

# Becoming A Skilled Worker Visa Sponsor

A Guide For General Practices In Scotland

August 2023

# Introduction to becoming a sponsor

## Introduction

This guidance covers applications to the Home Office for independent General Practice contractors looking to apply for a license to employ and sponsor individuals on (formerly Tier 2) and Temporary Worker (formerly Tier 5) immigration routes.

## Becoming a Sponsor

If the practice intends to recruit a GP from outside the UK and they are not a 'settled worker' or if the practice intends to recruit a UK medical graduate switching from a Tier 4 visa, they are likely to need a Skilled Worker visa and the practice will need to provide sponsorship. (The Skilled Worker visa replaced the Tier 2 (General) visa from 1 December 2020.)

This ensures:

1. The Home Office knows they have secured a job in the UK; and
2. That an employer is able to take responsibility for them while they are working in the UK.

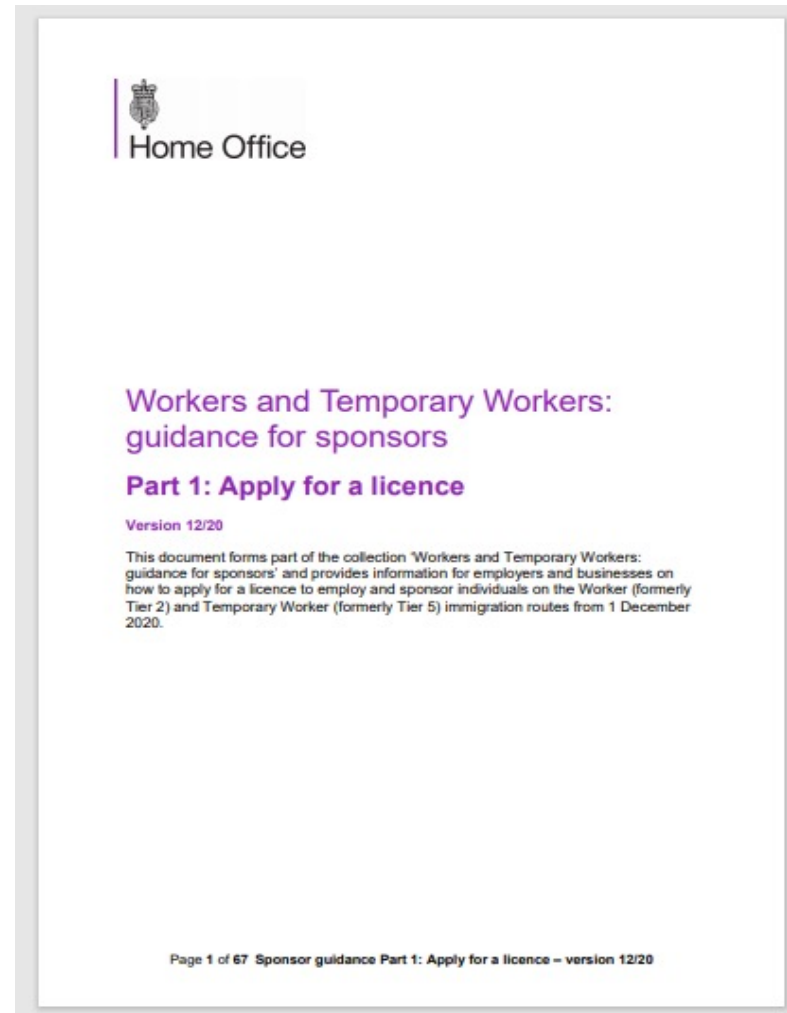
To do this, practices will need a sponsorship licence.

This guide will help you to:

1. Complete the online registration process; and
2. Identify the right documents you will need to send to the Home Office as part of your registration.

Please note, guidance only covers the questions which require a specific response from practices, and not the entire application form.

This guidance does not replace official [Home Office sponsor guidance](#), and has been developed specifically for independent general practices in Scotland.



**To note:** The Practice does not need to provide sponsorship to EU, EEA or Swiss citizens with status under the EU Settlement Scheme; Irish citizens; people with 'indefinite leave to remain' in the UK, or people who have another type of immigration permission to work. For full guidance on who needs to be sponsored, see Section S1 of Part 2: [Sponsor a worker](#)

# What you need before you start

## Documents

You will need to send the Home Office a minimum of 4 supporting documents to prove you are a legitimate employer within 5 working days of submitting your application. These are set out in full in the [sponsor guidance appendix a](#). You can send these electronically. A simplified list of example documents which may be most relevant for a GP Practice is below.

