



Unfortunately, scam warnings have become a regular occurrence. The latest scam highlighted by HMRC is rather ‘old school’, involving letters posted to companies instead of the more usual digital communication.

The scam letters being sent out are quite convincing. They come with a genuine-looking HMRC letterhead, and purport to come from the ‘Indv and Small Business Compliance’ team.

### **Targeted companies**

The scam focuses on the claim that a targeted company is required to verify their income in order to identify any business not declaring their full income. They then request:

- business bank statements for the past 13 months;
- the latest set of filed accounts, including information which – for smaller companies – would not be available from Companies House;
- VAT returns for the last four quarters; and
- for each director, a copy of their passport or driving licence.

Scammers can easily use copies of a director’s passport or driving licence to steal their identity for fraudulent purposes, possibly even accessing the company’s bank account.

The scam letter uses intimidation tactics, threatening an investigation and a potential freeze on business activity if a response is not received.

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## Spotting the scam

These scam letters use correct technical legislation and avoid obvious spelling and most linguistic mistakes that are usually clear giveaways. Two things to bear in mind when looking out for such frauds:

- HMRC does usually request information from companies by letter or via a business tax account, rather than by email. However, HMRC email addresses end [@hmrc.gov.uk](mailto:@hmrc.gov.uk), while the email address used in these fraudulent letters is: [companies-review@hmrc-taxchecks.org](mailto:companies-review@hmrc-taxchecks.org)
- A legitimate HMRC letter will include the company's unique tax reference (UTR).

HMRC has published a list of their recent letters to help you confirm if a letter is genuine. The list can be found [here](#).

## We can help

For further information on this, please call us on **01753 888 211** or email [info@nhllp.com](mailto:info@nhllp.com). We would be happy to help.