This publication revises the estimates for Marriage Allowance only. Details of this revision are set out in the ‘Commentary on changes in the published figures’ section on page 6 and in footnote 0 of the ‘Estimated cost of principal tax reliefs’ table.
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Executive Summary

We publish statistics on tax reliefs every year, including cost estimates for tax reliefs where this is available and a list of those where costs are not available. This publication has been extended: see the ‘What’s New’ section below.

Introduction and Interpretation

This bulletin provides background on our publications on tax reliefs. These tables fall outside the scope of National Statistics owing to a certain amount of forecasting in the estimates, and insufficient data.

It is important to note that each relief is costed separately, and in some cases the combined cost of a number of reliefs will differ significantly from the sum of the figure for individuals. The figures do not allow for behavioural changes which could result from changes to the generosity of the reliefs. In practice, if a relief was withdrawn, taxpayer’s behaviour would often alter so the actual yield from withdrawing a relief could be very different from, and often much smaller than the estimate shown.

These figures should be regarded as broad estimates as the loss of revenue from a tax relief cannot be directly observed and so the estimates are often based on simplified assumptions. All costs, except where specifically referred to in the footnotes, are on an accruals basis, i.e. they represent the effects on the tax liabilities for each year, not receipts in each year. Some are on a national accounts basis which represent time-shifted cash.

The note also provides links to non-statistical information on impacts of tax reliefs published elsewhere.

A user consultation was conducted earlier last year and the results from this survey are published here:


What’s New?

This publication has been further improved:

- Including estimates of the number of claimants. Where possible we have provided an estimate of the number of claimants in 2017-18 (this is the last full historic year). To avoid disclosure issues, these estimates in the minor reliefs table have been put into ranges.

- For the first time, our published bulletin will include explanations for the largest changes in the estimates.

- The estimates for Marriage Allowance have been revised and were re-published on 30th May 2019. This is in line with our published revisions policy of releasing revised statistics if additional information becomes available. The rest of the estimates are unchanged.

Future Development

We are currently reviewing the structure and scope of this publication. In future publications we intend to include a wider list of tax reliefs and associated costs. We also plan to review and improve the presentation of these statistics.
Methodology and Data Quality

Estimated costs of principal tax reliefs


For some of the main tax reliefs, this table provides estimates of the revenue costs (£50 million or above) for the six years 2013-14 to 2018-19. These estimates are based on information available at Autumn Budget 2018. The figures for 2018-19 are in all cases forecasts from previous years’ actual data. For many reliefs, estimates of the cost rely on information on tax returns that may not be available for 2017-18 (and in some cases 2016-17) at the time the estimates are produced. For these reliefs, the figures for 2017-18 (and in some cases 2016-17) are projections based on previous years’ actual data. Figures which are forecasts or projections based on previous years’ actual data are shown in italics. Figures for earlier years (not in italics) are based on actual outturn data for those years. The continuing inclusion of six years of data in subsequent annual updates of this publication will ensure that estimates based on actual data are reported for all years in due course, as forecasts or projections are replaced by those estimates.

Where figures are given in this release based on actual data for the first time, replacing previous forecasts or projections for the same year, notes are given explaining reasons for material revisions in estimates based on actual data compared to earlier forecasts or projections.

The inclusion of data in the report going back to 2013-14 means that for the majority of reliefs there will be at least four (consecutive) years of estimates based on actual data. This enables comparisons to be made of changes in estimated actual costs of reliefs over time. Where estimates based on actual data change materially from one year to the next, notes are provided explaining the main reasons for the changes.

In addition, where forecasts or projections show material changes from previous years, notes are given on the reasons for this.

The tax rates and allowances used in the estimates include the impact of decisions in the 2018 Autumn Budget.

The effect of some tax reliefs is to help or encourage particular types of individuals, activities or products for economic or social objectives. These reliefs are sometimes termed ‘tax expenditures’, and the table follows this terminology. Many other reliefs can reasonably be regarded (or partly regarded) as an integral part of the tax structure, and these are classified under the heading ‘structural reliefs’. These reliefs have various purposes: for example a number of the larger allowances operate as thresholds to make the tax system progressive, while others exist to avoid disproportionate compliance burdens, or simply to recognise the expense incurred in obtaining income.

