

ARSAC to launch online portal for research applications

News story

A new online portal to apply for Administration of Radioactive Substances Advisory Committee (ARSAC) approval of research studies will launch September 2020.



The online portal will transform the way research applications are submitted to the Administration of Radioactive Substances Advisory Committee (ARSAC). Uploading applications to the portal will offer a quick and simple way to apply for approval of new research studies from ARSAC. The new system will enable applicants to monitor the progress of their applications and will allow applicants to share access to their submissions.

Public Health England (PHE) will manage the new research applications through the ARSAC online portal.

Research sponsors, such as pharmaceutical companies and universities, will still be required to submit the same application documents but through the online portal instead of the previous email system.

Nasreen Parkar, Scientific Adviser to ARSAC, said:

Moving to the new system will mean all new research applications are submitted through the ARSAC online portal from September 2020. We are currently piloting this system and it is working very well.

Once the online portal is launched, research sponsors will need to create an account so they can submit their applications to ARSAC.

In the future, the ARSAC online portal will be further developed to enable applicants to submit additional types of applications including those for employer and practitioner licences.

For further information [subscribe to our bulletin](#) for updates.

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[The UK and the Bank of Thailand sign MoU on Financial Services](#)

World news story

The UK and the Bank of Thailand signed MoU to support Thailand's inclusive economic recovery and green growth in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.



The UK Government and the Bank of Thailand (BoT) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 7 August 2020, forming a strategic partnership on financial services to support Thailand's inclusive economic recovery and green growth in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Under the MoU, the UK and the BoT agreed to collaborate to strengthen accounting standards; to enhance corporate governance and transparency; to support the development of Financial Technology (FinTech) to facilitate greater access to finance and business opportunity for Thai FinTech industry; to promote sustainable finance; and to support resilience in the financial system.

The collaboration is enabled by the UK's ASEAN Economic Reform and ASEAN Low Carbon Energy Programmes.

The collaboration will share strategic knowledge and expertise on new financing trends, regulatory practices, products and services. The partnership will seek to develop the financial sector to support inclusive growth with consideration for the wider implications of policies on the economy, environment – in particular risks from climate change – and those

who are disadvantaged in society.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Mr. Veerathai Santiprabhob, Governor of the Bank of Thailand said:

Financial technology can enhance financial inclusion by scaling up accessibility and convenience with product offerings that can be tailored to individual's needs. Technological advancement in financial services has prompted regulators to embrace an organizational culture that nurtures innovation. At the same time, worsening effects of climate change have impacted business operations and their credit quality which financial institutions need to pay close attention. Financial institution should also play role in minimizing negative externality from the lending. Our cooperation under this MoU will play an important role in supporting Thailand, in particular the Bank of Thailand, to foster a regulatory framework that promotes agility and innovation while preserving financial stability as we pursue our journey of digital transformation. In addition, it will facilitate financial service providers to better embed the concept of sustainability, particularly the environment aspect, into their organizational culture and business conducts.

H.E. Brian Davidson, the British Ambassador to Thailand said:

This Memorandum of Understanding comes at a critical moment as we seek to manage and recover from the Covid-19 pandemic. Financial services can help deliver stimulus that will create jobs; support businesses; and empower societies to be more resilient by transforming economies from grey to green. But while we look to a green recovery, FinTech has been critical to the lives of so many during the pandemic – facilitating everything from government payments to the population to online deliveries. Consequently, I'm very proud that we are signing this MoU with the BOT to facilitate cooperation through the Prosperity Fund ASEAN Economic Reform Programme and the ASEAN Low Carbon Energy Programme.

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Prime Minister announces stronger

enforcement measures as easements

resume

- Fines will double to a maximum of £3,200 for those who repeatedly flout face covering rules
- New fines to be introduced for people hosting raves or other unlawful gatherings of more than 30 people
- Bowling alleys, skating rinks and casinos to reopen for the first time as well as indoor play and soft play centres which comply with new Covid-19 Secure guidelines
- Beauty salons, tattoo studios, spas, barbers across England will be able to offer all close contact services and treatments
- Wedding receptions for up to 30 people to resume – and indoor performances with socially distanced audiences will recommence
- Sports and business events pilots to resume

The Government has announced a series of tough new enforcement measures targeting the most serious breaches of social distancing restrictions.

