



Home Office

A Points-Based System: Making Migration Work for Britain



Executive Summary

Introduction

1. This document sets out the Government's proposals for a new points-based approach to managing the flow of migrants coming to the UK to work or study. It forms part of the five year strategy for asylum and immigration published in February 2005: "*Controlling Our Borders: Making Migration Work for Britain, Five Year Strategy for Asylum and Immigration*".
2. These proposals have been subject to extensive consultation following the publication in July 2005 of the consultation document "*Selective Admission: Making Migration Work for Britain*." The proposals have been informed and enhanced by the contributions made to that consultation. A summary of the consultation responses is attached as an annex to this document. A summary of the responses for each sector is available on the Home Office website at www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.

Benefits

3. The key outcomes of the new system will be:
 - Better identifying and attracting of migrants who have most to contribute to the UK;
 - A more efficient, transparent and objective application process;
 - Improved compliance and reduced scope for abuse.

These will help deliver high-level benefits for the UK including increased economic competitiveness and cultural exchange.

4. Applicants will find the system simpler to understand and the rules for entry clearer and more consistently applied. It will be quicker and simpler for employers and educational institutions to bring in the migrants they need, and there will be more certainty about whether prospective migrants will be able to come to the UK. The public will better be able to understand who we are allowing into the UK and why, and have confidence that the system is not being abused. It will also be more straightforward for entry clearance officers and caseworkers to administer.

Managing migration

5. All the main political parties, employers' organisations, trades unions and educational institutions agree that migration is vital for our economy. Migration makes a substantial contribution to economic growth, helps fill gaps in the labour market, including key public services such as health and education, and increases investment, innovation and entrepreneurship in the UK. Culturally, we are enriched by people with diverse backgrounds from other countries.
6. With an expanded European Union there is an accessible and mobile workforce already contributing to our growing economy, closing many gaps experienced by employers. In a changing environment where our European commitments provide many opportunities for the UK to benefit from this new source of labour, it is right that we look again at migration to the UK as a whole. Our starting point is that employers should look first to recruit from the UK and the expanded EU before recruiting migrants from outside the EU.
7. Migration needs to be properly managed. It is understandable that people migrate to seek a better life for themselves and their families. But this can leave settled populations, including many in the UK, concerned about the impact on jobs, public services and their way of life. The system should therefore be focused primarily on bringing in migrants who are highly skilled or to do key jobs that cannot be filled from the domestic labour force or from the EU. It should also help facilitate the entry of international students who rightly see the UK as a world leader in the provision of higher and further education, and in the teaching of English.
8. It should also be robust against abuse. Only those of benefit to the UK should be admitted and once here they must comply with the conditions of their leave. Those who benefit from migration, employers and educational institutions, should work with Government to ensure this is the case. Strong action should be taken against those who seek to abuse the system.

A points-based system:

Five Tiers

9. Underpinning the new system will be a five Tier framework. This will help people understand how the system works and direct applicants to the category that is most appropriate for them.

- Tier 1: Highly skilled individuals to contribute to growth and productivity
- Tier 2: Skilled workers with a job offer to fill gaps in UK labour force
- Tier 3: Limited numbers of low skilled workers needed to fill specific temporary labour shortages
- Tier 4: Students
- Tier 5: Youth mobility and temporary workers: people allowed to work in the UK for a limited period of time to satisfy primarily non-economic objectives

Points and structured decision-making

10. For each Tier, applicants will need sufficient points to obtain entry clearance or leave to remain in the UK. Points will be scored for attributes which predict a migrant's success in the labour market, and/or control factors, relating to whether someone is likely to comply with the conditions of their leave.

11. Points will be awarded according to objective and transparent criteria in order to produce a structured and defensible decision-making process. Prospective migrants will, prior to making their application, be able to assess themselves against these criteria, reducing the number of speculative and erroneous applications.

Sponsorship

12. All applicants in Tiers 2-5 will need to provide a certificate of sponsorship from an approved sponsor when making their application. The certificate of sponsorship will act as an assurance that the migrant is able to do a particular job or course of study and intends to do so. The sponsor's rating, an expression of their track record or policies in sponsoring migrants, will determine whether applicants receive more or fewer points for their certificate.

13. In order to sponsor migrants, employers and educational institutions will need to make an application to the Home Office, satisfy the requirements for the particular Tier in which they wish to sponsor migrants, and accept certain responsibilities to help with immigration control.

Financial securities

14. In due course, financial securities will be required of those whose personal circumstances or route of migration suggests that they present a high risk of breaching the immigration rules.

Next steps

15. The new system will be introduced in a phased manner Tier by Tier. We will be testing the processes that underpin the proposals before any firm implementation dates are announced. We will be carrying out impact assessments of the proposals before they are implemented.

16. We are always keen to hear the views of our customers and stakeholders and encourage your participation in helping us with the next stages of development. If you have any comments on the new system please let us have them. We will be running events and workshops over the coming months to answer your questions and to discuss the timing of implementation. For further information please contact us on 0114 207 4074 or visit our website at www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk. You can also email us at: pointsbased.comments@ind.homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk.

Summary of routes	
I am currently	In the new system you could apply under
Thinking about applying under the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme	Tier 1
A work permit holder in a shortage occupation	Tier 2
A work permit holder in a non-shortage occupation	Tier 2 but you will need to demonstrate the necessary skill and salary levels for this Tier
Wanting to come to the UK temporarily to do low-skilled work	Tier 3 but you will have to be from a country which has effective returns arrangements with the UK and find a placement with an approved operator
A student looking to come to the UK to study	Tier 4
Wanting to come to the UK for a working holiday	Tier 5 Youth mobility
A musician coming to play a concert or series of concerts	Tier 5 Temporary worker



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