

Skilled Worker visa

1. Overview

A Skilled Worker visa allows you to come to or stay in the UK to do an eligible job with an approved employer.

This visa has replaced the Tier 2 (General) work visa.

It also allows you to work in UK waters.

Eligibility

Your job

To qualify for a Skilled Worker visa, you must:

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

The specific [eligibility depends on your job \(/skilled-worker-visa/your-job\)](/skilled-worker-visa/your-job).

You must have a confirmed job offer before you apply for your visa.

Knowledge of English

You must be able to speak, read, write and understand English. You'll usually need to [prove your knowledge of English \(/skilled-worker-visa/knowledge-of-english\)](/skilled-worker-visa/knowledge-of-english) when you apply.

If you're not eligible for a Skilled Worker visa

You may be eligible for [another type of visa to work in the UK \(/check-uk-visa\)](/check-uk-visa).

How long you can stay

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

If you want to stay longer in the UK

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

After 5 years, you may be able to [apply to settle permanently in the UK \(/settle-in-the-uk/y/you-have-a-work-visa/tier-2-general-visa\)](/settle-in-the-uk/y/you-have-a-work-visa/tier-2-general-visa) (also known as 'indefinite leave to remain'). This gives you the right to live, work and study here for as long as you like, and apply for benefits if you're eligible.

How to apply

You must apply online.

How you apply depends on whether you're:

- [outside the UK \(/skilled-worker-visa/apply-from-outside-the-uk\)](/skilled-worker-visa/apply-from-outside-the-uk) and are coming to the UK
- inside the UK and [extending your current visa \(/skilled-worker-visa/extend-your-visa\)](/skilled-worker-visa/extend-your-visa)
- inside the UK and [switching from a different visa \(/skilled-worker-visa/switch-to-this-visa\)](/skilled-worker-visa/switch-to-this-visa)

If you want to change your job or employer, you must [apply to update your visa \(/skilled-worker-visa/update-your-visa-if-you-change-job-or-employer\)](/skilled-worker-visa/update-your-visa-if-you-change-job-or-employer).

[Your partner and children \(/skilled-worker-visa/your-partner-and-children\)](/skilled-worker-visa/your-partner-and-children) may be able to apply to join you or stay in the UK as your 'dependants'.

How long it takes

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

As part of your application, you'll need to prove your identity and provide your documents.

You may need to allow extra time if you need an appointment to do this. You'll find out if you need one when you start your application.

Getting a decision

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

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

You may be able to [pay to get a faster decision \(/faster-decision-visa-settlement\)](/faster-decision-visa-settlement) - you'll be told if you can when you apply.

If your application is successful, your [decision email \(/apply-to-come-to-the-uk/getting-a-decision-on-your-application\)](/apply-to-come-to-the-uk/getting-a-decision-on-your-application) will tell you what you'll get to prove your immigration status and what you need to do next.

How much it costs

You, your partner or children will each need to:

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

[Check how much money you'll need \(/skilled-worker-visa/how-much-it-costs\)](/skilled-worker-visa/how-much-it-costs).

If you work in public sector healthcare

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

What you can and cannot do

With a Skilled Worker visa you can:

- work in an eligible job
- study
- bring [your partner and children \(/skilled-worker-visa/your-partner-and-children\)](/skilled-worker-visa/your-partner-and-children) with you as your 'dependants', if you meet the eligibility requirements
- [take on additional work \(/skilled-worker-visa/second-job\)](/skilled-worker-visa/second-job) in certain circumstances
- travel abroad and return to the UK
- apply to settle permanently in the UK (also known as 'indefinite leave to remain') if you've lived in the UK for 5 years and meet the other eligibility requirements
- do voluntary work

Any voluntary work you do must be unpaid and for one of the following:

- a [registered charity \(/find-charity-information\)](/find-charity-information)
- a voluntary organisation
- an associated fundraising body (an organisation that raises money for a charity or voluntary organisation)
- a statutory body (a government-appointed body, for example Historic England)

You cannot:

- apply for most benefits ([public funds \(/government/publications/public-funds--2\)](/government/publications/public-funds--2)), or the State Pension
- change jobs or employer unless you apply to update your visa

If your application is successful, you'll get a full list of what you can and cannot do with a Skilled Worker visa.

2. Your job

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

- your job is eligible for this visa

- you'll be working for a UK employer that's been approved by the Home Office
- you'll be paid at least the minimum salary rate for the type of work you'll be doing

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

- £41,700 per year
- the 'going rate' for the type of work you'll be doing

The minimum salary may be lower if you're [extending your Skilled Worker visa \(/skilled-worker-visa/extend-your-visa\)](/skilled-worker-visa/extend-your-visa) or [updating it because you have a new job or employer \(/skilled-worker-visa/update-your-visa-if-you-change-job-or-employer\)](/skilled-worker-visa/update-your-visa-if-you-change-job-or-employer).

Your employer must make sure your job pays at least [the minimum wage \(/national-minimum-wage-rates\)](/national-minimum-wage-rates) and follows the UK rules for how many hours a week you work. If your employer does not do this, your application will be refused.

Check if your job is eligible

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

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

Look up your job's occupation code

If you do not know your code, you can search for your job in the [CASCOT occupation coding tool \(https://cascotweb.warwick.ac.uk/#/classification/soc2020\)](https://cascotweb.warwick.ac.uk/#/classification/soc2020).

Not every job title is included. If you cannot find your exact job title, try searching for similar jobs.

Make sure the job description matches what you'll be doing. Some similar jobs have different codes, for example in construction. Bricklayers, roofers and

carpenters are eligible for a Skilled Worker visa, but construction labourers are not.

Check if an occupation code is eligible for this visa

When you know your occupation code, [view the table of eligible jobs \(/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-eligible-occupations\)](/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-eligible-occupations) to see if it's included.

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

If your occupation code is listed as a 'higher skilled' job, you can apply for this visa.

If your occupation code is listed as 'medium skilled', you can only apply for this visa if your job is on either:

- the [immigration salary list \(/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-immigration-salary-list\)](/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-immigration-salary-list)
- the [temporary shortage list \(/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-temporary-shortage-list\)](/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-temporary-shortage-list)

Salary requirements

You'll usually need to be paid the 'standard' salary rate of at least £41,700 per year, or the 'going rate' for your job, whichever is higher.

Example

Your salary is £42,000 per year, but the annual going rate for the job you'll be doing is £45,000. You do not meet the usual salary requirements for this visa.

