



Workers and Temporary Workers: guidance for sponsors

Sponsor a Skilled Worker

Version 07/25

This document forms part of the collection ‘Workers and Temporary Workers: guidance for sponsors’. It provides information for employers on how to sponsor a person on the Skilled Worker immigration route.

This version of the guidance is valid from 22 July 2025.

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About this guidance

This document provides information for employers on how to sponsor a worker on the Skilled Worker immigration route.

The Skilled Worker route allows employers to recruit people to work in the UK in a specific job in an eligible skilled occupation. It replaced the Tier 2 (General) route from 1 December 2020.

Other guidance you must read

To make sure you meet all of the relevant requirements and fulfil your sponsorship duties, you must read the following parts of the sponsor guidance, in addition to this document:

- [Part 1: Apply for a licence](#) – this contains detailed information on how to apply for a sponsor licence and how we assess applications
- [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#) – this contains detailed information on how to sponsor Workers and Temporary Workers, including how to request and assign Certificates of Sponsorship, immigration requirements, and conditions of stay
- [Part 3: Sponsor duties and compliance](#) – this contains detailed information about your duties as a licensed sponsor and the action we can take if you fail to meet these duties
- any relevant annexes or appendices referred to in the above documents

You can access all of these documents, and other information on sponsorship, on the [Sponsorship: guidance for employers and educators](#) page on GOV.UK.

This guidance is subject to change. If you have printed or downloaded a copy of this guidance, check the version number and date on GOV.UK to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version.

Glossary

There is a glossary of terms used throughout the sponsor guidance (including this document) at the beginning of [Part 1: Apply for a licence](#).

For a definition of ‘occupation code’, ‘SOC 2020 occupation code’ and ‘SOC 2010 occupation code’, see the glossary in [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#).

The following additional terms are used in this document:

Regulated activity

When referring to occupation codes 6135 (care workers and home carers) or 6136 (senior care workers) with a working location in England, this means any activity specified in Schedule 1 to the [Health and Social Care Act 2008 \(Regulated Activities\) Regulations 2014](#).

Skilled Worker

This means a person who is applying for, or has been granted, entry clearance or permission to stay on the Skilled Worker route; or who you are sponsoring, or intend to sponsor, on that route.

Skilled Worker route

The route in [Appendix Skilled Worker to the Immigration Rules](#). Where the context requires, it can also refer to the Tier 2 (General) route in place before 1 December 2020.

Tier 2 (General) Migrant

A person with permission on the Tier 2 (General) route.

Tier 2 (General) route

The route in Part 6A of the Immigration Rules in place before 1 December 2020. This was the main route for skilled workers before the launch of the Skilled Worker route.

You can find previous versions of the Immigration Rules in the [Immigration Rules Archive](#) on GOV.UK.

Contacts

If you think this guidance has factual errors or broken links, you can email the [Business Helpdesk](#).

If you have read this guidance, and the guidance referred to above, and you still have any queries, you can call us on 0300 123 4699 or email the [Business Helpdesk](#).

Version number and publication

Below is information on the version number of this guidance and when it was published:

- version 07/25
- published on 22 July 2025

You can view [previous versions of this guidance](#) on the National Archives website.

Changes to this guidance

This version replaces version 04/25 (published on 9 April 2025). The guidance has been updated to reflect changes to the Immigration Rules coming into force on 22 July 2025, as set out in [Statement of Changes HC 997](#) (published on 1 July 2025).

The changes apply to workers assigned a Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) on or after 22 July 2025 and include:

- increasing the skills threshold from level 3 on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) to RQF6 (graduate level), except where the job is on the Immigration Salary List or Temporary Shortage List, or the worker meets a transitional provision
- ending overseas applications from care workers and senior care workers
- increasing salary thresholds

Details of the changes are set out below. Paragraph numbers in brackets refer to the previous version of this guidance where the number was different:

- SK1.2: updated to reflect the new skill level requirement from 22 July 2025
- SK1.5, SK3.34: minor drafting amendment to reflect the qualifying period for settlement is likely to be increased (as set out in the [Immigration White Paper](#))
- SK1.6: updated to reflect that Skilled Workers being sponsored for jobs below graduate level can generally no longer bring dependants
- SK2.7: minor amendment to reflect further restrictions on sponsoring care workers and senior care workers (see section SK4 for full details)
- SK2.9: reference to Defined CoS removed, as it's no longer possible to sponsor a care worker or senior care worker who will be applying from overseas
- SK4.1 to SK4.24 (SK4.1 to SK4.7): guidance on the skill level requirement (eligible occupation code) has been significantly redrafted to reflect that, from 22 July 2025, Skilled Workers can generally only be sponsored for graduate level jobs, except where the job is on the Immigration Salary List or Temporary Shortage List, or the worker meets a transitional provision
- SK4.25 to SK4.52 (SK4.23 to SK4.39): the 'care worker' subsection has been updated and redrafted to introduce a new 'immigration status requirement' for care workers and senior care workers, remove the 'recruitment requirement', and make some minor updates and drafting amendments to the 'regulation requirement'
- SK4.53 to SK4.60 (SK4.4 to SK4.11): these subsections have been moved but without any changes to their content
- SK5.1: correction of cross-reference
- SK5.10: salary thresholds updated
- SK5.13, SK6.5, SK6.33 (SK6.29), SK7.13, SK7.16: references to tables in Appendix Skilled Occupations updated
- SK6.7: examples deleted
- SK6.8 to SK6.30 (SK6.8 to SK6.27): tables and narrative text updated to reflect revised salary thresholds, skill thresholds and table references in Appendix Skilled Occupations
- SK6.40: clarification added that jobs on the Temporary Shortage List are not eligible for points under Options D or I unless they also appear on the Immigration Salary List
- SK7.9, SK7.14, SK7.18: examples updated to reflect revised salary thresholds
- SK11.19 (15th bullet point): minor amendment to reflect the introduction of the Temporary Shortage List
- SK11.19: final bullet updated to include reference to additional requirements for occupation code 6131 and the transitional provision for skill level
- SK12.12: minor amendment to first bullet point to reflect that Health and Care ASHE salary jobs below graduate level are only eligible to be sponsored if they

- are on the Immigration Salary List or Temporary Shortage List, or the worker meets the transitional provision for skill level
- SK12.16 to SK12.18: new paragraphs requiring sponsors to provide additional information when applying for a Defined CoS to sponsor a worker in a job below graduate level under the transitional provision; subsequent paragraphs in this section renumbered accordingly
 - (SK12.17): paragraph deleted as care workers and senior care workers are no longer eligible to apply from overseas
 - SK12.24 (SK12.22): new bullet point added to provide for rejection of a Defined CoS request where the worker does not meet a relevant transitional provision
 - SK13.3: cross-reference updated
 - SK13.5 to SK13.7 (SK13.4 to SK13.5): updated to reflect new skill-level thresholds
 - SK13.9 (SK13.7): reference to care workers and senior care workers deleted as this is now covered by paragraph SK13.5
 - other minor housekeeping changes

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SK1. Sponsoring a Skilled Worker: overview

This section provides an overview of the Skilled Worker route and the sponsorship requirements you must meet.

What is the Skilled Worker route?

- SK1.1. The Skilled Worker route is the main immigration route for overseas nationals who wish to work in the UK (including UK waters). It allows UK-based employers to recruit overseas workers to fill a wide range of skilled vacancies in the UK.
- SK1.2. A Skilled Worker must have a job offer in an [eligible skilled occupation](#) from a Home Office-approved sponsor. From 22 July 2025, the job must normally be skilled to level 6 (graduate level) on the Regulated Qualifications Framework for England and Northern Ireland, or the equivalent level in Wales or Scotland, or be included on either the Immigration Salary List or the Temporary Shortage List. There are transitional provisions for workers sponsored in lower-skilled roles before 22 July 2025.
- SK1.3. You can also sponsor eligible healthcare professionals for the [Health and Care visa](#), which is a special subcategory of the Skilled Worker route.
- SK1.4. All jobs sponsored on this route must meet the [Skilled Worker salary requirements](#).
- SK1.5. Skilled Workers can currently apply to settle in the UK after 5 years' continuous lawful residence on this (or another eligible) route.
- SK1.6. A Skilled Worker being sponsored for a job at graduate level or above can be accompanied or joined by their partner and dependent children if they meet the relevant requirements for dependants. Workers being sponsored for jobs below graduate level are generally no longer allowed to be accompanied or joined by their dependants, unless a transitional provision or other exception specified in the Immigration Rules applies. For further information, see:
- [Appendix Skilled Worker](#) (paragraphs SW 26.1 to SW 46.2)
 - [Skilled Worker visa: your partner and children](#)
 - [Health and Care Worker visa: your partner and children](#)

Who needs to be sponsored on the Skilled Worker route?

- SK1.7. You will need to sponsor any overseas national you wish to employ if they are not a 'settled worker' or do not otherwise have immigration

permission to work for you in the UK. This includes most [EU, EEA](#) and Swiss nationals who arrived in the UK after 31 December 2020.

- SK1.8. You do not have to sponsor certain categories of worker, including:
- Irish citizens
 - people who have been granted status under the [EU Settlement Scheme](#)
 - people with indefinite leave to enter or remain in the UK (also known as ‘settlement’)
- SK1.9. This is not a complete list. For further information on who does, and does not, need sponsorship, see section S1 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#).

What are the sponsorship requirements for the Skilled Worker route?

- SK1.10. If you wish to sponsor a Skilled Worker, you must:
- hold a [valid sponsor licence](#) for the Skilled Worker route
 - understand the general requirements for sponsoring a worker – see [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#)
 - satisfy yourself the worker can meet the [immigration requirements](#) for this route
 - only sponsor workers in [genuine employment](#) which meets the [skill-level](#) and [salary requirements](#) of this route
 - if you wish to sponsor a nurse or midwife before they have achieved full registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council, [understand the registration process and your additional sponsor duties](#)
 - assign a valid [Certificate of Sponsorship \(CoS\)](#) to the worker you wish to sponsor and pay any [relevant CoS fee](#) and [Immigration Skills Charge](#)
 - ensure you understand the [difference between a ‘Defined CoS’ and an ‘Undefined’ CoS](#)
 - keep records for each worker you sponsor, including information on how you recruited the worker – see [Appendix D](#) to the sponsor guidance
 - have eligible Key Personnel in place to manage your licence and assign or apply for CoS – see section L4 of [Part 1: Apply for a licence](#) for guidance on Key Personnel
 - understand and comply with all of your sponsor duties – see [Part 3: Sponsor duties and compliance](#)

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SK2. How to get a Skilled Worker sponsor licence

This section tells you about the requirements you must meet to be eligible for a Skilled Worker sponsor licence.

General requirements

- SK2.1. If you wish to sponsor a Skilled Worker, you must hold a valid sponsor licence for the Skilled Worker route. If you do not already hold such a licence, you must apply for one by completing the [online application form](#), paying the relevant [application fee](#), and submitting the supporting evidence specified in [Appendix A](#) to the sponsor guidance.
- SK2.2. Before applying for your licence, you should read:
- [Part 1: Apply for a licence](#) for detailed information on the general requirements and the application process
 - this section for guidance specific to the Skilled Worker route
- SK2.3. If you already hold a valid licence to sponsor workers, but it does not include the Skilled Worker route, you can apply to add the Skilled Worker route to your existing licence. You may have to pay an additional fee for this. For further information on adding routes to your licence, see section L10 of [Part 1: Apply for a licence](#).
- SK2.4. You are responsible for paying the sponsor licence fee and any associated administrative costs. If you are granted a licence, we will normally revoke your licence if we find you have recouped, or attempted to recoup, any part of the sponsor licence fee or associated administrative costs, by any means, from a worker you are sponsoring on or after 31 December 2024. For further information, see 'Sponsorship fees' in section L6 of [Part 1: Apply for a licence](#).

Specific requirements for a Skilled Worker licence

- SK2.5. In addition to the general requirements for a sponsor licence set out in [Part 1: Apply for a licence](#), to be eligible for a Skilled Worker sponsor licence, you must be able to offer employment that:
- meets the [skill level](#) and [salary requirements](#) for this route
 - is [genuine](#)
 - does not amount to the [hiring of the worker to a third party](#) to undertake an ongoing or routine role
 - complies with the [National Minimum Wage and the Working Time Regulations](#)

Evidence required

- SK2.6. Unless you are an organisation listed in section 5 of [Appendix A](#), you must normally submit with your application:
- a minimum of 4 documents (including any documents specified as mandatory for your type of organisation in section 2 of Appendix A)
 - additional information about your organisation and the jobs you intend to fill if you are granted a licence, as specified in section 3 of Appendix A

If you will be sponsoring care workers or senior care workers

- SK2.7. If you intend to sponsor any workers under occupation code 6135 (care workers and home carers) or 6136 (senior care workers), where permitted under this guidance, with a working location in any part of England, you must:
- be currently undertaking at least one '[regulated activity](#)'; and
 - hold active registration with the [Care Quality Commission \(CQC\)](#)
- SK2.8. You must include the following information with your application:
- the working location, or locations, of any workers you intend to sponsor under occupation codes 6135 or 6136
 - details of what regulated activity, or activities, your organisation undertakes
 - your CQC registration number, which we will check online
- SK2.9. If you are granted, or already have, a Skilled Worker sponsor licence, and you intend to sponsor a worker under these occupation codes, you must provide this information when you assign a Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) or request an allocation of Undefined CoS. For further information, see [section SK4](#).
- SK2.10. If your sponsored workers will be working under occupation codes 6135 or 6136 in any other part of the UK, you must confirm whether they will be undertaking any regulated or equivalent activities under the legislation of those countries and details of any registration you hold with the relevant regulator:
- [Care Inspectorate](#) (Scotland)
 - [Care Inspectorate Wales / Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru](#)
 - [Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority](#) (Northern Ireland)

How to keep your licence

- SK2.11. If you are granted a licence, you must comply with all of your sponsor duties. If you do not, we may take action against you, including:

- downgrading your licence rating
- suspending your licence
- revoking your licence
- reporting you to the police or other relevant authorities

SK2.12. For details, see [Part 3: Sponsor duties and compliance](#).

