

Indefinite leave to remain if you have a Skilled Worker, Health and Care Worker, T2 or Tier 2 visa

1. Overview

You may be able to settle permanently in the UK if you have one of the following visas:

- Skilled Worker, Health and Care Worker or Tier 2 (General)
- T2 Minister of Religion or Tier 2 (Minister of Religion)
- International Sportsperson, T2 Sportsperson or Tier 2 (Sportsperson)

Indefinite leave to remain is how you settle in the UK. It's also called 'settlement'. It gives you the right to live, work and study here for as long as you like, and apply for benefits if you're eligible. You can use it to apply for British citizenship.

'T2' visas have replaced 'Tier 2' visas. If you have a Tier 2 visa, you can still apply for indefinite leave to remain if you meet the requirements.

Eligibility

You must:

- have lived and worked in the UK for 5 years - there are rules for what [counts towards your time in the UK \(/indefinite-leave-to-remain-tier-2-t2-skilled-worker-visa/time-uk\)](/indefinite-leave-to-remain-tier-2-t2-skilled-worker-visa/time-uk)
- meet the [salary requirements \(/indefinite-leave-to-remain-tier-2-t2-skilled-worker-visa/salary-requirements\)](/indefinite-leave-to-remain-tier-2-t2-skilled-worker-visa/salary-requirements)
- continue to be needed for your job and meet the salary requirements after you get indefinite leave to remain - you'll need a document from your employer (sponsor) to confirm this

If you're not eligible using your T2, Skilled Worker or Health and Care Worker visa, there are [other ways to apply for indefinite leave to remain \(/indefinite-leave-to-remain\)](/indefinite-leave-to-remain).

Knowledge of language and life in the UK

If you're 18 to 64 you'll need to [book and pass the Life in the UK Test \(/life-in-the-uk-test\)](/life-in-the-uk-test).

You do not need to prove you meet the English language requirements when you apply to settle using your Skilled Worker, Health and Care Worker, T2 or Tier 2 visa. This is because you did this when you applied for your visa.

When to apply

The earliest you can apply is 28 days before you've been in the UK for 5 years on a qualifying visa. Check which visas [count towards your time in the UK \(/indefinite-leave-to-remain-tier-2-t2-skilled-worker-visa/time-uk\)](/indefinite-leave-to-remain-tier-2-t2-skilled-worker-visa/time-uk). Your application may be refused if you apply earlier.

Do not wait until your current visa expires. If your visa expires before you can apply for indefinite leave to remain, you'll need to renew it first.

Fees and how long it takes

It costs £3,029 for each person applying. You can include your [partner and children \(/indefinite-leave-to-remain-tier-2-t2-skilled-worker-visa/family-members\)](#) on the same application form, if they're eligible.

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

You'll usually get a decision within 6 months if you apply using the standard service.

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.

Get a faster decision on your application

You can pay an extra £500 to use the priority service to get a decision within 5 working days.

You can pay an extra £1,000 to use the super priority service to get a decision:

- by the end of the next working day after providing your fingerprints and photo (known as 'biometric information') if your appointment is on a weekday
- 2 working days after providing your biometric information if your appointment is at the weekend

Working days are Monday to Friday, not including bank holidays.

2. Time in the UK

You must have lived in the UK for 5 years before you can apply for indefinite leave to remain.

There are rules for what counts towards the 5 years if you have:

- spent time outside the UK
- been a partner or child (a 'dependant') on a visa
- had more than one visa

If you've spent time outside the UK

You must have spent no more than 180 days outside the UK in any 12 months.

If you think you're affected by this rule, the Home Office has guidance about how to [calculate your time in the UK \(/government/publications/indefinite-leave-to-remain-calculating-continuous-period-in-uk\)](#) ('continuous residence').

If you've been a partner or child (a 'dependant') on a visa

In the 5 years you've lived in the UK, you cannot include any time you've spent in the UK as a partner or child (a 'dependant') on a visa.

If you've had more than one visa

In the 5 years you've lived in the UK, you can include time you've had on any combination of the following visas:

- any Tier 1 visa - except Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur)
- Skilled Worker, Health and Care Worker or Tier 2 (General)
- Scale-up Worker
- T2 Minister of Religion or Tier 2 (Minister of Religion)
- International Sportsperson, T2 Sportsperson or Tier 2 (Sportsperson)
- Innovator Founder

- Global Talent
- Representative of an Overseas Business

3. Salary requirements

You need to be paid at least a minimum salary if you hold a T2, Skilled Worker or Health and Care Worker visa. How much you must be paid depends on your visa.