Each occupation code has its own annual going rate. Check the going rate for your job in the [going rates table \(/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-going-rates-for-eligible-occupations\)](/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-going-rates-for-eligible-occupations).

If you work in healthcare or education

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

When you can be paid less

If you do not meet the usual salary requirements, and you do not work in healthcare or education, you might still be eligible if your salary will be at least £33,400 per year.

[Check when you can be paid less \(/skilled-worker-visa/when-you-can-be-paid-less\)](/skilled-worker-visa/when-you-can-be-paid-less).

You may also be able to meet lower salary requirements if you're:

- [extending your Skilled Worker visa \(/skilled-worker-visa/extend-your-visa\)](/skilled-worker-visa/extend-your-visa)
- [updating your Skilled Worker visa \(/skilled-worker-visa/update-your-visa-if-you-change-job-or-employer\)](/skilled-worker-visa/update-your-visa-if-you-change-job-or-employer) - for example if you have a new job or employer

Approved UK employers

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

View the [list of approved UK employers \(/government/publications/register-of-licensed-sponsors-workers\)](/government/publications/register-of-licensed-sponsors-workers).

If your employer is not currently approved, they can [apply for a sponsor licence \(/uk-visa-sponsorship-employers\)](/uk-visa-sponsorship-employers) if they're eligible.

They'll need to pay a fee - £574 for small businesses and charities or £1,579 for medium and large organisations. It usually takes around 8 weeks to process a licence application.

If you're a care worker or senior care worker

Your employer must be registered with the Care Quality Commission if you're a care worker (code 6135) or senior care worker (code 6136) working in England.

[Check if your employer is registered with the Care Quality Commission \(https://www.cqc.org.uk/\)](https://www.cqc.org.uk/).

If you already have a job offer from an approved employer

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

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

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

Check which [documents you'll need to apply \(/skilled-worker-visa/documents-you-must-provide\)](/skilled-worker-visa/documents-you-must-provide).

3. When you can be paid less

You might still be able to apply for a Skilled Worker visa if your job is eligible but your salary is less than the standard salary requirement of £41,700 or your job's standard 'going rate'.

You can be paid between 70% and 90% of the standard going rate for your job if your salary is at least £33,400 per year and you meet one of the following criteria:

- you're under 26, studying or a recent graduate, or in professional training
- you have a science, technology, engineering or maths (STEM) PhD level qualification that's relevant to your job (if you have a relevant PhD level qualification in any other subject your salary must be at least £37,500)
- you have a postdoctoral position in science or higher education

There are different salary rules if you work in some [healthcare or education jobs \(/skilled-worker-visa/if-you-work-in-healthcare-or-education\)](/skilled-worker-visa/if-you-work-in-healthcare-or-education) or you're [extending your visa \(/skilled-worker-visa/extend-your-visa\)](/skilled-worker-visa/extend-your-visa) or [updating your visa \(/skilled-worker-visa/extend-your-visa\)](/skilled-worker-visa/extend-your-visa).

Your job is on the immigration salary list

The immigration salary list is a list of skilled jobs which have lower salary requirements.

If your job is on the immigration salary list you also pay a lower fee to apply for your visa.

You must be paid at least £33,400 per year if you are being sponsored for a job on the immigration salary list.

You must still be paid at least the standard going rate for your job. [Check the standard going rate for your job in the going rates table \(/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-going-rates-for-eligible-occupations\)](#).

[View the immigration salary list \(/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-immigration-salary-list\)](#) to see if your job is included and how much you'll need to be paid.

Make sure you check whether your job is listed in the part of the UK you'll be working in – UK-wide, or only in England, Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland.

You're under 26, studying or a recent graduate, or in professional training

You can be paid 70% of your job's standard going rate if your salary will be at least £33,400 per year and one of the following applies:

- you're under 26 on the date you apply
- you're currently in the UK on a [Student visa \(/student-visa\)](#) studying at bachelor's degree level or above (or you have been in the last 2 years, and a Student or [visit visa \(/browse/visas-immigration/tourist-short-stay-visas\)](#) was your most recent visa)
- you're currently in the UK on a Graduate visa (or you have been in the last 2 years, and a Graduate or visit visa was your most recent visa)
- you'll be working towards a recognised qualification in a [UK regulated profession \(/government/publications/professions-regulated-by-law-in-the-uk-and-their-regulators\)](#)
- you'll be working towards full registration or chartered status in the job you're being sponsored for

If this applies to you, [check how much you'll need to be paid \(/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-eligible-salary-if-youre-under-26-studying-training-or-in-a-postdoctoral-role\)](#) to qualify for this visa.

Your total stay in the UK cannot be more than 4 years if you apply for one of these reasons. This includes any time you've already spent in the UK on

a Graduate visa.

You have a PhD level qualification that's relevant to your job

If your job is eligible for a PhD salary discount, you can be paid 80% or 90% of the job's standard going rate, depending on which subject you are qualified in.

If you have a science, technology, engineering or maths (STEM) qualification, you can be paid 80% of your job's standard going rate, as long as you will still be paid at least £33,400 a year.

If you have a non-STEM qualification, you can be paid 90% of your job's standard going rate, as long as you will still be paid at least £37,500 a year.

In both situations, you must:

- have a UK PhD or an equivalent doctorate-level overseas qualification - you'll need to [apply through Ecctis \(https://qls.ecctis.com/\)](https://qls.ecctis.com/) to check if an overseas qualification is equivalent to a UK PhD
- be able to prove your qualification is relevant to the job you'll be doing in the UK - your employer can confirm this

[View the list of jobs that qualify for a PhD salary discount \(/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-jobs-that-qualify-for-a-phd-salary-discount\)](https://government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-jobs-that-qualify-for-a-phd-salary-discount) to see if your job is included and how much you need to be paid.

If you're a research or academic leader, you may also be eligible to [apply for the Global Talent visa \(/global-talent-researcher-academic\)](https://global-talent-researcher-academic). This visa has no language or minimum salary requirements.

You have a postdoctoral position in science or higher education

You can be paid 70% of your job's standard going rate if you'll be working in a postdoctoral position in certain science or higher education roles.

Your job must be in one of the following occupation codes to qualify for this salary discount:

- 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

If this applies to you, [check how much you'll need to be paid \(/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-eligible-salary-if-youre-under-26-studying-training-or-in-a-postdoctoral-role\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-eligible-salary-if-youre-under-26-studying-training-or-in-a-postdoctoral-role) to qualify for this visa.

Your total stay in the UK cannot be more than 4 years if you apply to work in a postdoctoral position at 70% of the standard going rate. This includes any time you've already spent in the UK on a Graduate visa.

