

Immigration Update

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Veristat specialises in providing immigration advice, support and other services to employers and education providers, as well as individuals applying for leave to enter/remain in the UK.



Employers wishing to employ European nationals after 2021 should consider applying now for a Sponsor licence! Click here for further details of how Veristat can support you with this.

New Immigration System

The Home Secretary, Priti Patel, has announced the new points-based immigration system which will be introduced from 1 January 2021.

You can view the full announcement [here](#).

The new immigration system will end free movement and will assign points for specific skills, qualifications, salaries or professionals and visas will only be awarded to those who gain the required points for the category in which they are applying.

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The new single global system will treat EU and non-EU citizens equally and intends to give the highest priority to applicants with the highest skills and the greatest talents, including scientists, engineers and academics.

The key points from the policy statement are as follows:

Working in the UK:

- The general salary threshold will be lowered from £30,000 to £25,600.
- Applicants will be able to 'trade' characteristics such as their specific job offer and qualifications against a lower salary.
- There will continue to be different arrangements for a small number of occupations where the salary threshold will be based on published pay scales.
- The skills threshold will be lowered from RQF6 to RQF3 (RQF stands for Regulated Qualifications Framework).
- The cap on the number of people who can come to the UK under the skilled worker route will be suspended.
- The resident labour market test (RLMT) requirement will be removed.
- The Shortage Occupation List (SOL) will continue to be monitored by the *Migration Advisory Committee (MAC)*.
- The Global Talent route will be extended to EU citizens from January 2021.
- There will not be a route for lower-skilled workers.

Employers not currently approved by the Home Office to be a sponsor should consider applying now if they think they want to sponsor skilled migrants, including EU citizens, from early 2021. Please contact us by email at enquiries@veristat.co.uk or by telephone on 01344 624016 further details and a quote for supporting you with your licence application.

Studying in the UK:

- Student visa routes will be points-based and opened up to EU citizens.
- Those wishing to study in the UK will need to demonstrate that they have an offer from an approved educational institution, and that they can support themselves financially and that they speak English.

Visitors:

- There will be simplified rules and guidance for visitors.
- They expect to treat EU citizens as non-visa nationals, allowing them to come to the UK as visitors for six months without the need to obtain a visa.
- The countries currently using the e-gates will be able to continue to do so. European nationals will also be able to use the e-gates.

Visa process:

- All applicants coming for six months or more will need to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS).
- Visa applications will be made online.
- Most EU citizens will enroll facial biometrics using smartphone self-enrolment; fingerprints will not initially be required.
- Non-EU citizens will submit biometrics at a Visa Application Centre, as they do now.
- Most EU citizens will be issued with an e-visa which confirms their right to be in the UK. The online checking service can be used by EU nationals to demonstrate their immigration status and their rights and entitlements.
- Access to income-related benefits will be the same for EU and non-EU citizens arriving after January 2021; only being permitted after indefinite leave to remain has been granted.

You can view the policy statement on the new UK points-based immigration system [here](#).

Further details will be published by the Home Office (UKVI) in due course, including detailed guidance regarding the points tables, shortage occupations and qualifications. Key routes will be opened from **Autumn 2020** so that migrants can start to apply ahead of the system being implemented in January 2021.

We will be using our update to inform you of any news or announcements about the new immigration system as they are published by the Home Office (UKVI). We will also be working very closely with our retainer clients to support them with the implementation of the new immigration system. If you would like details of our retainer advice/support services to employers and education providers, please email enquiries@veristat.co.uk or call us on 01344 624016.

We will also be delivering a training package for employers and education providers on the new points-based immigration system to be offered from Autumn 2020 onwards. This training will be provided on the client's site. We anticipate this training will be in high demand, so if you would like to book a training session in the diary now for later this year, please email us at enquiries@veristat.co.uk or call us on the number above.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-secretary-announces-new-uk-points-based-immigration-system>

Brexit/European nationals

EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS)

The Home Office (UKVI) have published a template letter that employers can provide to their staff to raise awareness of the need for them to apply to the EUSS.

The template letter and additional documents, including a presentation on the EUSS, can be downloaded from the Employer's toolkit which can be viewed [here](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/eu-settlement-scheme-employer-toolkit#template-letter-to-eu-citizen-staff>

3 million+ applications to the EU Settlement Scheme

The Home Secretary, Priti Patel, announced on 6 February 2020 that there have now been more than 3 million applications to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS).

You can view this announcement [here](#). Further information about the EUSS for applicants can also be viewed [here](#).

We provide advice and support to European nationals and their family members who are applying under the EUSS, so please contact us by email at enquiries@veristat.co.uk or by telephone on 01344 624016 if any of your staff require help with this.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/more-than-3-million-applications-to-the-eu-settlement-scheme>

<https://www.gov.uk/settled-status-eu-citizens-families>

Free movement rights: direct family members of EEA nationals

The Home Office (UKVI) have updated their guidance on how immigration staff should consider free movement rights of the direct family members of EEA and Swiss nationals to remove any information regarding no-deal following the UK's exit from the EU.

The updated guidance on free movement rights for direct family members of EEA nationals can be viewed [here](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/direct-family-members-of-european-economic-area-eea-nationals>

Working in the UK

Immigration Skills Charge

The Home Office (UKVI) have updated their guidance for how immigration staff should process transactions relating to the Immigration Skills Charge (ISC).