Fines for repeatedly not wearing face coverings where mandated will be significantly increased in the coming weeks, and on the spot fines for hosting or facilitating illegal gatherings of more than 30 people will be introduced.

The announcement comes as a number of remaining aspects of England's culture, sport, leisure and business sectors will be permitted to reopen from this weekend. Two weeks ago the ONS had expressed concerns about a slight increase in the number of people in England testing positive. The situation now appears to have levelled off.

The plan set out in the [‘roadmap to recovery’](#) which was paused for two weeks will resume from Saturday 15 August in England – except for specific areas where local restrictions are in place.

- Indoor theatres, music and performance venues will be able to reopen with socially distanced audiences under updated performing arts guidance published by the Government. This follows a successful series of pilots and marks [stage 4 of the government's 5-stage roadmap for the return of professional performing arts](#).
- [Wedding receptions](#) in the form of a sit-down meal in a COVID-secure location for up to 30 guests will now be permitted.
- The [piloting of a small number of sporting events to test the safe return of spectators](#) will resume from August 15 with a view to reopening competition venues for sports fans, with social distancing measures in place from 1 October. This will commence with the final of the World Snooker Championship at Sheffield's Crucible Theatre during 15-16 August, with a full pilot programme to follow.
- Indoor play and indoor soft play, bowling alleys, skating rinks and

casinos will be permitted to reopen.

- Beauty salons, tattoo studios, spas and barbers across England will be able to offer all close contact services – including front of the face treatments such as eyebrow threading, eyelash treatments and facials from August 15 under new guidance.
- A number of pilots will now take place at event venues across the country to help plan how best to restart indoor business events and implement social distancing practices. Business events and conferences will be [permitted to resume from 1 October provided rates of infection remain at current levels](#).

Taking into account new evidence provided by SAGE and consultation with industry, the Government has also confirmed today that all staff offering close contact services, including hairdressers, should now wear a face mask (type 2 surgical), in addition to a clear visor that covers the face. This will help protect the customer and staff from respiratory droplets caused by sneezing, coughing, or speaking.

The guidance also applies to businesses that operate remotely, such as massage therapists working in people's homes, and those learning in vocational training environments.

The Government will continue to review these measures announced today, which are based upon the very latest infection rates.

More detail on the new enforcement measures will be set out in the coming week.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

Most people in this country are following the rules and doing their bit to control the virus, but we must remain focused and we cannot be complacent. That is why we are strengthening the enforcement powers available to use against those who repeatedly flout the rules.

At every stage I have said our plan to reopen society and the economy is conditional and that it relies on continued progress against the virus.

Today, we are able to announce some further changes which will allow more people to return to work and the public to get back to more of the things they have missed. However, as I have always said, we will not hesitate to put on the brakes if required, or to continue to implement local measures to help to control the spread of the virus.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

Coronavirus remains a real and present threat to all of us and the

majority of the British public are doing the right thing.

I will not stand by and see these sacrifices undermined by a small minority of senseless individuals.

These measures send a clear message – if you don't cooperate with the police and if you put our health at risk, action will follow.

Culture Secretary Oliver Dowden said:

The nation's hard work to keep the virus under control means we can now make further careful progress on recovery with allowing audiences back for indoor performances, fans back at sports events and the reopening of more Covid-19 secure leisure businesses.

We must all continue to Stay Alert but today's welcome news means these organisations can finally get going safely, and we can enjoy more of the things we love as a nation.

I have no doubt that they will work incredibly hard to keep their fans, patrons, and customers safe.

Business Secretary, Alok Sharma said:

From Saturday, salons, spas and other close contact services across England will once again be able to offer all services in a way that is safe for workers and clients.

I am pleased to give these often small, independent businesses a much-needed boost as we progress with our plan to kickstart the economy to protect jobs and incomes.

Opening up the economy is conditional on our continued success at controlling the spread of coronavirus. Therefore it remains essential businesses comply with Covid-19 secure measures to protect workers and the public.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

We introduced mandatory face coverings on public transport to protect people and stop coronavirus spreading. I'm grateful to all those who have complied, and of course many people have legitimate reasons not to wear face coverings – but for those who aren't exempt, there is no excuse.

