

[News story: Clinical requirements for information and digital technologies](#)

After extensive consultation with its members, the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges (AoMRC) has published a set of clinical requirements for information and digital technologies. These have been developed on behalf of the other professions, to ensure that clinical priorities for the use of data and technology are met at a national level.

[Information and Digital Technologies Clinical Requirements 2020](#), provides a set of standards, in plain English, which will enable people working on the frontline in healthcare to exploit the information revolution. It is also designed to support NIB's framework for action, Personalised Health and Care 2020.

The work was overseen by NIB's Strategic Clinical Reference Group (SCRG), which has membership from across the clinical professions.

Clare Marx, President of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, who led the SCRG which oversaw the work said:

We know we are a long way behind the curve when it comes to using information more effectively to improve care. We need to redouble our efforts, but it's important too that clinicians have a say on what systems are introduced, how they work and what the benefits should be. This report does just that and should be closely read by those who are planning our healthcare systems for the next decade.

Information and technology need to work for the health and care professionals who care for people. It's essential to ensure that clinical priorities are reflected in the portfolio of programmes delivering the National Information Board's (NIB) framework for action, Personalised Health and Care 2020.

Through the SCRG, clinicians play a vital role in shaping the digital strategy for health and care services nationally to ensure that decisions taken lead to real improvements on the ground with tangible advances in the quality of care patients and service users receive.

[New vehicle tax rules: how imported](#)

vehicles are affected

[In our previous blog](#), we talked about the upcoming [vehicle tax changes](#) and how they'll affect motorhomes. We're now going to focus on imported vehicles.

As you may already know, the changes for cars and some motorhomes are:

- new standard tax rates for vehicles registered for the first time on or after 1 April 2017
- new first licence rates for new vehicles based on CO₂ emissions
- list price or notional price of the vehicle must be given to DVLA when the vehicle is first registered

Imported vehicles

For new cars and some motorhomes that are being imported into the UK (categories M1, M1SP and M1G on the [type approval certificate](#)), the changes will apply where there is a CO₂ emissions figure on the final build type approval certificate. Those vehicles without a CO₂ emissions figure on the final build type approval certificate will continue to be taxed as [private light goods \(PLG\) tax class](#), as they are now. When registering an imported vehicle, the list price or notional price of the vehicle must be provided.



New imported vehicles with a CO₂ emissions figure

For new vehicles imported with a CO₂ emissions figure, the first time the vehicle is taxed the rate will be based on the CO₂ emissions (as they are now). Take a look at [the current tax rates](#).

From the second time the vehicle is taxed, the vehicle will be charged at the standard rate or the standard rate plus an additional rate of £310, depending on the list price or notional price. To find out what the list price is for a vehicle, contact your dealer who will be able to help.

List price or notional price of £40,000 and under

When first registered, on or after 1 April 2017, these vehicles will be

charged at the standard rate of £140 (£130 for alternative fuel vehicles, £0 for vehicles with zero emissions).

List price or notional price of over £40,000

These vehicles will be charged at the standard rate, plus the additional rate for five years, making a total of £450 (£440 for alternative fuel vehicles, £310 for vehicles with zero emissions). After five years, they will revert to the standard rate.

Used imported vehicles

If you're importing a used vehicle into the UK, the [new tax rate scheme](#) will apply if the vehicle was first registered outside the UK on or after 1 April 2017. Vehicles registered outside the UK before this date will continue to be taxed as they are now.

If the vehicle had a list price or notional price of over £40,000 when it was first registered outside the UK, the additional rate of £310 a year will be added to the standard rate. The additional rate is applicable for either:

- a five year period from the end of the first licence (if imported and registered for the first time in the UK)
- up to six years from the date of first registration outside the UK, when imported as a used vehicle but first registered on or after 1 April 2017

Check out [new vehicle tax rates from 1 April 2017](#) for more information.

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[News story: Ofqual unveils corporate plan 2017 to 2020](#)

Ofqual's new [Corporate Plan](#) which covers the period 2017 to 2020, builds on work undertaken over the past 12 months. It is focused in particular on:

I am delighted to be unveiling the first corporate plan since I came into post in April 2016. Over the past year we have made significant progress against our identified goals and objectives

The most visible aspect of our work remains the continuing focus on general qualification reform and the safe delivery of new GCSEs, AS and A levels will be the culmination of several years of intensive reform. We are working

closely with exam boards to ensure they deliver accurate results, on time, and that standards are maintained. We are also working towards a system for reviews and appeals of marking outcomes that is clearer, more consistent and fairer for all students.

