

# Coronavirus Business Support

SUPPORT SCHEME	SUPPORT ORGANISATION
<p><b>£10,000 Grant for Rental Properties &amp; Total NAV of £1,590 or below   NI only</b></p> <p>£10,000 Small Business Grant for businesses who are sole tenants of a rental property, or who own and occupy a property with a total NAV of £1,590 or less</p>	<p>Department for the Economy (DfE), Land &amp; Property Services (LPS)</p>
<p><b>£10,000 Small Business Support Grant Scheme   NI only</b></p> <p>£10,000 grant available to Northern Ireland businesses eligible for the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme and businesses with a Total Net Annual Value of £15,000 and below, who currently benefit from Industrial Derating.</p>	<p>Department for the Economy (DfE), Land &amp; Property Services (LPS)</p>
<p><b>£25,000 Grant for Retail, Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure Sector Ratepayers   NI only</b></p> <p>£25,000 grant for Northern Ireland companies in the retail, hospitality, tourism and leisure sectors with a Total Net Annual Value between £15,001 and £51,000.</p>	<p>Department for the Economy (DfE), Land &amp; Property Services (LPS)</p>
<p><b>Bounce Back Loan   UK-wide</b></p> <p>Government-backed loans for UK-based small and medium-sized businesses ranging from between £2,000 and £50,000.</p>	<p>Accredited lenders</p>
<p><b>Artists Emergency Programme   NI only</b></p> <p>Award of up to £5,000 to support individual artists, creative practitioners and performers.</p>	<p>Arts Council of Northern Ireland</p>
<p><b>Sports Hardship Fund   NI-only</b></p> <p>£2,000 small grant scheme for sports clubs and sporting organisations from the voluntary and community sector in Northern Ireland.</p> <p><i>NOTE: Sport Northern Ireland has suspended new applications to the Sports Hardship Fund pending confirmation of additional funding.</i></p>	<p>Sport NI</p>
<p><b>Future Fund   UK-wide</b></p> <p>Government loans to UK-based companies ranging from £125,000 to £5 million, subject to at least equal match funding from private investors.</p>	<p>British Business Bank</p>
<p><b>Business Rates Holiday   NI only</b></p> <p>Three-month rates holiday for Northern Ireland non-domestic ratepayers (<i>excluding public sector and utilities</i>).</p>	<p>Land &amp; Property Services (LPS)</p>

<p><b>Statutory Sick Pay Rebate   UK-wide</b></p> <p>The UK government is to bring forward legislation to allow small and medium-sized businesses to reclaim Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) paid for staff sickness absence due to coronavirus.</p>	<p>HMRC</p>
<p><b>Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS)   UK-wide</b></p> <p>Self-employed individuals or members of partnerships can claim a taxable grant worth 80% of your trading profits up to a maximum of £2,500 per month for 3 months.</p>	<p>HMRC</p>
<p><b>Support for Businesses Paying Tax   UK-wide</b></p> <p>All businesses and self-employed people in financial distress, and with outstanding tax liabilities, may be eligible to receive support with their tax affairs through HMRC's Time To Pay service.</p>	<p>HMRC</p>
<p><b>Deferral of Self- Assessment Payment   UK-wide</b></p> <p>The Self- Assessment payment on account, that is ordinarily due to be paid to HMRC by 31 July 2020 may now be deferred until January 2021.</p>	<p>HMRC</p>
<p><b>Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme   UK-wide</b></p> <p>The temporary Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) supports small and medium-sized businesses with access to loans, overdrafts, invoice finance and asset finance of up to £5 million and for up to six years.</p>	<p>British Business Bank</p>
<p><b>Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme   UK-wide</b></p> <p>Provides a government guarantee of 80% to enable banks to make loans of up to £25m to firms with an annual turnover of between £45m and £500m.</p>	<p>British Business Bank</p>
<p><b>Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme   UK-wide</b></p> <p>Government will cover 80 per cent of business staff wages, up to £2,500 per employee per month.</p>	<p>HMRC</p>
<p><b>VAT Deferral   UK-wide</b></p> <p>The UK government will defer Valued Added Tax (VAT) payments due between 20 March 2020 and 30 June 2020. VAT refunds and reclaims will be paid by the government as normal.</p>	<p>HMRC</p>
<p><b>Covid-19 Corporate Financing Facility   UK-wide</b></p> <p>The new Covid-19 Corporate Financing Facility (CCFF) means that the Bank of England will buy short-term debt from larger companies.</p>	<p>Bank of England</p>

