



Home Office

General visitors

This guidance is based on the Immigration Rules

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This guidance tells you how to consider applications for leave in the general visitor category under paragraphs 41-46 of the Immigration Rules.

General visitors are those who are coming to the UK :

- for tourism
- for a holiday
- to visit family
- to take part in an archaeological excavation, or
- to donate an organ or to be assessed as a suitable organ donor .

Organ donors

Applicants coming to act as an organ donor or to be assessed as a suitable organ donor are considered under the general visitor rules regardless of whether the intended recipient is being treated on the National Health Service (NHS) or privately.

There are no provisions within the Immigration Rules to grant:

- Indefinite leave to remain (settlement) in any of the visitor categories.
- Someone entry to the UK as a dependant of a visitor. A dependant or family member will need to qualify in their own right in one of the visitor categories.

For more information on the Immigration Rules, see related link: [Immigration Rules – paragraph 40-56Z](#).

Changes to this guidance – This page tells you what has changed since the previous version of this guidance.

Contact – This page tells you who to contact for help if your senior caseworker or line manager can't answer your question.

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Changes to this guidance

About this guidance	This page lists the changes to the 'General visitor' guidance, with the most recent at the top.		Related links
Key facts	Date of change	Details of change	Multi-entry visas
Entry or extension requirements	17 February 2015	Change request: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Credibility and intentions<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Page rewritten.	See also
General visitor requirements	06 November 2014	Change request: <p>Change made throughout the guidance to reflect the rules change of 6 November 2014.</p>	Contacts
Other categories covered by general visitors	14 July 2014	Change request <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organ donors:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ New page added• Minor housekeeping changes.	Information owner
Granting or refusing		For previous changes to this guidance you will find all earlier versions in the archive. See related link: General visitors – Archive.	Links to staff intranet removed
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Key facts

This page lists key facts on general visitors.

Category: General visitors	
Eligibility requirements	<p>The applicant must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Genuinely be seeking entry as a general visitor for a period not exceeding six months, or 12 months for a visitor accompanying an academic visitor (who is a child, spouse or partner).• Leave the UK at the end of the period of the visit• maintain and accommodate themselves and any dependants without using public funds. Meet the cost of the return or onward journey..• If taking part in an archaeological excavation, provide a letter from the director or organiser with details of this.• If coming either to act as an organ donor or to be assessed as a suitable organ donor:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Genuinely intend to donate or be assessed as a suitable organ donor to an identified recipient in the UK.○ Show a genetic or pre-existing emotional relationship with the recipient, have been confirmed as a donor match, or be coming for further medical tests to establish whether he is a suitable donor to the intended recipient in the UK provide a letter, dated up to three months before their intended date of arrival in the UK from either the lead nurse or coordinator of the UK's NHS trust's living donor kidney transplant team or a UK registered medical practitioner who holds an NHS consultant post or who appears in the Specialist Register of the General Medical Council, confirming the above and details of when and where the proposed transplant will take place○ Demonstrate, if required, that the identified recipient is present in the UK legally or will be at the time of the planned transplant. <p>The applicant must not:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• intend to live in the UK for extended periods through frequent or successive visits• intend to take employment in the UK• intend to produce goods or provide services within the UK• intend to take a course of study, except as set out in

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	<p>paragraph 43a</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be a child under the age of 18 • intend to marry or form a civil partnership • intend to give notice of marriage or civil partnership • intend to carry out any of the activities provided for as a business, sports or entertainer visitor • intend to receive private medical treatment • be in transit to a country outside the common travel area.
Application forms	<p>Applications made outside the UK – online applications (VAF1A for general visitors and VAF1B for family visitors where online applications not available)</p> <p>Extension of stay in the UK – FLR(O)</p>
Cost of application:	UK Visas and Immigration fees
Entry clearance mandatory?	Only for visa nationals
Is biometric information required for applications made in the UK?	Yes for visa applicants only
Code of leave to remain granted	Code 3
Entry clearance endorsements	<p>Visa nationals</p> <p>C:VISIT: 6 MONTHS:CODE 3</p> <p>C: FAMILY VISIT: 6 MONTHS: CODE 3.</p> <p>Non-visa nationals</p> <p>D:VISIT: 6 MONTHS:CODE 3</p> <p>D: FAMILY VISIT: 6 MONTHS: CODE 3</p> <p>Where the visitor is coming to act as an organ donor it will usually be appropriate to issue a single entry visa, unless they provide a specific reason why a multi entry visa will be needed.</p>
Conditions of leave to enter	No work allowed. No recourse to public funds. Maximum 30 days incidental study
How long is leave to enter normally granted for?	Six months 12 months for visitors accompanying an academic visitor
Are dependants allowed?	No – dependants must qualify as a visitor in their own right.
Work and study allowed?	No work, maximum 30 days incidental study.
Is switching into this category allowed?	No
Does this category lead to settlement (indefinite leave to remain)?	No
Is knowledge of language and life required?	No

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CID case type	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visitor (general) – EC <p>In country case types:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visitors (general) - LTR• Visitors (Special) - LTR
Immigration Rules paragraphs	<u>Immigration Rules – Part 2: paragraphs 40-46</u>

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Entry or extension requirements

