



Home Office

# Employer's guide to right to work checks

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## About this guidance

This guidance advises an employer how to conduct a right to work check and sets out the specific actions you can take to prevent liability for a civil penalty. This is called 'establishing a statutory excuse against liability for a penalty'.

This guidance applies to right to work checks conducted on or after 16 August 2024 to establish or retain a statutory excuse from having to pay a civil penalty for employing a person who is not permitted to do the work in question.

## Previous versions of this guidance

Where the employment commenced on or after 29 February 2008, and a statutory excuse was established for the duration of that person's employment before 16 May 2014, the document checks set out in the ['Full guide for employers on preventing illegal working in the UK'](#) published in October 2013 continue to apply.

Where the employment commenced on or after 16 May 2014, and a statutory excuse was established for the duration of that person's employment before 28 January 2019, the document checks set out in the ['Employer's guide to right to work check'](#), last published on 29 June 2018, continue to apply.

For example, since 16 May 2014, for those people in the UK who require permission to work and reside, an immigration endorsement must be in a current passport to demonstrate a right to work. However, if you conducted a check between 29 February 2008 and 15 May 2014 and accepted an immigration endorsement in a passport that had expired or has since expired, your statutory excuse continues because this was an acceptable document at the time you conducted the check. You are only required to conduct follow-up checks on an employee if their right to work is time-limited.

Since 28 January 2019, employers have been able to rely on the Home Office online service, ['Check a job applicant's right to work: use their share code'](#) to establish a statutory excuse.

Where the employment commenced on or after 28 January 2019, and a statutory excuse was established for the duration of that person's employment before 1 January 2021, the document checks set out in the ['Employer's guide to right to work checks'](#), last published on 28 January 2019, continue to apply.

Where the employment of an EEA citizen or non-EEA family member commenced on or after 1 January 2021, and a statutory excuse was established for the duration of that person's employment before 1 July 2021, the document checks set out in the ['Employer's guide to right to work checks'](#), last updated on 17 March 2021, continue to apply.

Applicants to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) have their rights protected whilst their application is determined. Where the employment of an EEA citizen or non-EEA family member commenced on or after 1 July 2021, and a statutory excuse was established for the duration of

that person's employment before 31 August 2021, the document checks set out in ['An employer's guide to right to work checks'](#) continue to apply. Where the employment of an EEA citizen or non-EEA family member commenced on or after 31 August 2021, and a statutory excuse was established for the duration of that person's employment, the document checks set out in the relevant employer's guide at the time of the check continue to apply (Guidance: [31 August 2021](#), [17 January 2022](#) or [6 April 2022](#)).

On 6 April 2022, changes came into force regarding the use of biometric cards. Holders can no longer use their physical card as evidence of a right to work, and are now required to use the Home Office online service. Changes also enabled employers to use Identity Document Validation Technology (IDVT) via the services of an Identity Service Provider (IDSP) to complete the digital identity verification element of right to work checks for British and Irish citizens who hold a valid passport (including Irish passport cards). Therefore, where employment commenced on or after 6 April 2022, and a statutory excuse was established for the duration of that person's employment before 26 January 2023, the document checks set out in the ['Employers' guide to right to work checks'](#), updated on 6 April 2022, continue to apply.

On 26 January 2023, changes were made to enable some individuals with an outstanding, intime application for permission to stay in the UK, or an appeal, or administrative review (3C leave) to prove their right to work using the Home Office online checking service. Therefore, where employment commenced on or after 26 January 2023, and a statutory excuse was established for the duration of that person's employment before 17 October 2023, the document checks set out in the 'Employer's guide to right to work checks', updated on 28 February 2023, continue to apply.

On 9 August 2023, changes were made to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) to tackle spurious applications and prevent abuse of the EUSS Certificate of Application (CoA). For a late application to the EUSS made from 9 August 2023 to be valid and a CoA issued, the applicant needs to show the Home Office there are reasonable grounds for their delay in making their application.

On 18 October 2023, changes reflected that employers are no longer required to verify a digital Certificate of Application (CoA) with the Employer Checking Service (ECS) when conducting a right to work online check involving an outstanding EUSS application made on or after 1 July 2021. Therefore, where the employment of an EEA citizen or non-EEA family member commenced on or after 17 October 2023, and a statutory excuse was established for the duration of that person's employment before 13 February 2024, the document checks set out in the 'Employer's guide to right to work checks', last updated on 18 October 2023, continue to apply.

On 13 February 2024 changes came into force to reflect that the civil penalty for employers, which was last increased in 2014, will be raised up to £45,000 per illegal worker for a first breach from £15,000, and up to £60,000 for repeat breaches from £20,000.

On 13 June 2024 changes relating to right to work checks involving EEA citizens and their non-EEA family members with pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme were made. These changes were therefore first reflected in the ['Employers' guide to right to work checks' updated](#)

[on 21 June 2024.](#)

## Summary of changes in this issue of the guidance

This guidance was last updated on 23 September 2024.

