

Lowest paid workers to be given flexibility to top up their pay under government reforms

- Government to widen ban on exclusivity clauses, removing red tape and giving lowest paid workers the choice to work multiple jobs if they wish
- new reforms will ensure around 1.5 million low-paid workers are not subject to exclusivity clauses, providing them with flexibility over where and when they work
- Business Minister Paul Scully said: “We are putting more control into the hands of the lowest paid, giving them the freedom to decide who they work for and how often.”

Britain’s lowest paid workers will be given the flexibility to boost their income through extra work, under new plans set out by the government today (Monday 9 May).

The proposals will widen the ban on exclusivity clauses, which restrict staff from working for multiple employers, to contracts where the guaranteed weekly income is on or below the Lower Earnings Limit of £123 a week. An estimated 1.5 million workers are earning on or below £123 a week and the new reforms will ensure that workers in this group that have exclusivity clauses are able to top up their income with extra work if they choose.

The reforms will give workers more flexibility over when and where they work to best suit their personal circumstances such as childcare or study, including the option of working multiple short-hours contracts.

As well as supporting workers to increase their income, the reforms will also benefit businesses by widening the talent pool of job applicants to those who may have been prevented from applying for roles due to an exclusivity clause with another employer, and also helps businesses to fill vacancies in key sectors like retail and hospitality. The reforms will allow low-paid workers to reskill and make the most of new opportunities in existing sectors with growing labour demand.

This follows government action to support people with their cost of living and help the lowest paid workers keep more of what they earn, including increasing the National Living Wage to £9.50 per hour – equivalent to an extra £1,000 a year for a full-time worker – and cutting taxes for the workers on Universal Credit – putting an extra £1,000 back in their pockets.

Business Minister Paul Scully said:

We are creating a high skilled, high productivity labour market that supports workers by removing unnecessary red tape, helping the British people boost their incomes and keep more of what they earn.

By extending the ban on exclusivity clauses, we are putting more control into the hands of the lowest paid, giving them the freedom to decide who they work for and how often, including the option to top up their pay packet if they wish.

While not everyone will want a second job, the reforms will remove red tape that prevents those who want to do so – for example, gig economy workers, younger people, or those from disadvantaged backgrounds facing barriers to entering the labour market.

By giving more workers the option to take on additional work on short hours contracts, the reforms could also help increase businesses' confidence to create jobs with contracts which suit them and their current circumstances.

In 2015, exclusivity clauses were banned for workers on zero hours contracts, where employers are not obliged to provide any minimum working hours and the worker is not obliged to accept any work offered. The change provided more workers with the option to take on additional work, with the number of people on zero hours contracts having a second job rising.

Legislation for these reforms will be laid before Parliament later this year. The proposals follow the conclusion of a consultation launched by government in December 2020, which sought views on extending the ban on exclusivity clauses beyond zero hours contracts.

Some responses to the consultation highlighted the impact that COVID-19 has had on job security and its decrease in guaranteed working hours. Extending the ban to those earning below the Lower Earnings Limit will therefore enable vulnerable workers who have been moved to reduced hours contracts, due to the pandemic, to increase their income.

The reforms come at a time when there are more employees on payrolls than ever before. The move will also make workplaces fairer, reflecting the government's commitment to protecting and enhancing workers' rights across the country.

Andy Chamberlain, Director of Policy at IPSE said:

The extension of the ban on exclusivity clauses is welcome. By cutting back on these restrictive clauses, the opportunity to find more flexible work will be open to more people.

Read the full [government response to the consultation on exclusivity clauses](#).

PM to announce new laws to level up education opportunity so no child is left behind

- Schools Bill to help deliver government's ambition to give every child in the country a world-class education, providing the foundation they need to secure future well-paid jobs
- Bill will support schools to raise standards, strengthen attendance and improve safeguarding for children wherever they are educated
- Measures will feed into the government's central mission to spread opportunity, level up the country, and strengthen our economy

New laws are expected to be unveiled tomorrow to underpin the government's ambition for every child to receive a world-class education, no matter where in the country they live.

The Schools Bill is set to be announced in the Queen's Speech. It will provide the legislation necessary for the government's key education reforms and support its central mission to spread opportunity and level up the country, driving future economic growth.

Making sure every young person gets a good education is at the forefront of the government's agenda. It is also in the interest of the entire country, because these young people will have the skills, knowledge and opportunity needed to fulfil their future potential, secure the good jobs needed to support our economy, and fill local skills gaps.

Through the Bill, the government will raise education standards across the country via a range of measures including supporting schools to join strong, multi-academy trusts, introducing registers for children not in school and giving Ofsted more powers to crack down on unregistered schools operating illegally.

It will help to deliver the government's Levelling Up mission for education – for 90% of children leaving primary school to achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and maths by 2030, providing them with the foundation they need to secure well-paid jobs in the future.

To support this, last month the government announced its new pledge to parents: if your child falls behind in English or maths, they will get the support they need from their school to help them get back on track.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

"I want every parent across the country to know that their child's education is at the very heart of this government's agenda.