About this guidance	This page explains the requirements a person wishing to come to the UK as a general visitor must meet to receive either entry clearance, leave to enter at a port of entry, or extension of stay in the UK.	Related links Links to staff intranet removed
Key facts	Visa nationals and anyone applying to come to the UK for more than six months will require entry clearance.	Downloads
Entry or extension requirements	When you consider an application you must check:	External links
General visitor requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">the application is validthe applicant's passport or travel document is genuinethe applicant meets the substantive requirements of the categorythere are no general grounds for refusal.	Immigration Rules – Part 2: paragraphs 40-56Z
Other categories covered by general visitors	For more information, see related links: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Specified application forms and proceduresPassports and travel documentsGeneral grounds for refusal.	
Granting or refusing	Requirements for a grant of leave The applicant must: <ul style="list-style-type: none">be genuinely seeking entry as:<ul style="list-style-type: none">a general visitor for a period not exceeding six months, or12 months for a visitor accompanying an academic visitorleave the UK at the end of the period of the visitmaintain and accommodate themselves and any dependants without using public fundsmeet the cost of the return or onward journey.provide, if coming to take part in an archaeological excavation, a letter from the director	
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- or organiser of the excavation stating the length of their visit and, if appropriate, the arrangements made for their accommodation and maintenance.
- if coming to either act as an organ donor or be assessed for their suitability to act as an organ donor:
 - genuinely intend to donate an organ, or be assessed as a suitable organ donor to an identified recipient in the UK with whom they have a genetic or pre-existing emotional relationship
 - be a confirmed donor match to the named recipient through initial medical tests or be coming for further tests to establish whether they are a suitable donor to the intended recipient;
 - provide a letter, dated no more than three months before their intended date of arrival in the UK, from either the lead nurse or coordinator of the UK's NHS trust's living donor kidney transplant team or a UK registered medical practitioner who holds an NHS consultant post or who appears in the Specialist Register of the General Medical Council,
 - the letter must confirm the donor is undergoing further assessments to confirm their suitability to act as a donor to the named recipient in the UK or that the applicant is a confirmed donor match to the named recipient in the UK, and when and where the planned transplant or medical tests will take place. The applicant (the donor) must be able to demonstrate, if required to do so, that the identified recipient is present in the UK legally or will be at the time of the planned transplant.

The applicant must not:

- intend to live in the UK for extended periods through frequent or successive visits
- intend to take employment in the UK
- intend to produce goods or provide services within the UK
- intend to take a course of study, except as set out in paragraph 43a of the Immigration Rules
- be a child under the age of 18:
 - for more information on the visitor category for applicants under 18, see related link: [Child visitors](#)
- intend to marry or form a civil partnership
- intend to give notice of marriage or civil partnership

- intend to carry out the activities provided for by the business, sports and entertainer visitor routes
- intend to receive private medical treatment
- be in transit to a country outside the common travel area

Requirements for extension of stay

The applicant must:

- still meet all the requirements as stated above
- not have exceeded or would as the result of an extension exceed six months, or 12 months if attending an archaeological excavation in the UK
- have been last granted entry clearance, leave to enter or leave to remain as a general visitor or as a child visitor
- not be in breach of immigration law, except for any period overstaying:
 - for 28 days or less, which will be disregarded, or
 - if the application was submitted before 9 July 2012
- have enough funds and must not be working to support themselves.

For more information, see related link: [Applications from overstayers \(non family routes\)](#).

A general visitor granted less than six months leave when they entered the UK can be granted an extension of stay to bring their total stay up to six months. You must make further enquiries to find out why less than six months was originally given before granting an extension.

You must only grant leave to remain for a period beyond six months if one or more of the following criteria are met:

- The visitor falls in a category allowed a total stay of up to 12 months. Or
- There are compassionate and compelling grounds for the visitor to be in the UK beyond six months, for example the illness of a relative. Such cases are considered on an individual basis outside the rules. This does not include visitors who are seeking to provide child care support. For more guidance, see related link: [02.0 – Carers](#).

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This section tells you how to establish if an application from a general visitor is genuine.

Paragraph 41(i) of the Immigration Rules requires an applicant to be seeking entry to the UK as a genuine general visitor.

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This page tells you how to establish the credibility or intentions of a general visitor applicant.

Assessing an applicant's genuine intentions to visit

When deciding whether to grant entry clearance, leave to enter or leave to remain to a visitor, you must be satisfied, on the balance of probabilities, that the applicant meets all the requirements of paragraph 41 of the Immigration Rules and are therefore considered to be a genuine visitor. If you are not satisfied, you must refuse their application.

It is the applicant's responsibility to provide evidence to satisfy you that they are a genuine visitor. An absence of evidence may be a cause to refuse an application. You must assess all relevant information provided by the applicant, as well as any external information which may help inform your decision.

Assessing an applicant's personal circumstances

In addition to meeting the requirements of the Immigration Rules, the following factors will help you assess if an applicant is a genuine visitor:

- Their previous immigration history, including visits to the UK and other countries.
- The duration of previous visits and whether this was significantly longer than they originally stated on their visa application. If this is the case, you should not automatically presume that the visitor is non-compliant, but this may be a reason to question the applicant's overall intentions.
- Their financial circumstances as well as their family, social and economic background.
- Their personal and economic ties to their country of residence.
- The cumulative period of time the applicant has visited the UK and their pattern of travel over the last 12 month period, and assess whether this amounts to 'de-facto' residence in the UK.
- Whether, in your judgment, the information and the reasons for the visit provided by the applicant are credible and correspond to their personal, family, social and economic background.