4. If you work in healthcare or education

There are different salary rules if you work in some healthcare or education jobs. Your salary must be at least £25,000 - or more if your job's 'going rate' is higher.

The going rates for these jobs are based on the national pay scales set by the relevant independent body, for example the NHS.

[View the list of eligible healthcare and education jobs \(/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-eligible-healthcare-and-education-jobs\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-eligible-healthcare-and-education-jobs) to see if your job is included.

National pay scales tables

If your job is on the list, your salary must be at least the national pay scale rate for the job you'll be doing.

These going rates apply whether you'll be working in the public or private sector.

Check how much you'll need to be paid in the:

- [table of national pay scales for eligible healthcare jobs \(/government/publications/national-pay-scales-for-eligible-healthcare-jobs\)](#) - listed by NHS pay band and area of the UK
- [table of national pay scales for eligible teaching and education leadership jobs \(/government/publications/national-pay-scales-for-eligible-teaching-and-education-jobs\)](#) - listed by role and area of the UK

Ask your employer if you're not sure what your role or pay band will be.

5. Knowledge of English

You'll usually need to prove your knowledge of the English language when you apply. You can prove it in one of the following ways, by:

- having a UK school qualification
- having a degree from a UK institution
- having a degree from an institution that was outside the UK and taught in English
- passing an English test from an approved provider

If you have already proved your knowledge of English in a previous successful visa application, you may not have to prove it again.

If you have a UK school qualification

You can prove your knowledge of English if you have a qualification from a UK school that you began when you were under 18. You must have one of the following qualifications:

- a GCSE
- an A Level
- Scottish National Qualification level 4 or 5
- Scottish Higher or Advanced Higher in English

If you have a degree from a UK institution

You can prove your knowledge of English if you have a degree-level qualification that was both:

- taught in English
- awarded by a UK institution, even if you studied outside the UK

If you have a degree from an institution outside the UK

If your degree was taught in English and was not awarded by a UK institution, you'll need to [apply for an assessment from Ecctis \(https://qls.ecctis.com/\)](https://qls.ecctis.com/).

Ecctis will give you a code to confirm that your qualification is equivalent to a UK bachelor's degree or higher and was taught in English.

Passing an English test

If you do not have any qualifications that prove your knowledge of English, you will need to [pass a Secure English Language Test \(SELT\) \(/guidance/prove-your-english-language-abilities-with-a-secure-english-language-test-self\)](/guidance/prove-your-english-language-abilities-with-a-secure-english-language-test-self) with an approved provider.

You must prove you can read, write, speak and understand English to at least B1 level on the [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages \(CEFR\) scale \(https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-1-cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-global-scale\)](https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-1-cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-global-scale).

From 8 January 2026, the level of English requirement is changing. If this is your first application for a Skilled Worker visa, you'll have to prove that you can read, write, speak and understand English to at least level B2.

Who does not need to prove their knowledge of English

You do not need to prove your knowledge of English if you're a national of one of the following countries or territories:

- Antigua and Barbuda
- Australia
- the Bahamas
- Barbados
- Belize
- the British overseas territories
- Canada
- Dominica

- Grenada
- Guyana
- Jamaica
- Malta
- New Zealand
- St Kitts and Nevis
- St Lucia
- St Vincent and the Grenadines
- Trinidad and Tobago
- USA

If you're a doctor, dentist, nurse, midwife or vet

You do not need to prove your knowledge of English if you've already passed an English Language assessment that is accepted by the relevant regulated professional body.

If you're a vet, you may need to prove that you passed an English Language assessment with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons.

6. How much it costs

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

- pay the application fee - the standard fee ranges from £769 to £1,751 depending on your circumstances
- pay the [healthcare surcharge \(/healthcare-immigration-application\)](/healthcare-immigration-application) - this is usually £1,035 per year
- support yourself when you arrive in the UK - you'll usually need to have at least £1,270 available (unless you're exempt)

You'll pay a lower application fee if your job is on the immigration salary list.

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

Example

You're applying to come to the UK from Argentina for 2 years on a Skilled Worker visa.

Your job is not on the immigration salary list so your visa will cost £769, plus £1,035 for each year of your stay for the healthcare surcharge. This means you'll pay a total of £2,839 when you apply for your visa.

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

Application fees

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

- up to 3 years - £769 per person
- more than 3 years - £1,519 per person

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

- up to 3 years - £885 per person
- more than 3 years - £1,751 per person

If your partner or child applies to join you in the UK, they'll pay the fee for the same length of time as you even if they apply after your visa has been granted.

Example

If your 5-year certificate of sponsorship expires in 2027 and your child applies to join you in 2025, they'll need to pay the application fee for more than 3 years.

If your job is on the immigration salary list

You and your family will pay a lower application fee if your job is on the [immigration salary list](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-immigration-salary-list) ([/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-immigration-salary-list](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-immigration-salary-list)).

The fee for each person applying is:

- £590 if you're staying for up to 3 years

- £1,160 if you're staying for more than 3 years

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

If your partner or child applies to join you in the UK as your 'dependant', they'll pay the fee for the same length of time as you.

Money to support yourself

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

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

You'll usually need to [show proof of this when you apply \(/skilled-worker-visa/documents-you-must-provide\)](/skilled-worker-visa/documents-you-must-provide), unless either:

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

Your partner and children will also need to prove they can support themselves while they're in the UK. [Check how much money your dependants will need to support themselves \(/skilled-worker-visa/your-partner-and-children\)](/skilled-worker-visa/your-partner-and-children).

[Read the guidance on financial evidence \(/guidance/financial-evidence-for-sponsored-or-endorsed-work-routes\)](/guidance/financial-evidence-for-sponsored-or-endorsed-work-routes) for more information about the money you need and how to prove it.

