

Improving security situation in Pakistan leads to change in UK Travel Advice

The UK has changed its travel advice today to reflect the improved security situation in Pakistan.

Today's announcement is the result of a comprehensive review of UK travel advice for Pakistan, based on a wide-ranging assessment of the country's security situation. This is the first major update in the travel advice since 2015.

The improved security situation allowed for the return of British Airways to Pakistan in June 2019 and the visit by The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge in October 2019. Among other changes, the advice now allows for travel by road to the North of Pakistan as well as the Kalesh and Bamboret Valleys.

Dr Christian Turner, British High Commissioner to Pakistan, said:

Following my arrival in December 2019, I made this review of the travel advice a priority. It is great credit to the hard work of the Government of Pakistan in delivering improved security over the past five years. I am delighted that British nationals will be able to see more of what Pakistan has to offer.

Notes to editors:

- The UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) provides travel advice based on objective information to help British Nationals make better informed decisions about foreign travel.
- The new travel advice for Pakistan reduces the section of the Karakoram Highway where the FCO advises against all travel to the area between Mansehra and Chilas alone (previous travel advice covered the full route from Islamabad to Gilgit). Travellers may bypass this section by taking the alternative route through the Kaghan Valley and Babusar Pass.
- The FCO no longer advises against all but essential travel to the Kalesh and Bamboret Valleys.
- The FCO advises against all travel to most of Balochistan including the city of Quetta. This is except for the southern coast of Balochistan, including the city of Gwadar, where the FCO advises against all but

essential travel.

- Like all FCO travel advice, these changes are based on security assessments, which are kept under constant review.
- In 2018, there were an estimated 484,000 visits by British nationals to Pakistan. There are 22 weekly direct flights to the UK.
- For the full list of FCO travel advice to Pakistan, click here: <https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice/pakistan>
- For more information on how the FCO compiles its travel advice, click here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/how-the-foreign-commonwealth-office-puts-together-travel-advice>

For updates on the British High Commission and the Chevening Programme, please follow our social media channels:

- Twitter: [@UKinPakistan](#), [@ChevPakistan](#), [@CTurnerFCO](#)
- Facebook: [facebook.com/bhcpakistan](https://www.facebook.com/bhcpakistan)
- Instagram: [@UKinPakistan](#)

Contact
British High Commission
Islamabad
tel:0300 500 5306

[Business Analysis Programme at DVLA – four months on](#)

The first group of 10 has come on board

It's been four months since our students started the first [Business Analysis \(BA\) Development Programme at DVLA](#). The programme is part of the [Centre of Digital Excellence](#) which was set up in 2018, aimed at recruiting and developing talent in a number of digital areas. We welcomed our first ten students in September and set about immersing them in all things BA. The group is a good mix, with 50% new to DVLA and the others moving over from

other parts of the agency.

The students hit the ground running, starting with a 3 week boot camp where they were immersed into the DVLA culture and introduced to the foundations of BA. They were set challenges and tasks and worked through multiple BA methodologies and techniques. We also started preparing the students for their first British Computer Society (BCS) module – the Foundation in BA.



After boot camp it was straight to work, letting them start using their newly learned tools and techniques to help deliver front line digital services for the agency. The feedback from the software development teams has been great, and shows how quickly the students have started to add real value

Gaining experience and qualifications

Our first group has successfully completed their BCS Foundation in BA module and have started their journey to achieve an International Diploma in BA. We are incredibly proud of what our candidates have achieved so far and the effort our team have put in to help them along their path.

We took time before Christmas to review their progress with them and see how much they've learned and reflect on how their confidence has grown. It's been a busy few months but they're also looking forward to what comes next.

Vicky Goldsbury, one of our first students said:

The BA development programme has given me the opportunity to be totally immersed in a new development challenge and taken me right out of my comfort zone. It's got a great mix of on the job learning and formal qualifications. Pair that with the support and knowledge we've had from our peers and the wider DVLA community, has meant it's been a great scheme to be part of so far.

Next steps for our students

In the next module, our students will continue studies with BCS, including Requirements Engineering, Systems Development and an introduction to programming. They will also work on our programme to create a digital future.

What's next for the scheme

The scheme has proved incredibly successful. As well as all candidates passing their first module, which is a great personal boost for them, they are also able to help with developing DVLA's frontline services which will help get things done quicker for customers

We are now sharing knowledge with other organisations and government departments who have expressed an interest in the programme. If you have an interest in becoming a Business Analyst, [keep an eye on the Civil Service Jobs website](#) where all our opportunities will be advertised.

[Let's block ads! \(Why?\)](#)

[Do your tax return before it drives you quackers, you've got one week to go!](#)

More than 3 million customers are yet to send in their 2018 to 2019 tax returns and have just one week left to the deadline, HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) warns today (24 January 2020).

The deadline for completing tax returns online is 11.59pm on Friday 31 January. 8.5 million customers have avoided the niggles and already filed their Self Assessment, and HMRC is urging those who haven't to do so as soon as possible to avoid any last minute problems.

Anyone worried that they will not be able to complete their tax return by the deadline should contact HMRC as soon as possible.

Lots of help is available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk), from the Self Assessment helpline on 0300 200 3310 and on social media.

This week, the Financial Secretary to the Treasury visited HMRC's Cardiff office to see the Self Assessment operation in action. During the trip, he also met with apprentices and other colleagues working in customer services.

Jesse Norman, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, said:

The deadline is fast approaching for more than three million taxpayers who have not yet managed to file their tax returns. With only one week until 31 January, HMRC strongly encourages people to file their Self Assessment.