# Detailed information on Covid Business Support Schemes

## £10,000 Grant for Rental Properties & Total NAV of £1,590 or below | NI only

### Summary:

£10,000 Small Business Grant for businesses who are sole tenants of a rental property, or who own and occupy a property with a total NAV of £1,590 or less

### Eligibility criteria:

Under rating legislation, the landlord is liable for rates on non-domestic rental properties with a Total NAV of £1,590 or below. For rental properties with a sole tenant and properties with a Total NAV of £1,590 or below, further information is required to ensure that the grant is being paid to the small business who occupies the property, and not a landlord or letting agent.

*An online form is now available to register for the £10,000 grant or to provide further information if:*

- Your business is the sole tenant of a rental property where the landlord receives the rate bill
- Your business is the sole tenant of a rental property and the business receives the rate
- Your business owns the property that it occupies and the property has a Total NAV of £1,590 and below

### Additional information:

The deadline to register for this grant scheme is Wednesday 20 May 2020.

### Support organisation:

**Department for the Economy (DfE)  
Land & Property Services (LPS)**

## £10,000 Small Business Support Grant Scheme | NI only

### Summary:

£10,000 grant available to Northern Ireland businesses eligible for the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme and businesses with a Total Net Annual Value of £15,000 and below, who currently benefit from Industrial Derating.

### Eligibility criteria:

Available to all small Northern Ireland businesses eligible for the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme. Businesses with a Total Net Annual Value of £15,000 and below, who currently benefit from Industrial Derating, are also eligible for the £10,000 grant.

### Additional information:

The NI Executive is providing a one-off grant of £10,000 to businesses that are currently in receipt of Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR). Businesses with a Total Net Annual Value of £15,000 and below, who currently benefit from Industrial Derating, are also eligible for the £10,000 grant.

*Please note that a number of exclusions apply to the scheme, including:*

- Vacant properties are not eligible for this grant
- MP and MLA Constituency offices are not eligible for this grant
- Businesses with 3 or less premises will only be eligible for one grant of £10,000 in total
- Businesses with more than 3 properties are not eligible for the SBRR scheme, and therefore are not eligible for the grant

For rental properties, the scheme is being designed to benefit the small businesses and not the landlord who is responsible for paying the rates. For this reason, no grant payments are being automatically issued to landlords of properties with a Total Net Annual Value of £1,590 or less.

Landlords, managing agents and small businesses in this situation should not use the Small Business Grant Support online form to register for the scheme but should wait until a new online form for rental properties is made available.

*The deadline to register for this grant scheme is Wednesday 20 May 2020.*

### Support organisation:

**Department for the Economy (DfE)  
Land & Property Services (LPS)**

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# £25,000 Grant for Retail, Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure Sector Ratepayers | NI only

## Summary:

£25,000 grant for Northern Ireland companies in the retail, hospitality, tourism and leisure sectors with a Total Net Annual Value between £15,001 and £51,000.

## Eligibility criteria:

Available to Northern Ireland companies in the retail, hospitality, tourism and leisure sectors with a Total Net Annual Value between £15,001 and £51,000.

## Additional information:

The scheme will be administered by the Department for the Economy working with the Department of Finance's Land & Property Services.

