

## Timeline of border health measures: January 2020 – March 2022

### 2020

On **27 January 2020** passengers returning to the UK from Wuhan were asked to self-isolate for 14 days. This was extended to people returning from the Chinese province of Hubei, Iran, certain regions of South Korea, and some areas of Northern Italy on **25 February**.

### Spring 2020

On **12 March** guidance was published advising symptomatic individuals to stay at home. **17 March** the Foreign Secretary advised against all non-essential travel overseas. On **23 March** the Prime Minister told the UK public to 'Stay at Home' as the 1<sup>st</sup> national lockdown came into force on **26 March**.

On **10 May** the PM announced a phased domestic reopening of the UK, and self-isolation for passengers arriving in the UK : "to prevent re-infection from abroad, I am serving notice that it will soon be the time – with transmission significantly lower – to impose quarantine on people coming into this country". This was confirmed in 'Our plan to rebuild: The UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy' that was published on 11 May.

### Summer 2020

On **8 June** border health measures were introduced by the Home Office requiring all UK arrivals to self-isolate for 14 days and complete the Passenger Locator Form (PLF).

On **10 July** Travel Corridors were introduced for 59 countries and all British Overseas Territories (see Annex D for full list).

### Autumn/Winter 2020

The Global Travel Taskforce (GTT) was established in **on 7 October 2020** and the Health Secretary and the Transport Secretary presented the first GTT report to the Prime Minister on **24 November**. The main recommendations from the first report were:

- ① The introduction of 'Test to Release' (TTR), a regime for international arrivals that allowed people to leave self-isolation before early (before 10 days) was implemented on **15 December** and included the establishment of a targeted market for TTR travel tests. The idea of using travel tests to reduce self-isolation requirements was first identified in **summer 2020** and Cabinet Office tasked DfT, DHSC and the Home Office with designing and implementing the TTR framework to accelerate the reopening of international travel as part of the GTT.
- ① A commitment to explore other measures to get the UK's international travel and tourism sectors moving again safely, delivered through a Tourism Recovery Plan published by DCMS on **11 June 2021**.

Between **5 November-2 December**, the UK was in its 2<sup>nd</sup> national lockdown. During this time the first cases of the Alpha variant were recorded in the UK.

On **6 November** the travel corridor with Denmark was suspended, requiring arrivals to self-isolate for 14 days, in response to reported outbreaks of COVID-19 in mink farms. Between **7-28 November** a travel ban was implemented meaning only British nationals and residents were permitted to travel to the UK with all members of their household required to isolate, and no other exemptions provided.

On **14 December** the number of days international arrivals are required to self-isolate was shortened from 14 to 10 days following advice from the four UK chief medical officers (CMOs).

On **24 December** a travel ban was implemented for South Africa in response to a rapid rise of cases of the Beta variant. Except for Managed Quarantine, the measures introduced for Denmark and South Africa form suite of options for red listing going forward.

### 2021

Between **6 January-8 March 2021**, the UK was in its 3<sup>rd</sup> national lockdown.

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On **9 January** the travel ban implemented against arrivals from South Africa in response to the Beta variant, was expanded to 11 countries predominantly based in southern Africa.

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On **15 January** a travel ban was introduced for 16 countries, that were pre-dominantly based in South and Central America in response to a rapid rise in cases of the Gamma variant.

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On **18 January** all Travel Corridors were suspended, and pre-departure testing (PDT) and a 10-day self-isolation period was introduced for all arrivals to protect the progress being made on the vaccination programme and to prevent the spread of new variants of concern into the UK.

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On **27 January**, the PM announced that the Government would introduce the Managed Quarantine Service (MQS) for red list arrivals, that was implemented on **15 February** by making use of expertise sharing with New Zealand and Australia in the design process who had introduced similar systems from March 2020. As part of the introduction of the MQS, only British or Irish nationals or those with UK residency rights could enter the UK. Post arrival Day 2 and 8 PCR testing was also introduced for red list arrivals

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On **1 February** carriers became legally responsible for checking that all passengers had a completed Passenger Locator Form (PLF).