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SK3. Immigration requirements for Skilled Workers

This section tells you about the immigration requirements Skilled Workers must meet and where you can find further information.

Overview

- SK3.1. People who wish to come to the UK on the Skilled Worker route must meet the requirements in [Appendix Skilled Worker to the Immigration Rules](#).
- SK3.2. These requirements include that the applicant ('worker'):
- is aged at least 18 on the date of application
 - meets the 'points' requirement of the route (sponsorship, skill level, salary and English language), as set out below
 - meets the [genuineness requirement](#)
 - meets the [financial requirement](#)
 - if they were previously an [officially sponsored student](#), has the consent of that sponsor to making the application
 - if relevant, meets the [criminal records certificate requirement](#)
 - meets the requirements relating to [entry to the UK, extension of permission](#) or ['switching'](#), as appropriate
- SK3.3. This is not the full list of requirements – you must refer to the relevant [Immigration Rules](#) for these.

Points requirement

- SK3.4. All applicants on the Skilled Worker route must score 70 'points' to be eligible for entry clearance or permission to stay. How the points are awarded is set out in the table below. The worker must score the specified number of points for each row in the table.

Points type	Description	Points available
Sponsorship	You must assign a valid Certificate of Sponsorship to the worker for the job you wish to sponsor them for. The job must: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• be a genuine role• meet the rules on working for a third party (if relevant)• comply with the National Minimum Wage and Working Time Regulations	20

Points type	Description	Points available
Job at an appropriate skill level	The job must be in an eligible occupation and (where relevant) meet the ATAS requirement and additional requirements for care workers and senior care workers – see section SK4 for further information.	20
Salary	You must pay the worker at least the applicable general threshold and going rate for the job they are being sponsored for. The applicable threshold depends on a number of factors, as set out in section SK6 .	20
English language	The worker must have English language skills at level B1 or higher on the Common European Framework of Reference for language in all 4 components (speaking, listening, reading, writing), as specified in Appendix English Language . For guidance on proving this requirement, see ' Knowledge of English ' on GOV.UK	10

SK3.5. The worker must also meet a number of non-points-based criteria, such as the genuineness requirement, financial requirement, and (where relevant) the overseas criminal records requirement.

Genuine role requirement

SK3.6. We will not award points for sponsorship if we have reasonable grounds to believe that the job role you are sponsoring the worker for:

- does not exist
- is a sham; or
- has been created mainly so the worker can apply for entry clearance or permission to stay

SK3.7. If you assign a CoS for a role which is not genuine, we will refuse the worker's application and we may take action against you.

SK3.8. For further information, see 'Genuine vacancy: definition' in section C1 of [Part 3: Sponsor duties and compliance](#).

Working for a third party

SK3.9. You must not assign a CoS to a worker for a role which amounts to either:

- the hire of the worker to a third party who is not the sponsor to fill a position with that party, whether temporary or permanent; or
- contract work to undertake an ongoing routine role or to provide an ongoing routine service for a third party who is not the sponsor,

regardless of the nature or length of any arrangement between the sponsor and the third party

- SK3.10. If we have reasonable grounds to believe you have done so, we will not award points for sponsorship. If that happens, we will refuse the worker's application and may take action against you.
- SK3.11. For further information, see 'Working on a contract basis' in section S1 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#).

Compliance with National Minimum Wage and the Working Time Regulations

- SK3.12. The role you are sponsoring the worker for must always comply with the National Minimum Wage Regulations 2015 and the Working Time Regulations 1998. We will refuse any application for entry clearance or permission, and reject any application for a Defined CoS, where we have reasonable grounds to believe it does not. We will also consider revoking your sponsor licence if we find you are breaching these Regulations.
- SK3.13. For further information, see 'Compliance with National Minimum Wage and the Working Time Regulations' in section S4 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#).

Genuineness requirement

- SK3.14. The worker must:
- genuinely intend, and be able, to do the role for which they are being sponsored; and
 - not intend to take employment other than in the role for which they are being sponsored, or as otherwise permitted by their conditions of stay (see section S8 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#) for more information on conditions of stay)

Financial requirement

- SK3.15. If the worker is applying for entry clearance from outside the UK, or has been in the UK for less than one year at the date of application, they must show they have enough funds to support themselves and any family members in the UK.
- SK3.16. If you are an A-rated sponsor, you can certify this requirement is met when you assign a CoS to them (also known as 'certifying maintenance'). Otherwise, the worker must provide evidence of funds as specified in [Appendix Finance](#) to the Immigration Rules.
- SK3.17. For further information, see 'Financial requirement' in section S7 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#).

Former officially-sponsored students

- SK3.18. If the worker has, in the 12 months before the date of application, received an award from a Government or international scholarship agency covering both fees and maintenance, they must provide written consent to their application from that Government or agency. If they do not, we will reject their application as invalid.

Entry requirement

- SK3.19. Workers must apply for entry clearance (a visa) to be able to come to the UK on this route. If they arrive in the UK without the relevant visa, they will be refused entry, even if they otherwise meet the requirements.
- SK3.20. If the worker you wish to sponsor will be applying for a visa from outside the UK, you must make a successful application for a '[Defined CoS](#)' for the role before you can assign it to the worker.

Extension of permission

- SK3.21. Workers already in the UK with permission on the Skilled Worker route can apply to extend their stay if they meet the relevant requirements – this could be to continue in the same employment or to change employer or employment. See section S9 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#) for further information.

‘Switching’ to the Skilled Worker route

- SK3.22. People in the UK on another immigration route can ‘switch’ (change route) to the Skilled Worker route if they meet all the relevant immigration requirements and were not last granted permission:
- as a Visitor
 - as a Student, unless they meet the additional rules for people [switching from the Student route](#) (as set out below)
 - as a Short-term student
 - as a Parent of a Child Student
 - as a Seasonal Worker
 - as a Domestic Worker in a Private Household
 - outside the Immigration Rules
- SK3.23. If a person you wish to sponsor is in the UK on any of the above routes, they will normally need to leave the UK and apply for entry clearance as a Skilled Worker.

Switching from the Student route

- SK3.24. If the person you wish to sponsor will be applying for permission to stay (from within the UK) and they have, or last had, permission as a Student (including as a Tier 4 (General) Migrant), they must meet one

of the following conditions on the date they make their application to be allowed to switch to the Skilled Worker route:

- they must have completed the course of study for which they were being sponsored as a Student
- they must be studying a full-time course of study at degree level or above with a higher education provider which has a track record of compliance, and the start date on their CoS must be no earlier than the course completion date
- they must be studying a full-time course of study leading to the award of a PhD with a higher education provider which has a track record of compliance, and the start date on their CoS must be no earlier than 24 months after the start date of their PhD

- SK3.25. A ‘higher education provider with a track record of compliance’ will be shown on the [Register of student sponsors](#) with the type ‘Higher Education Institution (HEI)’ and with the status ‘Student Sponsor – Track Record’.
- SK3.26. If you wish to sponsor a worker who has, or last had, permission as a Student, you must carefully check they can meet one of the above conditions before you assign a CoS to them. If they do not meet one of these conditions, they will not be permitted to switch.

Permission to work while a switching application is pending

- SK3.27. A person who has made an application to switch to the Skilled Worker route must not start working for you until their application has been granted unless, on the date of application, they already have a type of immigration permission which allows them to do the work in question (for example, if they have permission as a dependant of a Skilled Worker and a [right to work check](#) confirms they are not prohibited from doing the work in question).
- SK3.28. A person who has permission as a Student may be allowed to work for 10 or 20 hours per week during term-time (depending on the type of course), and unlimited hours outside of term time (with certain restrictions on the type of work they can do). Some Students are not permitted to work at all. For further information on work conditions for Students, see the [Student and Child Student guidance](#).
- SK3.29. Students (even those with permission to work) are not normally allowed to fill a full-time permanent vacancy. There is an exception to this for those applying to switch to the Skilled Worker route if all of the following conditions are met:
- the Student is, or has been, studying a full-time course of study at degree level or above with a higher education provider with a track record of compliance (see paragraph SK3.25 above for a definition of this term)

- the Student has made a valid application for permission to stay as a Skilled Worker before their Student permission has expired
 - the Skilled Worker application was made no more than 3 months before the course completion date
 - the CoS start date is no earlier than the course completion date
 - a decision has not been made on their Skilled Worker application, or where a decision has been made, any administrative review against a refusal of that application has not been finally determined
- SK3.30. This means that if you have assigned a CoS to a Student who meets all of the above conditions, they can start working for you in a permanent role as soon as they have made a valid Skilled Worker application, even if this is before the start date on their CoS, as in the example below:
- Example**
A Student is following a full-time degree course at a higher education provider with a track record of compliance. The course end date is 30 June 2024 and they have permission as a Student until 30 October 2024. You assign a Skilled Worker CoS to the Student on 24 June 2024 with a work start date of 30 September 2024. The Student makes a valid Skilled Worker application on 1 July 2024. A right to work check confirms they can work up to 20 hours per week during term time and full time outside of term time. The Student can therefore start working for you in a full-time permanent role from 1 July 2024.
- SK3.31. If a Student applying under this rule makes a valid application while they are still studying, they will be limited to working a maximum of 20 hours per week until they have completed their studies.
- SK3.32. You must stop sponsoring the worker if their Skilled Worker application is eventually refused (and any administrative review is finally dismissed), and must not continue to otherwise employ them, unless (despite the refusal) they still have another type of valid immigration permission that allows them to do the work in question.

Period of grant

- SK3.33. If the worker makes a successful application for entry clearance or permission to stay as a Skilled Worker, they will be granted permission for:
- the period of employment stated on their CoS (you can assign a CoS for a maximum period of 5 years), plus:
 - any time before the start date on the CoS (an application can be made up to 3 months before the start date)
 - 14 days after the end date on the CoS (or, where the worker is being sponsored under occupation code 2211 as a general practitioner in specialty training, 4 months after the end date on their CoS)

Settlement

- SK3.34. Workers who have been continuously and lawfully resident in the UK on the Skilled Worker route (or other eligible route) for 5 years or more may currently apply to [settle in the UK permanently](#) (known as 'settlement' or 'indefinite leave to remain'). For details of the requirements, see paragraphs SW 19.1 to SW 25.2 of [Appendix Skilled Worker](#).

Further information on immigration requirements

- SK3.35. You can find more information about the [Skilled Worker visa](#) on GOV.UK.
- SK3.36. You should also refer to sections S7 to S9 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#) for further information on immigration requirements, conditions of stay, extension applications and change of employment applications.

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SK4. Skill level requirement for Skilled Workers

This section tells you how to ensure that any jobs you wish to sponsor workers for on the Skilled Worker route are at the appropriate skill level and otherwise meet the job eligibility requirements.

SK4.1. All applicants applying on the Skilled Worker route must score 20 points for having a job at the appropriate skill level. The following requirements must be met:

- the worker must be sponsored for a job in an eligible SOC 2020 occupation code
- if being sponsored under SOC 2020 occupation code 6135 (care workers and home carers) or 6136 (senior care workers), the [additional requirements for those occupations](#) must be met
- you must ensure you [choose the correct occupation code](#)
- if relevant, the worker must meet the [Academic Technology Approval Scheme \(ATAS\) requirement](#)

Eligible occupation code

SK4.2. The job the worker is being sponsored to do must be in an eligible SOC 2020 occupation code (or, where relevant, an eligible job within a SOC 2020 occupation code) listed in the relevant table of [Appendix Skilled Occupations](#). SOC 2020 occupation codes have replaced the SOC 2010 occupation codes previously in place.

SK4.3. For Certificates of Sponsorship (CoS) assigned on or after 22 July 2025, the job must normally be listed in Table 1, 2 or 3 of Appendix Skilled Occupations. These are jobs which are considered to be skilled to level 6 (graduate level) or above on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) for England and Northern Ireland, or the equivalent level in Scotland or Wales. The worker does not need to have a graduate-level qualification but the work they do must be skilled to that level.

SK4.4. You may still be able to sponsor a worker for a job below graduate level if it's included on the Immigration Salary List or Temporary Shortage List, or a transitional provision applies.

SK4.5. For CoS assigned before 22 July 2025, see the [relevant previous version of this guidance](#).

Eligible graduate level jobs

SK4.6. Eligible graduate-level jobs are listed in the following tables of Appendix Skilled Occupations:

- Table 1, where the worker will be claiming points for salary under one of Options A to E
- Table 2, where the worker will be claiming points for salary under one of Options F to J
- Table 3, where the worker will be claiming points for salary under Option K

- SK4.7. Jobs in Table 2 are identical to those in Table 1 but the worker can be paid a reduced salary if they are being sponsored for a ‘Health and Care ASHE salary job’, or meet the transitional provision for salary. [See section SK6](#) for further information on salary points options.
- SK4.8. Jobs in Table 3 are health and education jobs subject to national pay scales. Where the job is subject to ‘Agenda for Change’ pay scales, it must be at least Band 5. You can only sponsor a worker for a Band 3 or Band 4 job if it meets the requirements for jobs below graduate level described below. Band 1 and Band 2 jobs are not eligible to be sponsored on the Skilled Worker route.

