

Immigration: statement of changes – March 2021

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05 March 2021

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An overview of the key changes is below.

Graduate Visa

- The new Graduate Route will open for applications on 1 July 2021. The new route enhances the UK's higher education offer and ensures that international students will continue to choose the UK to build their careers.
- The route will enable international students to remain in the UK to work or look for work for 2 years (3 years for doctoral students) after completion of their studies.
- The route will be unsponsored meaning applicants will not need a job offer in order to be eligible.
- There will be no minimum salary requirements and graduates can work flexibly, switch jobs and move into other skilled work routes.

Skilled Worker

- The minimum salary thresholds for the Skilled Worker route will also need to be worked out by the hour rather than just annually. Minimum pay can be no less than £10.10 per hour even if the annual salary is above the Skilled Worker threshold of £25,600 per year (or lower thresholds for those exceptions). There is a transitional arrangement for those already on the Skilled Worker route in a job paying less than the minimum per hour.
- If a sponsored Skilled Worker's becomes eligible for a lower salary threshold as a result of acquiring a PHD since starting a job for example, a new application will need to be submitted to the Home Office.
- Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) requires overseas students taking certain courses to get approval to work in the UK in an occupation in sensitive subjects. This list has been expanded.

Expansion of Shortage Occupation List

The following roles will now be shortage jobs in the shortage occupation list meaning they can benefit from lower salary thresholds when it comes to sponsorship, with the removal of 'Chefs' from the list:

- Health services and public health managers and directors
- Residential, day and domiciliary care managers and proprietors
- Laboratory technicians
- Senior care workers
- Pharmacists
- Health professionals not elsewhere classified
- Physiotherapists
- Nursing auxiliaries and assistants
- Modern language teachers

Global Talent Route

- This route is for leaders or potential leaders in the field of Academia or research, Arts & Culture or digital technology. It normally requires an endorsement by an organisation in the UK. There will now be a list of 'prestigious prizes' such as Nobel Prizes & Oscars, which, if won, will qualify for a Global Talent visa without the need for an endorsement.
- This will apply from 5 May 2021.

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