*Registration is now open for businesses to apply for the £25,000 Retail, Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure Grant.*

## Support organisation:

**Department for the Economy (DfE)  
Land & Property Services (LPS)**

Tourism NI coordinated a series of tailored Tourism Enterprise Development (TED) webinars designed specifically for the NI tourism and hospitality industry at this difficult time.

Details of all upcoming Tourism NI webinar sessions can be found on the link below and will be regularly updated in the coming weeks. Please visit <https://covid19.tourismni.com/support-centre/webinars/?dateFrom&dateTo&page=1>

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# Bounce Back Loan | UK-wide

## Summary:

Government-backed loans for UK-based small and medium-sized businesses ranging from between £2,000 and £50,000.

## Eligibility criteria:

*You can apply for the Bounce Back Loan if your business:*

- is based in the UK
- has been negatively affected by coronavirus
- was not an 'undertaking in difficulty' on 31 December 2019

*The following businesses are not eligible to apply:*

- banks, insurers and reinsurers (*but not insurance brokers*)
- public-sector bodies
- state-funded primary and secondary schools

## Additional information:

The Bounce Back Loan scheme will help small and medium-sized businesses to borrow between £2,000 and £50,000.

The government will guarantee 100% of the loan and there won't be any fees or interest to pay for the first 12 months.

Loan terms will be up to 6 years. No repayments will be due during the first 12 months.

## If you're already claiming funding:

You cannot apply if you're already claiming under the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS). If you've already received a loan of up to £50,000 under CBILS and would like to transfer it into the Bounce Back Loan scheme, you can arrange this with your lender until 4 November 2020.

## How to apply:

The Bounce Back Loan scheme will launch on 4 May 2020

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# Artists Emergency Programme

## | NI only

### Summary:

Award of up to £5,000 to support individual artists, creative practitioners and performers.

### Eligibility criteria:

The Arts Council welcomes expressions of interest from freelance individual artists and creative practitioners and performers of all disciplines, genres, skills and practice. Applicant artists, creative practitioners and performers can also choose to work with arts organisations on projects where the leaders and principal beneficiaries are individual artists, creative practitioners or performers.

In addition to practicing individual artists, creative practitioners and performers as freelancers, included in the call are those who work in the arts as curators, editors, directors, creative producers, originators, among other roles.

### Additional information:

*There are two primary objectives of the programme*

- to support proposals for the research, design and future presentation of specific showcases, performance(s) and/or other forms of public presentation aimed at groups and communities otherwise facing barriers to the arts on a range of platforms
- to engage the arts sector in employment by providing individual artists, creative practitioners and performers with financial support to create work and make a vital contribution to the well-being of communities

*This programme prioritises applications that:*

- engage with groups, participants and audiences otherwise without easy access to or participation in the arts
- benefit individual artists, creative practitioners and performers who are currently in difficulties due to work restrictions imposed by COVID-19 protocols
- propose new or newly-imagined projects as interventions of high artistic quality
- are planned to reach significant audiences through 'live', 'as live' or recorded digital performance, publication, broadcast, reading, recording, and/or other audience channels
- provide for an extended life and/or extended public reach and impact for the work or project that has been created

### Support organisation:

**Arts Council of Northern Ireland**

Email: [Artgrants@artscouncil-ni.org](mailto:Artgrants@artscouncil-ni.org)

# Sports Hardship Fund | NI-only

### Summary:

£2,000 small grant scheme for sports clubs and sporting organisations from the voluntary and community sector in Northern Ireland.

NOTE: Sport Northern Ireland has suspended new applications to the Sports Hardship Fund pending confirmation of additional funding.

### Eligibility criteria:

Any organisation delivering sport and physical recreation can apply if experiencing short term financial hardship.