### Recommended documents

1. **You will also need the GMC registration details of the senior partner of the General Practice (mandatory).**
2. Corporate/Business Bank Statement (mandatory for start-ups operating for less than 18 months) or supporting letter from your bank manager
3. Employers Liability Insurance Certificate
4. HMRC Registration – PAYE Reference Number/Account Office Reference Number
5. Proof of ownership or lease of your business premises. If you send a copy of your lease agreement, it must be signed by all parties concerned.
6. [HMRC VAT registration certificate](#)
7. Latest acknowledgement of a Company Tax Return CT620, or the completed CT600 tax return and the CT603 notice.

## Key People

In order to complete an application, you will need to assign three distinct roles to manage the sponsorship process. However, these roles can all be fulfilled by one person, for example your Practice Manager. These roles are:

1. Authorising officer (**AO**) – this will be your most senior person responsible for recruitment and ensuring that all of the sponsor duties are met. This is usually the Practice Manager.
2. Key contact – this person will act as the main contact between the Home Office and the practice.
3. Level 1 user – this person will carry out the day-to-day sponsorship activities.
4. Level 2 user – this is an optional role and you do not need to initially assign it (typically used by very large employers).

For a full description of each role, please see Section L4 in Part 1 of the [Sponsor Guidance](#)

## Cost

1. The cost of the application depends on the size of the practice. For small or charitable sponsors the fee is £536. For a medium or large sponsor the fee is £1,476. Organisations are usually considered a small business if they meet two of the following conditions: **annual turnover is £10.2 million or less, balance sheet is £5.1 million or less or there are 50 employees or fewer.**
2. The fee is non-refundable if your application is refused (i.e. doesn't meet the requirements). However if your application is rejected because it is invalid (i.e. full fee not paid or mandatory documents not submitted) the fee is refundable.

# The registration process and setting up your online account

**Setting up an online account (2 minutes)**

**Completing the online form (20 minutes)**

**Finding the relevant documents (10 minutes)**

## Setting up an online account

To set up an account, click [here](#); then:

1. Enter your name and your email address.
2. The next page will give you a short UserID. Keep this safe, you will need it each time you log in.
3. You will be emailed a temporary password – click the link in the email to reset your password to something memorable and secure. Keep this safe and log into the system.



# The Online Application

1. When you first log into the application system you will be presented with a button that prompts you to 'Apply for a sponsor licence'. Click this button and it will take you to question 1.



## Application for a sponsor licence

### Licence routes - Step 1 of 1

Before making your application you should read the separate guidance notes for completing this form. These are available by selecting the link from the right hand side of this page.

### Who should apply using this form?

Only prospective sponsors based in the UK who want to apply for a sponsor licence under worker, temporary worker, and the student route of the points-based system should complete this application form.

### About this form

In accordance with paragraph 34 of the immigration rules, this form is specified for applications made on or after 27 November 2008. You can only make applications using this online application form.

You must complete all fields as you proceed through the application, unless stated otherwise.

### Under which routes is your organisation applying to become a sponsor?

Choose the routes in which you wish to register (you can choose more than one).

#### Workers

- Skilled Worker
- Intra-company Routes
- Sports people
- Ministers of Religion

#### Student Route

- Student

2. The first question as seen above, asks about the kind of licence you require. Choose 'Skilled Worker'
3. Where it asks if you are already on the register of sponsors, select: No

# The Online Application – Organisation

## Organisation: Step 3 of 4

Select the option that best describes your type of organisation.

Limited Liability Partnership ▼

1. Practices are usually a Partnership, Limited Liability Partnership (LLP) or a limited company

Is your organisation registered with Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC) to pay PAYE, National Insurance or VAT?

- Yes  
 No

If 'Yes', provide details of at least one registration.

PAYE reference number:

Accounts office reference number:

VAT registration number:

[Help on this question \(opens in a new window\)](#)

2. The practice will likely pay both PAYE tax and National Insurance, because the practice has employees. The practice may also have a VAT registration number.
3. It is important to provide this information because your HMRC registration will help the Home Office to confirm the authenticity of the practice, and that the practice is paying the worker in line with the Immigration Rules and sponsor guidance.

Select the sector in which your organisation operates.

Choose the sector that corresponds to your organisation's main economic activity.

Human Health and Social Work Activities ▼

[Help on this question \(opens in a new window\)](#)

4. When asked what sector your organisation operates in, you should select 'Human Health and Social Work Activities'.

Is your organisation required to be registered with or accredited by a governing body to operate legally in the UK?

- Yes  
 No

If 'Yes', you must add your accreditation or registration details to the table by choosing **Add**.

Once details have been recorded in the table, you can edit them by choosing **Edit**.

You can delete details by choosing **Select** and then **Delete**.

Name	Number	Expiry date	Select
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**Delete** **Edit** **Add**

5. Next you will need to provide details of any memberships or accreditations that the practice is legally required to have with a governing body. Scottish General Practices are not required to provide any details of memberships or accreditations so leave this section blank.
6. You will also need to provide details of any non-legally required memberships or accreditation. Specifically, this the GMC membership details of the senior partner at the GP practice.



