

# Immigration Update

**June 2022**

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

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Book now for the latest Right to work training including all you need to know about IDSPs delivered on site or via Microsoft teams/Zoom. [Click here for further information.](#)

## Introduction

2022 has already brought in lots of changes. The most significant of late have related to Right to Work and how UKVI have embedded technology in the entire process and removed the ability for employers to manually check Biometric permits. We will continue to use these updates to inform you of the immigration news and policy updates that will most impact you as employers or education providers.

We appreciate that this continues to be an exceedingly challenging time for businesses and many of you will have been impacted by the tragic events in Ukraine. Should you need any advice or support with anything, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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## Working in the UK

### Work visa applications from outside the UK

Skilled Worker visa applications are currently taking an average of 6 weeks to process for applications submitted outside of the UK. Normally, such applications would take an average of 3 weeks but there are currently delays due to priority being given to Ukraine Visa Scheme applications. The priority/super priority services remain suspended for those applying from overseas.

Further information about visa processing times can be viewed [here](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/visa-decision-waiting-times-applications-outside-the-uk#full-publication-update>

### Digital identity certification for right to work and right rent

For those employers that are interested in using certified digital identity service providers (IDSPs) to carry out identity checks in relation to right to work checks, please note that there are now 3 certified IDSPs listed on the GOV.UK website. Their details are as follows:

Name	Address	Email address	Website URL
Yoti and Post Office EasyID	6 <sup>th</sup> Floor 107 Leadenhall St London EC3A 4AF	<a href="mailto:support@yoti.com">support@yoti.com</a>	<a href="http://www.yoti.com">www.yoti.com</a>
HooYu Limited	Flora 180 Borough High Street London SE1 1LB	<a href="mailto:info@hooyu.com">info@hooyu.com</a>	<a href="http://www.hooyu.com">www.hooyu.com</a>
TrustID Limited	9 Greyfriars Road Reading RG1 1NU	<a href="mailto:enquiries@trustid.co.uk">enquiries@trustid.co.uk</a>	<a href="http://www.trustid.co.uk">www.trustid.co.uk</a>

The process for uploading identity documentation, costs/fees, and the completion of checks varies, dependant on the company providing the service. Further information can be found on the company websites in the table above – please note many of these offer a trial session.

A bespoke quote will be provided by the IDSP company on request, as the costs/fees depend very much on the size and type of organisation requiring the service.

Further information about the use of IDSPs can be viewed [here](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/digital-identity-certification-for-right-to-work-right-to-rent-and-criminal-record-checks>

## Creating and assigning a CoS: SMS guide 8

The Home Office (UKVI) have updated their step-by-step guide to creating and assigning a certificate of sponsorship (CoS). This document should be viewed with the SMS guide 8a. The guidance has been updated in light of the introduction of the Global Business Mobility routes (formerly known as the Intra-Company Transfer route).

You can view the updated SMS guide 8 [here](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/creating-and-assigning-a-cos-sms-guide-8>

## Applying for a Sponsor Licence | Sponsoring a UK Expansion Worker

The Home Office (UKVI) have updated their guidance (Appendix A) for those applying for a licence in order to sponsor a UK Expansion Worker. The updated Appendix A can be viewed [here](#).

Table 3 of the guidance has been updated to remove references to the provision for organisations on the UK Expansion Worker route to obtain a letter of support (endorsement letter) from a UK government department, as this process is not yet available.

A reminder has also been added that documents not in English or Welsh must be accompanied by a certified translation.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-documents-for-sponsor-applications-appendix-a>

## Offshore Wind Workers

In 2017, the Home Secretary introduced a concession to the Immigration Rules to allow the employment of foreign nationals who are joining vessels engaging in the construction and maintenance of offshore wind projects in UK territorial waters. This concession is time limited and leave to enter under the terms of the concession will not be granted beyond 31 October 2022.

All foreign nationals coming to the UK to work in UK waters, including on a wind farm, will need permission to work in the UK before starting work.

The guidance has been updated to reflect the end date of the concession. The updated guidance can be viewed [here](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/offshore-wind-workers-immigration-rules-concession-2017>

## Migrant Journey: 2021 report (Working in the UK)

The Home Office (UKVI) have published their 'Migrant Journey' report, which provides statistics on changes in migrants' visa and leave status within the UK's immigration system.