If your employer can support you instead

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

7. Documents you'll need to apply

When you apply you'll need to provide:

- your certificate of sponsorship reference number - your employer will give you this
- proof of your [knowledge of English \(/skilled-worker-visa/knowledge-of-english\)](/skilled-worker-visa/knowledge-of-english)
- a valid passport or other document that shows your identity and nationality

- your job title and annual salary
- your job's occupation code
- the name of your employer and their sponsor licence number - this will be on your certificate of sponsorship

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

Other documents you might need

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

- evidence that you have enough [personal savings to support yourself in the UK \(/skilled-worker-visa/how-much-it-costs\)](/skilled-worker-visa/how-much-it-costs), for example bank statements (unless your certificate of sponsorship shows your employer can support you)
- proof of your relationship with [your partner or children \(/skilled-worker-visa/your-partner-and-children\)](/skilled-worker-visa/your-partner-and-children) if they're applying with you
- your [tuberculosis test results if you're from a listed country \(/tb-test-visa/countries-where-you-need-a-tb-test-to-enter-the-uk\)](/tb-test-visa/countries-where-you-need-a-tb-test-to-enter-the-uk)
- a criminal record certificate - if you're working in certain jobs
- a [valid ATAS certificate \(/guidance/academic-technology-approval-scheme\)](/guidance/academic-technology-approval-scheme) if your employer tells you that you need one because your job involves researching a sensitive subject at PhD level or higher
- your UK PhD certificate, or your unique Ecctis reference number if your qualification is from outside the UK - you'll need to [apply through Ecctis \(https://qls.ecctis.com/\)](https://qls.ecctis.com/)

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

Criminal record certificate

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

- education, for example teachers, education advisers and school inspectors, childminders, teaching assistants

- healthcare, for example nurses, doctors, paramedics, managers, pharmacists, dentists and dental nurses, ophthalmic opticians
- therapy, for example psychologists, speech and language therapists, counsellors
- social services, for example social workers, managers, probation officers, welfare and housing officers

[Check how to apply for criminal records checks \(/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants\).](#)

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

If you've lived in more than one country

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

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

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

When you've got your documents ready

You can apply online once your documents are ready.

How you apply depends on whether you're:

- [outside the UK \(/skilled-worker-visa/apply-from-outside-the-uk\)](#) and are coming to the UK
- inside the UK and [extending your current visa \(/skilled-worker-visa/extend-your-visa\)](#)
- inside the UK and [switching from a different visa \(/skilled-worker-visa/switch-to-this-visa\)](#)

8. Apply from outside the UK

You must apply online for a Skilled Worker visa.

Check which [documents you'll need to apply \(/skilled-worker-visa/documents-you-must-provide\)](/skilled-worker-visa/documents-you-must-provide).

Proving your identity and providing supporting documents

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

You'll either:

- use the 'UK Immigration: ID Check' app to scan your identity document - you'll also create or sign into your UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) account
- have your fingerprints and photo (biometric information) taken at a [visa application centre \(/find-a-visa-application-centre\)](/find-a-visa-application-centre)

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

If you do need an appointment:

- you'll need to take your passport with you to the visa application centre (you'll be able to collect it on the day)
- you may have to travel to get to your nearest centre (this could be in another country)

Apply for a Skilled Worker visa

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

Start now

Continue your application

[Find out how to sign in to your account \(/sign-in-visa\)](/sign-in-visa).

How long it takes to get a decision

Once you've applied online, proved your identity and provided your documents, you'll usually get a decision within 3 weeks.

You'll be contacted if your application will take longer, for example because:

- your supporting documents need to be verified
- you need to attend an interview
- of your personal circumstances, for example if you have a criminal conviction

You may be able to pay to [get a faster decision \(/faster-decision-visa-settlement/applying-outside-the-uk\)](/faster-decision-visa-settlement/applying-outside-the-uk) - you'll be told if you can when you apply.

After you apply

You can ask to [cancel your application \(/cancel-visa\)](/cancel-visa). You'll only get your fee refunded if UKVI has not started processing your application.

You'll get an email containing the [decision on your application \(/apply-to-come-to-the-uk/getting-a-decision-on-your-application\)](/apply-to-come-to-the-uk/getting-a-decision-on-your-application). This will explain what you need to do next.

9. Your partner and children

Your partner and children may also be able to apply to join you or stay in the UK as your 'dependants'. They'll need to complete separate applications.

If your partner or child's application is successful, their visa will usually end on the same date as yours. If a child's parents have visas with different expiry dates, the child's visa will end on the earlier date.

A dependant partner or child is any of the following:

- your husband, wife, civil partner or unmarried partner
- your child under 18 - including if they were born in the UK during your stay
- your child over 18 if they currently have permission ('leave to enter' or 'leave to remain') to be in the UK as your dependant

You'll need to provide evidence of your relationship to your dependant when you apply.

If you're the first person in your family to apply, you can get a 'family linking code' to connect your applications together. Your family members can enter

the same code when they apply.

If you're a care worker or senior care worker

Your partner and children may be able to apply to join you or stay in the UK as your dependants. One of the following must be true:

- you have been continually employed as a care worker or senior care worker in the UK and on a Skilled Worker visa since before 11 March 2024
- you're applying for a child born in the UK
- you're the only living parent responsible for your child and you're applying for permission for your child to stay in the UK
- your child's other parent is also sponsored as a care worker or senior care worker and you're applying for permission for your child to stay in the UK

If your occupation code is a 'medium skilled' job (not care worker or senior care worker)

If your job is [listed as 'medium skilled' \(/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-eligible-occupations\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-eligible-occupations), your partner and children may be able to apply to join you or stay in the UK as your dependants. One of the following must be true:

- you have been continually employed in the UK on a Skilled worker visa and in a 'medium skilled' job since before 22 July 2025
- you're applying for a child born in the UK
- you're the only living parent responsible for your child and you're applying for permission for your child to stay in the UK
- your child's other parent is also sponsored for a job listed as 'medium skilled' and you're applying for permission for your child to stay in the UK

Your partner

You must be able to prove one of the following:

- you're in a civil partnership or marriage that's recognised in the UK
- you've been living together in a relationship for at least 2 years when you apply

- you've been in a relationship for at least 2 years when you apply but you cannot live together, for example because you're working or studying in different places, or it's not accepted in your culture

If you're not living together, you'll need to prove that you have an ongoing commitment to each other, for example by providing evidence that you:

- communicate regularly with each other
- support each other financially
- care for any children you have together
- spend time together as a couple, for example on holiday or at events

Your child

They must:

- live with you, unless they're living away from home in full-time education - for example, at boarding school or university
- not be married or in a civil partnership

You'll need to provide evidence of their address, such as:

- a bank statement
- credit card bills
- driving licence
- NHS registration document
- an official letter from their university or college

Money they need to support themselves

Your partner and children must have a certain amount of money available to support themselves while they're in the UK.

You - or your partner or child - will need:

- £285 for your partner
- £315 for one child
- £200 for each additional child

Example

You - or your partner or child - would need to have £600 to bring your partner and one child with you to the UK (£285 for your partner and £315 for your child).

You would also need to have £1,270 available to support yourself for your own application.

