Joint CIOT/ICAEW HMRC service level project

General Features



24 October 2024

CIOT reports on its joint project with the ICAEW to address HMRC’s service levels.

HMRC customer service levels have been a longstanding and continued concern for our members. Our previous work in this area has confirmed that poor HMRC service levels have a detrimental impact on taxpayers, agents, HMRC employees, the health of the tax system and the wider economy (see tinyurl.com/9bvnyafk).

Earlier this year, CIOT and ICAEW joined forces with a view to producing an evidence-based report with findings and recommendations on HMRC customer service performance.

The project involved gathering current evidence on HMRC customer service performance in a structured way. We commenced a six week data gathering period on 9 September, with over 30 firms volunteering to record their contact with HMRC via webchat/digital assistants and phone lines. Thanks to the valued participation of

these firms, we have built valuable evidence on HMRC customer service levels covering several key service lines. The data gathering period ended on Friday 18 October and we have already identified some key themes from the data collected.

We have also organised two workshops to gather additional qualitative data from participants. During these workshops, we will discuss gaps in current digital services and seek participants' views on key areas of improvement that would significantly improve their interactions with HMRC. We are now working hard to analyse the data in more detail and produce a report which makes evidence-based recommendations on key areas that would help to improve HMRC service levels and digital services.

Recognising that our data gathering only captures agent engagement with HMRC, we have also invited our Low Incomes Tax Reform Group to contribute to the report, bringing the voice of the unrepresented. We have also invited business groups to contribute the commercial voice.

We plan to launch our report on Wednesday 11 December, where we will present our findings to key stakeholders, including HMRC and the UK government. Look out for more information on this nearer the time.

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