The key facts and statistics in relation to working in the UK are as follows:

- Of the 131,000 people initially granted a 'Work' visa in 2016, just over a quarter (27%) still held valid leave or settlement at the end of 2021. However, the propensity to remain varied by route:
  - 73% of those issued **High Value** work visas still held leave after five years
  - 34% of those issued **Skilled worker** visas still held leave after five years
  - 11% of those issued **Temporary worker** visas still held leave after five years (99% had switched to a different route)
- At the end of 2021, of the people who initially came to the UK in 2016, 14% still remained on a Work visa, 3% had switched to a different visa category, and 10% had been granted settlement. The remaining 73% of people issued Work visas in 2016 had leave which had expired by the end of 2021.
- Under 18s issued Work visas in 2016 were the age group most likely to hold valid leave or settlement five years later (38%), although 98% of these were dependants accompanying someone else on a Work visa, such as their parents. This may indicate that Work migrants who bring children with them are more likely to stay in the UK in the long term.
- Skilled worker visas accounted for over half (60%) of Work visas issued in the 2016 cohort. 14% of people on this route had been granted settlement five years later. The proportion of Skilled workers granted settlement within five years remains much lower than the 2009 levels (23%).
- The proportion of Skilled Workers who had been granted settlement within five years differs by nationality. These differences will be a result of the types of jobs people come to the UK for, the number coming under the previous Intra-company Transfer (ICT) route, which does not have a direct route to settlement, as well as differences in nationalities desire to settle in the UK.
- Of the top 10 nationalities granted Skilled Worker visas in 2016, Japanese nationals had the highest proportion of ICT visas (88%), along with the lowest proportion of people granted settlement after five years (2%). Pakistan had the lowest proportion of ICT visas (8%) and the highest proportion of granted settlement after five years (50%).
- Of all those granted settlement in 2021, who had initially entered on a Work visa, the top nationalities were India (29%), Pakistan (8%) and the USA (7%).
- Just over two-thirds (69%) of those granted settlement in 2021 who had initially entered on a Work visa were aged between 30 and 49 years old when granted settlement.

You can download the full 'Migrant Journey' report [here](#). Section 4 of the report specifically relates to those who came to the UK on a Work visa in the 2016 cohort.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/migrant-journey-2021-report>

## Studying in the UK

### Student visa applications from outside the UK

Student visa applications are currently taking an average of 4 weeks to process for applicants submitted outside of the UK. Normally, such applications would take an average of 3 weeks but there are currently delays due to priority being given to Ukraine Visa Scheme applications. The priority/super priority services remain suspended for those applying from outside the UK.

Further information about current visa processing times can be viewed [here](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/visa-decision-waiting-times-applications-outside-the-uk#full-publication-update>

### Migrant Journey: 2021 report (Studying in the UK)

The Home Office (UKVI) have published their 'Migrant Journey' report, which provides statistics on changes in migrants' visa and leave status within the UK's immigration system.

The key facts and statistics in relation to sponsored study in the UK are as follows:

- Of those granted a Sponsored Study visa in 2016, 17% still held valid leave at the end of 2021. Of these: 10% were continuing to study and remain on a Sponsored study visa, 5% had switched to a Work visa, 1% had switched to a Family visa and a further 1% had other categories of visas.
- Of the 220,000 granted a Sponsored study visa in 2011, 7% still held valid temporary leave and 6% had been granted settlement at the end of 2021.
- Of all those granted settlement in 2021, 18% had initially been granted a Sponsored study visa; despite low rates of settlement compared to other visa categories, the large volume of foreign students means that they account for just under a fifth of total settlement cases in 2021.
- Of those issued an initial Study visa in 2016, 54% had expired leave after just two years and this had risen to 83% after five years. This suggests that many people on Sponsored Study visas will come to the UK to study but do not subsequently apply for permission to remain in the UK.
- The proportion of people arriving on an initial Sponsored Study visa who subsequently obtain a Work visa within the five years following their arrival as a student has decreased over time – from 13% in the 2004 cohort to 5% in the 2016 cohort. This change is consistent with the tightening of Immigration Rules for students since September 2007. It also reflects changes in the composition of student migrants coming to the UK.
- Chinese nationals are less likely than other nationalities to stay in the UK long term.
- Those aged between 18 and 29 made up almost four-fifths (79%) of Sponsored study visas issued in 2016. Of this age group, only 13% had valid leave at the end of 2021.

