

Independent Commission on Examination Malpractice

Ofqual welcomes the Report of the Independent Commission on Examination Malpractice, published today (10 September 2019). The Commission supports our view that there is not an endemic problem of malpractice in the exam system in England, and that the vast majority of people involved act with integrity and professionalism. Nevertheless, it is essential for public confidence that all opportunities are taken to reduce the incentives and potential for malpractice to occur, particularly in the light of growing threats posed by the use of technology. We look forward to working with JCQ and the exam boards to implement the recommendations.

Many of the Report's recommendations are ones that we have also identified, support and have begun to work with other stakeholders to address. In general, there is a need for greater clarity and consistency in the ways in which malpractice is identified, prevented and sanctioned, and also how associated data should be collected and communicated.

In particular, we agree that it is unhelpful to have varying definitions of malpractice, which can create confusion and inconsistency in approaches between individuals and organisations. We therefore support efforts to broaden understanding of what constitutes malpractice and what the anticipated responses might be when issues arise. From our perspective, we are at various stages of consultation (either intended or already initiated) on revisions to our guidance for awarding organisations around issues of personal interest and what constitutes malpractice and maladministration.

We agree with the Commission's view that gathering good quality data and reporting it in engaging ways is important, and we are pleased that our work in this area has been recognised. Nevertheless, we will reflect on the Commission's view that there is more that can be done and we will work with counterpart organisations as appropriate.

With regard to access arrangements, the Commission's report supports our strong view that there is a need for more meaningful candidate level data to be collected, alongside greater clarity of different arrangement definitions. It is only with this data that questions of fairness can be answered satisfactorily. There is, of course, a balance to be struck between gathering meaningful data and being mindful of any extra burden this could place on schools and colleges. We are discussing this trade-off with stakeholders and will work to develop a way to ensure the necessary data is collected in the most efficient way possible.

News story: Asian hornet: UK sightings

The latest updates on Asian hornet sightings in the UK in 2019.

Over £500m new investment in green technologies for a cleaner and healthier future

- £400 million fund to help develop rapid charging infrastructure points for electric vehicles
- First £70 million investment will create 3,000 new rapid charge points, more than doubling the number of rapid charge points across the UK by 2024
- Further £142.9m announced for R&D to combat air and water pollution, and increase sustainability to support Government's ambitious commitment to tackling climate change

Plans for a cleaner and healthier Britain stepped up a gear today, as Ministers announced more than half a billion pounds of investment in green technologies.

The Treasury has launched a £400 million fund to bolster Britain's electric vehicle charging infrastructure, with the first £70 million allocated for 3000 charge points – more than doubling the number across the UK to 5000.

Rapid charge points can recharge a family car in as little as 20 minutes, compared to existing technology which can take 40 minutes- making the reality of driving electric vehicles easier and more accessible for people across the country. The UK already has one of the largest electric vehicle charging networks in Europe, and this investment will help make that the fastest by installing state-of-the-art technology.

A review is currently underway to explore the provision of charge points across major road networks, meaning drivers could charge their car whilst stopping for a coffee at a service station. Today's investment complements £1.5 billion support to boost the uptake of electric vehicles and make cleaner vehicles more accessible to everyone. This is part of the Government's ambition to end the sale of petrol and diesel vehicles by 2040.

Also being announced today is £31.5 million for research into pioneering technologies to remove greenhouse gases from the atmosphere, and £22 million to research new kinds of air pollutants and minimise their effects on public health.

Exchequer Secretary Simon Clarke said:

We are driving ahead with plans to make travel greener while backing British innovation and technology.

I am delighted to announce this funding today that will more than double the number of rapid charge points for electric vehicles on our roads. Britain already boasts one of the biggest networks of charging infrastructure in Europe and soon we will have the fastest thanks to this investment.

This is the latest in our proud record on climate change –having slashed emissions by over 40% since 1990, whilst simultaneously growing our economy, and setting an ambitious target for net zero emissions by 2050.

Business, Energy and Clean Growth Minister Kwasi Kwarteng said:

The UK has been going further and faster in tackling climate change by becoming the first major economy to legislate for net zero emissions by 2050 and helping us seize the opportunities of a greener future. With air pollution thought to kill as many as seven million people a year globally, it's clear more needs to be done.