You'll usually need to be paid at least whichever is the higher out of the following:

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

Example

Your salary is £42,000 per year, but the standard 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 \(/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-going-rates-for-eligible-occupations\).](#)

When the salary requirements are different

The salary requirements are different if:

- you work in healthcare or education
- your job is on the Immigration Salary List
- you got a certificate of sponsorship for your first Skilled Worker (or equivalent) visa before 4 April 2024 and have held Skilled Worker visas since then
- you have an International Sportsperson, T2 Sportsperson or Tier 2 (Sportsperson) visa
- you have a T2 Minister of Religion or Tier 2 (Minister of Religion) visa

If you work in healthcare or education

There are different salary rules if you work in some [healthcare or education jobs \(/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-eligible-healthcare-and-education-jobs\)](#), where the going rate is based on national pay scales. You must be paid whichever is higher out of the following:

- £25,000 per year
- the 'going rate' based on national pay scales for the type of work you'll be doing

Check your going rate in the table of national pay scales for either:

- [eligible healthcare jobs \(/government/publications/national-pay-scales-for-eligible-healthcare-jobs\)](#) - listed by NHS pay band and area of the UK
- [eligible teaching and education leadership jobs \(https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-pay-scales-for-eligible-teaching-and-education-jobs\)](https://www.gov.uk/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 is. These going rates apply whether you're working in the public or private sector.

If your job in healthcare has different salary requirements

If you're on a Health and Care Worker visa and your job is in one of [the occupation codes with different salary requirements \(https://www.gov.uk/health-care-worker-visa/different-salary-requirements\)](https://www.gov.uk/health-care-worker-visa/different-salary-requirements), you must be paid whichever is higher out of the following:

- £31,300 per year

- £25,000 per year if your job is on [the Immigration Salary List](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-immigration-salary-list) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-immigration-salary-list>) (or it was at the time you applied)
- the 'lower going rate' for the type of work you'll be doing

If your job is on the Immigration Salary List

If you do not meet the usual salary requirements, and you do not work in healthcare or education, you might still be eligible.

If you're on a Skilled Worker visa and your job is on [the Immigration Salary List](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-immigration-salary-list) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-immigration-salary-list>) (or it was at the time you applied), you must be paid at least either:

- £33,400 per year
- the 'standard going rate' for the type of work you'll be doing

[Check the going rate for your job in the going rates table](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-going-rates-for-eligible-occupations) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-going-rates-for-eligible-occupations>).

If you got a certificate of sponsorship for your first Skilled Worker (or equivalent) visa before 4 April 2024

If you have continually held one or more Skilled Worker visas since then, you must be paid whichever is higher out of the following:

- £31,300 per year
- £25,000 per year if your job is on the Immigration Salary List, (or it was at the time you applied)
- the 'lower going rate' for the type of work you'll be doing

There are also different salary requirements if you were sponsored for a Tier 2 (General) visa in one of the following occupation codes:

- 2111 Chemical scientists
- 2112 Biological scientists and biochemists
- 2113 Physical scientists
- 2114 Social and humanities scientists
- 2119 Natural and social science professionals not elsewhere classified
- 2150 Research and development managers
- 2311 Higher education teaching professionals

In this case, you must be paid whichever is higher out of the following:

- £25,000 per year
- the different going rate for the type of work you'll be doing

[Check the going rate for your job in the going rates table](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-going-rates-for-eligible-occupations) (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skilled-worker-visa-going-rates-for-eligible-occupations>).

If you have an International Sportsperson, T2 Sportsperson or Tier 2 (Sportsperson) visa

You must be paid £35,800 or more a year.

When working out your salary, you can only count earnings:

- from your main job that you're sponsored for
- for up to 48 hours a week, if you're paid hourly

If you have a T2 Minister of Religion or Tier 2 (Minister of Religion) visa

You must be paid at least the same as UK workers in the same role, and meet [national minimum wage \(/national-minimum-wage\)](#) requirements.

4. Your family members

You can include your partner and children on your application if they're eligible.

Your partner and children can [apply separately at a later date \(/indefinite-leave-to-remain-family/partner-dependant-work-visa\)](#), for example if they're not eligible yet. They can continue to extend their visa as your Skilled Worker, Health and Care Worker or T2 dependant, even after you get indefinite leave to remain.