*These organisations include:*

- National Governing Body of Sport (based in NI)
- constituted local sports clubs affiliated to a Governing Body of Sport recognised by Sport NI
- community and voluntary sector organisations that deliver or enable sport and/or physical recreation
- small charitable trusts that do not qualify for financial help elsewhere

### Additional information:

The fund has been developed to help sport and physical recreation organisations meet their obligations, particularly fixed costs, which are no longer supported with revenue as a result of coronavirus. This might cover expenditure on:

- rent/lease
- utility costs
- essential ground maintenance
- insurances

Each successful applicant will receive £2,000 for costs incurred from 1 April 2020.

### Support organisation:

**Sport NI**

Telephone: 07810 183023 or 07967 240549; Email: [Sportshardshipfund@sportni.net](mailto:Sportshardshipfund@sportni.net)

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## Future Fund | UK-wide

### Summary:

Government loans to UK-based companies ranging from £125,000 to £5 million, subject to at least equal match funding from private investors.

### Eligibility criteria:

*You will be eligible to apply for the Future Fund loan if:*

- your business is based in the UK
- your business can attract the equivalent match funding from third party private investors and institutions
- your business has previously raised at least £250,000 in equity investment from third-party investors in the last five years. Full eligibility criteria will be published when it is available.

### Additional information:

These convertible loans may be a suitable option for businesses that rely on equity investment and are unable to access the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme.

### How to apply:

The Future Fund will launch in May 2020. Further details about this scheme will be published when available.

### Support organisation:

**British Business Bank**

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## Business Rates Holiday | NI only

### Summary:

Three-month rates holiday for Northern Ireland non-domestic ratepayers (excluding public sector and utilities).

### Eligibility criteria:

All Northern Ireland business ratepayers excluding public sector and utilities.

### Additional information:

Rate bills for 2020-21 were due to be issued in April 2020. This means that no rates will be charged for April, May and June 2020. The next business rate bill will not be issued until June 2020. Ratepayers do not need to request to have their rate bill deferred until June 2020. This will happen automatically. This reduces the 2020-21 annual rate bill for business ratepayers by 25 per cent. This amount does not need to be paid back. When rate bills are issued in June 2020, ratepayers can still choose to pay their bill in monthly instalments between June 2020 and March 2021. Current monthly Direct Debit payment plans will be automatically updated to collect payments between June 2020 and March 2021.

### Support organisation:

**Land & Property Services (LPS)**

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## Statutory Sick Pay Rebate | UK-wide

### Summary:

The UK government is to bring forward legislation to allow small and medium-sized businesses to reclaim Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) paid for staff sickness absence due to coronavirus.

### Eligibility criteria:

*The scheme can be used by employers if they:*

- are claiming for an employee who's eligible for sick pay due to coronavirus
- had a PAYE payroll scheme that was created and started on or before 28 February 2020
- had fewer than 250 employees on 28 February 2020

*The scheme covers all types of employment contracts, including:*

- full-time employees
- part-time employees
- employees on agency contracts
- employees on flexible or zero-hour contracts

### Additional information:

This refund will cover up to 2 weeks' SSP per eligible employee who has been off work because of coronavirus.

You must apply for this support.

The UK government will work with employers over the coming months to set up the repayment mechanism for employers as soon as possible. Existing systems are not designed to facilitate employer refunds for SSP.

If you are self-employed and want to know if you are eligible for Universal Credit - visit

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/campaigns/universal-credit>



# Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS)

## | UK-wide

### Summary:

Self-employed individuals or members of partnerships can claim a taxable grant worth 80% of your trading profits up to a maximum of £2,500 per month for 3 months.

### Eligibility criteria:

*To be eligible for the scheme you must meet all the criteria below:*

- Be self-employed or a member of a partnership.
- Have lost trading/partnership trading profits due to COVID-19.
- File a tax return for 2018-19 as self-employed or a member of a trading partnership. Those who have not yet filed for 2018-19 must do so by 23 April 2020
- Have traded in 2019-20; be currently trading at the point of application (or would be except for COVID 19) and intend to continue to trade in the tax year 2020 to 2021
- Have trading profits of less than £50,000 and more than half of your total income comes from self-employment. This can be with reference to at least one of the following conditions:
  - Your trading profits and total income in 2018/19.
  - Your average trading profits and total income across up to the three years between 2016-17, 2017-18, and 2018-19.