"We are determined to raise standards in our schools so every child has

access to the same opportunities wherever they live, and our brilliant teachers are supported to do what they do best, which is why we're putting our education ambition into law this week.

"By giving every child a good education, we're giving them the opportunity to thrive so they can reach their full potential and secure the jobs needed – this is absolutely vital to our levelling up mission."

Education Secretary Nadhim Zahawi said:

"Our new Schools Bill, alongside the Schools White Paper, will create a school system that works for every child, parent and family, bringing every school up to our current best standards.

"We want every school to be part of an academy trust, enabling teachers to focus on what they do best – meeting the needs of every child. Schools' approach to attendance is being overhauled to make sure every child gets the benefit of every possible hour in the classroom.

"In combination, this work will make sure every child has access to an education that they deserve and helps them fulfil their potential."

The measures in the Bill will:

- Support more schools to become part of a strong, multi-academy trust.
- Strengthen the regulatory framework for academy trusts, underpinned by powers to intervene where they are failing.
- Introduce a direct National Funding Formula, so that every school is allocated funding on a fair and consistent basis, wherever it is in the country.
- Require schools to publish an attendance policy
- Establish compulsory registers for children not in school, so that the system can identify those who are not receiving a suitable full-time education.
- Place a duty on local authorities to provide support to home-schooling families, so that no child falls through the cracks.
- Give Ofsted more powers to crack down on 'unregistered schools' operating illegally.
- Give the Teaching Regulation Agency increased powers to investigate misconduct.

This is all backed by huge government investment – core school funding will rise by £4 billion in 2022/23 compared with 2021/22, which represents a 7% increase per pupil. On top of this, £5 billion has been invested in the National Tutoring Programme, offering high-quality catch-up tutoring for students who fell behind during the pandemic.

Earlier this year, the government also set out its vision for a post-18 education system that promotes social mobility by providing more options for people to study, train, retrain or upskill at any stage throughout their lives.

In support of this, the Higher Education Bill is also expected to be

announced this week, enabling the introduction of the Lifelong Loan Entitlement. This will provide people with a loan equivalent to four years of education (£37,000 in today's fees) that they can use over their lifetime for a range of studies including shorter and technical courses. This could help them secure a promotion, or a better job.

This is a seismic shift in the way post-18 education is funded and accessed – and combined with the government's school reforms – will make sure an excellent education is accessible to everyone in this country, no matter what stage of life they're at.

[UK punishes Putin with new round of sanctions on £1.7 billion of goods](#)

- Russian and Belarusian regimes targeted with new package of trade sanctions on goods.
- Further import tariffs on products worth £1.4 billion, including platinum and palladium.
- Export bans worth more than £250 million target Russia's manufacturing and heavy machinery sectors.

The UK is today announcing a new package of sanctions on Russia and Belarus targeting £1.7 billion worth of trade in a move designed to further weaken Putin's war machine.

It will bring the total value of products subjected to full or partial import and export sanctions since Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine began to more than £4 billion.

The sanctions announced today by the International Trade Secretary and the Chancellor of the Exchequer include import tariffs and export bans.

The new import tariffs will cover £1.4 billion worth of goods – including platinum and palladium – hampering Putin's ability to fund his war effort.

Russia is one of the leading platinum and palladium producing countries and is highly dependent on the UK for exports of platinum and palladium products.

Meanwhile, the planned export bans intend to hit more than £250 million worth of goods in sectors of the Russian economy most dependent on UK goods, targeting key materials such as chemicals, plastics, rubber, and machinery.

Secretary of State for International Trade, Anne-Marie Trevelyan said:

We are determined to do our utmost to thwart Putin's aims in

Ukraine and undermine his illegal invasion, which has seen barbaric acts perpetrated against the Ukrainian people.

This far-reaching package of sanctions will inflict further damage on the Russian war machine. It is part of a wider coordinated effort by the many countries around the world who are horrified by Russia's conduct and determined to bring to bear our economic might to persuade Putin to change course.

Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak said:

Putin's illegal invasion of Ukraine is causing suffering on an enormous scale. His barbaric war must be stopped.

Over £4 billion worth of goods will now be subject to import and export sanctions, doing significant damage to Putin's war effort. Working closely with our allies we can and will thwart Putin's ambitions.

This is the third wave of trade sanctions announced by the UK government and, excluding gold and energy, will bring the proportion of goods imports from Russia hit by restrictions to more than 96 percent, with more than 60 percent of goods exports to Russia under whole or partial restrictions, effectively contributing to the debilitation of the Putin war machine.

Last week, the International Trade Secretary hosted international trade ministers and officials from 23 countries, including the Ukrainian first Deputy Prime Minister, to discuss how best to provide trade and economic support to Ukraine.

She also signed a formal exchange of letters to liberalise all tariffs on imports from Ukraine under the UK-Ukraine Free Trade Agreement.