You - or your partner or child - will need to have had the money available for at least 28 days in a row. Day 28 must be within 31 days of you or them applying for this visa.

You'll usually need to [show proof of this when they apply \(/skilled-worker-visa/documents-you-must-provide\)](/skilled-worker-visa/documents-you-must-provide), unless either:

- you have all been in the UK with a valid visa for at least 12 months
- your employer can cover your family's costs during your first month in the UK - this must be confirmed on your certificate of sponsorship

If your partner or child is applying at a different time to you, they'll only need to prove they have enough money to support themselves if they have been in the UK for less than 1 year.

Apply from outside the UK

Your partner and children must either:

- [apply online as your partner outside the UK \(https://apply-to-visit-or-stay-in-the-uk.homeoffice.gov.uk/sort/start/pbs_dependant_partner_out_uk\)](https://apply-to-visit-or-stay-in-the-uk.homeoffice.gov.uk/sort/start/pbs_dependant_partner_out_uk)
- [apply online as your child outside the UK \(https://apply-to-visit-or-stay-in-the-uk.homeoffice.gov.uk/sort/start/pbs_dependant_child_out_uk\)](https://apply-to-visit-or-stay-in-the-uk.homeoffice.gov.uk/sort/start/pbs_dependant_child_out_uk)

Each family member will need to complete a separate application and pay the [visa fee \(/skilled-worker-visa/how-much-it-costs\)](/skilled-worker-visa/how-much-it-costs). They must apply before they travel to the UK.

They'll need your application number - you'll get this when you apply. This number is called a Global Web Form (GWF) or a Unique Application Number (UAN). You'll find it on emails and letters from the Home Office about your application.

They can also enter a 'family linking code' if you got one when you applied. This will connect your applications.

Proving their identity

As part of an application, your partner and children will need to prove their identity.

They'll either:

- use the 'UK Immigration: ID Check' app to scan their identity document - they'll also create or sign into their UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) account
- have their fingerprints and photo (biometric information) taken at a [visa application centre \(/find-a-visa-application-centre\)](/find-a-visa-application-centre)

They'll be told what they need to do when they apply.

If they need an appointment:

- they'll need to take their passport with them to the visa application centre (they'll be able to collect it on the day)
- they may have to travel to get to their nearest centre (this could be in another country)

Getting a decision

Once they've applied online, proved their identity and provided their documents, they'll usually get a decision within 3 weeks.

They may be able to pay to [get a faster decision \(/faster-decision-visa-settlement/applying-outside-the-uk\)](/faster-decision-visa-settlement/applying-outside-the-uk) - they'll be told if they can when they apply.

If their application is successful, their [decision email \(/apply-to-come-to-the-uk/getting-a-decision-on-your-application\)](/apply-to-come-to-the-uk/getting-a-decision-on-your-application) will tell them what they'll get to prove their immigration status and what they need to do next.

Apply from inside the UK (extend or switch their visa)

If you extend or switch your visa, your partner or child's current visa will still be valid until its original end date. Your partner or child need to apply to extend or switch their visa, either:

- at the same time as you
- at any time before their current visa expires

This includes children who have turned 18 during your stay.

Your partner or children cannot apply to switch to your Skilled Worker visa as your dependants if they are currently in the UK:

- on a visit visa
- on a short-term student visa
- on a Parent of a Child Student visa
- on a seasonal worker visa
- on a domestic worker in a private household visa
- [on immigration bail \(/bail-immigration-detainees\)](#)
- because they were given [permission to stay outside the immigration rules \(/government/publications/chapter-1-section-14-leave-outside-the-immigration-rules\)](#), for example on compassionate grounds

If your partner or child is currently in the UK on a Student visa, they can only switch if they have either:

- completed the course they were sponsored to study
- studied for a PhD for at least 24 months

How to apply

The application form will tell you if you can include your partner and children in your application or whether they need to apply separately.

If your partner or child apply separately, they'll need to either:

- [apply online as your partner inside the UK \(https://apply-to-visit-or-stay-in-the-uk.homeoffice.gov.uk/sort/start/brp_reuse_pbs_dependant_partner_in_uk\)](https://apply-to-visit-or-stay-in-the-uk.homeoffice.gov.uk/sort/start/brp_reuse_pbs_dependant_partner_in_uk)
- [apply online as your child inside the UK \(https://apply-to-visit-or-stay-in-the-uk.homeoffice.gov.uk/sort/start/brp_reuse_pbs_dependant_child_in_uk\)](https://apply-to-visit-or-stay-in-the-uk.homeoffice.gov.uk/sort/start/brp_reuse_pbs_dependant_child_in_uk)

They'll need your application number - you'll get this when you apply. This number is called a Global Web Form (GWF) or a Unique Application Number (UAN). You'll find it on emails and letters from the Home Office about your application.

They can also enter a 'family linking code' if you got one when you applied. This will connect your applications.

Proving their identity

As part of their application, your partner and children will need to prove their identity. They'll either:

- use the 'UK Immigration: ID Check' app to scan their identity document - they'll also create or sign into their UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) account
- have their fingerprints and photo (biometric information) taken at a [UK Visa and Citizenship Application Services \(UKVCAS\) \(/ukvcas\)](#) service point

They'll be told what they need to do when they apply.

They must not travel outside of the UK, Ireland, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man until they get a decision. Their application will be withdrawn if they do.

How long it takes to get a decision

Once they've applied online, proved their identity and provided their documents, they'll usually get a decision within 8 weeks.

They may be able to pay to [get a faster decision \(/faster-decision-visa-settlement\)](#) - they'll be told if they can when they apply.

Children born in the UK

If you have a child while you're in the UK, they do not automatically [become a British citizen \(/british-citizenship\)](#).

You must apply for your child's dependant visa if you want to travel in and out of the UK with them.

The form you fill in depends on whether your child is inside or outside the UK. Your child must either:

- [apply online as your child inside the UK \(https://apply-to-visit-or-stay-in-the-uk.homeoffice.gov.uk/sort/start/brp_reuse_pbs_dependant_child_in_uk\)](https://apply-to-visit-or-stay-in-the-uk.homeoffice.gov.uk/sort/start/brp_reuse_pbs_dependant_child_in_uk)

- [apply online as your child outside the UK \(https://apply-to-visit-or-stay-in-the-uk.homeoffice.gov.uk/sort/start/pbs_dependant_child_out_uk\)](https://apply-to-visit-or-stay-in-the-uk.homeoffice.gov.uk/sort/start/pbs_dependant_child_out_uk)

You'll need to provide a full UK birth certificate for each child, showing the names of both parents.

