

# Sponsorship of skilled workers

Please note that the information provided below should not be taken as legal advice. Please contact Samar Shams, Managing Partner on the details at the end of this document if you have questions. The information is up to date as of the date of writing, 3 July 2024.

## How to sponsor overseas workers

A sponsor licence enhances an organisation's ability to attract talent, unlocking a world of qualified candidates.

Approved sponsors issue work authorisation in the form of Certificates of Sponsorship (COS) using an online system called the Sponsorship Management System or SMS. Non-UK national workers use the COS to apply for their UK immigration permission.

Sponsors can use the Skilled Worker route to fill medium and high-skilled roles.

The required salary level is based on a points calculation involving characteristics such as age, as well as on the 'going rate' for the relevant role in the UK.

Skilled Worker visa applicants must demonstrate English language ability. The Skilled Worker route leads to settlement in the UK.

## Eligibility

To be eligible for a sponsor licence, a UK company must have a director, other company officer or employee to act as the 'Authorising Officer' who will be responsible for the company's sponsorship activities; this individual must be based in the UK for the duration of their role as Authorising Officer.

UK companies that have incorporated less than 18 months prior to applying for a sponsor licence must evidence a corporate bank account with a bank registered by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority in the UK, for which most banks require a UK resident director or shareholder.

A business owner's own company may sponsor them to work in the UK.

## Fees

Our fees for assistance with the application form and document submission stages of the sponsor licence application process are £3,250 plus VAT and disbursements. Also included is advice on the required HR policies. However, additional fees would apply for a review of the company's HR policies. Disbursements will include the sponsor licence application fee, which is £1476, or £536 if the company is a small company. The size determination turns on 3 factors: number of employees, turnover and balance sheet total.

Our fees for assisting with the process of sponsoring a Skilled Worker applying from overseas are £2250 plus VAT and disbursements. This includes assistance with obtaining and assigning a certificate of sponsorship and the visa application process. Disbursements relating to the Skilled Worker sponsorship process include a fee of £239 for assigning a certificate of sponsorship and an Immigration Skills Charge of £1000, or £364 if the company is a small company, per sponsored worker per year.



Disbursements relating to the visa application process for workers outside the UK include a visa application fee of £719 for a 3-year visa, or £1420 for a 5-year visa, and an Immigration Health Surcharge of £1035 per year, per sponsored worker. For workers switching to a Skilled Worker visa inside the UK, the visa application fee is £827 for a 3-year visa, or £1636 for a 5-year visa, and an Immigration Health Surcharge of £1035 per year, per worker.

Priority processing within 5 working days may be available for £500. Transaction and exchange rate fees of about 9% apply to the government fees relating to the visa application process outside the UK.

## Process

The process of applying for a sponsor licence and sponsoring a Skilled Worker in the UK includes the following stages:

- The company prepares HR policies to be able to fulfil sponsor duties
- Completion and submission of the online application form
- Submission of supporting documents
- The Home Office processes the sponsor licence application
- The company requests a defined certificate of sponsorship. This is only required for Skilled Worker applications submitted overseas.
- The company assigns a certificate of sponsorship to the worker via the online sponsor management system
- The worker applies for a visa

## Timeline

We estimate an overall timescale of about 3-5 months for obtaining a sponsor licence and sponsoring the first sponsored worker, depending on priority services used.

## Get in touch

If you have any questions, or would like to proceed with an application on the basis of the above terms, please contact:



**Samar Shams**  
Managing Partner

[samar.shams@changesimmigration.com](mailto:samar.shams@changesimmigration.com)

mob: +44 (0)75 9138 5033