Background:

- The UK has announced an additional £1.4 billion package of import restrictions, raising tariffs by 35 percentage points on products such as chemicals, platinum, and palladium.
- The measures announced will cover more than £250 million in UK exports and represented almost 10 percent of UK exports to Russia in 2021.
- Overall, the UK has now announced import restrictions on over £2.4 billion of imports from Russia, excluding energy-related announcements.
- Around £1.4 billion of imports will face an additional 35 percentage point tariff.
- Legislation will be laid in due course to implement these measures.
- These estimates assume the full value of trade within a commodity code is subject to a restriction. The true value may be subject to licensing and exemptions.
- We encourage all importers that use Russian imports to source alternative supplies. As with all sanctions, these measures will be kept

under review.

PM call with G7 and European Leaders and President Zelenskyy: 8 May 2022

Press release

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The Prime Minister said there was a savage irony that the leaders had gathered to discuss Putin's barbaric invasion on a day when they should be remembering the sacrifice of Russian soldiers defeating fascism in the Second World War.

He agreed with G7 leaders that the world must intensify economic pressure on Putin in any way possible, and said the west must not allow the war to turn into a stalemate that only magnified suffering.

Ukraine needed to receive military equipment that allowed them to not just hold ground in Ukraine, but recapture it, the Prime Minister told the leaders.

The devastating ripples of the Ukrainian war was impacting food supplies across the world, and the Prime Minister agreed with his counterparts that more needed to be done to support Ukraine's agricultural exports and wider global food security.

The Prime Minister added that G7 partners needed to intensify their diplomatic lobbying of counterparts failing to apply pressure on President

Putin's war machine, especially as it was clear grossly unjustifiable human rights abuses and war crimes were being committed.

He added that he looked forward to seeing G7 leaders at the summit in Germany next month.

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[Prime Minister to give local leaders power to breathe new life into high streets](#)

- Prime Minister to bring in landmark reforms to rejuvenate high streets and restore pride in local areas
- New legislation forms central part of government mission to level up towns across the country, creating new jobs and infrastructure
- Follows publication of government's flagship Levelling Up White Paper to spread opportunity and prosperity across the UK

The Levelling up and Regeneration Bill, expected to be unveiled in the Queen's speech next week, will provide local leaders with the powers they need to revitalise town centres.

Currently shops can stand empty for years, blighting the high street and wasting opportunities for new jobs. New legislation will enable local leaders to force landlords to rent out commercial properties, revitalising highstreets, rejuvenating town centres, and restoring community pride in their home towns.

Councils will be given greater powers to take control of buildings for the benefit of their communities, transforming boarded up shops or derelict buildings into thriving businesses, shared community spaces or housing.

Prime Minister, Boris Johnson said:

"High streets up and down the country have long been blighted by derelict shopfronts, because they've been neglected, stripping opportunity from local areas.

"We are putting that right by placing power back in the hands of local leaders and the community so our towns can be rejuvenated, levelling up opportunity and restoring neighbourhood pride."

The number of empty shopfronts has soared to 1 in 7 according to the British

Retail Consortium, rising to 1 in 5 in the north east, with boarded up and derelict shops blighting highstreets and sapping the life from once bustling town centres. New Compulsory Rental Auctions will ensure that landlords auction shops that have been vacant for over a year to prospective tenants, putting buildings to good use.

The move will create opportunities for new businesses and community groups, paving the way for new jobs to boost employment, strengthening local economies and restoring local pride.

Levelling Up Secretary Michael Gove said:

“By empowering local communities to rent out shops which have been sat empty for a year or longer, we will end the scourge of boarded up shops that have blighted some of our great towns across the country for far too long.

“These measures will breathe new life into high streets, transforming once-bustling communities into vibrant places to live and work once again and restoring local pride as we level up across the country.”

Councils will also be given greater powers to drive regeneration through Compulsory Purchase Orders, making it quicker and easier for councils to use powers to deliver much needed local housing and infrastructure.

Compulsory Purchase Orders allow acquiring authorities, including local public bodies, to acquire buildings without needing the consent of the owner for public benefit. This may include acquiring land to build social housing or other regeneration projects.

Banstead and Reigate council has used this power to regenerate an old car park to create a new cinema, shops, leisure facilities and housing at the heart of Redhill’s town centre in Surrey.

To support vibrant high streets and communities thrive, pavement licensing red-tape will be permanently scrapped, freeing up businesses to serve food al fresco and attract diners all year round.

During the pandemic, restaurants, pubs and bars were granted temporary powers to serve guests on pavements, helping to mitigate lost floorspace for tables due to social distancing requirements.

Through new legislation, these powers will be made permanent to expand capacity for businesses to boost local economies and inject life into local communities.

The Levelling up and Regeneration Bill follows publication of the government’s flagship Levelling Up White Paper which set out plans to transform the UK by spreading opportunity and prosperity to all parts of it.

The UK Government is also providing £1.7bn of temporary business rates relief in 2022-23 for up to 400,000 retail, hospitality and leisure properties to support the high street.

The High Streets Task Force will continue to support communities to regenerate their high streets to reflect evolving local needs. It is already supporting 84 local authorities with access to expert support in areas such as placemaking, planning and design.