When you can sponsor a worker for a job below graduate level

- SK4.9. You can only sponsor a worker for a job below graduate level if one of the following is true:
- the job is on the Immigration Salary List or the Temporary Shortage List
 - the job is listed in Table 1a, Table 2aa or Table 3a of Appendix Skilled Occupations, and the worker meets the transitional provision for skill level described below
 - the job is listed in Table 2a of Appendix Skilled Occupations, the worker meets the [transitional provision for salary](#) described in section SK6 and is continuing to work for the same sponsor
- SK4.10. These jobs are considered to be skilled to level RQF 3 to 5, except for those in Table 2a and occupation code 6145 (care workers and home carers), all of which are RQF level 2. Jobs in Table 2aa are identical to those in Table 1a but the worker can be paid a reduced salary if they meet the requirements under salary options F to J. [See section SK6](#) for further information on salary thresholds and points options.

Job on the Immigration Salary List or Temporary Shortage List

- SK4.11. [Appendix Immigration Salary List](#) contains occupations eligible for the Skilled Worker route which the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) has identified as having labour shortages and where it is sensible to offer a discounted salary. This includes jobs both at (or above) graduate level and below. These jobs are therefore eligible for salary points [under Options D and I](#).

- SK4.12. The Temporary Shortage List at paragraph SW 6.1A of [Appendix Skilled Worker](#) includes occupations at RQF levels 3 to 5 which the Department for Business and Trade and HM Treasury have identified as being important for the [UK's Modern Industrial Strategy](#). Jobs on the Temporary Shortage List are not eligible for a discounted salary under Options D or I, unless they also appear on the Immigration Salary List.
- SK4.13. Entries on these lists are time-limited and conditional. The jobs currently listed are due to be removed by the end of 2026, unless the MAC recommends they continue to be included (with the exception of care workers and senior care workers, for whom there are separate arrangements). The Government reserves the right to bring this date forward (if, for example, there is evidence of non-compliance in a particular sector).
- SK4.14. There are additional requirements if you wish to sponsor a worker under the following occupation codes on the Immigration Salary List:
- 6131 (nursing auxiliaries and assistants) – see below
 - 6135 (care workers and home carers) and 6136 (senior care workers) – see '[Additional requirements for care workers and senior care workers](#)'

Occupation code 6131: additional requirements

- SK4.15. You can only sponsor a worker under occupation code 6131 (nursing auxiliaries and assistants) if they will be working in an environment where at least one registered nurse role also exists. You must confirm this when you assign, apply for, or request any CoS to sponsor a worker under this occupation code. You can include this information in the job description field of the CoS form, by adding a sponsor note after you've assigned the CoS, or in your request for additional Undefined CoS.
- SK4.16. If you fail to include this information, your application or request for a CoS may be rejected, or the worker's application may be refused.

Transitional provision for skill level

- SK4.17. If the job is not on the Immigration Salary List or Temporary Shortage List, you can sponsor a worker for a job below graduate level under the transitional provision for skill level. Where this applies, the worker must meet both of the following:
- they must have been granted permission as a Skilled Worker under the Immigration Rules in force before 22 July 2025
 - they must have had continuous permission as a Skilled Worker since that grant of permission
- SK4.18. Continuous permission can include a short period without permission if this was disregarded under [paragraph 39E of the Immigration Rules](#).

SK4.19. This transitional provision will not be in place indefinitely and will be reviewed in due course.

Assigning or requesting a CoS under the transitional provision

- SK4.20. You should check carefully the worker can meet this transitional provision before assigning a CoS to them, requesting a CoS or applying for a Defined CoS.
- SK4.21. When you assign a CoS to a worker under this transitional provision, you should include a statement (either in the job description field or by adding a sponsor note after you've assigned the CoS) confirming that the worker meets the transitional provision for skill level. Where possible, you should also include the worker's most recent CoS number.
- SK4.22. You should only apply for a Defined CoS, or request additional Undefined CoS, to sponsor a worker under this transitional provision if you've already identified a specific worker. If you have not yet identified a worker, you cannot know if the worker you eventually assign it to will meet the transitional provision.
- SK4.23. You must include the following in either the job description field of your Defined CoS application, or in your request for Undefined CoS:
- a statement confirming the worker meets the transitional provision for skill level
 - the name, nationality and date of birth of the worker, and any relevant Home Office reference number if you know it
 - the worker's most recent CoS number, if you know it
- SK4.24. If you fail to include this information, your request or application is likely to be rejected.

Additional requirements for care workers and senior care workers

SK4.25. There are additional requirements that must be met if you wish to sponsor a worker under either of the following occupation codes:

- 6135 (care workers and home carers)
- 6136 (senior care workers)

SK4.26. These requirements are:

- [the care worker immigration status requirement](#)
- [the care worker regulation requirement](#)

SK4.27. You must read the relevant sections below to ensure you fully understand these requirements. The requirements have been

introduced due to evidence of significant non-compliance by care providers, resulting in a number of care workers being left without a licensed sponsor or sufficient work in the UK. We also strongly recommend you read the following guidance to ensure the safe and ethical recruitment of care workers:

- [Code of practice for the international recruitment of health and social care personnel](#) (GOV.UK)
- [International recruitment](#) (Skills for Care guidance)

SK4.28. The Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC) has also issued [guidance for overseas nationals who wish to work in the care sector](#).

Care worker immigration status requirement

SK4.29. From 22 July 2025, if you wish to sponsor a care worker or senior care worker under occupation code 6135 or 6136, the worker must already be in the UK and be applying for permission to stay.

SK4.30. Additionally, the worker must have either:

- been legally working for you as a care worker or senior care worker for a minimum period of 3 months before the date you assigned them a CoS
- last been granted permission as a Skilled Worker to work in either occupation code 6135 or 6136 (or their SOC 2010 predecessor codes, 6145 or 6146 respectively) and have had continuous permission to work in either of these roles since then

SK4.31. There is further information about these requirements below.

SK4.32. You can no longer sponsor a worker under these occupation codes if they will be applying for entry clearance (from outside the UK) or they otherwise do not meet one of the requirements above.

Worker legally working for you for 3 months

SK4.33. Where the worker has been legally working for you for at least 3 months (with permission on an immigration route that allows them to do the work in question), and you now wish to sponsor them as a Skilled Worker, their application for permission to stay must be made no later than 22 July 2028, after which this transitional provision will end. We will keep this date under review.

SK4.34. You must retain evidence that the worker has been working for you for at least 3 months (for example, pay slips, contract of employment or engagement) before you assigned them a CoS. See [Appendix D to the sponsor guidance](#) for further details of your record-keeping duties.

Worker last sponsored as a Skilled Worker

- SK4.35. Where the worker was last granted permission as a Skilled Worker to work in one of these occupation codes, they can apply for further permission, either to continue with the same sponsor or to work for a different sponsor. If you are their new sponsor, you should ask to see evidence from the worker that they were previously working as a care worker or senior care worker for another Skilled Worker sponsor.
- SK4.36. The worker must have had continuous permission as a Skilled Worker since they were last granted to work in one of these occupations. The continuous period may include a short period without permission if this was disregarded under [paragraph 39E of the Immigration Rules](#).

Salary requirements for care workers and senior care workers

- SK4.37. If you are sponsoring the worker for a Skilled Worker [Health and Care visa](#), you must pay them a salary of at least £25,000 a year, or £12.82 for each hour worked, whichever is higher.
- SK4.38. If the worker does not meet the requirements for a Health and Care visa, you may sponsor them for a standard Skilled Worker visa but only if you pay them a salary of at least £33,400 a year, or £17.13 for each hour worked, whichever is higher.

The care worker regulation requirement

- SK4.39. This requirement applies where:
- you are sponsoring, or intend to sponsor, a worker under either occupation code 6135 (care workers and home carers) or 6136 (senior care workers)
 - the working location of the job includes any part of England
- SK4.40. Where these conditions apply, you must:
- be currently undertaking a ‘regulated activity’; and
 - hold ‘active’ registration with the Care Quality Commission (CQC)
- SK4.41. See the glossary for a definition of ‘[regulated activity](#)’. There is detailed guidance on [the scope of regulated activities on the CQC website](#).
- SK4.42. If you do not meet the regulation requirement, the worker’s application for permission will be refused. Any request for a CoS to sponsor such a worker will be rejected. If you are [applying for a sponsor licence with the intention of sponsoring workers in these occupations](#), we will refuse your application if you do not meet the regulation requirement.
- SK4.43. The specific requirement to hold active registration with the CQC does not affect a worker’s application for permission if the job is not based in

England, or if you are sponsoring a worker who meets all of the following requirements ('transitional provision'):

- was previously granted permission as a Skilled Worker to work in SOC 2010 occupation codes 6145 (care workers and home carers) or 6146 (senior care workers) under the Immigration Rules in force before 11 March 2024
- has held continuous permission as a Skilled Worker to work in either of these occupation codes, or their equivalent SOC 2020 occupation codes (6135 or 6136 respectively), since then (continuous permission may include a short period without permission that was disregarded under [paragraph 39E of the Immigration Rules](#))
- was sponsored by you in their most recent grant of permission and you are continuing to sponsor that worker

SK4.44. However, even if the specific requirement to hold CQC registration does not apply to the worker's application for permission to stay, you (as the sponsor) must still ensure you are registered with the CQC (or the equivalent body in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland) if required. If you do not hold, or stop holding, any required registration, we will revoke your sponsor licence.

Information you must include on a CoS for a care worker or senior care worker

SK4.45. When you assign or request a CoS under occupation codes 6135 or 6136, you must include the following information on your CoS (or in your request for that CoS):

- the working location, or locations, of the job the worker is being sponsored for
- if the job has a working location in any part of England, your CQC registration number, which must show your registration as 'active'

SK4.46. If you do not have active registration with the CQC, you must provide a reason for this. This could be because:

- the job does not have a working location in England
- you are continuing to sponsor a worker in a non-regulated activity who meets the transitional provision described in paragraph SK4.43 above

SK4.47. If the job has a working location in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland, and you are undertaking regulated (or equivalent) activities in those parts of the UK, you must be registered with the appropriate regulatory body for that part of the UK:

- Care Inspectorate (Scotland)
- Care Inspectorate Wales / Arolygiaeth Gofal Cymru
- Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (Northern Ireland)

- SK4.48. You should also explain how the worker meets the immigration status requirement by including a statement such as:
- the worker has been employed by you as a care worker / senior care worker since [date] – you should also state what type of immigration permission they have
 - the worker was last granted permission as a Skilled Worker to work as a care worker / senior care worker and has had continuous permission since then – where possible, you should also include their most recent CoS number
- SK4.49. You can include this additional information in either the job description field of the CoS form or by adding a sponsor note after you've assigned the CoS. If you are requesting additional CoS to sponsor a worker in one of these occupations, you should include this information in your request.
- SK4.50. If you do not include this information, the worker's application for permission may be rejected or refused, or your request for additional CoS may be rejected.

A note on the 'displaced worker pool'

- SK4.51. The 'care worker recruitment requirement' in the [previous version of this guidance](#) (which required sponsors to attempt to recruit from the pool of displaced care workers) has been removed, as the only workers now eligible to be sponsored in these roles are those who were exempt from that requirement in any case.
- SK4.52. However, if you intend to recruit a care worker or senior care worker, you may wish to consider a worker from the displaced worker pool. To do this, contact your regional care partnership, who will be able to provide you with contact details of displaced workers known to them. For further information, see the DHSC publication '[Support offer to international ASC workers whose employer's sponsor licence has been revoked](#)'.

Choosing the correct occupation code

- SK4.53. When you assign a CoS to a Skilled Worker, you must choose an appropriate and eligible SOC 2020 occupation code for the job from the relevant table of Appendix Skilled Occupations. The University of Warwick has developed a [Computer Assisted Structured Coding Tool \(CASCOT\)](#) which can help you choose the correct SOC 2020 code. There is also guidance in section S3 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#).
- SK4.54. We will not award points to a worker (and so will refuse their application) if we have reasonable grounds to believe you have chosen a less appropriate occupation code for any of the following reasons:

- the most appropriate occupation code for the job is not eligible for the Skilled Worker route
- the most appropriate occupation code for the job has a higher going rate than the salary you intend to pay the worker
- the worker is also claiming points under Option D or I for a job in Appendix Immigration Salary List and the most appropriate occupation code is not listed in that Appendix
- the worker is claiming points for a relevant PhD (Option B, C, G or H) and the most appropriate occupation code is not listed as “eligible for PhD points” in the relevant table of Appendix Skilled Occupations

SK4.55. When assessing if you have chosen an inappropriate occupation code, we may consider a number of factors, including, but not limited to:

- whether you have shown a genuine need for the job as described
- whether the worker has the appropriate skills, qualifications and experience needed to do the job as described in the CoS
- your history of compliance with the immigration system including, but not limited to, paying your sponsored workers appropriately
- any additional information you may provide

SK4.56. If we find you have provided false, misleading or otherwise incorrect information about the skill level of the job on a CoS, we will take compliance action against you.

ATAS requirement

SK4.57. When you assign a CoS to a Skilled Worker, you must check and confirm whether the worker needs to apply for an [Academic Approval Technology Scheme \(ATAS\) certificate](#) from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office before they can start (or continue) working for you.

SK4.58. A Skilled Worker will need an ATAS certificate if all of the following are true:

- you are also licensed as a Student sponsor
- the worker is not an [exempt national](#)
- you are sponsoring the worker in a [relevant occupation code](#)
- the work involves research at PhD level or above in [relevant subject area](#)

See Annex S1 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#) for a definition of the terms ‘exempt national’, ‘relevant occupation code’ and ‘relevant subject area’.

SK4.59. If the worker needs an ATAS certificate, you should encourage them to apply for one as soon as possible, as they will need to include a copy of the certificate with their application for entry clearance or permission to stay. If they fail to do so, we will refuse their application and you may lose your sponsor licence (or licences).