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Other information that is relevant to assessing the applicant's intentions:

- The applicant's country of residence and/or country of nationality. This can include the political, economic and security situation. You may use any reputable publicly available information to identify these factors for example, Home Office country information reports, UN reports, EU reports, factual media reporting.
- Information on immigration non-compliance by individuals who applied for a visit visa from the same geographical region as the applicant. This can include published statistical information on immigration non-compliance and any other locally held information. Home Office published statistical reports may help with your assessment, see related link: Statistical reports.

Whilst this information cannot be used as grounds for refusal alone, it is relevant in determining if the applicant is a genuine visitor.

Grounds for doubting the applicant's genuine intentions to visit the UK

This is not an exhaustive list but may help with your assessment:

- the applicant has few or no family and economic ties to their country of residence, and has several family members in the UK
- the political, economic and security situation in the applicant's country of residence, including whether it is politically unstable, a conflict zone or at risk of becoming one, which may lead to doubts about their intention to leave the UK at the end of their visit
- the applicant, their sponsor (if they are visiting a friend or relative) or other immediate family member has, or has attempted to, deceive the Home Office in a previous application for entry clearance, leave to enter or leave to remain
- there are discrepancies between the statements made by the applicant and the statements made by the sponsor, particularly on points where the sponsor could reasonably be expected to know the facts but does not
- it has not been possible to verify information provided by the applicant despite repeated attempts to do so
- the information that has been provided or the reasons stated by the applicant are not credible.

Keeping a record

For visa applications, it may be appropriate to issue a shorter duration of visa and/or restrict it to single entry, but this should only be considered in exceptional circumstances , where there is genuinely insufficient evidence to refuse the application. In these cases, you must refer to your manager before making your decision.

If your manager approves the decision to grant, you must record full details of your decision to grant as well as the individual's stated intentions. You must record these details either on:

- Proviso
- the landing card
- CID, or
- a written account of the interview attached to the appropriate casework database.

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This page tells you about undertakings and guarantees needed from general visitors about their visit.

A visitor must satisfy the Home Office they:

- genuinely intend to stay temporarily in the UK for a specific period and will leave at the end of it, and
- do not intend to live in the UK for extensive periods because of frequent, successive visits.

You must refuse an application for leave to remain if an applicant has failed to honour any undertakings as to the duration and purpose of their stay.

Where a visitor's intentions are in doubt but there is insufficient evidence to refuse leave to enter, full details of the passenger's stated intentions, including any undertakings given orally, must be recorded on the landing card or any other written account of the interview.

Undertakings from sponsors

Applications for leave to enter are sometimes supported by undertakings or guarantees from sponsors, for example, Members of Parliament, community leaders or other third parties.

It may be appropriate and acceptable to take into account promises of maintenance and/or accommodation made by a sponsor. Paragraph 35 of the Immigration Rules allows you to ask a sponsor to give an undertaking in writing that they will be responsible for the applicant's maintenance and accommodation for the duration of their stay.

Paragraph 320(14) allows a person to be refused entry on the grounds that their sponsor has refused to give such an undertaking when requested to do so.

For more information on sponsors (family or relative) providing maintenance and accommodation, see related link: Maintenance undertakings.

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Length of stay

You must not seek or accept a written guarantee or undertaking concerning length of stay. It is not currently possible to enforce guarantees by third parties that a visitor will comply with their conditions of stay, or to leave the UK at the end of a specific period.

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This page gives guidance on the frequency and duration of visits when deciding general visitor applications.

Frequency and duration of visits

Visitors cannot live in the UK on a continuous basis, even if they leave the UK for short periods to avoid overstaying.

There is no specific limit on the number of visits an individual can make to the UK, such as a definitive rule which states a visitor can only remain in the UK for '6 months in a 12 month period'. Visitors, however, must not be living in the UK for extended periods because of frequent, successive visits. For example, where an individual:

- spends five or six months in the UK during a visit and returns after a short break in their home country for a further five or six months, or
- is living in the UK for successive short periods and breaking this by leaving for a couple of days, for example, someone living in the UK during the week and breaking this by leaving the UK at the weekends.

This could amount to genuine residence. However this is not a hard and fast rule and you must consider the circumstances of each case on an individual basis.

Assessing residence through successive visits

You must consider the following factors to assess whether the visitor is residing in the UK because of frequent, successive visits:

- The purpose of the visit and intended length of stay stated on the visitor's visa application form or to the Border Force officer.
- The number of visits made over the past year (rolling 12 month period), including:
 - the length of stay on each occasion
 - the time elapsed since the last visit, and
 - whether this amounts to the individual spending more time in the UK than in their

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home country.

- The purpose of return trips to the visitor's home country and whether this is used only to be readmitted to the UK.
- The links they have with their home country such as:
 - main residence
 - employment
 - family or other long term commitments
 - where they are registered for tax purposes.
- Evidence the UK is their main place of residence such as:
 - Have they registered with a general practitioner (GP)?
 - Are their children in UK schools?
- Previous applications made:
 - Are they using the visitor route to avoid the rules in place for family migrants joining British or settled persons in the UK?
 - For example, if the visitor has previously been refused under the family rules and subsequently wants to enter as a visitor.