That's why we're backing these initiatives, aimed at making improvements from battling air pollutants to protecting our invaluable sea life. These pioneering projects will help us maintain our world-leading position in this field, and to make further strides towards a more sustainable future for our planet.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

It's fantastic there is already a rapid chargepoint at almost every motorway service station, and now more charging stations than petrol stations. But I want to see thousands more chargepoints installed across the UK.

This fund will help drum up further investment in charging infrastructure from the private sector, so charging an electric car becomes as easy as plugging in a smart phone.

Further investment into green technology being announced today

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy has today taken another vital step in cleaning up the planet by unveiling £142.9 million investment in green projects, including driving forward approaches to removing greenhouse gases from the air. Part of the second wave of the

Government's Strategic Priority Fund, the investment boost is evidence of the Government's steadfast commitment to ensure a healthy, happy planet and population.

Five projects are benefiting from the significant cash injection, including:

- Greenhouse Gas Removal Technologies (£31.52m) – this will support the UK in its net zero ambitions, by driving forward approaches to remove greenhouse gases from the sky on a large scale
- Clean Air: Addressing the Challenge of Indoor & Outdoor Pollution (£22m) – the next decade will see declining transport pollution but increases in other areas like household products and adhesives. This project will look at tackling emerging air pollutants indoors and outdoors, such as air fresheners and cleaning products, to minimise their effects on public health
- Cleaner food systems for healthy people and a healthy planet (£47 million) — this will transform UK diets to be healthier and more sustainable through changes in production, manufacturing, retail and consumption. It will deliver coherent evidence to enable concerted action from policy, business and civil society to help the UK meet its targets on obesity and greenhouse gas emissions.
- Reusing and recycling materials in innovative ways (£30 million) – this programme will drive forward new research to support opportunities to re-use and recycle materials across sectors such as food, water, textiles and electronics – as well accelerating new, greener manufacturing technologies
- Sustainable Management of Marine Resources (£12.43m) – This programme will ensure that the UK realises sustainable societal and economic benefits through better management of the UK's marine resources, including working more closely with government, industry and the public.

Today's announcements show the Government's firm commitment to tackling climate change and to meeting its environmental responsibilities. As a world leader in clean growth, and the first major economy in the world to legislate to end its contribution to global warming by 2050, today's announcements echo the UK's commitment to being in the driving seat of the green revolution.

Further Information

- The Charging Infrastructure Investment Fund will be managed and invested on a commercial basis by private sector partners, and government will invest up to £200m to be matched by private investors.

- The fund is leveraging private investment to support the rollout of charge points for electric vehicles across the UK. The initial £70m investment has been provided by government and Masdar.

About the Strategic Priorities Fund:

- The Strategic Priorities Fund supports high quality research and development priorities. This is the second wave of funding. The SPF Wave 2 total programme funding figure is £496.8 million. The fund is being delivered by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

More details about the funded projects can be found below:

1.Clean Air: Future Challenges (NERC)

Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and Met Office with Innovate UK, Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), Medical Research Council (MRC), Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC), National Physical Laboratory (NPL), Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), Department for Transport (DfT), Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC), Scottish Government and Welsh Government.

Funding requested: £22 million over 6 years

2.Greenhouse Gas Removal Demonstrators (NERC)

NERC with Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), Biotechnology and Biological Science Research Council (BBSRC), ESRC, EPSRC, Innovate UK, Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), Defra and Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG)

Funding requested: £31.52 million over 5 years

3.Sustainable Management of UK Marine Resources (NERC)

NERC with ESRC, Defra and Scottish Government.

Funding requested: £12.43 million over 4 years

4.A food systems approach for healthy people and a healthy planet (BBSRC)

BBSRC with Medical Research Council, NERC, Defra, DHSC and Food Standards Agency

Funding requested: £47 million over 6 years. Defra will contribute an additional £500k over 6 years

5.National interdisciplinary Circular Economy Research Programme (EPSRC)

EPSRC, with NERC, AHRC, Defra and BEIS

Funding requested: £30 million over 5 years

Publishers with false emergency services links wound-up in court

Print Publishing Ltd was wound up on Thursday 5 September 2019 by District Judge Richmond at the High Court in Manchester following an investigation by the Insolvency Service. The Official Receiver has been appointed as liquidator.