### Additional information:

*You'll get a taxable grant which will be 80% of the average profits from the tax years (where applicable):*

- 2016 to 2017
- 2017 to 2018
- 2018 to 2019

To work out the average HMRC will add together the total trading profit for the 3 tax years (where applicable) then divide by 3 (where applicable), and use this to calculate a monthly amount. It will be up to a maximum of £2,500 per month for 3 months. The grant will be paid directly into your bank account, in one instalment.

### How to apply:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-a-grant-through-the-self-employment-income-support-scheme>

HMRC will contact you if you are eligible for the scheme and invite you to apply online. HMRC will then pay the grant directly to eligible claimants' bank account. Grants are expected to start to be paid out by the beginning of June 2020.

### Support organisation:

**HMRC**

# Support for Businesses Paying Tax | UK-wide

### Summary:

All businesses and self-employed people in financial distress, and with outstanding tax liabilities, may be eligible to receive support with their tax affairs through HMRC's Time To Pay service.

### Eligibility criteria:

You will be eligible if:

1. Your business pays tax to the UK Government
2. Your business has outstanding tax liabilities

### Additional information:

These arrangements are agreed on a case-by-case basis and are tailored to individual circumstances and liabilities.

You can contact the HMRC Coronavirus Helpline for advice on 0800 024 1222.

### Support organisation:

**HMRC**

Contact: HMRC Coronavirus Helpline 0800 024 1222

# Deferral of Self- Assessment Payment | UK-wide

### Summary:

The Self- Assessment payment on account, that is ordinarily due to be paid to HMRC by 31 July 2020 may now be deferred until January 2021.

### Eligibility criteria:

If you are due to make a Self-Assessment payment on account on 31 July 2020 then you are eligible for the deferment.

The deferment is optional - anyone able to pay their second self-assessment payment on 31 July 2020, should still do so.

### Additional information:

This is an automatic offer with no applications required.

No penalties or interest for late payment will be charged if you defer payment of your July 2020 payment on account until January 2021.

HMRC has also scaled up their Time to Pay offer to all firms and individuals who are in temporary financial distress as a result of coronavirus and have outstanding tax liabilities.

### Support organisation:

**HMRC**

# Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme

## | UK-wide

### Summary:

The temporary Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme (CBILS) supports small and medium-sized businesses with access to loans, overdrafts, invoice finance and asset finance of up to £5 million and for up to six years.

### Eligibility criteria:

#### *Your business must:*

1. Be UK-based in its business activity
2. Have an annual turnover of no more than £45 million
3. Have a borrowing proposal which the lender:
  - would consider viable, were it not for the COVID-19 pandemic
  - believes will enable you to trade out of any short-term to medium-term difficulty

#### *Businesses from any sector can apply, except the following:*

- Banks and building societies
- Insurers and reinsurers (but not insurance brokers)
- Public-sector organisations, including state-funded primary and secondary schools

Facilities supported by the guarantee will be provided by participating commercial lenders. Businesses should check <https://www.british-business-bank.co.uk/ourpartners/coronavirus-business-interruption-loan-scheme-cbils-2/> to find out which lenders are able to provide the type of finance they are looking for. They should then approach a lender or lenders as they would normally. Individual lending decisions are at the discretion of these accredited lenders, and businesses will remain responsible for repaying any facility that they take out. Businesses with a turnover above £45m may be entitled to the Coronavirus Large Business Interruption Loan Scheme.

