

UK immigration law

Tier 2: General work permit (skilled workers)

Notice: On 6 April 2011 new immigration legislation came into effect making further changes to this category. To read these changes please go to [Immigration news and updates](#).

This category is designed for skilled workers who have an offer of employment in the UK from a sponsor who is willing to provide them with a certificate of sponsorship to work in the UK.

To qualify under this category, you must score a total of 70 points in the areas described below. You must score 50 points for "Attributes", 10 points for "English Language" and 10 points for "Maintenance".

Attributes: (50 points)

Points are awarded under this section based on the following:

Qualifications

- No qualifications **(0 points)**;
- GCE 'A' level **(5 points)**;
- Bachelor's degree **(10 points)**;
- Master's degree or PhD **(15 points)**.

Future expected earnings

- Less than £20,000 **(0 points)**;
- £20,000 to £23,999 **(10 points)**;
- £24,000 to £27,999 **(15 points)**;
- £28,000 to £31,999 **(20 points)**;
- £32,000 or more **(25 points)**.

Sponsorship

- Job on the shortage occupation list **(50 points)**;
- Job that has met the resident labour market test **(30 points)**;
- Switching from the post-study worker category **(30 points)**.

English language: (10 points)

In order to score 10 points, you must either:

- Be a national of an English speaking country; or
- Have a degree level qualification from an English speaking country; or
- Have passed an English language Test (IELTS: 4.0).

You can also claim 10 points if you:

- Have previously been granted leave under Tier 1 (General), Tier 1 (Entrepreneur) or the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme; or
- Have previously been granted leave under a Tier 2 category and have already produced evidence of meeting the English Language requirement.

Maintenance: (10 points)

In order to score 10 points, you must show you have:

- At least £800 in your bank account for the last 3 months; or
- Your Sponsor has confirmed in your certificate of sponsorship that they will be responsible for maintaining and accommodating you up to the end of your first month of employment in the UK; or
- You automatically score points as you are switching from a specified category; and
- An extra £533 for each family member that is accompanying you (if applicable).

Duration of a general work permit visa

Tier 2 general visas are granted for a period of 3 years initially. Before the expiry of this period, you may apply for an extension for a maximum period of a further 2 years, provided that you continue to meet the requirements of the rules.

Extending a general work permit visa

If you are extending your stay and have a certificate of sponsorship to continue working in the same job for the same employer, you will score 50 points.

You will automatically meet the maintenance requirement if you currently have permission to stay in the UK under Tier 2. You will also meet the English Language requirement if you were last given permission to stay under Tier 2 (and have already submitted evidence showing that you meet the English Language requirement) and are applying to extend your stay.

Settlement in the UK

If you have completed a total of 5 years under this category you will be able to apply for indefinite leave to remain (permanent residence) in the UK.

British nationality

You will be able apply for British Nationality 12 months from the time you were granted indefinite leave to remain in the UK, provided you meet the additional criteria for naturalisation in the UK as a British citizen.

Disclaimer

The information provided on this page is designed to provide general guidance. Nothing in this page constitutes legal advice.

For detailed advice please contact Laya by telephone on 020 7105 6178 or 020 7357 9494 or e-mail: [Laya Falsafi lf@lzwlaw.co.uk](mailto:Laya.Falsafi@lzwlaw.co.uk)