If a general visitor is in the UK to take part in an archaeological excavation you can grant an extension of stay beyond six months as a concession outside the rules providing:

- they produce evidence an extension of stay is necessary, and
- the total period of their stay in the UK does not exceed 12 months.

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This page tells you about multi-entry visas for general visitor applications.

Multi-entry visit visas are normally valid for either:

- six months
- 12 months
- two years
- five years, or
- 10 years.

Visas are valid for an unlimited number of journeys within the validity period of the visa.

People holding visit visas can only remain in the UK for a maximum of six months on any one visit, or until the visa expires if less than six months. This restriction is indicated on the visa by the entry '180' days after the 'Duration of stay' section.

Holders of long-term visit visas must still meet the requirements of the Immigration Rules each time they enter the UK. They must not be using the route to live in the UK for extended periods. If this is the case, Border Force officers must refuse entry to the UK.

Unless granted permission by the Home Office, the holder cannot remain in the UK beyond the 'valid until' date shown on the visit visa, even when this means their stay in UK will be less than six months.

Border Force officers at port of entry

You must check the endorsement 'Number of Entries' on the visa:

- multi-entry visas must carry the endorsement 'MULT'
- single entry visas must be endorsed '1'.

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This page tells you how to establish the employment or studying intentions for a general visitor.

You must be satisfied the applicant has demonstrated they do not intend to:

- take employment
- produce goods
- provide a service while in the UK
- do any of the activities provided for under the business, sports or entertainer visitor routes, or
- study in the UK, except where this falls within permissible study, see related link.

The exception to this is visitors taking part in archaeological excavations. For more information, see related link.

If a Border Force officer has doubts about the intentions of an applicant, they can examine them further under schedule 2, paragraph 2A of the 1971 Immigration Act, see related link: 1971 Immigration Act: schedule 2.

Paragraph 4 of schedule 2 of the 1971 Immigration Act also allows a Border Force officer to search an applicant and their baggage. This may reveal items which demonstrate a person intends to work in the UK.

A visitor who wishes to take a course of study must do so in the correct visitor category, such as student visitor, if the course does not meet the criteria for permissible study. The course will not meet the criteria if:

- it is unrelated to the main purpose of the visit, or
- study will be for more than 30 days in total.

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	A search may reveal items that show a person intends to study while in the UK. For example, an enrolment letter.	
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This page tells you how to consider if proposed study is allowed under the study criteria for a general visitor.

The key thing to consider is whether the study is incidental to the main purpose of the visit, be that tourism or visiting family.

30 days study

The Immigration Rules limit general visitors to a maximum period of 30 days study. This can either be in one period or multiple periods totalling no more than 30 days, for example, study on 30 separate days.

Recreational courses

Where the applicant is taking a recreational course (a course purely for leisure purposes), they can attend any type of institution. This does not include English language courses. Examples of recreational courses are:

- activity courses, such as a day's horse riding, archery, or a week's orienteering
- arts and craft courses, such as a day's pottery, a week's painting, a month's woodworking
- cultural courses, such as a day's theatre workshop, a week's music appreciation.

Courses that lead to formal qualifications are not normally considered recreational. Qualifications for this purpose do not include attendance certificates.

Other courses

Any other course, including all English language courses, must be provided by an institution which is:

- the holder of a sponsor licence for Tier 4 of the points-based system
- the holder of valid accreditation from:
 - Accreditation UK

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[BAC](#)

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- the Accreditation Body for Language Services (ABLS)
- the British Accreditation Council (BAC), or
- the Accreditation Service for International Colleges (ASIC)
- the holder of a valid and satisfactory full institutional inspection, review or audit by one of the following bodies:
 - Bridge Schools Inspectorate
 - Estyn
 - Education Scotland
 - the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI)
 - Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted)
 - the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)
 - the Schools Inspection Service (SIS)
 - the Education and Training Inspectorate Northern Ireland (ETINI), or
- an overseas Higher Education Institution:
 - offering only part of their programmes in the UK
 - holding its own national accreditation, and
 - offering programmes that are an equivalent level to a UK degree.

Where a visitor holds a long term visa (any visa valid for longer than one year) as a general visitor, they can enter solely to take a course or period of study for not more than 30 days. However, general visits must continue to be the primary reason for holding the general visit visa. If the person no longer intends to come to the UK for general visits, they must switch to the student visitor category.

Where a general visitor is pursuing a course of study overseas, or a distance learning course and needs to come to the UK as part of this, they can do so on the same basis as outlined in the paragraph above.

Where a visitor intends studying either:

- at an institution which does not meet the above requirements, or
- for a period more than 30 days

you must refuse under:

[ISI](#)

[Education Scotland](#)

[Estyn \(Wales\)](#)

[ETINI](#)

[UK NARIC](#)

[Bridge Schools Inspectorate](#)

[SIS](#)

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- paragraph 43 with reference to 41(v) for leave to enter applications, or
- paragraph 46 with reference to 44(i) and 41(v) for leave to remain applications.

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This page tells you how to consider the maintenance and accommodation for a general visitor.

Visitors coming to the UK must show they have enough funds to maintain and accommodate themselves and any family members with them during their stay in the UK.

In considering this you must look at:

- the level of funds available to them and anyone with them and if this is enough to cover their expenses for the duration of the visit
- what their plans are in the UK and the duration of their stay
- what arrangements have already been made for their accommodation.