- Of the top five nationalities issued Sponsored study visas in 2011 (who together accounted for 61% of the total Sponsored study visas granted), Pakistani and Nigerian nationals had the highest proportion who still had valid leave five years later.
- Of all those granted settlement in 2021 who had initially entered on a Sponsored study visa, the most common nationalities were Indian (15%), Pakistani (14%) and Chinese (10%).

You can download the full 'Migrant Journey' report [here](#). Section 3 of the report specifically relates to those who came to the UK on a Study visa in the 2016 cohort.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/migrant-journey-2021-report>

## Sponsorship – please note...

### UKVI compliance visits

During the past couple of months there has been a notable increase in the number of UKVI compliance visits. Of those we are aware of, the sponsors were given 2 to 3 days' notice of the visit, although please note that such visits can be announced or unannounced.

It is imperative that sponsors are prepared for UKVI visits and ensure that they have the systems and processes in place to meet all of their sponsorship responsibilities.

Should you wish Veristat to conduct a mock compliance visit, please contact us at [enquiries@veristat.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@veristat.co.uk) for further information and a quote.

### Manage your sponsorship licence: SMS guide 2

The Home Office (UKVI) have updated the step-by-step guide to managing a sponsorship licence using the sponsorship management system (SMS).

From the 11<sup>th</sup> April 2022 organisations applying for a sponsor licence in any Global Business Mobility (GBM) route must supply details of overseas linked entities (OSE). In addition, organisations applying for a sponsor licence in the GBM Service Supplier and/or GBM Secondment Worker routes must supply details of contracts. Guide 11 of the guidance provides information about viewing details of overseas linked entities and contracts (Global Business Mobility sponsors only).

You can view the updated SMS guide 2 [here](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/manage-your-sponsorship-licence-sms-user-manual>

## Level 1 Users: Logging in regularly to the SMS

We are aware that the Home Office (UKVI) have been proactively contacting the Authorising Officer/Key Contact of sponsors over the past few weeks about any Level 1 Users who have not accessed the system for some time.

Para L10.4 of Part 1 of the Sponsor Guidance states the following:

***L10.4. You need to access your SMS account regularly to review and update your licence details and to keep up to date with the latest news, messages, and any changes that may be coming up. We recommend that your Level 1 User accesses your account at least once a month.***

Therefore, we suggest that you take this opportunity to remind your Level 1 Users of the importance of regularly logging in to the SMS and checking that all contact details for Key Personnel and the organisation are up-to-date.

If you have any Level 1 Users who may be absent from their role for some time (e.g. those on secondment, maternity leave, sabbatical, etc.) you may wish to consider deactivating their account and then request to add them again if/when they return to a role in managing the SMS.

Please also remember that you must have at least one Level 1 User at all times during the lifetime of your licence. Whilst you can have a third party or representative acting in the role of the Level 1 User, you must always have at least one Level 1 User who is a paid employee or office holder.

The Authorising Officer is responsible for the activities of all SMS users, so they must have a system in place to check these activities. The Home Office (UKVI) also recommends that the Authorising Officer checks the CoS assigned to workers or CAS assigned to students at least once a month. You must have an Authorising Officer in place throughout the life of your licence. If you fail to have an Authorising Officer in place, action may be taken against the sponsor.

Further information about the role and responsibilities of Key Personnel can be found in the sponsor guidance which can be viewed [here](#).

**Veristat offers a training sessions on both sponsorship under the Skilled Worker/Global Business Mobility routes and the Student/Child Student routes. For further information and/or a quote for a training session, please contact us via email at [enquiries@veristat.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@veristat.co.uk). The training can be provided either on the client's site or remote via Microsoft Teams or Zoom.**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/workers-and-temporary-workers-guidance-for-sponsors-part-1-apply-for-a-licence/workers-and-temporary-workers-guidance-for-sponsors-part-1-apply-for-a-licence-accessible-version>

## Other Immigration News

### UK visa support for Ukrainian nationals

The Home Office (UKVI) have published their latest operational data on applications to come to or indeed stay in the UK under the Ukraine Family Scheme and Ukraine Sponsorship Scheme (Homes for Ukraine). The latest operational visa data can be viewed [here](#).