You must apply for their dependant visa before they turn 18 if they want to stay in the UK.

What your partner or child can and cannot do

Your partner or child can:

- work, except as a sports person or coach
- study
- travel abroad and return to the UK
- apply to settle permanently in the UK (also known as 'indefinite leave to remain') if they've lived in the UK for 5 years and meet the other eligibility requirements

They cannot apply for most benefits (public funds), or the State Pension.

If their application is successful, they'll get a full list of what they can and cannot do.

10. Extend your visa

You can usually apply to extend a Skilled Worker visa or a Tier 2 (General) work visa if all of the following are true:

- you have the same job as when you were given your previous permission to enter or stay in the UK
- your job is in the same [occupation code \(/skilled-worker-visa/your-job\)](/skilled-worker-visa/your-job) as when you were given your previous permission to enter or stay in the UK
- you're still working for the employer who gave you your current certificate of sponsorship

If your occupation code is a 'medium skilled' job

If your job is [listed as 'medium skilled' \(/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-eligible-occupations\)](/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-eligible-occupations), you can only extend your Skilled Worker visa if both of

the following are true:

- you got your first certificate of sponsorship before 22 July 2025
- you have continually held one or more Skilled Worker visas since you got your first certificate of sponsorship

You must not travel outside of the UK, Ireland, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man until you get a decision. Your application will be withdrawn if you do.

Your partner and children

Your partner or child's visa will not automatically extend if you extend yours. If they do not extend their visa, it will be valid until its original end date.

They can either apply at the same time as you, or at any time before their current visa expires.

[Check if your partner and children can stay in the UK as your dependants \(/skilled-worker-visa/your-partner-and-children\)](/skilled-worker-visa/your-partner-and-children) when you extend your visa.

If you have a Skilled Worker visa

If you got your first certificate of sponsorship (CoS) before 4 April 2024 you may be able to meet lower [salary requirements \(/skilled-worker-visa/certificate-of-sponsorship-before-4-april-2024\)](/skilled-worker-visa/certificate-of-sponsorship-before-4-april-2024).

If you have a Tier 2 (General) work visa

You may be able to meet different eligibility requirements, depending on:

- whether you got the certificate of sponsorship for your first Tier 2 visa before or after 24 November 2016
- your occupation code - some have different going rates

The requirements will apply if you either:

- have a Tier 2 (General) work visa

- had a Tier 2 (General) work visa which you've extended as a Skilled Worker visa

If you got your certificate of sponsorship on or after 24 November 2016

If you apply to extend before 1 December 2026, you will still need to meet the [lower salary requirements \(/skilled-worker-visa/certificate-of-sponsorship-before-4-april-2024\)](/skilled-worker-visa/certificate-of-sponsorship-before-4-april-2024), but your salary may also include allowances, such as London weighting. Any allowances must be guaranteed for the length of your stay.

Jobs with different going rates

For some jobs, the going rate for the Skilled Worker visa is different if you had a Tier 2 (General) visa. These going rates are based on a 37.5-hour working week.

Occupation code for your Tier 2 (General) application	Occupation code for your current application	Going rate	90% of going rate	80% of going rate	70% of going rate
2113 Physical scientists	2114 Physical scientists	£27,190 (£13.94 per hour)	£25,000 (£12.82 per hour)	£25,000 (£12.82 per hour)	£25,000 (£12.82 per hour)
2119 Natural and social science professionals not classified elsewhere	2119 Natural and social science professionals not classified elsewhere	£27,190 (£13.94 per hour)	£25,000 (£12.82 per hour)	£25,000 (£12.82 per hour)	£25,000 (£12.82 per hour)
2119 Natural and social science professionals not classified elsewhere	2162 Other researchers, unspecified discipline	£27,190 (£13.94 per hour)	£25,000 (£12.82 per hour)	£25,000 (£12.82 per hour)	£25,000 (£12.82 per hour)
2311 Higher education	2162 Other researchers,	£30,940 (£15.87 per hour)	£27,840 (£14.28 per hour)	£25,000 (£12.82 per hour)	£25,000 (£12.82 per hour)

Occupation code for your Tier 2 (General) application	Occupation code for your current application	Going rate	90% of going rate	80% of going rate	70% of going rate
teaching professionals	unspecified discipline	per hour)	per hour)	per hour)	per hour)
2311 Higher education teaching professionals	2311 Higher education teaching professionals	£30,940 (£15.87 per hour)	£27,840 (£14.28 per hour)	£25,000 (£12.82 per hour)	£25,000 (£12.82 per hour)
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)	£25,000 (£12.82 per hour)

If you've changed job or employer

You'll need to [apply to update your visa \(/skilled-worker-visa/update-your-visa-if-you-change-job-or-employer\)](/skilled-worker-visa/update-your-visa-if-you-change-job-or-employer) instead.

Fees

[Check how much it costs \(/skilled-worker-visa/how-much-it-costs\)](/skilled-worker-visa/how-much-it-costs) for your type of visa.

You'll also need to have your fingerprints and photo (biometric information) taken - there's no fee for this.

Proving your identity and providing supporting documents

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

You'll either:

- use the 'UK Immigration: ID Check' app to scan your identity document - you'll also create or sign into your UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) account
- have your fingerprints and photo (biometric information) taken at a [UK Visa and Citizenship Application Services \(UKVCAS\) \(/ukvcas\)](#) service point

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

Apply to extend your Skilled Worker visa

You must apply online before your current visa expires.

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

Apply now

Continue your application

[Find out how to sign in to your account \(/sign-in-visa\)](#).

How long it takes to get a decision

You'll usually get a decision within 8 weeks of your application date.

You'll be contacted if your application will take longer, for example because:

- your supporting documents need to be verified
- you need to attend an interview
- of your personal circumstances, for example if you have a criminal conviction

You may be able to [pay to get a faster decision \(/faster-decision-visa-settlement\)](#) - you'll be told if you can when you apply.

After you apply

If you need to change something in your application after you've sent it [contact UK Visas and Immigration \(UKVI\) \(/contact-ukvi-inside-outside-uk\)](#).

You can ask to [cancel your application \(/cancel-visa\)](/cancel-visa). You'll only get your fee refunded if UKVI has not started processing your application.

You'll get an email or a letter containing the [decision on your application \(/apply-to-come-to-the-uk/getting-a-decision-on-your-application\)](/apply-to-come-to-the-uk/getting-a-decision-on-your-application). This will explain what you need to do next.