That's why we must get tougher on repeat offenders. This new system will look to ensure everybody who is not exempt wears a face covering on public transport, continuing the public's excellent

efforts in helping this country recover.

Nightclubs, dance halls, and discotheques, as well as sexual entertainment venues and hostess bars, remain closed in law.

France, the Netherlands, Monaco, Malta, Turks and Caicos Islands and Aruba to be removed from travel corridors list

- France, the Netherlands, Monaco, Malta, Turks and Caicos Islands and Aruba removed from list of travel corridors for England following data showing a significant increase in COVID-19 risk, with passengers required to self-isolate when returning from these countries from 4am on Saturday 15 August
- travellers urged to check the latest advice from the FCO before travelling and ensure they have filled in a passenger locator form before returning home
- government continues to closely monitor increase in reported cases worldwide, and will keep all countries and territories under constant review

People arriving in England from France, the Netherlands, Monaco, Malta, Turks and Caicos Islands and Aruba from 4am Saturday 15 August 2020 will need to [self-isolate for 2 weeks](#) as the countries are removed from the travel exemptions list.

The Joint Biosecurity Centre and Public Health England have indicated a significant change in coronavirus (COVID-19) risk in all 6 destinations, leading to ministers removing these from the current [list of travel corridors](#).

Data from France shows that over the past week (7 to 13 August) there has been a 66% increase in newly reported cases and a 52% increase in weekly incidence rate per 100,000 population, indicating a sharp rise in COVID-19.

There has been a consistent increase in newly reported cases in the Netherlands over the past 4 weeks, with a 52% increase in newly reported cases between 7 and 13 August. Over the past week, there has been a 273% increase in newly reported cases in the Turks and Caicos Islands and 1,106% increase in newly reported cases in Aruba. Malta has had a 105% increase in newly reported cases over the past 7 days.

At the same time, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has also [updated its travel advice](#) to advise against all but essential travel to France, Monaco, the Netherlands, Malta, Turks and Caicos Islands and Aruba.

The government has made consistently clear it will take decisive action if necessary to contain the virus, including removing countries from the travel corridors list rapidly if the public health risk of people returning from a particular country without self-isolating becomes too high.

People currently in [France](#), [the Netherlands](#), [Monaco](#), [Malta](#), [Turks and Caicos Islands](#) and [Aruba](#) are encouraged to follow the local rules and check the FCO travel advice pages on GOV.UK for further information.

The government is urging employers to be understanding of those returning from these destinations who now will need to self-isolate and has invested over £9 billion to strengthen the welfare safety net, helping to ensure access for those in need.

Government keeps travel advice and the exemptions list under constant review, and the Joint Biosecurity Centre is closely monitoring increases in reported cases in destinations worldwide. People planning to travel overseas should be mindful that unfortunately disruption is possible, in order to protect public health, and the government is prepared to remove countries from the travel corridors list rapidly if the public health risk of people returning from a particular country without self-isolating becomes too high. Passengers should therefore carefully consider their ability to self-isolate on return before deciding to travel overseas in the event that advice changes.

Travellers should always check the [latest advice from the FCO](#), given the potential for changing coronavirus infection rates to affect both the advice about travelling to other countries and rules about self-isolation on return.

All travellers, including those from exempt destinations, will still be required to show a completed [passenger locator form](#) on arrival into the UK unless they fall into a [small group of exemptions](#), with failure to do so resulting in a £100 fine.

[Foreign Secretary statement: Israel-UAE agreement](#)

News story

Foreign Secretary statement following the announcement of an agreement between Israel and the United Arab Emirates.



Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab said:

This is an historic step which sees the normalisation of relations between two great friends of the UK. We welcome both the decision by the UAE to normalise relations with Israel, as well as the suspension of plans for annexation – a move the UK has opposed as it would have been counterproductive to securing peace in the region.

Ultimately, there is no substitute for direct talks between the Palestinians and Israel, which is the only way to reach a two state solution and a lasting peace.

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