Applying for a UK business or work visa
The UK is a great place to work, do business and invest. Whether you are planning a short trip, or want to work in the UK for a longer period, the type of visa you apply for will depend on your individual circumstances. You can find full details, and a tool to help you choose the right visa for you, on our website. Each category has its own set of rules, and the website will tell you what you can and cannot do on each visa.

For more information visit www.gov.uk/visas-immigration.

Visit visa

Visit visas are usually suitable if you are planning a short trip to the UK, for no more than six months to carry out activities usually relating to your profession overseas. You can apply for a standard visit visa, for example, to:

- attend conferences, meetings or training in the UK
- take part in a specific sporting or creative activity or event
- have discussions to secure funding to join, set up or take over a business
- undertake a ‘permitted paid engagement’ (you must have been invited to the UK because of your talents or expertise) – you can only stay for up to 1 month

‘High value’ workers (Tier 1)

A ‘high value worker’ visa may be suitable if you are:

- an investor
- an entrepreneur
- a graduate entrepreneur
- a leader or potential leader in arts (including fashion and design and film), sciences (including engineering, social sciences and humanities) or digital technology

Skilled workers (Tier 2)

A ‘skilled worker’ visa may be suitable if you have been offered:

- a ‘graduate level’ job in the UK – see full details on our website www.gov.uk/tier-2-general
• a role in your overseas employer’s UK branch – the visa you apply for depends on your circumstances
• a job in a religious community
• a job as an elite sportsperson or coach

**Temporary workers (Tier 5)**

A ‘temporary worker’ visa may be suitable if you want work in the UK for a short time, typically less than 24 months:

• in sports – you will need an endorsement from an appropriate sports governing body
• in arts or entertainment – you will need to meet the eligibility requirements of the creative workers category
• in a work experience training or research role
• for a charity – doing unpaid voluntary work
• for a religious organisation – e.g. preaching or working in a religious order

Young people from participating countries can enter the UK through the Youth Mobility Scheme.

You can also apply for an international agreement visa if you will be doing work covered by international law while in the UK (e.g. working for a foreign government or as a private servant in a diplomatic household).

Our website provides full details of the type of work that fits into each of the categories listed above [www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/work-visas](http://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/work-visas)

**Investing in the UK**

The Department of International Trade (formerly UK Trade and Investment) is the Government Department that helps UK-based companies succeed in the global economy. The department helps overseas companies bring their high-quality investment to the UK’s dynamic economy, acknowledged as Europe’s best place from which to succeed in global business.

To find out more visit [www.gov.uk/ukti](http://www.gov.uk/ukti)

**How to apply**

You must be outside the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man to apply for your visa. Go to [www.gov.uk/apply-uk-visa](http://www.gov.uk/apply-uk-visa)

You will need to:

• register for an account
• fill in the application form in English
• pay for the visa fee online (in most cases)
• print out your form
• book and attend an appointment at a visa application centre and provide your biometric information (fingerprints and photograph)

You also need to:

• have all the supporting documents you need for your visa
• translate any supporting documents and include them with the originals if they are not in English

Always check our website for full details.
**Immigration Health Surcharge**

All non-European Economic Area (EEA) nationals who apply to come to the UK to work for a period of more than six months, or extend their stay in the UK, are required to pay a health surcharge. This is £200 per year payable upfront for the total period of time for which you are given permission to stay in the UK. It is paid at the same time as the visa application and will entitle you to access the National Health Service (NHS) in the same way as a permanent UK resident.

For further details, including exemptions, visit [www.gov.uk/healthcare-immigration-application](http://www.gov.uk/healthcare-immigration-application).

**Overseas criminal record certificate**

From April 2017, the requirement to provide a criminal record certificate extends to Tier 2 visa applicants and their dependents who are coming to work in education, health and social care sectors.

Applicants and any adult dependents coming to work in these sectors will need to submit a criminal record certificate from each country in which they have resided continuously or cumulatively for 12 months or more in the ten years before making their application.

For details visit [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and search for ‘Criminal records checks for overseas applicants’.

**Immigration Skills Charge**

From April 2017 Tier 2 sponsors who sponsor a worker from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) may be required to pay an Immigration Skills Charge.

Except where an exemption applies, the skills charge applies to a sponsor of a Tier 2 worker assigned a Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) in the ‘General’ or ‘Intra-Company Transfer’ route.

The skills charge is £1,000 per Tier 2 worker per year for medium or large sponsors and £364 per year for small or charitable sponsors. The money collected is used to address skills gaps in the UK workforce.

For details, visit [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and search for ‘Sponsor a Tier 2 or 5 worker’.

**When your visa expires**

It is important that you understand and comply with the conditions of your visa and do not overstay. If you remain in the UK once your visa expires, you can be banned from returning to the UK in the future and from accessing further work.

**Additional services**

We offer a range of premium services to offer you additional speed and flexibility in your visa application.

Please visit our commercial partner websites appropriate to your country of application.

TLS Contact [www.tpcontact.co.uk](http://www.tpcontact.co.uk) for applications in Africa and Europe

VFS Global [www.vfsglobal.co.uk](http://www.vfsglobal.co.uk) for applications in Asia and the Americas.