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E-invoicing 2029: what UK finance teams need to do now

From April 2029, every VAT invoice in the UK will have to be an e-invoice.[1] That includes the ones you send and the ones you receive.

The government has now published its roadmap. Two and a half years sounds like plenty of time. But the decisions that shape your project, such as which systems you use, how clean your supplier data is and how invoices get approved, are ones you can make now.

A PDF isn't an e-invoice

This is the part that catches people out. If you email PDF invoices, you're not e-invoicing yet. Under the government's definition, an e-invoice is invoice data exchanged directly between the buyer's and supplier's financial systems.[2]

These don't count:

- ✕ PDFs and Word documents
- ✕ Scanned images and photos
- ✕ Invoices in the body of an email or on a web page
- ✕ Paper and fax

What's decided, and what isn't

Decided	Detail
Start date	1 April 2029[1]
Scope	All VAT invoices, which covers most business-to-business and business-to-government sales[2]
Smaller businesses	Businesses that aren't VAT-registered won't have to adopt it[2]
Model	Decentralised, on the Peppol network: invoices travel between businesses' own systems[2 3]
Implementation roadmap	Published at Budget 2026, on 28 October 2026[1]
Digital reporting	Not part of the 2029 mandate. No decision has been taken. A consultation on whether e-invoice data could be reported to HMRC closes on 20 January 2027[1 4]

Not decided yet	When to expect it
UK data standard	Technical consultation due spring 2027, building on Peppol[1]
Software provider requirements	Due spring 2028[1]
Final guidance, obligations and exemptions	By April 2028, a year before the mandate starts[1]

Seven things to do now

NOW — APRIL 2029

1. **Know your invoice mix.**
   How many VAT invoices do you send and receive each month, and in what formats? Which suppliers still post paper?

2. **Ask your ERP or accounting provider about their plans.**
   Find out when they'll support e-invoicing over Peppol and what it will cost.

3. **Clean your supplier and customer data.**
   VAT numbers, legal names, addresses and bank details. E-invoicing relies on the data matching on both sides.

4. **Get your process digital now.**
   If invoices still arrive by email and get keyed in by hand, fix that first. Suppliers who aren't VAT-registered will keep sending PDFs after 2029 anyway.

5. **Fix approvals and matching.**
   E-invoices arrive faster. If approval still runs on "OK to pay?" emails, the bottleneck just moves.

6. **Name an owner.**
   Someone in finance who tracks the roadmap and talks to IT and your providers.

7. NEXT MILESTONE · SPRING 2027 · UK STANDARDS CONSULTATION

   Track the roadmap dates.
   The roadmap is out. Watch for the technical consultation on UK standards in spring 2027, and final rules and guidance by April 2028.

E-invoicing changes how invoices arrive

It doesn't approve them, match them to an order or code them to the right budget. That's still your process, and it's where most of the time goes.

How Webexpenses Accounts Payable helps

Invoices read as they arrive. PDFs, spreadsheets, Word documents and images, captured to line level.

Matched to order and receipt. Two- and three-way matching against purchase orders, itemised or blanket.

Approval routes you set. Delegation of authority built into the workflow, not left to email.

Written back to your ERP. Your ERP stays the system of record.

Want to see it on your own process?

Book a discovery call and we'll talk through how your team works today. Then we'll tailor a demo to what matters to you.

webexpenses.com/finops-platform/try-us/

This guide is for general information and isn't tax advice. For the latest position, see GOV.UK.

Sources

1. HM Treasury and HMRC, Roadmap for E-Invoicing Implementation, published 28 October 2026. GOV.UK.

2. HM Treasury and HMRC, Promoting electronic invoicing across UK businesses and the public sector: consultation response, published 26 November 2025. GOV.UK.

3. HM Treasury and HMRC, Tax Update 2026: simplification, modernisation and fairness, published 23 June 2026. GOV.UK.

4. HM Treasury and HMRC, consultation on digital reporting alongside e-invoicing, launched 28 October 2026 and closing 20 January 2027. GOV.UK.