- SK4.60. For further information on the ATAS requirement, and your responsibilities in relation to it, see under 'ATAS requirement' in section S7 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#).

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SK5. Salary requirements for Skilled Workers

This section provides an overview of the salary requirements you must meet to sponsor a person on the Skilled Worker route and how we will check that you are complying with these requirements. You must also read sections SK6 to SK8 of this guidance.

Overview

- SK5.1. You must ensure any worker you sponsor on the Skilled Worker route is paid in line with the salary rates set out in the Immigration Rules and in this guidance. The relevant Immigration Rules are contained in paragraphs SW 4.2 to SW 4.4 and SW 8.1 to SW 14.5 of [Appendix Skilled Worker](#). The going rates, where applicable, are set out in Tables 1 to 5 of [Appendix Skilled Occupations](#).
- SK5.2. These rates have been set to make sure the resident labour market is not undercut. They are reviewed and updated regularly to reflect the latest available salary data.
- SK5.3. If the amount you will pay the worker is below these rates, we will refuse their application for entry clearance or permission to stay.
- SK5.4. If we grant permission to a sponsored worker, but later find that you stop paying, or have never paid, them in line with these rates, we will take action against you – this could include [revoking your sponsor licence](#).
- SK5.5. In addition to [compliance visits](#), we will undertake regular checks with HMRC to ensure you are paying at least the salary you stated on the sponsored worker's [Certificate of Sponsorship \(CoS\)](#), in any sponsor note you have added to the CoS, or in any other notification of a change in salary.

How much do you have to pay a Skilled Worker?

- SK5.6. The minimum salary you must pay the worker depends on a number of factors, including:
- the job you wish to sponsor them for
 - the date you assigned a CoS to them or the date they applied for permission
 - whether the worker has additional ‘attributes’, such as a relevant PhD or the job being on the Immigration Salary List
- SK5.7. Unless a transitional arrangement or other exception applies, the salary you pay to the worker must meet or exceed both of the following:

- the applicable [general salary threshold](#)
- the applicable [going rate](#) for the occupation

- SK5.8. If the going rate for the occupation is higher than the general salary threshold, you must pay the worker at least the going rate. If the going rate is lower than the general salary threshold, you must pay the worker at least the general salary threshold.
- SK5.9. These rates are reviewed and updated regularly. If any of these rates are increased, this does not affect Skilled Workers you are already sponsoring for the duration of their current permission. Depending on the specific transitional arrangements, updated rates will apply either to any application for entry clearance or permission to stay made, or to any CoS assigned, on or after the date the change comes into effect, and will affect both new recruits and existing workers applying to extend their stay or settle.

General salary threshold

- SK5.10. The applicable general salary threshold depends on which option the worker you are sponsoring is claiming points under. For CoS assigned on or after 22 July 2025, it can be any of £41,700, £37,500, £33,400, £31,300, £28,200, or £25,000 per year. See [section SK6](#) for further information.
- SK5.11. The general salary threshold is calculated based on actual gross earnings, up to a maximum of 48 hours per week. See [Calculation of general salary threshold](#) (section SK7) for further information.
- SK5.12. We will not grant permission to a worker if they will be paid less than the applicable general salary threshold. The only exception is where the worker is a pre-registration nurse or midwife working towards registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council, where they can temporarily be paid less than the applicable general threshold. See [section SK9](#) for further information.

Going rate

- SK5.13. For each eligible occupation code listed in Tables 1, 1a, 2, 2aa, 2a, 3 and 3a of [Appendix Skilled Occupations](#), there is a ‘going rate’. The applicable going rate depends on the option the worker is claiming points for. The salary you pay to the worker must meet or exceed the applicable going rate. In some cases, you can pay 70, 80 or 90 per cent of the going rate if the worker scores points for attributes such as having a relevant PhD or being a new entrant.
- SK5.14. The going rate is calculated and pro-rated based on the number of hours the worker will actually work. See [Calculation of going rate](#) (section SK7) for further information.

PAYE reference numbers

- SK5.15. When you [assign a CoS](#) to a Skilled Worker, you must tell us the Pay As You Earn (PAYE) scheme reference number through which the worker will pay tax and national insurance. We will use this information to check with HMRC that you are paying the worker the amount you said you would. If you are not required to operate PAYE on the worker's earnings, you must tell us why on the CoS.
- SK5.16. Before you assign any CoS, we recommend you first add any PAYE scheme reference numbers for your sponsored workers to your licence, using the 'PAYE References' tab in your sponsorship management system (SMS) account. You will then be able to select the relevant PAYE scheme when you assign a CoS to a sponsored worker.
- SK5.17. If the PAYE scheme through which the worker pays tax and national insurance changes, you do not need to report this to us in relation to the individual worker. You must, however, ensure that the new PAYE scheme is listed in your SMS account.
- SK5.18. For further information on managing PAYE reference numbers, see Guide 9 in [SMS Manual 2: manage your sponsorship licence](#).

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SK6. Points for salary (Skilled Worker salary thresholds)

This section tells you how a worker you are sponsoring can score points for salary and meet the Skilled Worker salary requirement.

The salary thresholds in this section apply to Certificates of Sponsorship assigned on or after 22 July 2025. For previous salary thresholds, see the [relevant archived version of this guidance](#).

Overview

- SK6.1. All applicants on the Skilled Worker route must score 20 ‘points’ for salary, based on the salary you enter on their Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS).
- SK6.2. There are various ways a worker can score points for salary. These are labelled as Options A to K in the Immigration Rules and in this guidance. These options also show the minimum amount you must pay the worker in the specified circumstances.
- SK6.3. A worker can only score points under one option. There is guidance on how to choose the correct option below.
- SK6.4. You must also read [section SK7](#) for guidance on how allowances and deductions affect salaries, and how salaries are calculated to account for different working patterns.

How to choose the correct points option

- SK6.5. [Option K](#) is the only relevant option if you are sponsoring the worker in a health or education occupation listed in either Table 3 or Table 3a of [Appendix Skilled Occupations](#).
- SK6.6. [Options F to J](#) are the relevant options in either of the following circumstances:
 - you are sponsoring the worker for a Health and Care visa in a specified occupation code (also known as a ‘Health and Care ASHE salary job’)
 - the worker was previously granted as a Skilled Worker under the Immigration Rules in place before 4 April 2024 and has had continuous permission as a Skilled Worker since then (‘transitional provision for salary’)
- SK6.7. In all other cases, the worker can only score points under Options A to E.

Options A to E: general (salaries based on median earnings)

SK6.8. The table below shows the salary thresholds for Options A to E. You must also read the information below on the eligibility criteria for these options.

Option	Description	Requirements
A	Salary only (no discounts)	Salary must meet or exceed both: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £41,700 (general threshold) • the full going rate for the occupation code as stated in Table 1 or Table 1a of Appendix Skilled Occupations
B	Relevant PhD (10% discount on general threshold and going rate)	Salary must meet or exceed both: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £37,500 (general threshold) • 90% of the going rate for the occupation code as stated in Table 1 or Table 1a of Appendix Skilled Occupations
C	Relevant PhD in a STEM subject (20% discount on general threshold and going rate)	Salary must meet or exceed both: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £33,400 (general threshold) • 80% of the going rate for the occupation code as stated in Table 1 or Table 1a of Appendix Skilled Occupations
D	Job in Appendix Immigration Salary List (20% discount on general threshold only)	Salary must meet or exceed both: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £33,400 (general threshold) • the full going rate for the occupation code as stated in Table 1 or Table 1a of Appendix Skilled Occupations
E	New entrant (20% discount on general threshold and 30% discount on going rate)	Salary must meet or exceed both: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £33,400 (general threshold) • 70% of the going rate for the occupation code as stated in Table 1 or Table 1a of Appendix Skilled Occupations

SK6.9. A worker can only claim points under these options if the job is in an eligible occupation code (or, where relevant, is an eligible job within an occupation code) listed in either

- Table 1 of [Appendix Skilled Occupations](#)

- Table 1a of Appendix Skilled Occupations if the job is on the Immigration Salary List or Temporary Shortage List, or the worker meets the [transitional provision for skill level](#) described in section SK4

- SK6.10. The salary you pay to the worker must normally meet or exceed £41,700 per year (the general threshold) and the specified full going rate for the job, but 'discounts' are available under Options B to E.
- SK6.11. The going rates for these occupations are based on median earnings according to the latest Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) data. Where the going rate (or percentage of going rate under Options B, C or E) works out as less than £17.13 per hour, £17.13 per hour will be the applicable going rate.
- SK6.12. There are [additional requirements that must be met](#) if the worker is claiming points under any of Options B to E.

Options F to J: specified Health and Care occupations and transitional provision for salary

- SK6.13. The table below shows the salary thresholds for Options F to J. You must also read the information below on the eligibility criteria for these options.

Option	Description	Requirements
F	Salary only (no discounts)	<p>Salary must meet or exceed both:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £31,300 (general threshold) • the full going rate for the occupation code as stated in Table 2, 2aa or 2a of Appendix Skilled Occupations
G	Relevant PhD (10% discount on general threshold and going rate)	<p>Salary must meet or exceed both:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £28,200 (general threshold) • 90% of the going rate for the occupation code as stated in Table 2, 2aa or 2a of Appendix Skilled Occupations
H	Relevant PhD in a STEM subject (20% salary on general threshold and going rate)	<p>Salary must meet or exceed both:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £25,000 (general threshold) • 80% of the going rate for the occupation code as stated in Table 2, 2aa or 2a of Appendix Skilled Occupations

Option	Description	Requirements
I	Job in Appendix Immigration Salary List (20% discount on general threshold only)	Salary must meet or exceed both: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £25,000 (general threshold) • the full going rate for the occupation code as stated in Table 2, 2aa or 2a of Appendix Skilled Occupations
J	New entrant (20% discount on general threshold and 30% discount on going rate)	Salary must meet or exceed both: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £25,000 (general threshold) • 70% of the going rate for the occupation code as stated in Table 2, 2aa or 2a of Appendix Skilled Occupations

SK6.14. A worker can only claim points under options F to J if the job is in an eligible occupation code (or is an eligible job within an occupation code) listed in Table 2, Table 2aa or Table 2a of [Appendix Skilled Occupations](#) and one of the following is met:

- you are sponsoring the worker for a ‘Health and Care ASHE salary job’ and any relevant additional requirements shown below are met
- the worker meets the transitional provision for salary described below

Health and Care ASHE salary job

SK6.15. A Health and Care ASHE salary job is where you are sponsoring a worker for a [Health and Care visa](#) in one of the occupations listed below. The worker must fully meet the eligibility criteria for a Health and Care visa, and any additional requirements specified below, to be eligible for points under options F to J.

SK6.16. The following are graduate level Health and Care ASHE salary jobs listed in Table 2 and are eligible for salary points under Options F to J:

- 1171 Health services and public health managers and directors
- 2113 Biochemists and biomedical scientists
- 2114 Physical scientists

SK6.17. The following jobs in Table 2aa are skilled to level RQF3 to RQF5 and are eligible for points under Options F to J. If the job is not included on the Immigration Salary List (indicated by ‘ISL’ below) or the Temporary Shortage List (‘TSL’), the worker must also meet the [transitional provision for skill level](#) described in section SK4:

- 1231 Health care practice managers (must meet transitional provision for skill level)
- 1232 Residential, day and domiciliary care managers and proprietors (ISL)

- 3111 Laboratory Technicians (ISL with 3 years' experience only; TSL)
- 3211 Dispensing opticians (must meet transitional provision for skill level)
- 3212 Pharmaceutical technicians (ISL)

SK6.18. The following jobs in Table 2aa are eligible for points under Option I but only if the [additional requirements for care workers and senior care workers](#) described in section SK4 are met:

- 6135 Care workers and home carers
- 6136 Senior care workers

SK6.19. For any of the occupations above, if the worker is not eligible for a Health and Care visa, they may still be sponsored for a standard Skilled Worker visa but they will need to score points under one of Options A to E and meet any relevant additional requirements for those options.

Transitional provision for salary

SK6.20. This transitional provision applies to applications where the worker you are sponsoring meets all of the following requirements:

- they were granted permission as a Skilled Worker under the Immigration Rules in force before 4 April 2024
- they have had continuous permission as a Skilled Worker since then (continuous permission may include periods without permission that were disregarded under [paragraph 39E of the Immigration Rules](#))
- they are being sponsored for a job in an eligible occupation listed in Table 2, 2aa or 2a of [Appendix Skilled Occupations](#)
- if being sponsored for a job in Table 2a, they were sponsored by you in their most recent grant of permission and you are continuing to sponsor them

SK6.21. This transitional provision applies to applications for permission made before 4 April 2030, after which it will end.

SK6.22. Table 2a lists occupations which ceased to be eligible for the Skilled Worker route on 4 April 2024, except where the worker qualifies under this transitional provision. A worker cannot claim points for a job in Table 2a if they are applying to work for a different sponsor to the one in their last grant of permission.

SK6.23. Where the worker is being sponsored for a job in Table 2 or Table 2aa, they can qualify under this transitional provision if they are applying to work for a new sponsor or staying with the same sponsor as in their previous permission.

Salary requirements under Options F to J

- SK6.24. The salary you pay to the worker must normally meet or exceed £31,300 per year (the general threshold) and the full going rate for the job specified in Table 2, 2aa or 2a, but ‘discounts’ are available under Options G to J.
- SK6.25. The going rates in Tables 2, 2aa and 2a are based on the 25th percentile of earnings according to the latest ASHE data. Where the going rate (or percentage of going rate under Options G, H or J) works out as less than £12.82 per hour, £12.82 per hour will be the applicable going rate in all cases.
- SK6.26. There is a [transitional arrangement for going rates](#) for workers originally granted under the predecessor Tier 2 (General) route in specified occupations.
- SK6.27. There are [additional requirements that must be met](#) if the worker is claiming points under any of Options G to J.

