish but only if your income is over the repayment threshold. You repay 6% of what you earn over the repayment threshold which is currently £21,000 per annum. If you have other student loans you repay these at the same time.

To find out more [watch our film on Postgraduate Doctoral Finance](#) and follow Student Finance Wales on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook] (<https://www.facebook.com/SFWales>).

Published 29 June 2020