

# British Dance Council

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Member of: The World Dance Council - The Sport and Recreation Alliance

Rt Hon Rishi Sunak  
Chancellor of the Exchequer  
House of Commons  
London  
SW1A 0AA

17<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Rt Hon Rishi Sunak,  
Chancellor of the Exchequer,

Dear Sir,

## British Dance Council – Freelance Self Employed Members

I am writing to voice on behalf of our member's great concern to the government for our freelance self-employed members, who are in a particularly vulnerable situation during the coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19). The British Dance Council is the governing body for many dance teachers throughout the United Kingdom and following the Prime Ministers statement which included "avoiding close social contact" earlier this week now face serious financial concerns.

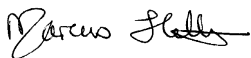
The recent budget included some measures aiming to make it quicker and easier for self-employed workers to access benefits including Contributory Employment and Support Allowance and Universal Credit. However, I am deeply concerned that the government's action to protect freelancers did not go far enough and is not comparable to the scale of assistance being offered to employees or to businesses. This puts freelance workers in a particularly vulnerable situation during this pandemic. Many work in ways that mean that even small disruptions to their working patterns can cause real financial hardship. In addition they may have just faced a tax bill that will have reduced their ability to manage a period without work.

The way our members have been asked to rely on the welfare system, either through Universal Credit or Employment and Support Allowance, is simply inadequate. I urge the government to put in place a more resilient safety net for freelance workers, suggesting this could be in the form of a dedicated fund, loans or mortgage or rent holidays.

A self-employed member of the workforce is often lauded as a success story of the UK economy. This crisis is exposing the perils of having so much of the workforce without the protections offered by permanent employment. Of course this will have to be reflected upon and addressed, but for now it is essential something is done to avoid placing millions in real hardship.

I await your reply.

Yours sincerely,



MARCUS HILTON MBE  
President and Chairman



NICHOLAS MILES  
Vice President and Vice Chairman

