

Immigration Update

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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.



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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Please note...

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. 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>

Priority/Super Priority Services

'Priority' and 'Super Priority' visa services remain suspended for new study, work and family visa applications made from overseas. However, these services remain available at present for most in-country visa applications.

The latest visa decision waiting times for outside the UK can be viewed [here](#).

The latest visa decision waiting times for inside the UK can be viewed [here](#).

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

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/visa-decision-waiting-times-applications-inside-the-uk>

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 have been given 2 to 3 days' notice of the visit, although it should be noted that such visits can be announced or unannounced.

It is imperative that sponsors are prepared for such visits and ensure that they have the systems and processes in place to ensure that they are meeting their sponsorship responsibilities.

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

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

For those employers or landlords that are interested in using a certified digital identity service providers (IDSPs) to carry out identity checks in relation to right to work or rent checks, please note that there are still no certified IDSPs listed on the GOV.UK website.

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>

Manage your sponsorship licence: SMS guide 2

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

From the 11th 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, from this date organisations applying for a sponsor licence in the GBM Service Supplier and/or GBM Secondment Worker routes must supply details of contracts. Contract details must be provided when a CoS is assigned in either of these routes. Guide 11 of this 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>

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>

Immigration News

UKRI endorsement: endorsed funders for Global Talent visa

The list of endorsed funders approved by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) for Global Talent has been updated by the Home Office (UKVI).

The updated list of endorsed funders for those applying for a Global Talent visa can be viewed [here](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ukri-endorsement-endorsed-funders-global-talent-visa>

Worker and Temporary Worker – Post-Licence sponsor changes

The Home Office (UKVI) have updated their guidance for their staff on dealing with post-licence changes related to Worker and Temporary Worker sponsors. The guidance has been updated to remove references to Intra-Company Transfer to reflect the introduction in April 2022 of the Global Business Mobility routes.

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

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/points-based-system-sponsor-licensing-maintenance>

Biometric reuse – guidance for caseworkers updated

The Home Office (UKVI) have updated their staff guidance on biometric reuse. The latest advice can be viewed [here](#).

The minimum age for biometric reuse when individuals use the 'UK Immigration: ID Check' app has been lowered to 5 years old. The guidance now also confirms the arrangements for when an individual who only holds an eVisa requires physical evidence of immigration status to travel to the UK.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biometric-information>

Coronavirus (Covid-19): advice for UK visa applicants and temporary UK residents

The Home Office (UKVI) have updated their advice for UK visa applicants and temporary UK residents in light of coronavirus (Covid-19). The latest advice can be viewed [here](#).

The expiry date for exceptional assurance has been extended until 30th June 2022.

The guidance has been updated to advise that applications for visit, transit, study, work and family visas are taking longer to process as the UKVI continues to prioritise Ukraine Visa Scheme applications in response to the humanitarian crisis caused by the invasion of Ukraine.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-advice-for-uk-visa-applicants-and-temporary-uk-residents>

UK visa support for Ukrainian nationals

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

The guidance has been updated to provide information about the **Ukraine Extension Scheme**. Ukraine nationals and their family members can apply to the scheme if they hold a UK visa, or held one that expired on or after 1st January 2022. The Ukraine Extension Scheme allows the applicant to live, work and study in the UK if they're a Ukrainian national, or the family member of someone who is Ukrainian. Applicants should consider whether they wish to keep their current visa or switch to the Ukraine Extension Scheme.

This route does not currently lead to settlement – this means that they may not be able to count time spent in the UK under the Ukraine Extension Scheme as part of a future application for indefinite leave to remain in the UK. Further information about the Ukraine Extension Scheme 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/guidance/apply-to-stay-in-the-uk-under-the-ukraine-extension-scheme>

Electronic Visa Waiver Status. | Bahrain and Saudi Arabia

The Home Office (UKVI) have announced that Bahrain and Saudi Arabia are to join other Gulf Cooperation Council countries with electronic visa waiver status for UK travel.

From 1st June 2022, nationals of Bahrain and Saudi Arabia can apply to travel to the UK (for tourism, business, study or medical treatment) for up to 6 months with an electronic visa waiver.

An electronic visa waiver allows the holder to travel to the UK without obtaining a visa, provided they complete an online waiver for each visit. A small fee will be applied, and it is quicker to obtain than a visa as there is no need to provide biometric information (photo or fingerprints), attend a visa application centre or hand in their passport in advance of travel.

You can view the full news story [here](#). You can apply for an electronic visa waver [here](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/bahrain-and-saudi-arabia-get-uk-electronic-visa-waiver-status>

Citizenship and naturalisation for migrants in the UK (Briefing by The Migration Observatory)

The Migration Observatory at the University of Oxford has published a briefing about citizenship and naturalisation among migrants in the UK. You can view the full briefing [here](#). The key points are as follows:

- In 2019, 39% of people born abroad reported that they were UK citizens, but this share was higher for non-EU born (54%) than for EU-born (16%) migrants.
- Migrants from EU countries are less likely to apply for UK citizenship than those from outside the EU, although applications from EU citizens increased after the EU referendum of 2016.
- An estimated 72% of non-EU migrants with permanent status (ILR) in the UK 10 years after getting their initial visa have become British citizens.
- Migrants who come to the UK with Family visas become citizens faster than those entering with work or study visas.
- There is evidence that naturalisation can improve migrant's economic and social integration, especially amongst those from disadvantaged groups.
- Non-EU citizens from high-income countries (e.g. US, Canada or Australia) are less likely to become UK citizens than those from lower-income countries.
- People who moved to the UK as children are more likely to become British citizens, and this trend is particularly clear among the EU born.
- In 2019, there were an estimated 1.1 million non-UK citizen children living in the UK, of whom approximately 470,000 were born in the UK.
- Citizenship fees, language and integration requirements may create barriers to applying for citizenship.
- Around 3% of citizenship applications were refused in 2020, the most common reason being not meeting the 'good character' requirement.
- Non-EU born migrants are more likely to be citizens of the country where they reside in the UK (74%) than in EU-14 countries (58%).

<https://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/resources/briefings/citizenship-and-naturalisation-for-migrants-in-the-uk/>

Secure English Language tests

The list of English language test centres has been updated by the Home Office (UKVI). You can view the latest information about secure English Language tests for visa and citizenship applications and the list of approved English Language test centres [here](#).

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/prove-your-english-language-abilities-with-a-secure-english-language-test-self>

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. 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 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.

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.

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.

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