Option K: health and education occupations based on national pay scales

- SK6.28. The table below shows the salary requirements for Option K. You must also read the information below on the eligibility criteria for this option.

Option	Description	Requirements
K	Eligible health or education occupation code	Salary must meet or exceed both: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• £25,000 (general threshold)• the full going rate for the occupation code as stated in Table 3, 3a, 4 or 5 of Appendix Skilled Occupations

- SK6.29. A worker can only claim points under Option K if you are sponsoring them in an occupation code (or in an eligible job within an occupation code) listed in either:
- Table 3 of Appendix Skilled Occupations
 - Table 3a of Appendix Skilled Occupations if the job is on the Immigration Salary List or Temporary Shortage List, or the worker meets the [transitional provision for skill level](#) described in section SK4
- SK6.30. You may temporarily pay a pre-registration nurse or midwife less than the general threshold of £25,000 per year while they are working towards registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council. See [section SK9](#) for details of this concession.

Additional requirements for options B to E or G to J

SK6.31. The subsections below set out additional requirements a worker must meet to score points under Options B to E or G to J. These are in addition to the eligibility and salary requirements stated for the relevant option above.

Options B and G (relevant PhD) or C and H (PhD in a STEM subject)

SK6.32. A worker can only score points under these options if the job is specified as “eligible for PhD points” in the relevant table of Appendix Skilled Occupations:

- Table 1 or 1a if claiming points under Option B or C
- Table 2, 2aa or 2a if claiming points under Option G or H

SK6.33. The worker must have either:

- a relevant UK PhD or other academic doctoral qualification
- an overseas academic qualification which [Ecctis](#) confirms meets the recognised standard of a UK PhD

SK6.34. Where the worker is claiming points under Option C or H, the PhD must additionally be in a Science, Technology, Engineering or Mathematics (STEM) subject.

SK6.35. When you assign a CoS to a worker claiming points under any of these options, you must give a credible explanation of how their qualification is relevant to the job you are sponsoring them for. If the worker is claiming points under Option C or H, you must also give a credible explanation of how the qualification is in a STEM subject.

SK6.36. If you fail to provide this information, we will not award the points and will refuse the worker’s application. You must provide this information in any subsequent CoS you assign to the worker if they are claiming points under any of these options.

SK6.37. The worker must provide evidence of the relevant qualification when they first apply for entry clearance or permission as a Skilled Worker. They do not have to provide this evidence in any subsequent application, provided they were correctly awarded points in a previous grant of permission.

Options D and I: Job in Appendix Immigration Salary List

SK6.38. A worker can only score points under these options if the job you are sponsoring them for is in an eligible occupation code (or, where relevant, is an eligible job within an occupation code) listed in [Appendix Immigration Salary List](#) for the nation of the UK where that job is based.

- SK6.39. If the job was removed from Appendix Immigration Salary List on or before the date you assigned a CoS to the worker, all of the following conditions must be met to score points under these options:
- the worker's most recent permission was as a Skilled Worker
 - in that grant of permission, they were sponsored for a job in Appendix Immigration Salary List (or the previous Appendix Shortage Occupation List) under the Immigration Rules in force at the time
 - you were the sponsor in that grant of permission and are continuing to sponsor them
- SK6.40. For the avoidance of doubt, where a job is included on the Temporary Shortage List only (and not on the Immigration Salary List), it is not eligible for points under these options.

Options E and J: worker is a new entrant to the labour market

- SK6.41. To be eligible for points under Options E or J as a new entrant to the labour market, the worker must meet one of the following requirements:
- be under the age of 26 on the date they apply for entry clearance or permission to stay
 - be sponsored for a postdoctoral position in any of the following occupation codes:
 - 2111 Chemical scientists
 - 2112 Biological scientists
 - 2113 Biochemists and biomedical scientists
 - 2114 Physical scientists
 - 2115 Social and humanities scientists
 - 2119 Natural and social science professionals not elsewhere classified
 - 2162 Other researchers, unspecified discipline
 - 2311 Higher education teaching professionals
 - be sponsored for a job in a [UK Regulated Profession](#) and be working towards a recognised UK professional qualification for that profession
 - be sponsored for a job where they are working towards full registration or chartered status with the relevant professional body for that job
 - their most recent permission (disregarding any permission as a Visitor) was as a Graduate – if that permission has expired, it must have expired less than 2 years before the date of application
 - their most recent permission (disregarding any permission as a Visitor) was as a Student and they meet the additional requirements for Students set out below

Additional requirements for Students

- SK6.42. Where the worker is claiming points as a new entrant on the basis that their most recent permission (disregarding any permission as a Visitor) was a Student, all of the following requirements must be met:

- if their Student permission has expired, it must have expired less than 2 years before the date of application
- during that period of permission (or any other period of permission as a Student), they must have been sponsored to study one of the following courses (equivalent-level courses are not acceptable):
 - a UK bachelor's degree
 - a UK master's degree
 - a UK PhD or other doctoral qualification
 - a Postgraduate Certificate in Education
 - a Professional Graduate Diploma of Education
- they must have completed the course mentioned above or one of the following must be true:
 - they are applying for permission no more than 3 months before the end of the relevant course
 - if they are studying for a UK PhD, they must have completed at least 12 months of that PhD in the UK

Maximum period a worker can be sponsored as a new entrant

SK6.43. The worker will not be eligible for points as a new entrant if granting their application would mean their combined period of permission as a Skilled Worker, Tier 2 Migrant or Graduate would exceed 4 years in total. This applies whether or not the 4-year period is continuous. You should therefore check with the worker how long they have had permission on these routes before you sponsor them as a new entrant.

Transitional arrangement for going rates in specified occupations

SK6.44. This transitional arrangement applies if the worker is claiming points under [Options F to J](#) and meets all of the following conditions:

- they were sponsored to work in one of the SOC 2010 occupation codes in the table below when they last applied for permission as a Tier 2 (General) Migrant
- they have continued to be sponsored since that time (either as a Tier 2 (General) Migrant or a Skilled Worker) in that same SOC 2010 occupation code or an equivalent SOC 2020 occupation code in the table below
- their application for permission is submitted before 1 December 2026 (after which this transitional arrangement will end)

SK6.45. Where this transitional arrangement applies, the going rates in the table below apply, instead of the going rates in Table 2 of Appendix Skilled Occupations. These going rates are based on a 37.5-hour working week and must be pro-rated for other working patterns, based on the weekly working hours stated by you on the worker's CoS. All other salary requirements set out in this guidance continue to apply.

SOC 2010 occupation code	Equivalent SOC 2020 occupation code	Full going rate (Options F and I)	90% of going rate (Option G)	80% of going rate (Option H) or 70% going rate (Option J)
2113 Physical scientists	2114 Physical scientists	£27,190 (£13.94 per hour)	£25,000 (£12.82 per hour)	£25,000 (£12.82 per hour)
2119 Natural and social science professionals not elsewhere classified	2119 Natural and social science professionals not elsewhere classified 2162 Other researchers, unspecified discipline	£27,190 (£13.94 per hour)	£25,000 (£12.82 per hour)	£25,000 (£12.82 per hour)
2311 Higher education teaching professionals	2162 Other researchers, unspecified discipline 2311 Higher education teaching professionals 2322 Education managers	£30,940 (£15.87 per hour)	£27,840 (£14.28 per hour)	£25,000 (£12.82 per hour)

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SK7. Calculation of salary: allowances and pro-rating

This section provides information on how we calculate whether a salary meets the Skilled Worker requirements, including the rules on allowances and pro-rating.

- SK7.1. You must ensure you understand the rules on calculation of salary (including allowances and pro-rating). These apply to all salary points options in section SK6, unless otherwise stated.

Allowances

- SK7.2. Subject to the [transitional provision](#) below, we will only take into account guaranteed basic gross pay (before income tax and including employee pension and national insurance contributions, and other guaranteed payments which are treated exactly the same as basic gross pay for tax, pension and national insurance purposes). We will not take into account other allowances, pay or benefits (even if they are guaranteed), such as any of the following:
- pay which cannot be guaranteed because the nature of the job means that hours fluctuate
 - additional pay such as shift allowance, or overtime or bonus pay, whether or not it is guaranteed
 - employer pension and employer national insurance contributions
 - any allowances, such as accommodation or cost of living allowances
 - in-kind benefits, such as equity shares, health insurance, school or university fees, company cars or food
 - one-off payments, such as 'golden hellos'
 - any payments relating to immigration costs, such as the application fee or [Immigration Health Charge](#)
 - payments to cover business expenses, including (but not limited to) travel to and from the worker's home country, equipment, clothing, travel or subsistence
- SK7.3. When you enter the worker's gross salary on their Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS), you must not include any allowances, such as those listed above, in the figure. If we find you have done so, and a transitional provision does not apply, we may revoke your licence.

Transitional provision for allowances

- SK7.4. If the worker is in the UK and is applying for permission to stay (or settlement), you may include guaranteed allowances in the salary figure entered on the worker's CoS if all of the following conditions are met:

- the worker was previously granted permission as a Tier 2 (General) Migrant and has had continuous permission as a Skilled Worker or Tier 2 (General) Migrant ever since
- you sponsored the application which led to the worker's last grant of permission and you are continuing to sponsor the worker; and
- the allowances are guaranteed, will be paid for the duration of the worker's permission, and would be paid to a local settled worker in similar circumstances, such as London weighting

SK7.5. The other restrictions outlined in this section (including on other allowances and pro-rating) still apply. The application for permission to stay (or settlement) must be made before 1 December 2026, after which this transitional provision will end.

Money paid by the worker to the sponsor or related organisation

SK7.6. When we calculate whether the worker's salary meets the applicable salary thresholds, we will subtract from the worker's salary any of the following payments a worker is required to make to you (the sponsor) or to a related organisation:

- deductions from the worker's salary related to business costs, immigration costs or investment in your (or a related) organisation
- repayments of loans made to the worker related to business costs, immigration costs or investment in your (or a related) organisation
- investment in your (or a related) organisation

SK7.7. When making this calculation, we will average any such deductions over the period the worker is being sponsored for, as stated on their CoS.

SK7.8. Money will not be subtracted where the payment is not related to business costs, immigration costs or investment, but is an additional benefit offer which the worker has a genuine choice whether to take up, such as a [salary sacrifice arrangement](#). However, you must ensure that any such arrangement does not result in the worker's pay falling below [National Minimum Wage](#).

Workers being sponsored for less than a year

SK7.9. The general salary thresholds and going rates listed in [section SK6](#) refer to annual salaries. If the worker will be working in the UK for less than 12 months, we will pro-rate their gross actual earnings, as recorded on their CoS, to the equivalent annual figure to determine if they meet the salary requirements. For example, if the worker is assigned a CoS for 6 months, and their gross pay will be £4,000 per month, this would equate to a gross annual salary of £48,000.

Calculation of general salary threshold

- SK7.10. To determine if the applicable [general salary threshold](#) is met, we will only take into account salary for up to a maximum of 48 hours per week, even if the worker works for longer than this. For example, a person who works 60 hours a week for £15 per hour will be considered to have a salary of £37,440 ($15 \times 48 \times 52$) and not £46,800 ($15 \times 60 \times 52$).
- SK7.11. If the worker will be working part-time, we will only consider their actual gross earnings to determine if they are being paid at least the general salary threshold – we will not pro-rate their salary to the equivalent full-time earnings. For example, if the worker works 20 hours per week for £20 per hour, their annual salary will be £20,800 ($20 \times 20 \times 52$) and they will not meet any of the applicable general thresholds.

Calculation of going rate

- SK7.12. When assessing whether the worker is being paid the applicable going rate, we will take into account their full weekly working hours, as stated on their CoS, and pro-rate accordingly. This applies even if the worker works more than 48 hours per week. The calculation we use for the going rate depends on which table of [Appendix Skilled Occupations](#) the occupation code is listed in.

Occupation code in Table 1, 1a, 2, 2aa or 2a

- SK7.13. Going rates for occupation codes listed in Tables 1, 1a, 2, 2aa or 2a of Appendix Skilled Occupations are based on a 37.5-hour week. Where the worker is required to be paid the full going rate (Options A, D, F or I), the following calculation will be used:

(The going rate for the occupation code stated in the relevant table of Appendix Skilled Occupations) multiplied by (the number of weekly working hours stated by you on the worker's CoS) divided by 37.5

- SK7.14. This means, for example:
- a worker who works 60 hours a week in an occupation code in Table 1 with a full going rate of £60,000 must be paid at least £96,000 ($\text{£60,000} \times 60 \div 37.5$) per year to meet the going rate requirement
 - a worker who works 30 hours per week in an occupation code in Table 1 with a full going rate of £60,000 must be paid at least £48,000 ($\text{£60,000} \times 30 \div 37.5$) per year to meet the going rate requirement
- SK7.15. If the worker's salary is required to be at least 70%, 80% or 90% of the going rate, the figure from the calculation above will be multiplied by 0.7, 0.8 or 0.9, as appropriate, to calculate the required salary under the applicable going rate requirement.

Occupation code in Table 3 or 3a

SK7.16. If the worker is being sponsored for a job in one of the health or education occupation codes listed in Table 3 or Table 3a of [Appendix Skilled Occupations](#), they must be paid the full going rate. This will be pro-rated according to the number of weekly working hours stated by you on the CoS and the rules set out in Tables 3, 3a, 4 and 5 of Appendix Skilled Occupations.