Eligibility for partners

Your partner may qualify if all the following apply:

- they have permission to be in the UK as your partner (as a 'dependant' on your visa)
- they've lived in the UK with you as your dependant for at least 5 continuous years
- your relationship is genuine
- you intend to keep living together
- you have enough income to support yourselves and your dependants
- you're not using [public funds \(/government/publications/public-funds--2/public-funds\)](#)

Your partner can include time they've spent as your dependant on another visa to count towards the continuous years they need to qualify. They cannot count any time spent on their own visa (not as your dependant).

If your partner is 18 to 64, they must:

- book and pass the [Life in the UK Test \(/life-in-the-uk-test\)](#)
- meet the [English language requirements \(/english-language\)](#)

Eligibility for children

You can include your child on your application if:

- they have permission to be in the UK as your child (as a 'dependant' on your visa)
- they are not married or in a civil partnership
- they will live with you and be supported by you without using [public funds \(/government/publications/public-funds--2/public-funds\)](#)
- you and your child's other parent are both currently applying to settle, or are already settled

Your child can also apply to settle in one of the following situations:

- you're the child's sole surviving parent
- you have sole responsibility for the child's upbringing
- there are serious or compelling family or other considerations, for example you (if you're settled in the UK) or your child has a serious illness

Extra documents for children over 16

You'll need to prove:

- where they live - if they do not live with you, you'll need to explain why
- any rent or upkeep they pay you each month
- that you support them financially if they do not live with you

You'll need to provide documents such as the ones on this list, to prove where they live:

- bank statement
- credit card bill
- driving licence
- NHS registration document
- a letter from their current school, college or university, on headed paper and issued by an authorised official of that organisation

The documents you provide should not be more than a month old on the date you make your application.

If your child lives away from home, you'll need to provide evidence they are not living an independent life, for example:

- bank statements for you and your child covering the 3 months before the date you apply (to prove you've supported them)
- confirmation from their university or college on headed paper and issued by an authorised official (if they're studying)

Children 18 and over

You can only include older children in your application if they both:

- were under 18 when they first got permission to be in the UK as your dependant
- still do not live an independent life - for example, they have not got married or had children

They also need to:

- pass the [Life in the UK Test \(/life-in-the-uk-test\)](#)
- meet the [English language requirements \(/english-language\)](#)

If your child is over 18 by the time you apply and does not meet these requirements, they must [apply separately \(https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/product/set-o\)](#).

5. How to apply

You must [apply online to settle in the UK \(https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/product/set-o\)](#).

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

You'll be told which documents you need to provide when you apply. For example, to show that:

- you've passed the Life in the UK Test
- you meet the salary requirements
- you're still needed for your job - your employer (sponsor) will need to provide a document confirming this

You'll need to pay the fee as part of your application.

Get help to apply online

You can [get help with completing the online form \(/assisted-digital-help-online-applications\)](/assisted-digital-help-online-applications) if you:

- do not feel confident using a computer or mobile device
- do not have internet access

You can only use this service if you're applying in the UK.

You cannot get immigration advice through this service.

6. After you apply

You'll be asked to make an appointment at a [UK Visa and Citizenship Application Services \(UKVCAS\) \(/ukvcas\)](#) service point to provide your biometric information (your fingerprints and a photo).

You'll also need to submit your supporting documents. You can:

- upload them into the online service
- have them scanned at your UKVCAS appointment

Any children aged 6 or over must provide biometric information if you're applying for them on your form.

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.

Getting a decision

You'll usually get a decision within 6 months. If you paid to use the 'super priority service' you'll get a decision within 2 working days, or within 5 working days if you paid to use the 'priority service'.

Working days are Monday to Friday, not including bank holidays.

You'll be contacted if your application is complex and will take longer, for example:

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

If your application is approved

You can do the following:

- work
- run a business
- study
- use public services, such as healthcare and schools
- apply for [public funds \(/government/publications/public-funds--2/public-funds\)](#) (benefits) and pensions
- apply for [British citizenship \(/apply-citizenship-indefinite-leave-to-remain\)](#), usually after a minimum of 12 months

If you stay outside of the UK for more than 2 years

You can lose your indefinite leave to remain if you stay outside the UK for more than 2 years at a time.

You may need to apply before you can [return to the UK \(/returning-resident-visa\)](/returning-resident-visa).



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