Maintenance and accommodation provided by a sponsor (family or friend)

If a visitor is dependant on a sponsor (family or friend) to provide accommodation or financial support during their visit, you must be satisfied the sponsor is:

- Legally present in the UK, or legally present at the time of their visit (if they are a visitor themselves).
- Able and intending to provide this support for the duration of the visitor's stay. In particular you must consider:
 - if the sponsor and visitor have a genuine relationship
 - where they met
 - how they maintain communication and how often they communicate, and
 - the sponsor's previous history of sponsoring visitors. Previous failure to support visitors may call into question their intention and ability to do so for this application.

Accommodation

If the sponsor is providing accommodation to the visitor you must consider if there is enough room to adequately house the visitor(s) and any existing residents. If this is not the case, the application may fall for refusal.

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Financial support

If the sponsor is providing financial support for the visitor, the sponsor must show they have enough funds available to adequately support themselves and anyone normally dependent on them, as well as the visitor. In assessing this you must take into account the level of regular outgoings and make sure there are enough surplus funds.

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This section tells you about other categories covered by general visitors.

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This page tells you about general visitors who come to the UK to take part in archaeological excavations.

Applicants seeking entry as visitors may take part in archaeological excavations if they:

- are working as volunteers, and
- receive no payment apart from subsistence and travelling expenses.

Applicants must produce a letter from the director or organiser of the excavation stating the length of their visit. They must also state, when appropriate, what arrangements have been made for their accommodation and maintenance.

The maximum length of stay permitted under the Immigration Rules is six months.

Visa nationals require entry clearance. If entry clearance is issued it must be endorsed 'VISIT'.

Police registration

A visitor must register with the police if they are coming to the UK for longer than six months, and are either a:

- national or citizen of a country or territory listed in Appendix 2 of the Immigration Rules
- stateless person, or
- person holding a non-national travel document.

For more information about police registration and who is required to register, see related link: [Police registration](#).

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This page tells you when to grant or refuse entry at a UK port to a person seeking entry with an outstanding appeal.

You must not grant leave to enter at a UK port for the sole purpose of attending a hearing if the person is appealing:

- against refusal of entry clearance, or
- from abroad against a previous refusal of leave to enter at a UK port.

A person arriving at a UK port, who is seeking leave to enter, as a visitor with an outstanding appeal must satisfy you they:

- will limit their length of stay in line with the requirements for visitors
- will leave the UK regardless of the outcome of their appeal
- meet all the requirements of the rules for entry as a visitor.

A person arriving at a UK port with an outstanding appeal still has the right to seek entry as a visitor.

You must consider the following when deciding if an applicant is genuinely seeking entry as a visitor:

- Does the person still wish for their appeal to go ahead? This may explain the true purpose for their visit.
- Does the person intend to leave the UK?
- Is the person credible and what are their intentions?
- Has the person given any undertakings or guarantees?
- Is the duration of their stay in line with the visitor requirements?

For more information, see related links:

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[Visiting family in the UK – family visitors](#)

[Child minder for relatives](#)

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Related links

[Credibility and intentions](#)

[Undertakings and guarantees](#)

[Frequency and duration of visits](#)

See also

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External links

[Immigration Rules – Part](#)

- Credibility or intentions
- Undertaking or guarantee
- Frequency and duration of visits.

If the person has previously been refused leave to enter and was removed from the UK, you must notify the outcome of the application to either the:

- port that refused leave to enter, or
- appropriate appeals section.

A person arriving at a UK port with an outstanding appeal must be considered against the Immigration Rules, and the requirements of those rules relating to the purpose of their visit. For example a:

- student
- worker, or
- visitor.

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This page tells you about applicants who wish to visit family in the UK.

The Immigration Rules do not include specific reference to visitors coming to the UK to visit family members. A person applying to come to the UK in order to visit family is regarded as a:

- general visitor, if they are aged 18 or over, or
- child visitor, if they are aged under 18.

For more information on child visitors, see related link.

Before 25 June 2013, applications for a family visit visa that were refused attracted a full right of appeal, providing that the UK family member that they wish to visit is their:

- spouse, civil partner, father, mother, son, daughter, brother or sister
- grandfather, grandmother, grandson or granddaughter
- spouse or civil partner's father, mother, brother or sister
- son or daughter's spouse or civil partner
- stepfather, stepmother, stepson, stepdaughter, stepbrother, or stepsister
- partner, where the couple have been in a relationship similar to a marriage or civil partnership for at least the two years before the day the application is made and the relationship is genuine and subsisting.

Applications submitted on or after 25 June 2013 do not attract a right of appeal when refused. This is unless the appeal is based on human rights or race discrimination grounds. This is in line with other visitor categories.

Applicants who have been refused would need to re-apply. If an applicant chooses to re-apply they must submit a fresh application, and the entry clearance officer (ECO) must treat the fresh application on its merits. The ECO can cross-reference information held on previous application(s) and note them but must fully assess the new application against the Immigration

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[The Immigration Appeals \(Family Visitor\) Regulations 2012](#)

Rules.

A family member who wants to enter the UK for longer than six months (the maximum entry granted to visitors) on the basis of their family life must apply for entry clearance under the relevant family route, rather than as a visitor.

Refusal of in-country extension applications

In the UK (in-country) refusals follow normal appeal rules so, as long as the application was made while their existing leave was valid, it will attract a right of appeal.

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This page tells you about general visitors visiting the UK to act as a child minder for a relative.