Anyone who believes they might not be able to file on time should make sure to call or email HMRC.

Angela MacDonald, HMRC Director General of Customer Services, said:

We're here to help customers get their tax right, and have put in place a range of help from online services, webinars and videos, to customer service helplines, webchats and social media channels.

We know completing a tax return can be confusing at times, so please do get in touch if you're still concerned about how to file, or about paying what you owe. HMRC colleagues are standing by to provide support and advice ahead of the deadline.

Lots of help is available on GOV.UK, from the Self Assessment helpline on 0300 200 3310 and on social media.

11.7 million Self Assessment returns are due. Returns received includes unsolicited returns and returns not due until after 31 January.

The penalties for late tax returns are:

- an initial £100 fixed penalty, which applies even if there is no tax to pay, or if the tax due is paid on time
- after 3 months, additional daily penalties of £10 per day may be charged, up to a maximum of £900
- after 6 months, a further penalty of 5% of the tax due or £300, whichever is greater
- after 12 months, another 5% or £300 charge, whichever is greater

There are also additional penalties for paying late of 5% of the tax unpaid at 30 days, 6 months and 12 months.

Self Assessment guidance is available [online](#).

Between 30 January, and 31 January, our phone helplines shut at 8pm. Customers can contact us via Webchat until midnight both days.

Tax is automatically deducted from the majority of UK taxpayers' wages, pensions or savings. For people or businesses where tax is not automatically deducted, or when they may have earned additional untaxed income, they are required to complete a Self Assessment tax return each year.

Be aware of copycat websites and phishing scams – always type in the full online address <http://www.gov.uk/hmrc> to obtain the correct link to file your Self Assessment return online securely and free of charge.

HMRC uses your home address to determine whether you should be paying UK or Welsh/Scottish Rate of Income Tax, make sure yours is up to date by accessing your Personal Tax Account or <https://www.gov.uk/tell-hmrc-change-of-details>.

Customers can also register for HMRC's help and support email service at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hmrc-webinars-email-alerts-and-videos> or by going to GOV.UK and searching 'HMRC videos, webinars and email alerts'.

[Safe working bonus given in Tommy's memory](#)



Hospice at Home West Cumbria with employees from Sellafield Ltd

That's more than 200 years' worth of safe hours worked, in a time of massive construction and change on the Sellafield site in West Cumbria.

Sellafield Ltd Head of EHS&Q in Project Delivery, Mark Sarrington explained:

Once we knew we were hitting this milestone without a recordable accident we knew we wanted to mark it in some way.

Our colleague Tommy Dougan sadly passed away in the summer – he was

very well regarded so we thought it would be a nice idea to speak to his family and ask them which deserving cause they would like to see benefit.

Tommy was a safety advisor on the Sellafield site and supported the recent delivery of the Silos Maintenance Facility project. His family chose Hospice at Home West Cumbria, which will receive £500.

Tommy's son Marc, who works at the Vitrification facility as a Manufacturing Team Leader, said:

The hospice really helped a great deal when my dad was in the nursing home, the support they gave us was second to none. Thanks for this very kind gesture it really means a lot and it shows how well my dad was thought of.

Published 24 January 2020

[Mother banned for allowing disqualified son to run company](#)

Sylvia (79) and Roy Jones (57) have signed disqualification undertakings which prohibit them from being involved, directly or indirectly, in the formation, promotion or management of a company, without the permission of the court.

Weston Decorating Specialists UK Limited was incorporated in September 2009 and formally began to trade in August 2011, providing painting and decorating services.

The company entered into Creditors Voluntary Liquidation in November 2017 before the Insolvency Service was made aware of misconduct carried out by the former registered director, Sylvia Jones, and the registered director at the date of liquidation, Roy Jones.

Upon closer inspection, investigators uncovered that Sylvia's son, Roy Jones, had been acting as the director of Weston Decorating Specialists UK before he was appointed. This included dealing with trade suppliers and customers, signing cheques, and dealing with the company's bank.

But that this was in direct contravention of a three-and-a-half-year ban Roy received in August 2013. This was in relation to a separate company with a similar sounding name, Weston Decorating Specialists Limited, after Roy

failed to ensure the company paid its tax liabilities as and when they fell due, causing it to trade to the detriment of the tax authorities.

Sylvia Jones was the appointed director of Weston Decorating Specialists UK during the period of her son's ban and despite being aware Roy's disqualification, Sylvia allowed him to act as director of UK of the painting and decorating company.

Investigators also found that mother and son failed to ensure that the company paid its tax liabilities, causing Weston Decorating Specialists UK to trade to the detriment of the tax authorities.

Mother and son signed their disqualification undertakings on 27 November 2019. Roy Jones was banned for 11 years after he did not dispute that he acted as a director whilst disqualified.

Sylvia did not dispute that she allowed her son to act as a director whilst disqualified and her ban lasts for 6 years.

Robert Clarke, Chief Investigator for the Insolvency Service, said:

Sylvia had a legal duty to be a responsible director but completely failed when she allowed her son to continue running the painting and decorating company despite being fully aware Roy was banned from doing so.

This ban is a warning that such behavior will not be tolerated and where misconduct is discovered, we will pursue enforcement measures against rogue directors.

Roy Jones is of St Fagans, Cardiff, and his date of birth is January 1962

Sylvia Jones is of Cardiff, and her date of birth is September 1940

Weston Decorating Specialists UK Limited (Company number: 07026872)

Persons subject to a disqualification order are bound by a [range of restrictions](#).

[Further information about the work of the Insolvency Service, and how to complain about financial misconduct.](#)

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on: