

INFORMATION FROM UK.GOV WEBSITE **Skilled Worker visa - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)**

Eligibility

Your job

To qualify for a Skilled Worker visa, you must:

- work for a UK employer that's been approved by the Home Office
- have a 'certificate of sponsorship' from your employer with information about the role you've been offered in the UK
- do a job that's on the list of eligible occupations
- be paid a minimum salary - how much depends on the type of work you do

The specific [eligibility depends on your job](#).

Your job

You must meet all of the following requirements to be eligible for a Skilled Worker visa:

- Your job is eligible for this visa
- You'll be working for a UK employer that's been approved by the Home Office
- You'll be paid at least the minimum salary for the type of work you'll be doing

The minimum salary for the type of work you'll be doing is whichever is the highest out of the following 3 options:

- £20,600 per year
- £10.10 per hour
- the 'going rate' for the type of work you'll be doing

Check if your job is eligible

Before you can find out if your job is eligible, you need to know its 4-digit occupation code.

If you already have a job offer, ask your employer for your occupation code.

Look up your job's occupation code

If you do not know your code, you can search for your job in the [ONS occupation coding tool](#).

Not every job title is included. If you cannot find your exact job title, try searching for similar jobs. Make sure the job description matches what you'll be doing. Some similar jobs have different codes, for example chefs and cooks. Chefs are eligible for a Skilled Worker visa, but cooks are not.

Check if an occupation code is eligible for this visa

When you know your occupation code, [view the table of eligible jobs](#) to see if it's included.

The table is very large. It's sorted in order of occupation code, with the smallest numbers at the top. You may be able to use your web browser to search for your code on the page.

Salary requirements

You'll usually need to be paid at least £25,600 per year or £10.10 per hour, whichever is higher. If the 'going rate' for your job is higher than both of these, you'll usually need to be paid at least the going rate.

Example Your salary is £27,000 per year, but the annual going rate for the job you'll be doing is £30,000. You do not meet the usual salary requirements for this visa.

Each occupation code has its own annual going rate. Check the going rate for your job in the [going rates table](#).

If you work in healthcare or education

There are different salary rules if you work in some [healthcare or education jobs](#), where the going rate is based on national pay scales.

When you can be paid less

If you do not meet the usual salary requirements, and you do not work in healthcare or education, you might still be eligible if your salary will be at least £20,480 per year and at least £10.10 per hour.

[Check when you can be paid less.](#)

Approved UK employers

You must have a job offer from [an approved UK employer](#) before you apply for a Skilled Worker visa. Approved employers are also known as sponsors, because they are sponsoring you to come to or stay in the UK.

View the [list of approved UK employers](#).

If your employer is not currently approved, they can [apply for a sponsor licence](#) if they're eligible.

They'll need to pay a fee - £536 for small businesses and charities or £1,476 for medium and large organisations. It usually takes around 8 weeks to process a licence application.

If you already have a job offer from an approved employer

Your employer - also known as your sponsor - will check that you meet the eligibility requirements. They'll give you a 'certificate of sponsorship' to prove this.

The certificate of sponsorship is an electronic record, not a physical document. It will have a reference number, which you'll need for your visa application.

You must apply for your visa within 3 months of getting your certificate of sponsorship.

Check which [documents you'll need to apply](#).

Knowledge of English

You must be able to speak, read, write and understand English. You'll usually need to [prove your knowledge of English](#) when you apply.

If you're not eligible for a Skilled Worker visa

You may be eligible for [another type of visa to work in the UK](#).

Knowledge of English

You'll usually need to prove your knowledge of the English language when you apply, unless you did this in a previous successful visa application.

Level of English

You must prove you can read, write, speak and understand English to at least level B1 on the [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages \(CEFR\) scale](#).

You can prove your knowledge of English by:

- passing a Secure English Language Test (SELT) from an [approved provider](#)
 - having a GCSE, A level, Scottish National Qualification level 4 or 5, Scottish Higher or Advanced Higher in English, gained through study at a UK school that you began when you were under 18
 - having a degree-level academic qualification that was taught in English - if you studied abroad, you'll need to [apply through Ecctis \(formerly UK NARIC\)](#) for confirmation that your qualification is equivalent to a UK bachelor's degree, master's degree or PhD
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How long you can stay

Your visa can last for up to 5 years before you need to extend it. You'll need to apply to extend or update your visa when it expires or if you change jobs or employer.