The Home Office does not consider a visitor coming to the UK to assist relatives with child care as being employed, if all the following are true:

- neither parent is in a category leading to settlement
- neither parent is able to supervise the daytime care of the child
- the situation or position is temporary
- they are a close relative of the parent, for example:
 - a parent, sibling or in-law
 - they are a distant relative that has formed part of the family unit, or
 - they are the closest surviving relative of the parents
- it is not simply an arrangement to enable both parents to take gainful employment or to study
- they will not receive any payment, other than for board, accommodation and pocket money
- they intend to remain in the UK for no longer than six months.

If you suspect that a child minding arrangement amounts to employment, paid or unpaid, you must refuse the application using one or more of the reasons given above.

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The information in this page has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use only.

Official sensitive – not for disclosure – end of section

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This page tells you about general visitors seeking entry to the UK to obtain visas for travel to other countries.

You must treat people who are seeking leave to obtain visas for travel to other countries as visitors and apply all the provisions of the rules.

You must be satisfied that the applicant is genuinely seeking leave for the reason given, and that the length of the visit will not exceed six months. A return ticket alone is not sufficient evidence of their intention to leave the UK.

A person seeking a visa for settlement in a third country must show that:

- their application for that country will be decided in a short and clearly defined period
- they will be able to return without difficulty to another country without exceeding the period they are entitled to be in the UK.

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This page tells you how to assess an application from organ donors.

The Immigration Rules for general visitors allow individuals who want to come to the UK to act as an organ donor, or be assessed as a suitable organ donor, as long as they have a genetic or existing emotional relationship with the recipient .

Organ donors can enter as general visitors if the recipient in the UK is receiving treatment by the National Health Service (NHS) or privately.

In addition to the general visitor requirements, organ donors must meet the following additional criteria.

They must:

- genuinely intend to donate an organ, or be assessed as a suitable organ donor to an identified recipient with whom they have a genetic or pre-existing emotional relationship
- be a confirmed donor match to the named recipient through initial medical tests or be coming for further tests to establish whether they are a suitable donor to the intended recipient
- provide a letter, to confirm the above and set out the timing and location of the planned transplant or medical tests, that is dated within three months before the visitor's intended date of arrival in the UK, from either the lead nurse or coordinator of the UK's NHS trust's living donor kidney transplant team or UK registered medical practitioner who holds an NHS consultant post or who appears in the Specialist Register of the General Medical Council
- demonstrate, if required to do so, that the identified recipient is present in the UK legally or will be at the time of the planned transplant.

Genetic or pre-existing relationships

In order to be granted leave under the rules there must be a clear link between the applicant who is intending to act as a donor and the intended recipient. This will usually be in the form of

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	<p>a familial connection, but can extend to close friends.</p> <p>Genetically related donations will be where the donor is a blood relative of the potential applicant. Where the family members have not had an emotional relationship prior to the recipient needing a transplant, care must be taken to consider whether the applicant (donor) is genuinely coming to act as a donor.</p> <p>Emotionally related donors can include potential donors who have had a relationship with the recipient, for example they are their spouse, partner or a close friend. This does not extend to where the donor has not met the recipient before and they have been brought together by a third party, such as a social media campaign.</p> <p>Where the applicant (the donor) is not a member of family they must be able to provide documents that show the relationship is genuine, such as copies of previous correspondence. Where they are unable to prove the relationship or they are only able to provide a small number of documents in support (including where the claimed friendship is relatively recent), you must refer the case to referred casework unit (RCU) for consideration outside of the Immigration Rules.</p> <p>It is an offence for an individual to give or receive any form of reward for organ donation. So, you must make sure the applicant is not receiving payment in order to donate an organ. Where there is reason to believe an applicant is receiving a reward for acting as a donor you must refer the case to RALON.</p> <p>Legally present</p> <p>Where the intended recipient is being treated by the National Health Service (NHS) they will have been established by the relevant NHS trust as being ordinarily resident. However where the recipient is being treated privately no assessment of their status in the UK will have been made.</p> <p>As such, where the recipient is being treated privately you must check that they have the correct legal status to be in the UK. They must not hold visitor status other than as a visitor for private medical treatment, as all other types of visitors are prohibited from receiving private medical treatment.</p>	<p>List of registered medical practitioners</p> <p>United Kingdom Guidelines for living donor kidney transplantation</p> <p>Types of living organ donation</p> <p>Contacts for donor transplant units</p>
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Maintenance and accommodation

Visitors coming to act as organ donors must meet the maintenance and accommodation requirements in the same way as other general visitors. However due to the nature of their visit, care must be taken when considering who is providing this support for the visitor and their likely expenses in the UK.

When assessing whether the applicant (the donor) has sufficient funds, you should note that in the majority of cases the donor will need to be in hospital for the majority of their stay, and therefore their accommodation and maintenance will be provided by the hospital.

NHS donors can also be reimbursed for expenses incurred which are directly attributable to being a donor. These can include travel costs and loss of earnings. Payments in this respect are paid as reimbursements after the operation. This means that an applicant must still be able to demonstrate they have sufficient funds to cover any costs in the interim.

Accompanying family members

Given the nature of the visit we would not normally expect the applicant to be accompanied by family members, especially where these are under the age of 18. The exception to this will be where there is no suitable alternative care for them in their country of residence.