### Additional information:

You should apply via your lender's website or through one of the 40 accredited finance providers offering the scheme. The lender has the authority to decide whether to offer you finance. Personal guarantees are not required to secure lending below £250,000. For any borrowing above £250,000 personal guarantees will be capped at 20% of the outstanding value of the loan, as the Government is providing the guarantee for the remaining 80% of the finance. This will apply to all customers that have secured a loan under the scheme since its launch on 23 March. Given there is likely to be a big demand for facilities, businesses should consider applying via the lender's website in the first instance. Telephone lines are likely to be busy and branches may have limited capacity to handle enquiries due to social distancing.

**Support organisation:**  
**British Business Bank**

# Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme | UK-wide

### Summary:

Government will cover 80 per cent of business staff wages, up to £2,500 per employee per month.

### Eligibility criteria:

*All UK-wide employers with a PAYE scheme that was created and started on or before 19 March 2020 including:*

- Businesses
- Charities
- Recruitment Agencies (*agency workers paid through PAYE*)
- Public Authorities

The employer must have a UK bank account.

### Additional information:

#### *To access the scheme, you will need to:*

1. Designate affected employees as 'furloughed workers,' and notify your employees of this change – changing the status of employees remains subject to existing employment law and, depending on the employment contract, may be subject to negotiation.
2. Submit information to HMRC about the employees that have been furloughed and their earnings.

If your business needs short-term cash flow support, you may be eligible for the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme.

### Support organisation:

**HMRC**



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## VAT Deferral | UK-wide

### Summary:

The UK government will defer Valued Added Tax (VAT) payments due between 20 March 2020 and 30 June 2020. VAT refunds and reclaims will be paid by the government as normal.

### Eligibility criteria:

All VAT-registered UK businesses are eligible.

### Additional information:

This is an automatic offer with no applications required. UK Registered businesses will not need to make VAT payments normally due with VAT returns during this period. Taxpayers will be given until the end of the 2020-21 tax year to pay any liabilities that have accumulated during the deferral period. VAT refunds and reclaims will be paid by the government as normal. Customers who normally pay by direct debit should cancel their direct debit with their bank if they are unable to pay. It is advised that you do so in sufficient time so that HMRC does not attempt to automatically collect on receipt of your VAT return.

### Support organisation:

**HMRC**

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## Covid-19 Corporate Financing Facility | UK-wide

### Summary:

The new Covid-19 Corporate Financing Facility (CCFF) means that the Bank of England will buy short-term debt from larger companies.

### Eligibility criteria:

Larger companies - and their finance subsidiaries - that make a material contribution to the UK economy are able to participate in the facility. More information on eligibility can be found on the Bank of England website

<https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/news/2020/march/the-covid-corporate-financing-facility>

### Additional information:

This will support companies which are fundamentally strong but have been affected by a short-term funding squeeze. It will also support corporate finance markets overall and ease the supply of credit to all firms. The scheme will be funded by central bank reserves – in line with other Bank of England market operations.

It will operate for at least 12 months, and for as long as steps are needed to relieve cash flow pressures on firms that make a material contribution to the UK economy.

### Support organisation:

**Bank of England**

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## Support for Innovate UK award recipients

Continuity grants, loans and advisory support for existing Innovate UK award holders

Innovate UK has developed a range of options for supporting its existing customers with current projects through the impacts of the pandemic, including:

- timing extensions
- monthly grant payments
- continuity grants
- innovation continuity loans
- innovation and growth advisory support

### Continuity grants

Up to £90 million is available in continuity grants, paid up front, to SMEs and third sector organisations who are existing Innovate UK award holders and who are at risk of abandoning their project due to a sudden shortage or even unavailability of funds directly related to COVID-19.

These grants are for eligible organisations that expect to have a funding gap (between £25,000 and £250,000) in the remaining period of their project because they are facing loss or damages, such as reduced access to capital, cancelled orders or increases to costs, and are therefore seeing cashflow disrupted as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Continuity grants are available until 29 May 2020. Please see link for more information:

<https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/coronavirus-support-innovate-uk-award-recipients>

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## COVID-19 Childcare Support Scheme

Scheme is now open for applications from eligible childcare providers

The COVID-19 Childcare Support Scheme offering £12 million package of measures to support the childcare sector has opened to eligible childcare providers.