The Home Office staff guidance on the ISC can be viewed [here](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-skills-charge-process-guidance>

Applying for a UK visa: approved English Language tests (*Working in the UK*)

The list of tests and test centres approved by UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) to show that applicants have the required level of English for work visas has been updated.

The latest list can be viewed [here](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-applying-for-uk-visa-approved-english-language-tests>

Global Talent visa

The Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) category was replaced by the Global Talent category on 20 February 2020. You can apply for a Global Talent visa if you work in a qualifying field and have been endorsed:

- as a recognised leader (exceptional talent)
- as an emerging leader (exceptional promise)
- under the UK Research and Innovation endorsed funder option

Eligible applicants need to complete two stages to get this visa: 1) apply to the Home Office for endorsement as a leader or an emerging leader in your particular field; and 2) apply for the visa.

Further information about the Global Talent visa can be viewed [here](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/global-talent>

Closure of the Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) visa route

Due to the Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) category being replaced by the Global Talent category on 20 February 2020, the Home Office (UKVI) have updated their guidance to caseworkers on considering applications in the Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) category due to the closure of this route. The guidance outlines the transitional arrangements in place for applicants who are affected by this change.

The updated guidance on Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) category can be viewed [here](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/points-based-system-tier-1-exceptional-talent>

Turkish ECAA business guidance

The Home Office (UKVI) have updated their guidance to caseworkers on considering business applications under the Turkish EC Association Agreement.

The updated Turkish ECAA business guidance can be viewed [here](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/turkish-ecaa-business-guidance>

Studying in the UK

Applying for a UK visa: approved English Language tests (*Studying in the UK*)

The list of tests and test centres approved by UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) to show that applicants have the required level of English for their student visa has been updated.

The latest list can be viewed [here](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-applying-for-uk-visa-approved-english-language-tests>

Other Immigration News

Appeals policy: withdrawing decisions

The policy regarding when, a decision which is being appealed should be withdrawn/conceded, has been updated by the Home Office (UKVI). In particular, the updated policy reflects new processes as to when Presenting Officers can withdraw decisions.

The updated appeals/withdrawing decisions policy can be viewed [here](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/appeals#history>

Veristat Services

Sponsor licence applications

With the announcement of the new Immigration system to be implemented from 1 January 2021, employers wishing to sponsor non-EEA and EEA/EU nationals from this date may wish to apply now for a licence.

We provide a comprehensive advice and support package to employers applying for a licence, including preparation for a Home Office (UKVI) visit and can also include training on Tier 2/5 or Tier 4 sponsorship and the SMS system, as well as assistance with applying for Certificates of Sponsorship (CoS).

Please email us at enquiries@veristat.co.uk or contact us by telephone on 01344 624016 for further details and a quote for helping you apply for a licence.

Training for employers and education providers

We provide bespoke training on all aspects of immigration matters, including Right to Work, Tier 2 sponsorship, Tier 4 sponsorship, and identification of fraudulent documents.

We will also be providing post-Brexit training detailing all future requirements.

These training sessions are conducted on the client's premises for a standard half-day rate for up to 12 persons per session.

If you think your organisation would benefit from training in any of these areas, please contact us for a quote by emailing us at enquiries@veristat.co.uk. If you would like to discuss the contents of our training packages or require a bespoke training package to be delivered, please contact us by telephone on 01344 624016 or email us as above.

Audits and Inspections

Veristat is hugely experienced at providing compliance audits across all immigration tiers. We have worked with hundreds of employers, ranging from small family businesses to multi-nationals, high

street retailers and professional sports clubs. In the education sector, we have also worked with over 30 universities and a significant number of colleges and schools.

Our audit/inspection service is fully flexible and can be tailored to individual requirements, and is based on sound practical experience of UKVI's policies, culture and approach.

- For employers, we offer on-site Tier 2 compliance inspections (with staff aware or unaware to simulate a surprise UKVI visit). We also offer right to work compliance visits.
- For education providers, our service ranges from a "lite" health-check to a comprehensive review of Tier 4 activities, assessing compliance with UKVI requirements and sharing best practice. We also offer targeted inspections covering specific issues, such as BCA, Tier 2 compliance, policies, student unions, relationships with partner institutions, etc.

On completion, we provide a comprehensive, evidence-based report, together with an assessment of how compliant the business or institution is with UKVI's requirements. We will support the introduction of change if required and offer a 'spot check' follow up service at a later date if required to reassure management that recommendations have been implemented.

If you're interested in booking an audit/inspection, please call us on 01344 624016 or email us at enquiries@veristat.co.uk.

File Inspection Days

If you're unsure whether you require a full compliance audit or specific training but would like an independent check of your files to ensure they are fully compliant with Home Office requirements, we can provide a UKVI file compliance inspection of either your staff or student files.

Depending on the number of employees/students you have, we would either check all files or an agreed sample. After the inspection has taken place, we would provide a written report outlining any risks, feedback and recommendations.

For further information or a quote for our file inspection days, please call us on 01344 624016 or email us at enquiries@veristat.co.uk.

Advice/Support packages

These packages can either be on a fixed rate monthly retainer basis, which can include a number of services, such as: acting as your Level 1 user, issuing of CoS/CAS, immigration audit, etc.

Alternatively, you can purchase an annual package of either 5, 10, 15- or 20-hours advice/support per year at reduced rates.

If you are interested in discussing our retainer or hourly advice/support packages further, then please contact us on 01344 624016 or email us at enquiries@veristat.co.uk.

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