

## Why shouldn't everyone have tax relief for the cost of ...

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There's a lot of fuss about [MP's trying to claim the cost of preparing their tax returns this morning](#). HMRC are resisting, now Parliament says they are right to claim. I happen to [think they're right to do so](#). MPs have little choice but incur this cost. Why shouldn't they have tax relief for it if it is imposed on them to be tax compliant?

But let's go a step further. Over the last few years HMRC have made life very difficult for anyone not trained in tax to get their tax return right. They've been shutting local tax offices as fast as they can. Only 50% of calls to their call centres have been replied to. Even fewer give rise to accurate responses because far too little training is given to the people who work there though no fault of their own. And let's be honest, doing a tax return is not always straightforward.

So why, since HMRC and the government have abandoned their responsibility for helping people get their tax right, shouldn't there be a flat rate deduction for those seeking to get their tax return right?

The self employed have this relief by concession now.

MPs did have it.

My argument is that a flat deduction if the return is prepared by a registered and regulated tax agent who submits it electronically of say £250 plus VAT would be fair for anyone. And because tax returns would be better prepared (you would hope) then HMRC would get a benefit too.

How about it?

Either that, or reopen tax offices who will really help people get the return right, face to face: that's the choice, I think.