Where children are applying to accompany the applicant, you must make sure there are suitable care arrangements in place for the period during which the applicant (their parent(s)) will be in hospital and for any period of recovery when the applicant will be incapacitated.

Where entire family groups are coming to the UK (spouses and children) you must carefully consider the impact this has on their likelihood to return at the end of their visit.

Consideration process

All applications must be assessed under the general visitor rules in the first instance. Where an application meets all of the requirements the application can be approved by the entry clearance manager (ECM) considering the application. Any grants on this basis should be logged locally so that numbers can be identified.

Where an applicant fails to provide the medical evidence as required in the rules, the

application must be refused.

Referral to RCU

Where an applicant provides the relevant medical evidence but there are doubts, such as their relationship to the donor, their intention to return home or their funds to support their stay in the UK, you must refer the application to RCU for further consideration outside of the rules.

Where the decision is taken to grant outside of the rules, this must be restricted to a single entry visa unless there are strong mitigating factors to support issuing a multi-entry visa.

Secondary applications from applicants previously granted in this capacity

Where a visitor enters as an NHS donor and is assessed to be an unsuitable match or chooses not to donate, either because they are incompatible with their intended recipient, or prefer a better match, they may choose to pursue a paired or pooled donation. This allows them to be matched with another donor and recipient in the same situation in the National Living Donor Sharing Schemes. The donor organs are then swapped. When two pairs are involved it is a paired donation, and where there are more than two, it is a pooled donation.

Where an individual applies for entry clearance on this basis, their application must be referred to RCU for consideration outside the rules. Individuals applying on this basis must provide the relevant medical letter, detailing the arrangements involved and specifying whether this is a pooled or paired donation. The application must be assessed against the general visitor requirements and the additional organ donor requirements (with the exception of the requirement to have genetic or a pre-existing emotional relationship with the direct recipient, although they should still have a connection with someone in the group who is receiving an organ transplant).

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This section tells you who can accompany an academic visitor for an extended period of 12 months.

The Immigration Rules allow partners and children to accompany academic visitors to the UK. For the purpose of this provision the following types of relationships are considered as partners:

- the applicant's spouse
- the applicant's civil partner
- the applicant's fiancé(e) or proposed civil partner, or
- a person who has been living together with the applicant in a relationship akin to marriage or civil partnership for at least two years prior to the date of application.

Where any other relatives apply to accompany an academic visitor they will be limited to the maximum of six months. In these cases care should be taken to ensure that they do not intend to remain beyond the six months, especially where longer term visas are applied for.

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This page tells you who can accompany a private medical treatment visitor.

There is no specific provision in the Immigration Rules for an individual to be granted a visa to accompany a private medical treatment visitor. If a friend or family member wants to travel with a private medical treatment visitor they will need to qualify in their own right.

From 6 November 2014, medical visitors can be issued with 11 month visas, where it is known that their treatment is going to take longer than six months. If a friend or family member applies to accompany them as a general visitor, they will be considered against the full requirements of this route.

Where there is a compelling need for accompanying friends or family to stay with the medical visitor for the remaining period of their treatment in the UK (for example, beyond the six months the friend or family has been granted), consideration can be given to them outside the Immigration Rules on an individual basis. This is because we do not expect family and friends to ordinarily spend 11 months with the medical visitors.

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This section tells you when to grant or refuse an application for visitors to the UK.

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This page tells you when to grant or refuse an application made overseas to come to the UK as a visitor.

Grant entry clearance

You must grant entry clearance if the applicant:

- meets all the requirements of paragraph 40 – 56Z of the Immigration Rules, and
- none of the general grounds for refusal in paragraph 320 apply.

Length of leave

- Up to six months – general visitor
- Up to 12 months – visitors accompanying academic visitors.

The endorsement is one of the following:

Visa nationals

- C:VISIT: 6 MONTHS: CODE 3
- C: FAMILY VISIT: 6 MONTHS: CODE 3.

Non-visa nationals

- D:VISIT: 6 MONTHS:CODE 3
- D: FAMILY VISIT: 6 MONTHS: CODE 3.

The endorsement must be marked valid more than three months from the date of decision and must be valid for the date the applicant intends to travel to the UK.

The GCID case type will be:

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Related links

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External links

[Immigration Rules – Part 2: paragraphs 40-56Z](#)

[Immigration Rules - Part 9: paragraphs 320-324](#)

- Visitor – LTE.

Refusing entry clearance

You must refuse the application if:

- the applicant has not provided the required evidence they meet all the requirements of the relevant paragraph, or
- any of the general grounds for refusal in paragraphs 320 to 324 apply.

For guidance on the relevant paragraphs of the rules to refer to when refusing visitors, see related link: Refusal wording - entry clearance – paragraph 320.

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This page tells you when to grant or refuse entry at a UK port to a person seeking to enter the UK as a visitor.

Granting leave to enter

Before you grant leave to enter, you must be satisfied that:

- the applicant has valid entry clearance
- there are no reasons to believe the applicant gave false information to obtain the entry clearance nor that circumstances have changed since it was issued
- none of the general grounds for refusal in paragraphs 320 to 321 of the Immigration Rules apply.

A visitor must register with the police if they are:

- coming to the UK for longer than six months
- are aged 16 or over, and
 - are either a national or citizen of a country or territory listed in Appendix 2 of the Immigration Rules
 - a stateless person, or
 - a person holding a non-national travel document.