Calculation of salary: irregular working patterns

SK7.17. The following rules apply where the worker's working hours vary each week, resulting in uneven pay:

- work in excess of 48 hours in some weeks can be considered towards the general salary threshold, provided the average over a regular cycle (which can be no more than 17 weeks) is not more than 48 hours a week
- any unpaid rest weeks will count towards the average when considering whether the salary thresholds are met
- any unpaid rest weeks will not count as [absences from employment](#)

SK7.18. For example, a worker who works a pattern of 60 hours a week for £20 per hour for two weeks, followed by an unpaid rest week, will be considered to work 40 hours a week on average and have a salary of £41,600 ($\text{£}20 \times 40 \times 52$) per year.

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SK8. Unpaid leave and salary reductions

This section tells you about your responsibilities if a sponsored worker is absent from work without pay (or on reduced pay) or their salary is otherwise reduced.

Absence without pay or on reduced pay

- SK8.1. You must normally stop sponsoring a worker if they are absent from work without pay, or absent on reduced pay, for more than 4 weeks in total according to their normal working pattern, during any calendar year (1 January to 31 December), unless the absences are due to any of the following:
- statutory maternity, paternity, parental, shared parental, adoption or neonatal care leave
 - sick leave
 - assisting with a national or international humanitarian or environmental crisis, with your agreement
 - taking part in legally organised industrial action
 - jury service
 - attending court as a witness

See ‘Absence without pay or on reduced pay’ section S4 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#) for more information.

Salary otherwise reduced

- SK8.2. You can temporarily reduce the salary of a Skilled Worker or Tier 2 (General) Migrant you are currently sponsoring if the reduction coincides with one of the [absences listed above](#) – for example, if you are paying them a reduced salary, or they are receiving statutory payments only, while they are on parental leave or sick leave.
- SK8.3. If you wish to reduce the salary of a Skilled Worker or Tier 2 (General) Migrant in any other circumstances (either on a temporary or permanent basis), you must first check if you will need to assign them a new CoS, and if the worker will need to make a new application for entry clearance or permission to stay, before you can reduce their salary.

Permitted salary reductions

- SK8.4. You do not need to assign a new CoS, and the worker does not need to make a new application, if you reduce the worker’s salary and any of the following are true:

- the worker has permission as a Skilled Worker and, following the reduction in salary, they would score 20 points under the same salary points option which led to their current grant of permission – for example:
 - if their current permission is based on points scored under [Option B](#) in this version of the guidance, their revised salary must continue to meet all of the requirements under that same option
 - if their current permission is based on points scored under the version of Option B in force immediately before 4 April 2024, their revised salary must continue to meet the requirements under that option – see [archived versions of this guidance](#) for information on previous salary thresholds
- the worker has permission as a Skilled Worker or Tier 2 (General) Migrant, they met the salary requirement under a transitional arrangement in force at that time and, following the reduction in salary, they would continue to meet the requirements of that transitional arrangement if it were still in force – see [archived versions of this guidance](#) for information on previous transitional arrangements
- the worker has permission as a Tier 2 (General) Migrant, and their revised salary would be eligible for 20 points under Option A, Option F or Option K of this guidance if they were required to make an application on the Skilled Worker route
- the worker has permission as a Tier 2 (General) Migrant, was considered to be a new entrant when they were granted that permission, and they would be eligible for 20 points under either Option E or Option J of this guidance if they were required to make an application on the Skilled Worker route
- the reduction coincides with a temporary reduction in the worker's hours, or a phased return to work, for individual health reasons, provided both of the following are true:
 - this is supported by an occupational health assessment
 - the reduction does not result in the hourly rate falling below any hourly rate requirement which applied when the worker obtained their most recent grant of permission

SK8.5. Although the worker does not need new permission in the above circumstances, you must still let us know, within 10 working days of the change, via your [sponsorship management system \(SMS\) account](#) that you have reduced their salary, and tell us what that salary is.

Prohibited salary reductions

SK8.6. If you reduce the worker's salary, and none of the exceptions outlined in this section apply, you cannot simply continue to sponsor the worker. If the revised salary is eligible for points on the Skilled Worker route, you must assign the worker a new CoS, and the worker must make a successful application for entry clearance or permission to stay before you can start to pay them at the reduced rate.

Example

If the worker scored 20 points under Option F of this guidance when they were last granted permission, and they obtain a relevant PhD while they are working for you, you cannot simply reduce their salary to the levels stated in Option G. You must assign a new CoS, and the worker must make a successful application (scoring 20 points under Option G) before you can start to pay them a reduced salary.

- SK8.7. If the revised salary you intend to pay the worker would not meet the salary requirements for the Skilled Worker route, as set out in the Immigration Rules and in this guidance, you must stop sponsoring them and tell us you have done so via your [SMS account](#).
- SK8.8. Remember, we will make regular checks with HMRC to ensure you are paying the worker appropriately. If we find you are paying the worker less than you said you would, and the amount would not be eligible for points under the same salary points option which led to their current grant of permission, or the change is not otherwise permitted by the Immigration Rules or this guidance, we will [revoke your licence](#).

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SK9. Pre-registration nurses and midwives

This section tells you about the specific requirements you must meet, and your additional sponsorship duties, if you wish to sponsor a pre-registration nurse or midwife on the Skilled Worker route.

Overview

- SK9.1. This section applies if you wish to sponsor a worker in one of the nursing or midwifery occupation codes listed in paragraph SK9.2 below and either:
- they are working towards completing registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)
 - they were previously registered with the NMC and need to complete a programme approved by the NMC before they can return to practice
- SK9.2. The relevant nursing or midwifery occupation codes referred to in paragraph SK9.1 are:
- 2231 Midwifery nurses
 - 2232 Community nurses
 - 2233 Specialist nurses
 - 2234 Nurse practitioners
 - 2235 Mental health nurses
 - 2236 Children's nurses
 - 2237 Other nursing professionals
- SK9.3. For convenience, workers sponsored under these provisions are referred to in this guidance as 'pre-registration nurses or midwives'.
- SK9.4. The rest of this section contains guidance on:
- how long a pre-registration nurse or midwife has to achieve NMC registration
 - how much you have to pay a pre-registration nurse or midwife
 - the registration process for overseas-trained nurses and midwives
 - your sponsor duties when the nurse or midwife has completed registration

How long the worker has to achieve NMC registration

- SK9.5. Pre-registration nurses and midwives being sponsored on the Skilled Worker route must complete NMC registration within 8 months of either:

- the start date on their Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) (if this is their first application for permission on the Skilled Worker route as a pre-registration nurse or midwife)
- the start date of their previous employment (if they are applying for an extension to continue working as a pre-registration nurse or midwife)

SK9.6. It is your responsibility to ensure the worker completes the appropriate steps to achieve registration within this time limit. If the worker fails to achieve NMC registration within 8 months of either of the above dates, you must stop sponsoring them as a nurse or midwife. You must not sponsor a worker as a nurse or midwife if they have previously been sponsored by a different sponsor and have failed to achieve full NMC registration within the 8-month period specified above.

How much you have to pay a pre-registration nurse or midwife

- SK9.7. Workers sponsored under the nursing or midwifery occupation codes specified in paragraph SK9.2 must normally be paid in line with the rates under [salary points option K](#). However, you may temporarily (for up to 8 months) pay a pre-registration nurse or midwife less than the specified general threshold of £25,000 while they are completing NMC registration, provided the conditions in paragraph SK9.8 or SK9.9 below are met, and their salary meets the requirements of paragraph SK9.10.
- SK9.8. Where the worker is working towards NMC registration for the first time, they must meet both of the following conditions to be eligible:
- the worker must have passed the NMC's English language requirements and Computer Based Test of competence before the date of application
 - the worker must intend to sit an Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) to obtain NMC registration no later than 3 months after the job start date recorded on their CoS
- SK9.9. Where the worker has previously been registered with the NMC, they must either meet the above conditions or be undertaking a programme approved by the NMC with a view to returning to practice as a nurse or midwife.
- SK9.10. During this 8-month period, or until the worker achieves NMC registration (if sooner), the worker's salary must be at least equal to the appropriate [NHS Agenda for Change](#) Band 3 rate, as stated in Table 4 of [Appendix Skilled Occupations](#).
- SK9.11. When you assign a CoS to a pre-registration nurse or midwife, you must confirm that:
- they meet the relevant conditions outlined above

- you will stop sponsoring them as a nurse or midwife if they do not achieve full NMC registration within the 8-month period referred to above.

SK9.12. Once the worker completes registration, you must pay them in line with rates stated under [salary points option K](#), if you are not already.

Registration process for overseas trained nurses and midwives

- SK9.13. The table below summarises the steps a nurse or midwife trained outside the EEA or Switzerland must complete to demonstrate that they are capable of safe and effective practice as a nurse or midwife in the UK. You must ensure that the individual completes these steps within the [8-month period](#) outlined above if you wish to sponsor, or continue sponsoring, them. You should note this process is subject to change and you must also refer to the '[Trained outside the UK](#)' page on the NMC website for up-to-date details.
- SK9.14. The registration process may be different for nurses or midwives trained within the EEA or Switzerland, or who are returning to practice. See '[Register as a nurse or midwife](#)' on the NMC website for details.

Requirement	Details
Qualification	<p>The candidate must have completed a nursing or midwifery training programme leading to registration in their home country as an entry-level registered nurse or midwife.</p> <p>Unless that qualification has been deemed comparable to the NMC's standards of proficiency, they will also need to complete a 2-part test of competence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Part 1 is a multiple-choice computer-based test (CBT) administered on behalf of the NMC by a third party and can be taken in a test centre in most countries around the world Part 2 is a practical nursing or midwifery examination known as the objective-structured clinical examination (OSCE). The OSCE is only available at NMC-approved OSCE test centres in the UK
Health and character requirements	<p>The candidate will need to meet the health and character requirements for safe and effective practice – see Character and health decision-making guidance on the NMC website for details.</p>
Language requirement	<p>The candidate must demonstrate they have the necessary knowledge of the English language for safe and effective practice as a nurse or midwife in the UK. See the English language requirements page on the NMC website for details.</p>

Requirement	Details
Professional indemnity	The candidate will need to confirm that there is in force, or will be in force, cover for them under an appropriate indemnity arrangement.
Payment	Payment of the evaluation fees and the registration fee.

Recognition of overseas qualifications

- SK9.15. A nurse or midwife trained outside the [European Economic Area \(EEA\)](#) or Switzerland must either hold a qualification that is comparable to the NMC's standards of proficiency or pass the NMC test of competence. This test will assess the candidate's qualifications, training and experience against the NMC's standards to ensure they are capable of practising safely and effectively in the UK. It also considers whether the candidate has the necessary post-qualifying practice and experience in each appropriate area of nursing or midwifery.
- SK9.16. A nurse or midwife trained inside the EEA who applies to register on or after 1 January 2021 and holds qualifications listed amongst those identified as meeting the requirements for automatic recognition in EU law under [Annex V of Directive 2005/36/EC](#) (select the table of contents on the left-hand side and then select Annex V from the list) will continue to have their qualification recognised on a near-automatic basis until further notice. The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) has published [detailed guidance for EEA-qualified and Swiss healthcare professionals practising in the UK](#).

Note: these provisions for near-automatic recognition are subject to statutory review from January 2023. This guidance will be updated with any changes when the review has been completed.

- SK9.17. Swiss nationals, UK nationals settled in Switzerland, and their non-EEA dependants and spouses who started their nursing or midwifery training before 31 December 2020 and apply to register on or after 1 January 2021 and hold qualifications previously recognised on a near-automatic basis by EU law under [Annex V of Directive 2005/36/EC](#) (select the table of contents on the left-hand side and then select Annex V from the list) will have their qualification recognised on a near-automatic basis. This will continue to be the case for 4 years from 1 January 2021. For more information, see:
- [Swiss nationals, UK nationals settled in Switzerland and their dependents or spouses](#) (NMC website)
 - [EEA-qualified and Swiss healthcare professionals practising in the UK](#) (DHSC guidance)

Objective-structured clinical examination (OSCE)

- SK9.18. Where required, the candidate will be invited to sit the OSCE in one of the approved NMC UK OSCE test centres.
- SK9.19. Candidates may sit the OSCE up to 3 times as part of one application for registration.
- SK9.20. If the candidate is unsuccessful, they must wait a minimum of 10 working days between attempts.
- SK9.21. If the candidate is unsuccessful after their 3 permitted attempts, their OSCE application will close. If they still wish to register as a nurse or midwife, they will be required to submit a new application to the NMC but will not be able to sit the OSCE again for a minimum of 6 months.
- SK9.22. A candidate who fails the OSCE 3 times is unlikely to be able to achieve their NMC registration within the [8-month period](#). In such cases, you must stop sponsoring them as a nurse or midwife.
- SK9.23. If you cease sponsorship for this or any other reason, you must tell us via your [sponsorship management system \(SMS\) account](#) within 10 working days. If you fail to do so, we may revoke your sponsor licence. See section C1 of [Part 3: Sponsor duties and compliance](#) for further information on your reporting duties.

Completion of registration

- SK9.24. Once the candidate completes all the registration requirements, the NMC will send them their registration number or personal identification number (PIN). You must retain a copy of their PIN notification.
- SK9.25. You must tell us within 10 working days through [your SMS account](#) of the individual's full NMC registration, confirmation they are now undertaking the role of a registered nurse or midwife, and their salary fully meets the requirements of [salary points option K](#).

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SK10. Overseas criminal record certificate requirement

This section tells you about the criminal record certificate requirement that some applicants on the Skilled Worker route must meet to be granted entry clearance or permission to stay.