# The Online Application – CoS

## CoS and CAS: Step 1 of 1

1. You will now need to enter how many Certificates of Sponsorship (CoS) you need and explain why. There is no restriction on the number of CoS that can be granted (however it should be proportionate to the size of your organisation).
2. **Undefined** (previously unrestricted) CoS are for individuals already in the UK.
3. **Defined** (previously restricted) CoS are for individuals applying from overseas.
4. The allocation of undefined CoS is valid for a 12 month period.

**The text below can be used as an example when explaining why you need a CoS. This can be tailored to reflect your individual practice circumstances (limited to 2000 characters):**

- The UK has a national shortage of qualified General Practitioners to meet the growing demands of the population. Typical recruitment efforts have not provided us with the suitable candidates required to fulfil General Practitioner roles within our practice. The impact of this is extended waiting times for patients and greater pressure on our current workforce to meet the needs of our patients.
- The role of a General Practitioner is one that requires many years of specialist training including: a full medical degree, two years of foundation medical training and at least three years of specialist GP training. While there are concerted national efforts to increase the numbers of available GPs in the UK, this does not address the immediate pressure in our service and, for this reason, we anticipate needing to recruit from overseas.
- The role of a General Practitioner has been included on the UK Shortage Occupation list as of 6 October 2019.

## Application for a sponsor licence

### CoS and CAS - Step 1 of 1

#### Number of undefined certificates of sponsorship for Skilled Worker

Enter the estimated number of CoS required in this route during your first year as a sponsor, providing detailed reasons for this requirement.

Number of CoS:

Reasons required: please provide as much detail as possible about why you need the requested allocation. For example: business expansion; specialist skills required; extension of leave for existing migrant worker(s).

**Please note**, CoS granted in this allocation can only be used for undefined posts.

[Help on this question \(opens in a new window\)](#)

Save Exit Back Next

# The Online Application – Documents

## Supporting Documents : Step 1 of 1

1. Remember the supporting documents you pulled together from the lists on [page 4](#)? This next page asks you to tick-off the ones you have to support your application.
2. For the full Home Office guidance on supporting documents please click [here](#) and also see Section L7 Part 1 of the [sponsor guidance](#).
3. In Scotland there is no requirement to submit ‘Governing Body Registration’ documents, however, you will need to submit details of GMC registration details for the senior partner of the practice.
4. **You must choose 1 final document from the list in the section entitled ‘Other documents’. If you fail to provide one, your application may be refused by the Home Office.**
5. You should scan or take pictures of your supporting documents and send them to the email address given on the sponsor submission sheet.  
[SponsorshipValidations@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:SponsorshipValidations@homeoffice.gov.uk)
6. If you are unable to provide the submission sheet and supporting evidence digitally, you can contact the Home Office using the contact details given on the submission sheet

**Mandatory documents**  
The following documents are mandatory and you must send them with your application.

Documents	To be sent
Corporate/Business Bank Statement	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Employers Liability Insurance Cert.	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

[Help on this question \(opens in a new window\)](#)

**The following documents must be sent if they are applicable to your type of organisation.**

Documents	To be sent	Not applicable to this application
Audited Annual Accounts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Governing Body Registration	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Digitech declaration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

[Help on this question \(opens in a new window\)](#)

**Other documents**  
You may send any of the following documents in support of your application.

Documents	To be sent	Not applicable to this application
Supporting Letter from Bank Manager	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sup. let. UK Trade and Investments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
HMRC - Self Asses. (SA300 or SA302)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
HMRC Reg - VAT	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
HMRC Reg-PAYE Ref No/Acc Off Ref No	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
HMRC - Comp. Tax - CT603 AND CT600	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Proof of Bus Prem/Fxd Assets/Lease	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
HMRC - Self Emp. - Uniq. Tax Ref.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Corp/Business Bank Statement OR Letter from bank	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

[Help on this question \(opens in a new window\)](#)



# Final steps and useful contacts

1. The application is not complete until you have paid and sent the Home Office the submission sheet and supporting documents.
2. Information on where to send your submission sheet and supporting documents are provided at the end of the application process, once your payment has been made.

## How long it takes to get a decision

- The Home Office advises that most applications (8 out of 10) are dealt with in less than 8 weeks.
- You may be able to pay £500 to get a decision within 10 working days. You'll be told if you can after you apply.

## Help and advice

- If you do have any difficulty with the application, further advice can be obtained from the sponsorship, employer and education helpline:

### Telephone:

0300 123 4699

Monday to Thursday, 9am to 5pm

Friday, 9am to 4:30pm

### Or email

[businesshelpdesk@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:businesshelpdesk@homeoffice.gov.uk)



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