For more information about police registration and who is required to register, see related link: Police registration.

Non visa nationals

If you are satisfied the person meets all the requirements you must grant leave to enter for up to six months with employment prohibited using code 5N. You must only use code 3 if you have doubts about the person but not enough evidence to refuse leave to enter.

Visa nationals

If you are satisfied the person meets all the requirements, you must:

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Related links

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- endorse the entry clearance with an open date stamp, and
- record on the landing card the statistical code below.

Statistical codes

V – is for those persons who have been given leave to enter for six months or less as visitors.

Refusal of entry

You must refuse entry as a visitor if:

- a visa national does not have an entry clearance
- the applicant has not provided the required evidence that they meet all the requirements of the relevant paragraph of the Immigration Rules, or
- any of the general grounds for refusal in paragraphs 320 to 321 apply.

You must read the guidance on general grounds for refusal and on what paragraphs to use at the related link: [General grounds for refusal](#).

On entry refusal codes

- A1 - Insufficient funds for proposed visit
- A2 - Not satisfied genuine visitor
- A4 - Unsatisfactory or unacceptable arrangements for proposed study
- E4 - Lack of required visa or entry clearance.

More guidance on refusing leave to enter is available in the Border Force manual. See related link: [Refusal of leave to enter](#).

Official sensitive – not for disclosure - start of section

The information in this page has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use only.

This guidance is based on the Immigration Rules

Official sensitive – not for disclosure – end of section

Archived

General visitors

Grant or refuse extension of stay in UK

About this guidance	<p>This page tells you when to grant or refuse an extension of stay to a person seeking an extension of stay as a general visitor.</p> <p>Grant extension</p> <p>You must grant leave to remain to complete a total of six months on code 3, prohibiting employment if all the following requirements are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The person meets all the requirements of the relevant paragraph of the Immigration Rules.• You are satisfied that none of the general grounds for refusal in paragraphs 322 to 324 applies, see related link: Immigration Rules – paragraph 320-324.• The reasons why less than six months was given on entry no longer apply. <p>A visitor for an archaeological excavation can be granted an extension to take the period of their stay in the UK up to a maximum of 12 months. This is granted as a concession outside the rules.</p> <p>There is no provision in the Immigration Rules for a visitor who is acting as an organ donor to be granted an extension beyond the six months permitted as a general visitor.</p> <p>If there is a medical need for the donor to extend their leave they must be considered outside the Immigration Rules and provide a letter from the lead nurse or coordinator of the UK's NHS trust's living donor kidney transplant team or from a UK registered medical practitioner who holds an NHS consultant post or who appears in the Specialist Register of the General Medical Council, outlining why the donor is required to stay for a longer period and what the anticipated period is for the organ transplant to take place.</p> <p>Refuse extension</p> <p>If you are considering refusing an extension of stay on grounds not specific to visitors, you must refer to the following guidance using the related links:</p>	<p>In this section</p> <p>Grant or refuse entry clearance</p> <p>Grant or refuse entry at UK port</p> <p>Related links</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p> <p>External links</p> <p>Immigration Rules – Part 2: paragraphs 40-56Z</p> <p>Immigration Rules - Part 9: paragraphs 320-324</p>
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This guidance is based on the Immigration Rules

- General grounds for refusal
- Immigration Rules - paragraph 320-324.

You must refuse an extension of stay as a visitor if the applicant does not meet all of the requirements of the relevant paragraphs of the Immigration Rules.

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This page tells you which dependants can be granted leave to join a person with leave to enter as a general visitor.

Family members of people with leave to enter as a general visitor who wish to join them in the UK must themselves meet the requirements of the general visitor or child visitor rules. If their application is successful, they will be granted leave that expires on the same day as the person with leave as a visitor.

External links

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Contacts

About this guidance	This page tells you who to contact for more help with a specific case in the general visitor category. If you have read paragraphs 40-56Z (visitors) of the Immigration Rules as well as this guidance and still need more help, you must first ask your senior caseworker or line manager. If the question cannot be answered at that level, you may email: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Study and visit operational policy team (see related link) for guidance on the policy.• Border Force officers can email BF Operations Advice and Support, see related link: Email: BF OAS Enquiries. Changes to this guidance can only be made by the guidance rules and forms team (GRaFT). If you think the policy content needs amending you must contact the study and visit operational policy team, who will ask GRaFT to update the guidance, if appropriate. GRaFT will accept direct feedback on broken links, missing information or the format, style and navigability of this guidance. You can send these using the link: Email: Guidance rules and forms team.	Related links Changes to this guidance Information owner External links Immigration Rules – Part 2: paragraphs 40-56Z Links to staff intranet removed
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Information owner

About this guidance	This page tells you about this version of the 'General visitors' guidance and who owns it.		Related links
Key facts	Version	15.0	Changes to this guidance
Entry or extension requirements	Valid from date	17 February 2015	Contacts
General visitor requirements	Policy owner	Study and visit operational policy team	External links
Other categories covered by general visitors	Cleared by director	Naomi Hatton	Immigration Rules – Part 2: paragraphs 40–56Z
Granting or refusing	Director's role	Director, operational policy and rules	Links to staff intranet removed
Dependants	Clearance date	26 September 2013	
	This version approved for publication by	John Thompson	
	Approver's role	Head of migration policy	
	Approval date	16 February 2015	