The split between ‘structural reliefs’ and ‘tax expenditures’ is inevitably broad and the distinction is not always straightforward: many reliefs combine both structural and discretionary components. For example, capital allowances can provide relief for depreciation at a commercial rate as well as an element of accelerated relief. It is the latter element that provides benefit to business which is ‘tax expenditure’. The tables therefore classify reliefs into three categories as follows:

- Tax expenditures
- Structural reliefs
- Reliefs with tax expenditure and structural components

The reliefs are also categorised by the type of tax to which they apply, for example, Income Tax, Corporation Tax.

Estimated cost of minor tax reliefs

This table provides estimates of costs for the minor allowances and reliefs, defined as under £50 million per annum.

**Tax Reliefs: estimates of cost unavailable**


This table lists reliefs for which there is insufficient data available on which to base any reasonable estimate. In some cases, the costs of reliefs cannot be reliably estimated because there is insufficient available information and the cost of collecting the necessary data or the burden imposed on taxpayers would be disproportionate. This may be in the following circumstances:

- For many reliefs, HMRC does not require information on the use of the relief to be submitted on tax returns as this is not needed for establishing the liability to tax. This may be because the relief is an exemption rather than a deduction from income or profits. In such cases, HMRC uses suitable external information sources, if available, to estimate usage of the relief and thereby its cost. However, if no administrative or external data source exists, then in general HMRC avoids increasing taxpayers’ administrative burdens by requiring information to be submitted solely for statistical purposes unless the benefit of this would be expected to outweigh the cost.

- In some other cases, although information is collected on the value of the relief claimed, this information is not sufficient to enable the cost to be estimated because of inherent modelling uncertainties. For example, HMRC can quantify the value of Share Loss Relief claimed from tax returns, but cannot reliably estimate its cost, because (i) alternative reliefs could sometimes be used instead against the same income, and (ii) the losses could sometimes be offset against gains if no longer relievable against income. As HMRC does not know whether particular taxpayers would be able to use an alternative relief, it is not possible to determine their tax liability in the absence of Share Loss Relief.

The tax reliefs for which no estimate of cost is available are analysed by area of the tax system for reference. The table also provides a categorisation indicating the reason why the cost information is not available, the categories being as follows:

A. Information on the usage of this relief is not required in tax returns and cannot be reliably estimated from other data sources, and the cost of collection for statistical purposes is disproportionate.

B. Information on the usage of this relief is reported to HMRC, but the relevant data is not held in a centralised form, and the cost of gathering for statistical purposes is disproportionate.

C. Information on the usage of this relief is available, but the cost is not quantifiable as it is dependent on other unknown factors.

D. Introduction of the relief is too recent for any data to be available.

E. Exemption under the Freedom of Information Act, such as Data Protection.

F. Other (reason stated in each case).

**Quality Assurance**

We are committed to continuously improving the official statistics we publish. Our quality assurance processes were reviewed in September 2018 and we have in place checks to minimise the risk of error and the use of a quality assurance review process. These measures will enhance the level of assurance and provide a clear audit trail. A panel has been set up to review the methodology of reliefs on a rolling quarterly basis: this review process was implemented early in 2018, and the panel includes senior analysts.

Further to this, each section is scrutinised by analytical staff working on each of the areas. The publication is also peer reviewed by different team members and overseen by senior analysts including the team’s senior statistician.
Commentary on changes in the published figures

The following section includes commentary on any large changes in the figures since the previous publication. For our purposes large changes are defined as those greater than £500 million or 25 per cent. The table below shows changes in the principle table which is mainly due to:

- New outturn data received into the department from tax returns. For some taxes there can be a substantial delay in return data being received due to the nature of that particular regime.
- Improvements to methodology behind collecting information or forecasting the estimates.
- Including the latest OBR economic forecasts in HMRC forecast models.
- The estimated tax expenditure and number of claimants for the line on Marriage Allowance within the Income Tax "Reliefs with Tax Expenditure and Structural Components" have been revised following a review of the methodology. The original methodology was based on counting all the years for which applications were made. This included unsuccessful claims and previous years claimed when individuals made backdated claims. Individuals can make backdated claims for marriage allowance. The original estimates included multiple counts for those individuals making backdated claims for previous years as well as claims for that year.
- The new methodology uses individual taxpayer records to count the number of successful claimants for the year in question – those actually receiving Marriage Allowance. The new estimate of successful claimants does not include any estimate of backdated claims for that tax year. The estimated tax expenditure has been modelled using the revised time series of the estimated number of successful claimants and continues to reflect the anticipated full take up of the allowance when all backdated claims have been made, as the allowance can be claimed for up to four years prior to the year of original claim.
- Estimates of the number of Marriage Allowance claimants are for the latest tax year available and reflect only successful claimants up to that point in time and not the anticipated full take up when all backdated claims have been made in future tax years (up to 4 years later). Please note therefore that cost estimates cannot be divided by claimant numbers to estimate the average cost of this relief. The estimated number of claimants reflects a count of only the receivers of the Marriage Allowance rather than both individuals within each couple. The new estimates of number of claimants cannot be compared to any previously published versions of this estimate.

Revised time series of estimated number of claimants of Marriage Allowance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No of claimants</th>
<th>2015-16</th>
<th>2016-17</th>
<th>2017-18</th>
<th>2018-19*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marriage Allowance</td>
<td>750,000</td>
<td>1,300,000</td>
<td>1,570,000</td>
<td>1,780,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Provisional estimate until 2018-19 Self-Assessment returns are finalised.
### Tax Expenditures

#### Income tax
- Relief for:
  - Registered pension schemes
  - Share Incentive Plan
  - Save As You Earn
  - Enterprise Management Incentives
  - Approved Company Share Option Plans
  - Enterprise Investment Scheme
  - Wear and tear allowance
  - Dividends from Venture Capital Trusts

#### Corporation tax
- R&D tax credits
- R&D tax relief: SME scheme
- R&D tax relief: Large company & RDEC schemes

#### Theatre Tax Relief
- Patent Box
- Ring-fenced oil and gas trades: tax relief for decommissioning expenditure

#### Petroleum Revenue Tax
- Tax relief for decommissioning expenditure

#### National insurance contributions
- Relief for:
  - Share Incentive Plan
  - Save As You Earn
  - Abolition of employer National Insurance Contributions for apprentices under 25

#### Capital gains tax
- Exception of gains arising on disposal of only or main residence
- Relief on investments in Enterprise Investment Schemes

#### Inheritance tax
- Relief for estates left on death for agricultural property

#### Value added tax
- Reduced rate of VAT on energy saving materials

#### Structural Reliefs
- Income tax
- Value added tax

#### Refunds to:
- Local Authority-type bodies of VAT incurred on non-business purchases under the Section 33 refund scheme (includes academies, museums and galleries under the Section 33A refund scheme)
- Central Government, Health Authorities and NHS Trusts of VAT incurred on contracted-out services under the Section 41(3) refund scheme

#### Climate change levy
- Exception of electricity generated from certain renewable resources
- Exemptions for supplies used in metallurgical and mineralogical processes
- Exception for supplies to good quality CHP stations
- Reduced rate for participants in Climate Change agreements

#### Carbon price floor
- Exclusion for fuels used in CHP stations to produce non-electrical outputs

#### Reliefs with Tax Expenditure and Structural Components

#### Income tax
- Marriage Allowance

#### Corporation tax
- Ring-fence oil and gas trades: Investment Allowance used against Supplementary Charge
- Income tax and corporation tax
- Capital allowances
- Annual Investment Allowance
- Ring-fence oil and gas trade, first-year capital allowances for plant and machinery

#### National insurance contributions
- Reduced contributions for self-employed not attributable to reduced pensions eligibility

#### Inheritance tax
- Nil rate band for chargeable transfers not exceeding the threshold for estates left on death

#### Stamp Duty Land Tax
- Transfers to Registered Social Landlords
- First Time Buyers (as per 23/11/2017)

#### Value added tax
- Exemption of Finance and insurance

### Reason for changes

- New outturn data and improvements to the methodology
- New outturn data and OBR economic forecasts
- Relief abolished from April 2016
- Relief moved from the minor table. New outturn data and OBR economic forecasts
- New outturn data following new rules to intellectual property regimes

The table below shows those reliefs with changes of over 25 per cent in the minor table which is mainly due to new outturn data and including the latest OBR economic determinants.
In addition to the information on costs of reliefs in these tables, other statistical information on tax reliefs is included in other HMRC statistical publications. For ease of reference, the other information is summarised here with links to the relevant publications.

