

VAT Registration and VAT Registration Numbers

VAT registration

In general, an organisation must register for VAT if at the end of any month its taxable turnover exceeded a registration threshold (currently £85,000) during the previous twelve months or at any time is expected to exceed it during the next 30 days, although there is an exception to this rule if the organisation can show HMRC that the registration threshold is exceeded temporarily. The registration must be completed within time limits. HMRC may charge a penalty if an organisation registers late.

In general, taxable turnover includes:

- standard rated, reduced rate and zero-rated supplies, but not exempt supplies;
- services received from suppliers in other countries that are subject to reverse charge VAT and
- services subject to the domestic reverse charge (subject to a de minimis threshold).

An organisation may also register for VAT voluntarily. Registration enables the organisation to reclaim VAT incurred on its purchases.

An organisation may cancel its VAT registration by application to HMRC if its taxable turnover falls below a deregistration limit.

Once an organisation is registered for VAT it will be issued with a VAT registration certificate which shows its VAT number, effective date of registration and other details.

VAT registration numbers

The VAT registration number must be recorded on VAT invoices. The organisation must issue a VAT invoice whenever it supplies standard rate or reduced rate goods or services to another VAT-registered person.

Generally, an organisation can only reclaim VAT on its purchases where it possesses a valid VAT invoice in support of the purchase, although there are some exceptions to this rule.

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It is possible to check whether a UK VAT registration number is valid using an online service provided by HMRC <https://www.gov.uk/check-uk-vat-number>. It is good practice to check the VAT registration number for a UK supplier especially when a large amount of VAT will be reclaimed.

Where taxable services are supplied to customers based in the EU, it is important to obtain their VAT registration number because whether or not an EU customer is registered for VAT will help to determine whether VAT should be charged on the invoice.

The list below shows the UK entities in the University's group structure that are registered for VAT, and their VAT registration numbers, with the prefix GB.

University of Reading	GB 200 0126 59
Henley Business School Limited	GB 996 8987 06
Thames Valley Science Park Limited	GB 209 5970 84
Reading Real Estate Foundation	GB 861 4155 33

Contact for further information

The rules relating to VAT registration are complex. If you would like more information, please contact vat@reading.ac.uk.