SK10.1. If the worker is applying for entry clearance and is being sponsored for a job in any of the occupation codes listed below, they must provide a criminal record certificate from the relevant authority in any country in which they have been present for 12 months or more (whether continuously or in total) in the past 10 years, while aged 18 or over:

- 1171 Health services and public health managers and directors
- 1172 Social services managers and directors
- 1231 Health care practice managers
- 1232 Residential, day and domiciliary care managers and proprietors
- 1233 Early education and childcare services proprietors
- 2211 Generalist medical practitioners
- 2212 Specialist medical practitioners
- 2221 Physiotherapists
- 2222 Occupational therapists
- 2223 Speech and language therapists
- 2224 Psychotherapists and cognitive behaviour therapists
- 2225 Clinical psychologists
- 2226 Other psychologists
- 2229 Therapy professionals not elsewhere classified
- 2231 Midwifery nurses
- 2232 Community nurses
- 2233 Specialist nurses
- 2234 Nurse practitioners
- 2235 Mental health nurses
- 2236 Children's nurses
- 2237 Other nursing professionals
- 2251 Pharmacists
- 2252 Optometrists
- 2253 Dental practitioners
- 2254 Medical radiographers
- 2255 Paramedics
- 2256 Podiatrists
- 2259 Other health professionals not elsewhere classified
- 2312 Further education teaching professionals
- 2313 Secondary education teaching professionals
- 2314 Primary education teaching professionals
- 2315 Nursery education teaching professionals
- 2316 Special and additional needs education teaching professionals

- 2317 Teachers of English as a foreign language
- 2319 Teaching professionals not elsewhere classified
- 2321 Head teachers and principals
- 2322 Education managers
- 2323 Education advisers and school inspectors
- 2324 Early education and childcare services managers
- 2329 Other educational professionals not elsewhere classified
- 2461 Social workers
- 2462 Probation officers
- 2464 Youth work professionals
- 2469 Welfare professionals not elsewhere classified
- 3211 Dispensing opticians
- 3212 Pharmaceutical technicians
- 3213 Medical and dental technicians
- 3214 Complementary health associate professionals
- 3219 Health associate professionals not elsewhere classified
- 3221 Youth and community workers
- 3222 Child and early years officers
- 3223 Housing officers
- 3224 Counsellors
- 3229 Welfare and housing associate professionals not elsewhere classified
- 3231 Higher level teaching assistants
- 3232 Early education and childcare practitioners
- 3433 Fitness and wellbeing instructors
- 3571 Human resources and industrial relations officers
- 6111 Early education and childcare assistants
- 6112 Teaching assistants
- 6113 Educational support assistants
- 6114 Childminders
- 6117 Playworkers
- 6131 Nursing auxiliaries and assistants
- 6132 Ambulance staff (excluding paramedics) – for Certificates of Sponsorship assigned on or after 8 October 2024
- 6133 Dental nurses
- 6134 Houseparents and residential wardens
- 6135 Care workers and home carers
- 6136 Senior care workers

- SK10.2. This requirement does not apply if, at the time of application, the worker provides a satisfactory explanation as to why it is not reasonably practicable for them to obtain a criminal record certificate from any or all of the relevant authorities.
- SK10.3. The requirement also applies to the partner of the Skilled Worker if they will be applying to accompany or join them. The requirement does not apply to dependent children (including adult children).

- SK10.4. We advise you to inform prospective employees of this requirement as early as possible to ensure they are made aware in advance of applying for a visa, so that they have sufficient time to obtain the relevant documentation.
- SK10.5. Further guidance about the requirement can be found on the '[Criminal records check for overseas applicants](#)' page on GOV.UK.

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SK11.Certificate of Sponsorship for Skilled Workers

This section tells you how to assign a valid Certificate of Sponsorship on the Skilled Worker route.

Overview

- SK11.1. If you have followed all the rules in this guidance and you wish to sponsor a worker on the Skilled Worker route, you must assign them a valid Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS), using your [sponsorship management system \(SMS\)](#) account.
- SK11.2. Before assigning a CoS, you should satisfy yourself that the worker can meet the relevant [immigration requirements](#).
- SK11.3. You cannot assign a CoS if you're a B-rated sponsor, unless the worker is applying for permission to stay from within the UK and you sponsored the application which led to their last grant of permission. In all other cases, you must have an A-rating. For information on sponsor ratings, see section L8 of [Part 1: Apply for a licence](#).

Defined and Undefined CoS

- SK11.4. There are 2 types of CoS you can assign on the Skilled Worker route, known as 'Defined' and 'Undefined' CoS.
- SK11.5. If the worker you wish to sponsor will be applying for entry clearance from outside the UK, you must first [apply for a Defined CoS](#) for them. You must wait until this application has been approved before you can assign the CoS to the worker.
- SK11.6. If the worker you wish to sponsor will be applying for permission to stay from within the UK, you must assign them an 'Undefined' CoS from your annual CoS allocation. If you do not have enough CoS left in your allocation to sponsor the worker, you can apply to increase your allocation: see [SMS Manual 2: Manage your licence](#).
- SK11.7. It is very important that you understand the difference between the 2 types of CoS. You must not assign:
 - a Defined CoS to a worker for any job other than the one you described in your application for that Defined CoS
 - an Undefined CoS where a Defined CoS is required
- SK11.8. If you assign the wrong type of CoS, or give false information on your application for a Defined CoS, we are likely to revoke your sponsor licence.

- SK11.9. For more information on what a CoS is, and CoS allocations, see section S2 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#).
- SK11.10. You can find detailed technical guidance on how to assign or apply for a CoS in [User manuals: sponsorship management system \(SMS\)](#) – see in particular Manuals 8 and 12.

Fees

- SK11.11. You must pay a fee for each CoS you assign – see the [UK visa fees](#) page on GOV.UK for information on current fee levels.
- SK11.12. For CoS assigned on or after 31 December 2024, you must not recoup, or attempt to recoup, by any means, any part of the CoS fee, or associated administrative costs, from any workers you sponsor. If we find you have done this, we will normally revoke your licence.
- SK11.13. Subject to certain exceptions, you will also need to pay an Immigration Skills Charge for each worker you sponsor – see section S5 of [Part 2: sponsor a worker](#) for more information.

Use of the CoS

- SK11.14. Once you have assigned a CoS, the worker must use it within 3 months to apply for:
- entry clearance (a visa) if they are outside the UK
 - permission to stay if they are in the UK and eligible to extend their permission or switch to the Skilled Worker route
- SK11.15. If the CoS was issued more than 3 months before the date of application, we may reject their application and not consider it.
- SK11.16. The worker must not apply for a visa or permission to stay more than 3 months before the start date recorded on their CoS. If they do, we will refuse their application.
- SK11.17. We will also refuse the application if the CoS:
- has been withdrawn by you or cancelled by the Home Office – see section S6 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#) for information on when a CoS can be withdrawn or cancelled
 - was used in a previous application that was refused

What the CoS must confirm

- SK11.18. For a CoS to be valid, it must meet the requirements set out in paragraphs SW 5.1 to SW 5.6A of [Appendix Skilled Worker](#).
- SK11.19. It must confirm all of the following:

- that you are sponsoring the worker on the Skilled Worker route
- the [category in which you are sponsoring the worker](#)
- the worker's personal information (such as name, date of birth, nationality), passport details and contact details
- the [start and end date of their employment](#)
- how many hours they will work each week – enter an average figure if this varies
- where the worker will carry out their employment – this should include their main work address and any other regular work addresses, if relevant
- whether you used an agent (such as a recruitment agency, employment business or other intermediary) to find the worker and, if so, details of that agent
- the job title
- the relevant SOC 2020 occupation code for the role (choose from the drop-down list under 'Job type') – see section S3 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#) for more information on occupation codes
- the main duties of the role for which the worker is being sponsored (enter these in the 'Summary of job description' box)
- that the worker is a 'new entrant' if they will be claiming points for salary under [Option E or Option J](#) – you must also provide a brief explanation of how the worker meets the new entrant criteria (you can do this in the 'Summary of job description' field or by adding a 'sponsor note' after you've assigned the CoS)
- details of the worker's salary – this must not include any allowances or bonuses, unless the [transitional provision for allowances](#) applies
- whether the job is on a client contract and, if so, details of that contract
- that the job is in an eligible occupation code – see [section SK4](#) for further information
- whether the job is on the [Immigration Salary List or Temporary Shortage List](#)
- professional registration details of the worker, if there is a legal requirement for them to be registered with a professional or other official organisation in the UK (for example, a doctor must be registered with the GMC)
- whether you wish to [certify maintenance](#) for the worker (and, if relevant, their dependants) – you can only do this if you're an A-rated sponsor
- whether the worker needs [an Academic Technology Approval Scheme \(ATAS\) certificate](#)
- the [Pay As You Earn \(PAYE\) scheme reference number](#) under which the worker will pay income tax and national insurance – if you are not required to operate PAYE on the worker's earnings (for example, if the worker is covered by an exception set out in [HMRC EP Appendix 4](#), or is self-employed), you must explain this on the CoS
- any other additional relevant information specified in this guidance, such as for workers being sponsored under [occupation code 6131](#), workers applying under the [transitional provision for skill level, care](#)

workers and senior care workers, pre-registration nurses and midwives
and Health and Care visa applicants

Choosing the correct category

- SK11.20. When you assign an Undefined CoS to a Skilled Worker, you will be asked to select a 'category' from a drop-down list. The category you choose depends on the worker's current immigration status and whether you will need to pay the Immigration Skills Charge (ISC) for them, as set out in the table below:

Category	Choose this option if...
Skilled Worker (Switching immigration category – ISC liable)	The worker will be applying to <u>switch from another immigration route</u> (other than a route for the purpose of study) to the Skilled Worker route and you are liable to pay the ISC for them.
Skilled Worker (extensions – ISC exempt)	The worker will be making an <u>extension of permission application</u> (to continue working for you in the same occupation code) and you are not liable to pay the ISC for them.
Skilled Worker (extensions – ISC liable)	The worker will be making an <u>extension of permission application</u> (to continue working for you in the same occupation code) and you are liable to pay the ISC for them.
Skilled Worker (Changes of Employment – ISC exempt)	The worker will be making a <u>change of employment application</u> (to change job or employer) and you are not liable to pay the ISC for them.
Skilled Worker (Changes of Employment – ISC liable)	The worker will be making a <u>change of employment application</u> (to change job or employer) and you are liable to pay the ISC for them.
Skilled Worker (Student course complete switching to Skilled Worker)	<p>The worker has valid permission for the purpose of study (this does not include permission on the Graduate route) and will be applying to <u>switch</u> to the Skilled Worker route where the rules permit this. You are not required to pay the ISC in these circumstances.</p> <p>See section S5 of <u>Part 2: Sponsor a worker</u> for a definition of 'valid permission for the purpose of study'.</p>
Skilled Worker (Switching immigration category – ISC exempt)	The worker will be applying to <u>switch from another immigration route</u> (other than one for the purpose of study) to the Skilled Worker route and you are not liable to pay the ISC for them.

How long you can assign a CoS on the Skilled Worker route

- SK11.21. You can normally assign a CoS for the period you intend to employ the worker, up to a maximum of 5 years.

- SK11.22. If you are sponsoring a worker who will be [claiming points for being a new entrant](#), the maximum period you can assign a CoS is 4 years (including time already spent in the UK as a new entrant on the Skilled Worker or Tier 2 (General) routes, or on the Graduate route).
- SK11.23. If you assign a CoS to a worker who is a pre-registration nurse or midwife, the start date you give on their CoS should be the earliest date of:
- the date they will start working for you in familiarisation training
 - if they have already passed the objective-structured clinical examination (OSCE) and received their registration number (PIN), the date they will start working for you as a fully NMC-registered nurse or midwife
 - the date on which they will sit their OSCE
- SK11.24. You cannot sponsor a pre-registration nurse or midwife for longer than 8 months. You must confirm on the CoS that you will stop sponsoring the worker as a nurse or midwife if they do not achieve full NMC registration within 8 months of the job start date. See [section SK9](#) for further information.
- SK11.25. For further information on start and end dates, see section S3 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#).

Reporting duties and record keeping

- SK11.26. Once you have assigned a CoS to a worker, you must tell us if they fail to start their employment, are absent without permission, or there are any significant changes to the nature of their work or salary, or to your organisation. For full details of your reporting and other duties, see: [Part 3: Sponsor duties and compliance](#).
- SK11.27. You must also keep records for each worker you sponsor as specified in [Appendix D](#) to the sponsor guidance.
- SK11.28. If you fail to meet these duties, we may revoke your sponsor licence.

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SK12. Skilled Worker Defined CoS

This section tells you when and how to apply for a Defined Certificate of Sponsorship for a Skilled Worker.

Overview

- SK12.1. You must apply for a ‘Defined’ Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) if the worker you wish to sponsor will be making their application for permission (entry clearance) from outside the UK. You can apply for a Defined CoS if you have either:
- identified a particular worker for the role you wish to fill
 - not yet identified a particular worker for the role but you have a vacancy (or vacancies) you wish to fill and you reasonably anticipate that you may need to sponsor a worker (or workers) not currently in the UK
- SK12.2. You must not assign an Undefined CoS to a worker who will be applying for entry clearance – if you do, we are likely to [revoke your licence](#).
- SK12.3. You cannot apply for an annual allocation of Defined CoS. Instead, you must apply for a Defined CoS as and when you require one. You can apply for more than one Defined CoS in a single application, provided the role details (including start date, occupation code, job description and salary) on each CoS are the same.
- SK12.4. You cannot apply for a Defined CoS if your licence is B-rated or suspended.
- SK12.5. A Defined CoS must otherwise meet all of the same requirements as an [Undefined CoS](#) to be valid.