If you want to stay longer in the UK

You can apply to extend your visa as many times as you like as long as you still meet the eligibility requirements.

After 5 years, you may be able to [apply to settle permanently in the UK](#) (also known as 'indefinite leave to remain'). This gives you the right to live, work and study here for as long as you like, and apply for benefits if you're eligible.

How to apply

You must apply online.

How you apply depends on whether you're:

- [outside the UK](#) and are coming to the UK
- inside the UK and [extending your current visa](#)
- inside the UK and [switching from a different visa](#)

If you want to change your job or employer, you must [apply to update your visa](#).

You can include [your partner and children](#) in your application to stay in the UK if they are eligible.

Apply from outside the UK

You must apply online for a Skilled Worker visa.

Check which [documents you'll need to apply](#).

Your [partner or children](#) will need to apply separately.

Proving your identity and providing supporting documents

As part of your application, you'll need to prove your identity. How you do this depends on where you're from and what type of passport you have.

You'll either:

- have your fingerprints and photograph taken at a [visa application centre](#) - this is to get a [biometric residence permit](#)

- use the 'UK Immigration: ID Check' app to scan your identity document - you'll also create or sign into your UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) account

You'll be told what you need to do when you apply.

If you do need an appointment:

- the centre may need to keep your passport and documents while they process your application
- you may have to travel to get to your nearest visa application centre (this could be in another country)

Apply for a Skilled Worker visa

Once you've started your application, you can save your form and complete it later.

Documents you'll need to apply

When you apply you'll need to provide:

- your certificate of sponsorship reference number - your employer will give you this
- proof of your [knowledge of English](#)
- a valid passport or other document that shows your identity and nationality
- your job title and annual salary
- your job's occupation code
- the name of your employer and their sponsor licence number - this will be on your certificate of sponsorship

Ask your employer for a copy of your certificate of sponsorship if you do not have one.

If your certificate of sponsorship was issued before 1 December 2020

Your certificate of sponsorship will need to be updated because it was assigned to you before the Tier 2 (General) work visa was replaced by the Skilled Worker visa.

Ask your employer to update the 'sponsor notes' section in the [UK visa sponsorship management system](#).

Other documents you might need

Depending on your circumstances, you might be asked to provide:

- evidence that you have enough [personal savings to support yourself in the UK](#), for example bank statements (unless your certificate of sponsorship shows your employer can support you)
- proof of your relationship with [your partner or children](#) if they're applying with you
- your [tuberculosis test results if you're from a listed country](#)
- a criminal record certificate - if you're working in certain jobs
- a [valid ATAS certificate](#) if your employer tells you that you need one because your job involves researching a sensitive subject at PhD level or higher
- your UK PhD certificate, or your unique Ecctis reference number (formerly unique UK NARIC reference number) if your qualification is from outside the UK - you'll need to [apply through Ecctis](#)

You'll need a blank page in your passport for your visa if you're:

- from outside the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein

- from the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein but do not have a biometric passport with a chip in it

If your documents are not in English or Welsh you'll also need to provide a [certified translation](#).

Criminal record certificate

You'll need to provide a criminal record certificate if you're applying from outside the UK and you work in:

- education, for example teachers, education advisers and school inspectors, childminders, teaching assistants
- healthcare, for example nurses, doctors, paramedics, managers, pharmacists, dentists and dental nurses, ophthalmic opticians
- therapy, for example psychologists, speech and language therapists, counsellors
- social services, for example social workers, managers, probation officers, welfare and housing officers

[Check how to apply for criminal records checks](#).

If you work in healthcare, you might be able to apply for the [Health and Care Worker visa](#) instead.

If you've lived in more than one country

You might need to provide a certificate from each country you've lived in, depending on your age and how long you stayed in each country.

If you're under 28, you'll need a certificate from any country you've stayed in for a total of 12 months or more since you turned 18.

If you're 28 or over, you'll need a certificate from any country you've stayed in over the last 10 years.

