UK e-invoicing: what the 2029 mandate means for your finance team

On 28 October 2026, HMRC and the Department for Business and Trade published the roadmap for e-invoicing alongside Budget 2026. The direction is now settled: one start date, one network, and every VAT-registered business in scope. This guide sets out what has been confirmed, where teams typically get caught out, and how to get ready.

WHAT HAS BEEN CONFIRMED

1 April 2029

One start date. VAT invoices between VAT-registered businesses must be issued and received as e-invoices.

Everyone VAT-registered

Including sole traders, charities and VAT-registered public bodies. No phasing by size.

Built on Peppol

A four-corner model with accredited access points. HMRC becomes the UK Peppol Authority.

PDFs will not count

A PDF, scan or Word file is not an e-invoice. Invoices must be structured data a system can read.

THE ROAD TO 2029

28 Oct 2026

Roadmap published

Dates, scope and Peppol confirmed alongside Budget 2026.

Spring 2027

Legislation

Primary legislation through Finance Bill 2026 expected to become law.

Autumn 2027

EDI and legacy guidance

Guidance expected on how EDI and older systems fit in.

By April 2028

Final requirements

Detailed technical rules due about a year before go-live.

1 April 2029

Mandate applies

Structured e-invoices over Peppol become mandatory.

WHERE TEAMS GET CAUGHT OUT

The mandate is the easy part. The edge cases are not.

01

Rejected over trivial fields

A field too short for a high-value amount, an unexpected character or a missing mandatory tag, and the invoice bounces.

02

Credit notes and custom fields

Corrections, rounding differences and custom fields break when they meet a rigid format.

03

Legacy and multiple ERPs

Older or mixed ERP setups often cannot produce, or read, the format the other side expects.

04

Large files that quietly fail

Invoices with embedded PDFs and attachments can fail in the recipient's system without anyone noticing.

05

Access point downtime

Documents have to keep flowing when a connection goes offline, without being lost or duplicated.

06

Suppliers still on PDF

Not every supplier will be ready on day one, so PDF invoices still need to reach your ERP as clean data.

Based on the HMRC and Department for Business and Trade e-invoicing roadmap published on 28 October 2026. Final technical requirements are still to be published, so details may change.

HOW ECIT DIGITAL HELPS

We run e-invoicing for you, so your finance team does not have to

Instead of rebuilding exports in every ERP and chasing rejected invoices, you hand the whole flow to one service that connects to the systems you already have.

One service, every ERP

We connect to the ERP you have today, or several at once, including legacy systems. No ERP replacement needed.

Every invoice, every format

Invoices, credit notes and corrections in any format or language, incoming and outgoing.

Validated, with a human safety net

Every e-invoice is checked before it leaves, and exceptions are handled by our team rather than yours.

Connected over Peppol

Send and receive through our certified Peppol Access Point, and go live well before April 2029.

GET UK-READY

Your readiness checklist

- [ ] **Map your invoice flows.** Incoming and outgoing, per legal entity, with rough monthly volumes.
- [ ] **List your ERPs.** Every system that issues or receives invoices, including older ones.
- [ ] **Check your data.** VAT numbers, addresses and mandatory fields on customer and supplier records.
- [ ] **Find your Peppol-ready partners.** Identify key customers and suppliers already sending or receiving over Peppol.
- [ ] **Plan for the edge cases.** Credit notes, corrections, attachments and suppliers still sending PDFs.
- [ ] **Decide build or managed.** Weigh building per-ERP integrations against a managed e-invoicing service.
- [ ] **Set an early go-live.** Aim well before April 2029 and test with your largest trading partners first.

Book a UK readiness call

Talk to our UK team about your ERPs, invoice volumes and trading partners, and get a clear plan for the 2029 mandate.

Book a readiness call

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ecitdigital.com/lp/uk-e-invoicing

Supported across the UK and Ireland

ECIT Digital partners with Agile Document Solutions to deliver Digital Mailroom and e-invoicing readiness across the UK and Ireland.

This guide is general information, not legal or tax advice. It reflects the HMRC roadmap of 28 October 2026; check the latest HMRC guidance before making decisions.