**Personal Tax Reliefs**


Income Tax deductions and reliefs: contributions to occupational pensions, contributions to personal pensions, all other interest, charges and deductions, see Table 3.8: [https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/deductions-and-reliefs-2010-to-2011](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/deductions-and-reliefs-2010-to-2011)
Employee share schemes (Company Share Option Plans, Save As You Earn share options schemes, Share Incentive Plans and Approved Profit Sharing Schemes (abolished), see commentary and Tables 6.1 to 6.8: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/employee-share-schemes-statistics

Individual Savings Accounts (ISA), amounts subscribed, market value of funds, number of individuals subscribing and with accounts, see commentary and Tables 9.1 to 9.12: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/individual-savings-accounts-isa-statistics

Personal Pensions: contribution and tax relief statistics, see Tables PEN1 to PEN6: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/personal-pensions-statistics


Personal Equity Plans (now abolished), see: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120609144643/http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/stats/peps/menu.htm


Corporate Venturing Scheme (CVS), numbers of companies, see: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/corporate-venturing-scheme-cvs-statistics

Child Trust Fund statistics, see: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/child-trust-fund-statistics

Qualitative research on employees’ non-reimbursed expenses tax relief https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/qualitative-research-on-employees-non-reimbursed-expenses-tax-relief

Business Tax Reliefs


Creative Industries: Film Tax Relief, High-end Television Tax Relief, Animation Tax Relief, Video Games Tax Relief, Children’s Television Tax Relief, Theatre Tax Relief, and Orchestra Tax Relief, see commentary and Tables 1.1 to 1.5, 2.1 to 2.5, 3.1 to 3.5, 4.1 to 4.5, 5.1 to 5.4, 6.1 to 6.3 and 7.1 to 7.2 https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/creative-industries-statistics-july-2018

Research and Development Tax Credits, see commentary and tables RD1-8: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/corporate-tax-research-and-development-tax-credit

Value Added Tax (VAT), Registration limits (historical), see Table R1: https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/value-added-tax-vat-annual-statistics
Non-statistical information on impacts of tax reliefs

The remainder of the information in this note is outside the scope of official statistics, and is set out here for ease of reference only. By providing links to a number of non-statistical publications relating to tax reliefs, this note brings together most of HMRC’s analytical information on existing tax reliefs. Information on estimated impacts of new tax reliefs or changes to existing tax reliefs may be found in the Tax Information and Impact Notes (TIINs) published with the policy announcements, for example at Budget.

**Tax Information and Impact Notes**


TIINs published prior to January 2016 is available on The National Archives website:

(June 2013 to December 2015)


(before June 2013)


**HMRC external research reports on tax reliefs**

HMRC publishes a series of external research and analysis reports on GOV.UK, which can be found here:

*https://www.gov.uk/government/publications?keywords=&publication_filter_option=research-and-analysis&topics%5B%5D=all&departments%5B%5D=hm-revenue-customs&official_document_status=all&world_locations%5B%5D=all&from_date=&to_date=

Within this series, reports relating to tax reliefs can be found here (in reverse order of publication date):

**Transferable tax allowance for married couples and civil partners** (21 July 2016)

**Feasibility study into evaluating the labour and childcare market impacts of Tax-Free Childcare and the Free Early Education Entitlement** (19 February 2016)

**The use and impact of Venture Capital Schemes** (2 February 2016)

**Net Pay Arrangements: Flat Rate Expenses and Mileage Allowance Relief** (9 September 2015)

**Cognitive testing of Tax-Free Childcare draft guidance and registration pages** (7 September 2015)

**Using and communicating Tax-Free Childcare** (7 September 2015)

**Awareness and impact of the Employment Allowance: research with small employers** (20 July 2015)
Capital Gains Tax: Entrepreneurs’ Relief and Business Asset Rollover Relief research (15 July 2015)

Charitable giving and Gift Aid behaviour amongst better-off individuals (15 July 2015)

Gift Aid: Understanding donor behaviour (17 November 2014)

Tax-Free Childcare: findings on parents' account provider preferences (29 July 2014)