11. If you got your first certificate of sponsorship before 4 April 2024

There are lower salary requirements if both of the following apply:

- you got your certificate of sponsorship for your first Tier 2 or Skilled Worker visa before 4 April 2024
- you have continually held one or more Skilled Worker visas since then

You can be paid whichever is higher of £31,300 or the lower going rate for your occupation if you make an application to:

- extend your visa
- update your visa

Lower salary requirements will only be in place for applications made before 4 April 2030. These salary requirements will be updated regularly and your salary will still need to rise in line with the updated going rates each time you apply.

Each occupation code has its own annual going rate. Check the lower going rate for your job in the [going rates table \(/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-going-rates-for-eligible-occupations\)](/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-going-rates-for-eligible-occupations).

When you can be paid less

You can be paid between 70% and 90% of the lower going rate for your job if your salary is at least £25,000 per year and you meet one of the following criteria:

- you're under 26, studying or a recent graduate, or in professional training
- you have a science, technology, engineering or maths (STEM) PhD level qualification that's relevant to your job (if you have a relevant PhD level qualification in any other subject your salary must be at least £28,200)
- you have a postdoctoral position in science or higher education

Check how much you will need to be paid for these jobs in the [going rates table \(/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-going-rates-for-eligible-occupations\)](/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-going-rates-for-eligible-occupations).

There are different salary rules if you work in some [healthcare or education jobs \(/skilled-worker-visa/if-you-work-in-healthcare-or-education\)](/skilled-worker-visa/if-you-work-in-healthcare-or-education).

If your job is on the immigration salary list

If your job is on the [immigration salary list \(/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-immigration-salary-list\)](/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-immigration-salary-list), you need to be paid at least £25,000 or your job's full going rate, whichever is higher.

If you're under 26, studying or a recent graduate, or in professional training

You can be paid at least 70% of your job's lower going rate if your salary will be at least £25,000 per year.

Your total stay in the UK cannot be more than 4 years. This includes any time you've already spent in the UK on a Tier 2 (General) or Graduate visa.

If you have a PhD level qualification that's relevant to your job

If you have a science, technology, engineering or maths (STEM) PhD level qualification, you can be paid at least 80% of the lower going rate if your salary will be at least £25,000 per year.

If you have a relevant PhD level qualification in any other subject, you can be paid at least 90% of the lower going rate if your salary will be at least £28,200 per year.

If you have a postdoctoral position in science or higher education

You can be paid at least 70% of the lower going rate if your salary will be at least £25,000 per year.

Your total stay in the UK cannot be more than 4 years. This includes any time you've already spent in the UK on a Tier 2 (General) or Graduate visa.

12. Update your visa if you change job or employer

You'll need to apply to update your Skilled Worker or Tier 2 (General) work visa if:

- you want to change your job and your new job is with a different employer
- your job changes to a different occupation code, and you're not in a graduate training programme
- you leave a job that's on the immigration salary list for a job that is not on the list

You do not need to apply again if you stay in the same job, but your job is taken off the immigration salary list.

If you'll be doing a different job for your current employer, you only need to apply to update your visa if your new job is in a different [occupation code \(/skilled-worker-visa/your-job\)](/skilled-worker-visa/your-job).

If your new occupation code is [listed as 'medium skilled' \(/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-eligible-occupations\)](/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-eligible-occupations), you can update your visa if both of the following apply:

- you got your certificate of sponsorship for your first Tier 2 or Skilled Worker visa before 22 July 2025
- you have continually held one or more Skilled Worker visas since then

Your [partner or children \(/skilled-worker-visa/your-partner-and-children\)](/skilled-worker-visa/your-partner-and-children) will need to apply separately to update their visa. They can either apply at the same time as you, or at any time before their current visa expires.

Fees

[Check how much it costs \(/skilled-worker-visa/how-much-it-costs\)](/skilled-worker-visa/how-much-it-costs) for your type of visa.

You'll also need to have your fingerprints and photo (biometric information) taken - there's no fee for this.

Eligibility and documents you'll need to apply

Your new job must meet the [eligibility requirements \(/skilled-worker-visa/your-job\)](/skilled-worker-visa/your-job) and you'll need a new certificate of sponsorship to prove this.

You may be able to meet lower [salary requirements \(/skilled-worker-visa/certificate-of-sponsorship-before-4-april-2024\)](/skilled-worker-visa/certificate-of-sponsorship-before-4-april-2024) if both of the following apply:

- you got your certificate of sponsorship for your first Tier 2 or Skilled Worker visa before 4 April 2024
- you have continually held one or more Skilled Worker visas since then

You'll only need to [provide other evidence \(/skilled-worker-visa/documents-you-must-provide\)](/skilled-worker-visa/documents-you-must-provide) again if you've been in the UK for less than one year.

If you're applying to add a second job to your current visa

You must apply to update your visa if you take on a second job that is more than 20 paid hours a week in addition to the job you're being sponsored for.

Your second job must meet the [eligibility requirements \(/skilled-worker-visa/your-job\)](/skilled-worker-visa/your-job) and you'll need a new certificate of sponsorship to prove this.

If your second job occupation code is listed as 'medium skilled' you can add it if both of the following apply:

- you got your certificate of sponsorship for your first Tier 2 or Skilled Worker visa before 22 July 2025
- you have continually held one or more Skilled Worker visas since then

You'll also need to include a letter with your application explaining that you want to change your current permission to stay.

Your letter must state:

- your name
- your date of birth
- your current certificate of sponsorship reference number
- the date when your current permission to stay runs out

If your application is successful, you'll get a new visa giving you permission to do both jobs.

You do not need to apply to update your visa if you're taking on additional work that has an [eligible occupation code \(/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-eligible-occupations\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-eligible-occupations) or you'll be doing less than 20 paid hours a week.

When to apply to update your visa

You can apply to update your visa up to 3 months before the start date of your new job.

You can continue working in your current job while your new application is being considered, or to work out your notice period - as long as you apply before your current visa expires.

You should not start your new job until you've got confirmation of your new permission.

You must not travel outside of the UK, Ireland, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man until you get a decision. Your application will be withdrawn if you do.

Proving your identity and providing supporting documents

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

You'll either:

- use the 'UK Immigration: ID Check' app to scan your identity document - you'll also create or sign into your UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) account
- have your fingerprints and photo (biometric information) taken at a [UK Visa and Citizenship Application Services \(UKVCAS\) \(/ukvcas\)](https://www.gov.uk/uk-visa-and-citizenship-application-services-ukvcas) service point

You'll be told what you need to do when you apply. You'll also be told how to provide your supporting documents if you need to.