How to apply for a Defined CoS

- SK12.6. You apply for a Defined CoS using your [sponsorship management system \(SMS\)](#) account. The application can only be made by a Level 1 User – see section L4 of [Part 1: Apply for a licence](#) for information on who can be a Level 1 User.
- SK12.7. There is no additional fee to apply for a Defined CoS beyond the [standard CoS fee](#).
- SK12.8. When you make your application, you must fill in all mandatory fields marked with an asterisk (*). If you do not, you will not be able to send your application. The information you give about the role is the same as you would give if you were assigning a Skilled Worker [Undefined CoS](#).

SK12.9. You can find detailed information on how to complete a Defined CoS application, and how to assign a Defined CoS, in [SMS Manual 12](#).

Salary information on the CoS

SK12.10. The salary you enter on the CoS must be a genuine reflection of what you intend to pay the worker. It must also be eligible for 20 points for salary, and meet all of the salary requirements of the Skilled Worker route. If it does not meet the requirements, we will reject the application.

SK12.11. If you have identified a specific worker for the role, you must indicate in the ‘Summary of job description’ field which option they will be claiming salary points under, with a brief explanation of how they meet that points option. Where the worker will be claiming points as a new entrant on the basis of their age under either Option E or Option J, you must include their name, date of birth and nationality. See [section SK6](#) for further information on the requirements of the various points options.

SK12.12. You must also include this information even if you have not identified a specific worker at the time you apply for a Defined CoS. However, you cannot assume the worker you eventually assign it to will be eligible for points under certain options, unless you can provide a clear justification, for example:

- in the case of any of Options F to J, that the worker will be sponsored for a ‘Health and Care ASHE salary job’ at graduate level, or where the job is on the Immigration Salary List or Temporary Shortage List
- in the case of Options B and G, that the job requires the successful candidate to have a relevant PhD
- in the case of Options C and H, that the job requires the successful candidate to have a relevant PhD in a STEM subject
- in the case of Options D and I, that the job is on the Immigration Salary List
- in the case of Options E and J, that the job is in a specified occupation code or is a regulated profession and the worker will be working towards a recognised professional qualification in that profession

SK12.13. If you cannot provide a satisfactory justification in the ‘Summary of job description’ field, the salary you enter on the CoS must be eligible for points under Option A or Option K as appropriate. If the salary is not eligible for points under one of these options, your application will be rejected.

SK12.14. You must also state the number of hours the successful candidate, or candidates, will work each week. If the working hours will vary, you must give details of what the working pattern will be in the ‘Summary of job description’ field. This information will help us to confirm the stated salary meets the Skilled Worker salary requirements.

SK12.15. If the number of weekly hours is subject to negotiation or final agreement, you should enter the number of hours you would normally expect workers in a similar role to work each week and provide an explanation in the ‘Summary of job description’ field. You must confirm the correct number of hours by adding a sponsor note when you assign the CoS to a worker.

If the job is below graduate level: transitional provision

SK12.16. If you are applying for a Defined CoS to sponsor a worker for a job below graduate level which is not included on the Immigration Salary List or Temporary Shortage List, you must include the following information in the ‘job description field’:

- a statement confirming the worker meets the transitional provision for skill level
- the name, nationality and date of birth of the worker, and any relevant Home Office reference number if you know it
- the worker’s most recent CoS number, if you know it

SK12.17. You cannot apply for a Defined CoS under the transitional provision if you have not identified a specific worker.

SK12.18. You can also no longer apply for a Defined CoS to sponsor a worker under occupations codes 6135 (care workers and home carers) or 6136 (senior care workers). You can only sponsor a worker under these occupation codes if they will be applying from within the UK and the [additional requirements for care workers and senior care workers](#) are met.

If the worker will be working on a client contract

SK12.19. If the worker will be working on a client contract, you must include the following information in the ‘Summary of client contract’ field:

- the name and business address of the client
- the duration of the contract
- the key deliverables of the contract

When we will decide your application

SK12.20. If your application is straightforward and does not require any further information, we will normally decide your application for a Defined CoS within one working day.

SK12.21. We may check the information you send with your application before we can fully consider it – for example, if we have doubts about its validity or we are not sure if the role described on the CoS meets the requirements of the Skilled Worker route.

SK12.22. If we need to make any checks, we may ask you for more information or documents. You must send us any information or documents within the timescale specified in the request. If you do not, your application will be rejected and not considered.

Decision on an application for a Defined CoS

SK12.23. If your application for a Defined CoS is successful, it will be allocated to your SMS account, ready to be assigned to a worker.

SK12.24. We will reject any application for a Defined CoS if:

- the job does not meet the [skill level requirement](#) (including eligible occupation code or ATAS requirement)
- you are relying on a transitional provision but have not yet identified a specific worker for the job, or the worker does not meet the transitional provision
- we have reasonable grounds to believe you have chosen an inappropriate occupation code for the role
- the job does not meet the [salary requirements](#)
- we have reasonable grounds to believe the job is not [a genuine role](#) or amounts to the [hire of the worker to a third party](#)
- we have reasonable grounds to believe the role does not comply with UK employment law (for example, [National Minimum Wage or the Working Time Regulations](#))
- we have reasonable grounds to believe you have provided false or misleading information in your application
- the application otherwise does not meet the requirements of the Skilled Worker route

SK12.25. We may also reject any application for a Defined CoS (or, where you have requested multiple Defined CoS, grant fewer than you have requested or grant none at all) for any of the following reasons:

- you are asked to provide additional information or evidence to support your application and you fail to submit it by the deadline given by UKVI
- you cannot justify your need for the number of Defined CoS you have requested
- we do not consider your need to be credible, based on your current circumstances
- we are not satisfied you will be able to offer guaranteed work for the worker by the start date stated on the Defined CoS application
- you have a history of non-compliance with the sponsorship arrangements
- the request is substantially or materially the same as one we have previously rejected

SK12.26. When considering applications for Defined CoS, we will apply the same considerations as we do when we consider a request for an annual or

increased allocation of Undefined CoS – see ‘Deciding your CoS allocation’ in section S2 of [Part 2: Sponsor a worker](#) for further information.

- SK12.27. If we reject an application for a Defined CoS (or grant fewer than you have requested), or if you persistently submit applications which are rejected, we may take compliance action against you.

Time limit for assigning and using a Defined CoS

- SK12.28. Once we have allocated a Defined CoS to your SMS account, you must assign it to a worker within 90 days. If you do not assign it within 90 days, it will be removed from your account. You should therefore only apply for a Defined CoS if you genuinely intend to assign it within 90 days.
- SK12.29. Once you have assigned the CoS to a worker, they will then have 3 months to use it to support an application for entry clearance or permission to stay. If they do not use it within this period, it will be invalid and any application supported by it is likely to be rejected.

If your licence is downgraded or suspended

- SK12.30. If you have any unassigned Defined CoS in your SMS account, and your licence is downgraded to a B rating, or is suspended, you will not be able to assign these CoS. They will be removed from your account at the end of 90 days (unless you regain your A-rating and assign them to a worker during that period).

Reclaiming invalid CoS

- SK12.31. If we find, after allocating you a Defined CoS, but before you have assigned it to a worker, that the application was in fact invalid, we will reclaim it from your SMS account. If you still need a Defined CoS, you will need to apply again.

Changes to the details on a Defined CoS

- SK12.32. When you apply for a Defined CoS, the information you give in your application, such as the salary and job description, will appear on the CoS that is allocated to you if your application is successful. When you are ready to assign that CoS to a worker, you will not be able to change any of these pre-populated fields.
- SK12.33. You can, however, add a sponsor note to let us know of the following changes only:

Change	Extent to which change is permitted
Salary	You can change the salary you will pay to the worker, but the revised salary must be eligible for the same number of points as the salary stated in

Change	Extent to which change is permitted
	the original application for that CoS. If it is not, we will cancel the CoS.
Weekly working hours	You can change the weekly working hours. If you do this, you must also update the worker's salary. The salary must be eligible for the same number of points as the salary stated in the original CoS application. If it is not, we will cancel it.
Start and end date of the job	You can amend either or both of these dates – but remember, the start date cannot be more than 3 months after the date the worker makes their application for entry clearance or permission to stay.

SK12.34. These are the only changes you can make to a Defined CoS when you assign it. If anything else has changed, such as:

- a change in salary or working hours beyond the limits set out in the table above
- a change to the occupation code or job description

you must tell us so we can cancel the CoS.

If you give false information in your application

SK12.35. You must only assign a Defined CoS if you intend to employ the worker according to the details stated in the application you made for it, or in any sponsor note added in the circumstances permitted above. If we subsequently find that you gave false information in your application, we will revoke your sponsor licence. Examples include, but are not limited to, where:

- we find (either through a compliance visit or checking with HMRC) that the salary you pay to a worker whose application for permission was supported by a Defined CoS is lower than the salary stated in your application for that CoS
- you have assigned the CoS for a job other than the one described in the application for that CoS
- you have used an inappropriate occupation code to meet the skill level

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SK13. Health and Care visa

This section tells you about sponsoring key health workers for a ‘Health and Care visa’.

Background

- SK13.1. On 4 August 2020, the Government launched a ‘Health and Care visa’ for eligible health workers who have been trained to a recognised standard and have good English language skills. The Health and Care visa forms part of the Skilled Worker route.
- SK13.2. The benefits of the Health and Care visa include:
- fast-track visa processing for entry to the UK
 - the support of a dedicated team within UKVI in processing applicants’ and their dependent families’ visa applications
 - reduced [visa fees](#)
 - exemption from the [Immigration Health Charge](#)

Eligibility for a Health and Care visa

- SK13.3. If you wish to sponsor a Skilled Worker for a Health and Care visa, you must read the full [Health and Care visa guidance](#) for detailed information on the eligibility criteria. The criteria include that you must:
- be an eligible organisation, as set out in paragraph 2 of that guidance
 - be sponsoring the worker in an eligible occupation code specified in paragraph 3 of that guidance – for convenience, these are also set out in paragraphs SK13.4 and SK13.7 below:
- SK13.4. The following occupation codes (known as ‘Health and Care ASHE salary jobs’) are eligible for the Health and Care visa and are also eligible for salary points under [Options F to J](#):
- 1171 Health services and public health managers and directors
 - 1231 Health care practice managers
 - 1232 Residential, day and domiciliary care managers and proprietors
 - 2113 Biochemists and biomedical scientists
 - 2114 Physical scientists
 - 3111 Laboratory technicians
 - 3211 Dispensing opticians
 - 3212 Pharmaceutical technicians
 - 6135 Care workers and home carers
 - 6136 Senior care workers
- SK13.5. With the exception of occupation codes 1171, 2113 and 2114 (which are graduate level), you can only sponsor a worker for these jobs if they are included on the Immigration Salary List or Temporary Shortage List,

or the worker meets the transitional provision for skill level. There are also additional requirements for occupation codes 6135 and 6136. See sections SK4 and SK6 of this guidance for full details.

SK13.6. The following graduate-level healthcare jobs listed in Table 3 of Appendix Skilled Occupations are eligible for the Health and Care visa and also eligible for salary points under [Option K](#):

- 2211 Generalist medical practitioners
- 2212 Specialist medical practitioners
- 2221 Physiotherapists
- 2222 Occupational therapists
- 2223 Speech and language therapists
- 2224 Psychotherapists and cognitive behaviour therapists
- 2225 Clinical psychologists
- 2226 Other psychologists
- 2229 Therapy professionals not elsewhere classified
- 2231 Midwifery nurses
- 2232 Registered community nurses
- 2233 Registered specialist nurses
- 2234 Registered nurse practitioners
- 2235 Registered mental health nurses
- 2236 Registered children's nurses
- 2237 Other registered nursing professionals
- 2251 Pharmacists
- 2252 Optometrists
- 2253 Dental practitioners
- 2254 Medical radiographers
- 2255 Paramedics
- 2256 Podiatrists
- 2259 Other health professionals not elsewhere classified
- 2461 Social workers

SK13.7. The following healthcare jobs listed in Table 3a of Appendix Skilled Occupations are only eligible for the Health and Care visa (and for salary points under [Option K](#)) if the job is included on the Immigration Salary List or Temporary Shortage List, or the worker meets the transitional provision for skill level described in section SK4:

- 3213 Medical and dental technicians
- 3219 Health associate professionals not elsewhere classified
- 6131 Nursing auxiliaries and assistants
- 6132 Ambulance staff (excluding paramedics)
- 6133 Dental nurses

SK13.8. These are the only eligible occupation codes. If the worker will not be sponsored in one of the above occupation codes, they will have to

qualify under the standard Skilled Worker route (and pay the [Immigration Health Charge](#)).

- SK13.9. Health and Care visa applicants must meet all of the standard [immigration requirements](#) of the Skilled Worker route, in addition to the specific Health and Care visa requirements.

Additional information you must include on the CoS

- SK13.10. When you assign a CoS to a Skilled Worker for a Health and Care visa, or apply for a Defined CoS that you intend to assign to such a worker, you must:

- include in the ‘Summary of job description’ field of the CoS:
 - a brief explanation of how the worker meets the Health and Care visa criteria – for example, that they work for an NHS trust in one of the above occupation codes
 - if you are a private organisation, provide brief information about the contract or agreement you have with NHS trusts or bodies to provide those services
- tell the worker they are eligible for the Health and Care visa so they can correctly complete their visa application form – if you fail to do so, the worker’s visa application may be rejected

- SK13.11. If you forget to include information about how the worker meets the criteria or your contractual arrangements (if relevant) in the ‘Summary of job description’ field, you must add a ‘sponsor note’ with this information after you have assigned the CoS.

- SK13.12. If you are a private organisation providing services on behalf of the NHS, we may ask you to submit evidence of your arrangements with the NHS. You must give us this evidence if asked.

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