Tax Free Childcare: design considerations for implementation of the new scheme (18 March 2014)

Seed Enterprise Investment Scheme: customer experience (4 December 2013)

Gift Aid: online services for charities and Community Amateur Sports Clubs (7 October 2013)

Employer National Insurance contributions holiday scheme: survey (18 July 2011)

Child Trust Fund study: wave 2 results (22 June 2011)

Tax credits: evaluation of research and development (7 December 2010)

Research and development: businesses’ decision making processes (12 November 2010)

Reports published before 2010 now in the UK Government Web Archive

Research Report 91 - Gift Aid donor research: Exploring options for reforming higher-rate relief. Gift Aid Donor Research Report (PDF 452K)

Research Report 59 - Evaluation of Tax-Advantaged All-Employee Share Schemes - Save As You Earn (SAYE) and Share Incentive Plan (SIP) Report 59 - Executive Summary (PDF 36K)
Report 59 - Main report (PDF 484K)
Report 59 - Technical report (PDF 1.8MB)

Research Report 57 - Pensions Taxation Reform: a baseline study of individuals Main report 57 (PDF 429K)

Research Report 56 - Pensions Taxation Reform: a baseline study of employers and the Financial Services Industry Main report 56 (PDF 650K)
Technical report to Report 56 (PDF 866K)

Evaluation of Enhanced Capital Allowance (ECA) for energy saving technologies Full report (PDF 769K)

Key barriers to the Adoption of Gift Aid Full report (PDF 448K)

Research Report 44 - Study of the impact of the Enterprise Investment Scheme (EIS) and Venture Capital Trusts (VCTs) on company performance Full report (PDF 771K)
Executive summary (PDF 170K)

Full Report (PDF 2.2MB)
Appendices (PDF 1.0MB)
Research Report 38 - Saving in ISAs
Saving in ISAs Final Report (PDF 1.7MB)
HMRC working Paper: Individuals' attitudes to ISAs: the effect of ISAs on Peoples' savings behaviour (PDF 215K)

Research Report 33: Tax-advantaged employee share schemes: analysis of productivity effect
Overview (PDF 176K)
Report 1: productivity measured using turnover (PDF 757K)
Report 2: productivity measured using gross value added (PDF 327K)
Appendices to Report 1 (PDF 613K)

Research report 29 - Charitable Donations by Wealthy People
Full report (including executive summary) (PDF 630K)

Full report, executive summary and appendices

Research report 19 - Feasibility Study for potential econometric assessment of the impact of R&D tax credit on R&D expenditure
A non technical summary (PDF 194K)
Literature review (PDF 270K)
Matching R&D credit data (PDF 239K)

Research report 18 - a baseline survey at the inception of the Child Trust Fund
Saving for children: a baseline survey at the inception of the Child Trust Fund (PDF 452K)
Saving for children: a baseline survey at the inception of the Child Trust Fund technical appendices (PDF 111K)
Saving for children: a baseline survey at the inception of the Child Trust Fund questionnaires (PDF 155K)

Research report 12: Research and Development Tax Credits survey
Research and Development Tax Credits final report (PDF 382K)
Research and Development Tax Credits executive summary (PDF 13K)

Research report 11: qualitative research into Enterprise Management Incentives
Full report (PDF 2.9M)

Research report 9: individuals' donations to charities and their use of tax relief
Main report (PDF 1.1M)

Research report 2: research into the Enterprise Investment Scheme and Venture Capital Trusts
Summary (PDF 23K)
Full report (PDF 650K)

HMRC working papers on tax reliefs

HMRC publishes a series of internally produced working papers which may be found here:
https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hm-revenue-and-customs-research-working-papers

Within this series, working papers relating to tax reliefs, including published reports of internally conducted evaluations, are as follows:
Evaluation of Research and Development Tax Credit
Evaluating the Impact of the Rural Fuel Duty Relief
18 October 2013

Evaluating the Impact of Stamp Duty Land Tax First Time Buyer’s Relief
28 November 2011

Other useful information

Our publications are available on the GOV.UK site where you can also find publications by other Government bodies.
https://www.gov.uk/

Or if you wish to view all of HMRC taxes areas go to the main menu:
https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-revenue-customs/about/statistics