Please note that the Monday to Friday opening hours for calls to the contact centre about the Ukraine Family Scheme have changed to 8am to 8pm.

The latest advice and guidance on support available to Ukrainian nationals and their family members can be viewed [here](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/support-for-family-members-of-british-nationals-in-ukraine-and-ukrainian-nationals-in-ukraine-and-the-uk>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ukraine-family-scheme-application-data>

### Family visa applications from outside the UK

Family visa applications are currently taking an average of 24 weeks to process for applicants submitted outside of the UK. Normally, such applications would take an average of 12 weeks but there are currently delays due to priority being given to Ukraine Visa Scheme applications. The priority/super priority services remain suspended for those applying from outside the UK.

Further information about current visa processing times can be viewed [here](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/visa-decision-waiting-times-applications-outside-the-uk#full-publication-update>

### Home Office (UKVI) fees for citizenship applications

The Home Office (UKVI) have published an updated payment slip to be used for applicants applying for citizenship where they have submitted a paper application. The new payment slip (for paper applications) and view the latest fees for citizenship applications can be downloaded [here](#).

Those applying online do not need to use this payment slip, as the fees will be paid online via the online application submission process on the AccessUK visa portal.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/fees-for-citizenship-applications>

## Veristat Services

### **Training on IDSPS, the Skilled Worker or Student routes/Right to Work/Forgery**

We provide comprehensive training on all aspects of immigration, including; IDSPs, the Student route, the Skilled Worker route, Right to Work and the identification of fraudulent documents.

We can also deliver a session simply focusing on the recent changes being brought about by the 2021 points-based immigration system and how employers and education providers can be prepared moving forwards.

The new routes have brought about significant changes for sponsors and our training outlines these changes and helps prepare employers and education providers for sponsoring employees and students under these routes.

All training can be provided in person on the client's site or remotely via Microsoft teams/Zoom.

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](mailto: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 call us on 01344 624016 or email us as above.

### **Sponsor licence applications**

With the introduction of the 2021 immigration system, employers or education providers wishing to employ EEA/EU nationals or non-EEA nationals who do not have right to work need to apply for a Sponsorship licence.

We provide a comprehensive advice and support package to employers and education providers applying for a licence. This can include preparation for a Home Office (UKVI) visit and training on the new Skilled Worker or Student routes and the SMS system, as well as assistance with applying for Certificates of Sponsorship (CoS) or Confirmation for Acceptance for Studies (CAS) and a step by step guide for completing the application itself.

Please email us at [enquiries@veristat.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@veristat.co.uk) or by telephone on 01344 624016 for further details and/or a quote for helping you with your application.

## Audits and Inspections

Veristat is hugely experienced in providing compliance audits across all immigration routes. We have worked with hundreds of employers, ranging from small family businesses to multi-nationals, high street retailers and professional sports/football clubs. In the education sector, we have 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. It is based on sound practical experience of UKVI's policies, culture and approach.

- For employers, we offer on-site Skilled Worker or ICT compliance inspections (with staff aware or unaware to simulate an announced or unannounced 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 student route activities, assessing compliance with UKVI requirements and sharing best practice. We also offer targeted inspections covering specific issues, such as BCA, Skilled Worker compliance, policies, student unions, relationships with partner institutions, etc.

On completion, we can 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 beneficial to reassure management that recommendations have been implemented.

If you are interested in booking an audit/inspection, please call us on 01344 624016 or email us at [enquiries@veristat.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@veristat.co.uk).

Please note we are also now offering remote audits and inspections- please contact us for more details.

## 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](mailto:enquiries@veristat.co.uk).

## Advice/Support packages

We offer advice/support packages on either a fixed rate monthly retainer basis or on a fixed-hourly basis, which can include a number of our services, such as: acting as your Level 1 user, issuing of CoS/CAS, immigration audit, etc. If you do not require ongoing retainer advice/support, we offer either 5 or 10 hour annual support packages 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](mailto:enquiries@veristat.co.uk).

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