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#### Spring 2021

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On **29 March** the UK public was told to 'Stay in the UK' rather than 'Stay at Home'. The 'Stay in the UK' concept was led by Cabinet Office to support the Government's roadmap out of lockdown. This was accompanied by a Travel Declaration Form, which was announced by the Home Secretary and required passengers to be in possession of a completed form specifying the essential reason they were leaving the country.

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The second GTT was established in February 2021, and on **9 April** the second GTT report was presented to the Prime Minister by the Transport Secretary on the safe return of international travel, including recommendations to:

- ① Introduce a risk-based framework for international travel, including the requirement for all arrivals to undertake a day 2 and 8 test and a significant expansion of the market for international travel tests.
  - ① Introduce a passenger COVID-19 charter setting out consumer rights and responsibilities whilst travel measures were in place, which was delivered on **17 May**.
  - ① The restart of international cruises from **2 August**.
  - ① 3 GTT checkpoints to review measures no later than **28 June, 31 July and 1 October**.
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A travel ban was implemented for India by the UK on **23 April** in response to a rapid rise of cases of the Delta variant.

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On **5 May**, the Transport Secretary convened Transport Ministers from each of the G7 nations and the European Commission for a first discussion on ways to support the safe reopening of international travel.

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On **14 May**, automated PLF checks were replaced manual checks and all passengers claiming exemptions were checked by Border Force officers.

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On **17 May** the Traffic Light System was introduced by the Transport Secretary and the do not travel message was removed. However, people were still advised not to travel to countries on the red and amber list based on the prevalence of COVID-19. On this date the International Travel Regulations, Public Health Information for International Passengers Regulations and Pre-Departure Testing and Operator Liability Regulations were consolidated, and responsibility for making regulations was transferred from DFT to DHSC

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Traffic Light System: 17 May 2021 - 19 July 2021			
Measures	Green	Amber	Red
Passenger Locator Form	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pre-departure Test	Yes	Yes	Yes
Managed Quarantine Hotel	No	No	Yes
Home self-isolation	No	Yes	N/A
Day 2 PCR test	Yes	Yes	Yes
Day 8 PCR test	No	Yes	Yes

#### Summer 2021

On **8 June** bans on direct flights from red list countries were lifted and dedicated 'Red-List terminals' were opened at Heathrow Airport and Birmingham Airport for direct UK arrivals from red list countries.

The UK hosted the G7 summit in Cornwall between **11-13 June**. G7 Leaders' acknowledged the role of deepened cooperation between G7 Transport and Health Ministries, resulting in:

- ① Prime Minister Johnson and President Biden announcing the formation of the UK-US Experts Working Group on a safe return to international travel.
- ① G7 officials continued to discuss international travel issues throughout the summer/autumn culminating in the G7 Ministerial **on 30 September**, chaired by the Transport Secretary, where Transport and Health Ministers agreed high-level principles to guide the implementation of travel measures, commitments to share information and lessons learned, and to work together in other multilateral fora to drive broader political momentum on these issues.

On **24 June** the Transport Secretary announced as part of the **1<sup>st</sup> GTT checkpoint review** that a green 'watchlist' would be introduced. Plans to introduce quarantine-free travel for fully vaccinated passengers arriving from amber list countries were also announced alongside the removal of guidance to not travel to amber countries from 19 July.

From **19 July**, passengers fully vaccinated in the UK and British Overseas Territories arriving from amber list countries were no longer required to self-isolate or take a Day 8 test and guidance not to travel to amber list countries removed.

Traffic Light System: 19 July 2021 - 4 October 2021				
Measures	Green	Amber – Qualified as fully vaccinated	Amber – Not qualified as fully vaccinated	Red
Passenger Locator Form	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pre-departure Test	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Managed Quarantine Hotel	No	No	No	Yes
Home self-isolation	No	No	Yes	N/A
Day 2 PCR test	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Day 8 PCR test	No	No	Yes	Yes

On **28 July** as part of the **2<sup>nd</sup> GTT checkpoint review**, the Transport Secretary announced that from **2 August** passengers vaccinated in EU member states, European Free Trade Association countries, European microstate countries and the USA arriving from amber list countries would be exempt from self-isolation and international cruises would restart. Following the persistent presence of cases in France of the Beta variant, France was excluded from this list. Enhanced measures requiring passengers arriving in the UK from

France, regardless of their vaccination status, to self-isolate for 10 days and take a Day 2 and 8 test, were applied between **19 July-8 August**.