*Under the scheme, financial assistance will be provided to:* registered daycare settings, school age childcare settings and childminders that remain open for vulnerable children and those of key workers daycare and school age childcare settings which remain closed and are unable to reopen. The Department of Health has written to registered childcare providers and issued applications to those eligible to apply. Application forms for closed and open daycare and school aged childcare settings issued on Wednesday 6 May 2020. Applications for childminders and the Bespoke Approved Home Childcare Scheme issued on Thursday 7 May 2020.

Any provider entitled to apply to the scheme should have received an application form at this stage.

For more information please visit: <https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/content/coronavirus-covid-19-childcare-support-scheme>

## Events

- Tourism, hospitality & Events
- Financial Management For Non-Accountants
- Get Your Business Online

*Suitable for businesses in the Derry City Strabane Council area and employ less than 50 people*

For more information visit <https://www.derrystrabane.com/Business/Updates-And-Support/Updates-And-Support>

or Contact Jacqui at Full Circle

Email: [jacqui@fullcircle.eu.com](mailto:jacqui@fullcircle.eu.com)

Tel: 07885 443187

## Online training support

### Open University

If you're a furloughed worker, or have lost your job as a result of coronavirus (COVID-19) and want to develop your skills to help you look for work, free online training is available. The Department for the Economy has partnered with the Open University to offer a range of free training to help you improve your skills and wellbeing.

The Open University offers a wide range of online courses, ranging from digital skills, employability to key skills. To find out more please visit <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/online-training-support>

### North West Regional College

NWRC are pleased to be able to support companies throughout the pandemic by offering free skills programme online for small businesses. The Skills Focus programme, available for SMEs with fewer than 250 employees, is now offering free upskilling for staff, including those who are furloughed. These courses will be delivered with accredited qualifications.

Places are limited so companies need to register their interest now. For more information visit <http://bsc.nwrc.ac.uk/skills-focus/>, email [businesssupport@nwrc.ac.uk](mailto:businesssupport@nwrc.ac.uk) OR contact us on 07830361640.

### New webinars to boost support for SMEs during coronavirus

The webinars will offer practical advice to SMEs and focus on issues businesses trading internationally are facing. Topics covered will range from managing distribution of supply chains and the movement of goods, to support for selling online overseas.

To read more, go to: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-webinars-to-boost-support-for-smes-during-coronavirus>

## COVID-19 Response Webinar Series:

COVID-19 has led to unprecedented business disruption at short notice for many companies. To access HMRC response webinars visit <https://www.nibusinessinfo.co.uk/latest-events/>

- Directors' duties and your legal responsibilities - Online, Webinar, **14 May 2020**
- Managing Cashflow - Online, Webinar, 14 May 2020
- The Importance of Cloud - Online, Webinar, **14 May 2020**
- CMI L5 Award in Leadership and Management (Customer Management) - Online, Webinar, **14 May 2020**

## The Department for International Trade (DIT) COVID-19 Webinar Series

Are free to UK companies. Our experts usually present for 25 minutes and allow 35 minutes to answer your questions and help you find solutions to any barriers you may be facing. To access webinars visit <https://www.events.great.gov.uk/ehome/index.php?eventid=200205080&>

- Managing overseas agents and distributions during COVID-19, **Tuesday 12 May 2020, 14:30 - 15:30**
- Routes to market, **Thursday 14 May 2020, 10:00 - 11:00**
- Logistics and movement of goods during COVID-19, **Wednesday 20 May 2020, 10:00 - 11:00**
- Risk management when considering new markets, **Thursday 21 May 2020, 10:00 - 11:00**
- Managing disruption of supply chains during COVID-19, **Friday 22 May 2020, 14:30 - 15:30**