When you've got your documents ready

You can apply online once your documents are ready.

How you apply depends on whether you're:

- [outside the UK](#) and are coming to the UK
- inside the UK and [extending your current visa](#)
- inside the UK and [switching from a different visa](#)

If you've read the guidance and you're not sure if you're eligible, you can use a [Home Office checker tool](#). You'll be asked to confirm that you meet [all of the eligibility requirements](#).

How long it takes

You can apply for a visa up to 3 months before the day you are due to start work in the UK. This date is listed on your certificate of sponsorship.

As part of your application, you'll need to prove your identity and provide your documents. You may need to allow extra time if you need an appointment to do this. You'll find out if you need one when you start your application.

Getting a decision

Once you've applied online, proved your identity and provided your documents, you'll usually get a decision on your visa within:

- 3 weeks, if you're outside the UK
- 8 weeks, if you're inside the UK

If you need to go to an appointment, you may be able to pay for a faster decision. How you do this depends on whether you're [outside the UK](#) or [inside the UK](#).

How much it costs

You, your partner or children will each need to:

- pay the application fee
- pay the healthcare surcharge for each year of your stay
- prove you have enough personal savings

[Check how much money you'll need.](#)

If you work in public sector healthcare

If you're a doctor or nurse, or you work in health or adult social care, check if you're eligible to apply for the [Health and Care Worker visa](#) instead. It's cheaper to apply for and you do not need to pay the annual immigration health surcharge.

How much it costs

When you apply for a Skilled Worker visa, you'll need to have enough money to:

- pay the application fee - the standard fee ranges from £610 to £1,408 depending on your circumstances
- pay the healthcare surcharge - this is usually £624 per year
- support yourself when you arrive in the UK - you'll usually need to have at least £1,270 available (unless you're exempt)

You'll pay a lower application fee if your job is on the [shortage occupation list](#).

You'll be told how much you need to pay when you apply.

Example You're applying to come to the UK from Argentina for 2 years on a Skilled Worker visa. Your job is not in a shortage occupation so your visa will cost £610, plus £624 for each year of your stay for the healthcare surcharge. This means you'll pay a total of £1,858 when you apply for your visa.

You'll also need to prove you have £1,270 available to support yourself in the UK if your employer cannot cover these costs.

Application fees

If you're applying from outside the UK, the standard fee depends on whether you'll be in the UK for:

- up to 3 years - £610 per person
- more than 3 years - £1,220 per person

If you're applying from inside the UK to extend, switch or update your visa, the standard fee depends on whether you'll be in the UK for:

- up to 3 years - £704 per person
- more than 3 years - £1,408 per person

If your job is on the shortage occupation list

You and your family will pay a lower application fee if your job is on the [shortage occupation list](#).

The fee for each person applying is:

- £464 if you're staying for up to 3 years
- £928 if you're staying for more than 3 years

The fee is the same whether you're applying from inside or outside the UK.

There's a different list of shortage occupations [if you work in healthcare or education](#).

If you're from an eligible country

Your application fee will be automatically reduced by £55 if you're from one of the following countries: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden or Turkey. If your job is on the shortage occupation list, you'll get this reduction as well as paying a lower fee.

This reduction only applies to your visa application. Your partner and children will still need to pay the full application fee.

Healthcare surcharge

You'll also have to pay the healthcare surcharge for each year of your stay - this is usually £624 per year. [Check how much you'll have to pay](#) before you apply.

Money to support yourself

You must have at least £1,270 in your bank account to show you can support yourself in the UK.

You will need to have had the money available for at least 28 days in a row. Day 28 must be within 31 days of applying for this visa.

You'll usually need to [show proof of this when you apply](#), unless either:

- you've been in the UK with a valid visa for at least 12 months
- your employer can cover your costs during your first month in the UK, up to £1,270

Your partner and children will also need to prove they can support themselves while they're in the UK. [Check how much they'll need](#).

[Read the guidance on financial evidence](#) for more information about the money you need and how to prove it.

If your employer can support you instead

Your certificate of sponsorship must confirm this. Your employer will need to complete the 'sponsor certifies maintenance' section on your certificate. This is under 'Additional data'.