On **5 August** sectoral exemption checks were transferred from Border Force to carriers.

On **6 August** the Health Secretary requested a rapid review of the market for PCR travel tests by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA). Action was taken by the CMA on **25 August** and **3 September** against providers in the market and they published a report on **10 September** including recommendations to improve the market.

#### Autumn 2021

On **20 September**, the Transport Secretary announced the outcome of the **3<sup>rd</sup> GTT checkpoint review**, including:

- ① A move to a new international travel framework of a single red list and simplified travel measures for those arriving from the “Rest of the World” based on their vaccination status that was implemented on **4 October**.
- ① The removal of PDT for fully vaccinated non-red list arrivals on **4 October** and a move that would allow such passengers to use Lateral Flow Device (LFD) tests for post-arrival Day 2 tests that was implemented on **24 October**.
- ① A change that would exempt passengers who have transited airside through a red-list country as part of their journey to the UK from MQS hotels and Day 8 tests, that was implemented on **29 October**.
- ① All remaining countries were removed from the red list on **1 November**.

From **4 October** a new simplified international travel framework was introduced based on vaccination status.

Simplified international travel framework: 4 October 2021 – 30 November 2021			
Measures	Rest of World – Qualified as fully vaccinated	Rest of World – Not qualified as fully vaccinated	Red
Passenger Locator Form	Yes	Yes	Yes
Pre-departure Test	No	Yes	Yes
Managed Quarantine Hotel	No	No	Yes
Home self-isolation	No	Yes	N/A
Day 2 PCR test	Yes – LFD test from 24 October<	Yes	Yes
Day 8 PCR test	No	Yes	Yes

Between **31 October** and **12 November** COP26 was held in Glasgow.

#### Winter 2021

From **22 November** all under 18s arriving in England were treated as fully vaccinated at the border and dedicated red list terminal contracts with Heathrow and Birmingham were terminated.

On **26 November**, six African countries<sup>1</sup> were added to the red list due to the risk posed by the Omicron variant. Four further countries<sup>2</sup> were added to the red list on **27 November**. From **30 November** all arrivals were required to take a PCR test on or before Day 2 and self-isolate until they received a negative result.

On **6 December** Nigeria was added to the red list. From **7 December** people travelling to the UK had to have a negative PCR or LFD pre-departure test, taken no more than 2 days before departure.

<sup>1</sup> South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Eswatini, Zimbabwe and Namibia

<sup>2</sup> Angola, Mozambique, Malawi and Zambia

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On **15 December** all countries were removed from the red list and those passengers in Managed Quarantine who tested negative allowed to leave early and follows the rules as if they had arrived from a non-red list country. On **22 December** the self-isolation period for passengers was reduced from 10 days to 7 days following a negative LFD test result.

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#### 2022

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From **7 January 2022** following a review of Omicron measures, fully vaccinated passengers and those under 18 were no longer required to take a pre-departure test before travelling to England or required to self-isolate on arrival and from **9 January** LFDs could be used instead of PCR tests for fully vaccinated travellers on or before Day 2. On **17 January** the self-isolation period was reduced to 5 days following two negative LFD test results.

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On **24 January**, as part of a January review of border health measures, the Transport Secretary announced:

- ① That all testing requirements would be removed for fully vaccinated arrivals on **11 February**.
- ① That arrivals who did not qualify as fully vaccinated would no longer be required to do Day 8 tests or self-isolate from **11 February**.
- ① That the PLF would be simplified, and passengers would be given an extra day to complete it from **28 February**.

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#### Spring 2022

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On **18 March** all remaining COVID-19 border health measures were lifted and international travel regulations revoked, in line with the Prime Minister's Living with COVID strategy that was published on 21 February.

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