Since I arrived at Ofqual, government priorities for vocational and technical qualifications and assessment have moved on significantly, and as a result, so has our approach to this part of our remit. We are working closely with government on the redevelopment of functional skills qualifications, to make sure they remain relevant to employers. We are also closely engaged with government to support the development of T-levels and similarly are working with other bodies on finalising the outstanding operational decisions related to apprenticeship reform, including the development of high quality apprenticeship end-point assessments.

In primary assessment, our responsibilities focus on monitoring validity and promoting assessment standards, rather than test delivery. We will continue to advise government on policy, and keep our approach under review.

We have taken a wide range of regulatory action over the past year, including issuing our first fines. This plan makes clear that we will undertake both proactive regulatory activity, and stand ready to react where our risk analysis demands it.

To support these goals we will continue to develop and motivate our people and target expertise wherever we see it.

[Press release: NI parties invited to intensive talks](#)

The main political parties in Northern Ireland are being invited to attend political talks on Monday 3 April at Stormont Castle, Belfast.

The talks will have two objectives.

First, to secure a coalition agreement to form the basis of the formation of a new Executive. Second, to address the implementation of outstanding issues from previous Agreements.

In a shared approach, the UK government and Irish government have agreed this phase of talks will be best supported by an intensive process to drive progress.

This includes:

- An agreed agenda;

- A structure of bilateral meetings;
- Regular roundtables; and
- A coordination mechanism across all the issues.

The talks will be conducted in accordance with the well-established three stranded approach.

[News story: UK entrepreneurs are disrupting the business world](#)

Joint list by Maserati and The Sunday Times names 9 companies that have progressed with Innovate UK funding in top 100 game changers.

The [Maserati 100](#) highlights the emerging entrepreneurs who are challenging the established order with their disruptive technologies. Now in its third year, these awards celebrate the positive impact innovative start-ups have on the economy and society as a whole.

Nine businesses that have received funding from Innovate UK featured in the list.

- [Crisp Thinking Group](#) – using Crisp’s software, companies are able to moderate and monitor social media to protect their brands. It has offices in Leeds, London and New York. Crisp received funding to prototype their real-time social media management platform
- [Ella’s Kitchen](#) – making and selling organic baby food since 2006, the company now employs 70 people in the UK and takes 20% of the market. Global turnover is more than \$100 million. Ella’s Kitchen has taken part in 3 knowledge transfer partnerships (KTP) with the University of Reading, to look at its marketing, raw materials and packaging

[Ella’s Kitchen: transforming the organic baby food market](#)

- [Horizon Discovery](#) – a gene-editing biotech company, Horizon Discovery supports the discovery of new medicines, including personalised medicines for treating cancer. It has already acquired a number of US companies to further grow the business. Innovate UK funded collaborative research and development projects to find innovative approaches for the manufacture of high-value, genome-edited cell lines
- [M Squared Lasers](#) – the Glasgow-based company designs and manufactures lasers for use in industry, defence, healthcare and energy. Its revenues totalled more than £8 million last year. Innovate UK has funded several projects to help M Squared Lasers optimise laser emission intensity, develop high precision, handheld spectrometry and grow the market

Nils Hempler of M Squared Lasers.

- [Metail](#) – offering virtual fitting rooms to allow shoppers to create 3D models of themselves and try on clothes. Evans and House of Holland are among the retailers to have signed up. Metail received Innovate UK funding for feasibility and proof of concept studies, as well as prototype testing. This helped the company to develop computer vision techniques and digitise garments with lower costs and simpler operations
- [Ocado](#) – a pioneering online supermarket with annual sales of £1.3 billion. Ocado was involved in a collaborative, 24-month project to trial a range of vehicles with hydrogen dual-fuel technology, in order to reduce the carbon of its vehicles
- [Swiftkey](#) – predictive keyboard software that's installed in more than 300 million smartphones and tablets. Last year Swiftkey acquired by Microsoft in a deal reported to be worth \$250m. Swiftkey received 2 Innovate UK grants, to test its idea for an app that would transform the way people used keyboards and help prototype it

Swiftkey shown working on a mobile device.

- [The Floop](#) – this tool collects data for motor insurers from a driver's phone or a black box in their vehicle. Floop has more than 70 staff in Sheffield and clients include Direct Line and AIG. Floop was involved in a collaborative funding project to accelerate the development, market readiness and deployment of automated driving systems
- [The Framestore](#) – an innovative special effects firm that has worked on films including Gravity, the 2013 Oscar winner for Best Visual Effects. The Framestore received funding in 2 collaborative projects: to create an extensible, pluggable digital security framework that protects media companies; and the development of a production pipeline process that improves quality, speeds up production and reduces costs