Apply to update your visa

You must apply online.

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

[Apply now](#)

Continue your application

[Find out how to sign in to your account \(/sign-in-visa\)](/sign-in-visa).

How long it takes to get a decision

You'll usually get a decision within 8 weeks of your application date.

You'll be contacted if your application will take longer, for example because:

- your supporting documents need to be verified
- you need to attend an interview
- of your personal circumstances, for example if you have a criminal conviction

You may be able to [pay to get a faster decision \(/faster-decision-visa-settlement\)](/faster-decision-visa-settlement) - you'll be told if you can when you apply.

After you apply

If you need to change something in your application after you've sent it [contact UK Visas and Immigration \(UKVI\) \(/contact-ukvi-inside-outside-uk\)](/contact-ukvi-inside-outside-uk).

You can ask to [cancel your application \(/cancel-visa\)](/cancel-visa). You'll only get your fee refunded if UKVI has not started processing your application.

You'll get an email or a letter containing the [decision on your application \(/apply-to-come-to-the-uk/getting-a-decision-on-your-application\)](/apply-to-come-to-the-uk/getting-a-decision-on-your-application). This will explain what you need to do next.

13. Switch to this visa

You might be able to apply to change ('switch') to a Skilled Worker visa if you're already in the UK on a different type of visa.

You must not travel outside of the UK, Ireland, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man until you get a decision. Your application will be withdrawn if you do.

Your partner and children

Your partner or child's visa will not automatically switch to this visa if you switch yours. If they do not switch their visa, it will be valid until its original end date.

They can either apply at the same time as you, or at any time before their current visa expires.

If you're switching to this visa as a care worker, senior care worker or someone with a job [listed as 'medium skilled' \(/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-eligible-occupations\)](#), your partner or child will not be able to switch to this visa as your dependant.

Eligibility

You must meet the following requirements:

- [your job meets the eligibility requirements \(/skilled-worker-visa/your-job\)](#)
- you can [speak, read, write and understand English \(/skilled-worker-visa/knowledge-of-english\)](#)

If you're currently in the UK on a Student visa, you must also meet one of the following requirements:

- you have completed the course you were sponsored to study
- your job start date is after your course has finished
- you're studying for a PhD full time, and have been for at least 24 months

Who cannot apply to switch to this visa

You cannot apply to switch to this visa if you're currently in the UK:

- on a visit visa

- on a short-term student visa
- on a Parent of a Child Student visa
- on a seasonal worker visa
- on a domestic worker in a private household visa
- [on immigration bail \(/bail-immigration-detainees\)](/bail-immigration-detainees)
- because you were given [permission to stay outside the immigration rules \(/government/publications/chapter-1-section-14-leave-outside-the-immigration-rules\)](/government/publications/chapter-1-section-14-leave-outside-the-immigration-rules), for example on compassionate grounds

You must leave the UK and [apply for a Skilled Worker visa from abroad \(/skilled-worker-visa/apply-from-outside-the-uk\)](/skilled-worker-visa/apply-from-outside-the-uk) if you're in one of these categories.

Fees

Each person applying will need to pay:

- the [visa application fee \(/skilled-worker-visa/how-much-it-costs\)](/skilled-worker-visa/how-much-it-costs)
- [the healthcare surcharge \(/healthcare-immigration-application\)](/healthcare-immigration-application) for each year of their stay

You'll also need to have your fingerprints and photo (biometric information) taken - there's no fee for this.

If you've been in the UK for less than 1 year, you'll also need to [prove you have enough money to support yourself \(/skilled-worker-visa/how-much-it-costs\)](/skilled-worker-visa/how-much-it-costs).

Proving your identity and providing supporting documents

As part of your application you'll need to prove your identity.

How you do this depends on where you're from and the type of passport you have.

You'll either:

- use the 'UK Immigration: ID Check' app to scan your identity document - you'll also create or sign into your UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) account
- have your fingerprints and photo (biometric information) taken at a [UK Visa and Citizenship Application Services \(UKVCAS\) \(/ukvcas\)](/ukvcas) service point

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

Apply to switch to a Skilled Worker visa

You must apply online before your current visa expires.

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

Apply now

Continue your application

[Find out how to sign in to your account \(/sign-in-visa\)](/sign-in-visa).

How long it takes to get a decision

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You'll be contacted if your application will take longer, for example because:

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If you need to change something in your application after you've sent it [contact UK Visas and Immigration \(UKVI\) \(/contact-ukvi-inside-outside-uk\)](/contact-ukvi-inside-outside-uk).

You can ask to [cancel your application \(/cancel-visa\)](/cancel-visa). You'll only get your fee refunded if UKVI has not started processing your application.

You'll get an email or a letter containing the [decision on your application \(/apply-to-come-to-the-uk/getting-a-decision-on-your-application\)](#). This will explain what you need to do next.

14. Taking on additional work

If you work overtime in the job you're being sponsored for, you do not need to update your visa.

There's no limit to how many hours of overtime you can do.

Working in another job or for your own business

You can work up to 20 hours a week in another job or for your own business as long as you're still doing the job you're being sponsored for.

The work you do must meet one of the following conditions:

- it has an [eligible occupation code \(/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-eligible-occupations\)](#) listed as 'higher skilled'
- it is on the [immigration salary list \(/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-immigration-salary-list\)](#)
- it is in the same sector and at the same level as your main job

You can only do additional work in a job with an [eligible occupation code \(/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-eligible-occupations\)](#) listed as 'medium skilled' if both of the following apply:

- you got your certificate of sponsorship for your first Tier 2 or Skilled Worker visa before 22 July 2025
- you have continually held one or more Skilled Worker visas since then

If you work more than 20 hours a week in another job

You'll need to [apply to update your visa \(/skilled-worker-visa/update-your-visa-if-you-change-job-or-employer\)](#) so that you're being sponsored to do both jobs.

You'll need to:

- get a new certificate of sponsorship from your second employer
- include a letter with your application explaining that you want to change your current permission to stay

Running your own business

There are various ways to [set up a business \(/set-up-business\)](/set-up-business) including registering as a sole trader.

Any business administration that you do, such as preparing invoices, counts as part of the 20 hours.

Voluntary work

You can do voluntary work while on the Skilled Worker visa. This must be unpaid (except for reasonable expenses such as travel) and for one of the following:

- a registered charity
- a voluntary organisation
- an associated fundraising body (an organisation that raises money for a charity or voluntary organisation)
- a statutory body (a government-appointed body, for example Historic England)



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