In considering the petition to wind up the company, the court heard that Print Publishing was incorporated in October 2017 and produced magazines that supported the emergency services.

To secure revenue, sales people would cold-call local businesses, local authorities, schools, as well as sports and social clubs, offering advertising space in two magazines: Crime Reaction and Attention Fire.

Print Publishing claimed to produce three editions of each title per year, with distribution numbers of circa 25,000. Sales people also stressed that they worked for the emergency services or associated charities, while proceeds went towards the emergency services.

Following complaints, however, the Insolvency Service conducted confidential investigations into the Print Publishing's activities before uncovering that claims made by the company were misleading and often false.

The company began securing funds from sponsors for future editions of the magazines as early as October 2017 but did not produce the first magazine until a year and a half later in January 2019.

There was no evidence that the magazines were ever distributed to anyone other than the advertisers themselves or that financial contributions had found their way to the emergency services and associated charities.

Although denied by the company, the Insolvency Service's enquiries concluded that Print Publishing traded with a lack of commercial probity when it claimed to be affiliated with the emergency services and other good causes.

Enquiries also found that Print Publishing used oppressive and objectionable sales techniques to pressurise customers into making payments.

Overall, Print Publishing's records showed that they had 120 clients, spanning 169 sales transactions between October 2017 and December 2018, generating bank receipts totalling £62,418.80.

Scott Crighton, Chief Investigator for the Insolvency Service, said:

Not only did Print Publishing use dubious sales practices to elicit

funds and did not have any links to charities or the emergency services, the magazines were produced late and were not distributed anywhere beyond the company's own staff.

Following the winding-up of the company the Official Receiver will now look closely into the company's affairs, including the conduct of the former director.

If you or your business has been affected by the actions of Print Publishing, contact the Official Receiver at piu.north@insolvency.gov.uk, quoting CIB57545.

Print Publishing Ltd (10995898). The company's registered officers were located at 64 Derby Lane Old Swan, Liverpool, United Kingdom, L13 3DN.

The petitions were presented under s124A of the Insolvency Act 1986. The Official Receiver was appointed as provisional liquidator of the companies on 5 September 2019 by District Judge Richmond.

Company Investigations, part of the Insolvency Service, uses powers under the Companies Act 1985 to conduct confidential fact-finding investigations into the activities of live limited companies in the UK on behalf of the Secretary of State for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS). [Further information about live company investigations is available here.](#)

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

You can also follow the Insolvency Service on:

[Bell from American ship destroyed in Second World War going home](#)

USS Osprey was lost on 5 June 1944 when she hit a mine around 5pm and sank with the loss of six men, south of the Isle of Wight.

Now more than 70 years on, the ship's bell which has been handed over to Heloise Warner, the acting Receiver of Wreck based at the Maritime & Coastguard Agency in Southampton, is going home.

Heloise said: 'We need to remember that whilst this bell is an important artefact and historically significant in terms of Operation Overlord, it also represents the tragedy of loss. It will be a symbolic moment when the bell is returned to US soil.'

Families and friends would have grieved the loss of the six service men believed to have perished: Lieutenant Van Hamilton, seaman 2nd class John Medvic, fireman 1st class Walter O'Bryan, quartermaster 2nd class Emery Parichy, motor machinist's mate 2nd class Joseph Vanasky, Jr and motor machinist's mate 3rd class Cleo Whitschell.

USS Osprey was a raven-class minesweeper of the United States Navy. Commissioned on 16 December, 1940, she later saw service in North Africa as part of Operation Torch, the Anglo-American invasion of French North Africa (November 1942).

On 3 April 1944, she travelled to England to be part of Operation Overlord, successfully taking part in sweeping operations off the south west coast. She is thought to have been the first casualty of D-Day operations when she hit a mine which blew a large hole in the engine room. A fire broke out and just 45 minutes later, the ship had to be abandoned.

There are thousands of wrecked vessels and aircraft around the UK coast and many are protected sites. Any recovered wreck material must be reported to the receiver of wreck.