The most significant updates contained in this guidance relate to:

- the section titled '[Who is this guidance is relevant for?](#)' which has been updated to set out the public policy reasons why businesses are advised to check their contractors conduct right to work checks on those they employ or engage, or to carry out the checks themselves.
- clarification on processes in relation to follow-up right to work checks within the section titled '[When do you conduct follow-up checks?](#)'
- clarification within [Annex A](#): ILR endorsements in a current passport from a Crown Dependency are acceptable proof of right to work.
- updates to [Annex B](#): Employment of specific categories of workers to provide further information for employers offering supplementary employment to individuals who have immigration permission on a sponsored work route and to reflect recent changes to the immigration rules.
- updates to [Annex D](#): Employment of Ukrainian nationals including advising of schemes which are now closed and changes made to the Homes for Ukraine scheme which means some visa holders, who applied to the scheme after the 19 February 2024, will have 18 months permission to remain in the UK.

# 1. Introduction

All employers in the UK have a responsibility to prevent illegal working. You do this by conducting simple right to work checks before you employ someone, to make sure the individual is not disqualified from carrying out the work in question by reason of their immigration status.

This guidance provides information on how and when to conduct a right to work check. You should also refer to the following documents:

- [Code of practice on preventing illegal working: Civil penalty scheme for employers](#)
- [Code of practice for employers: avoiding unlawful discrimination while preventing illegal working](#)

If you conduct the checks as set out in this guide and the code of practice, you will have a **statutory excuse** against liability for a civil penalty in the event you are found to have employed someone, who is disqualified from carrying out the work in question, by reason of their immigration status. This means that if we find that you have employed someone who does not have the right to do the work in question, but you have correctly conducted right to work checks as required, you will not receive a civil penalty for the illegal worker in question.

In addition to the codes of practice and this guidance, there are a range of [tools available](#) on GOV.UK to support you in conducting right to work checks.

## Why do we need to prevent illegal working?

The ability to work illegally is a driver of illegal migration. It leaves people vulnerable to exploitation and results in unscrupulous employers undercutting compliant businesses. It can also negatively impact on the wages of lawful workers and is linked to other labour market abuse such as tax evasion, breach of the national minimum wage and exploitative working conditions, including modern slavery in the most serious cases.

## Legislation

The law on preventing illegal working is set out in sections 15 to 25 of the [Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006](#) (the 2006 Act), [section 24B of the Immigration Act 1971](#), and [Schedule 6 of the Immigration Act 2016](#).

The 2006 Act replaced section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 (the 1996 Act) in respect of employment commencing on or after 29 February 2008.

Under section 15 of the 2006 Act, an employer may be liable for a civil penalty if they employ someone who does not have the right to undertake the work in question if that person commenced employment on or after 29 February 2008.



## Who is this guidance relevant for?

Employers, including their Human Resource staff and those staff within the same business with delegated responsibility for the recruitment and employment of individuals, should read this guidance to understand their responsibility to correctly carry out right to work checks, and, therefore, ensure compliance with the law.

This guidance applies to employers who employ staff under a contract of employment, service or apprenticeship, whether express or implied and whether oral or in writing.

Where the worker is not your direct employee (for example, if they're self-employed), you are not required to establish a statutory excuse, but you must still carry out these checks (and retain evidence you have done so) to comply with your sponsor duties.

As the employer, you (and not the members of your staff carrying out the checks, whether they are your employees or workers engaged by your business) are liable for the civil penalty. Where you have used an Identity Service Provider (IDSP) to carry out digital identity checks on British and Irish citizens who hold a valid passport (including Irish passport cards), you will retain obligations set out in this guidance to ensure compliance under the Scheme. If you choose to use an IDSP, you (rather than the IDSP) are still liable for the civil penalty should the employee later be found to be working without the requisite permission and it is reasonably apparent the check has not been completed correctly. Other than where you use an IDSP for checks on British and Irish citizens who hold a valid passport (including Irish passport cards), you cannot establish a statutory excuse if the check is performed by a third party, such as a recruitment agency or your professional adviser.

Even if the workers you use or supply are not your employees (within the meaning of [Section 25\(b\) of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006](#)), there are compelling reasons why you should check that anyone doing so has a right to work. Some examples include:

- If illegal workers are removed from your business, it may disrupt your operations and result in reputational damage.
- There could be adverse impacts on your health and safety and safeguarding obligations, as well as potential invalidation of your insurance, if the identity, qualifications and skill levels of individuals doing work for you are not as claimed.
- Different legislation specific to recruitment businesses requires that right to work checks are established.
- Right to work checks are also a requirement of the majority of international best practice standards and the audits that go with them.

**This list is not exhaustive.**

Accordingly, you are strongly encouraged to check that your contractors and labour providers carry out right to work checks in accordance with this guidance on people they employ, engage or supply (or carry out these checks yourself). This includes anyone in your supply chain using a substitute to perform work on their behalf.

## References in this guidance

'3C leave' (Section 3C of the Immigration Act 1971) extends existing immigration permission, and any associated conditions, to a person who makes an 'in-time' application to extend their stay in the UK. 'In-time' means the application was made before the existing permission expired. The individual will continue to hold 3C leave while they are awaiting a decision on that application and while any appeal or administrative review they are entitled to is pending.

'Breach' means that section 15 of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 has been contravened by employing someone who is subject to immigration control; and

- aged over 16; and
- not allowed to carry out the work in question because either they have not been granted immigration permission or because their permission:
  - (i) is invalid;
  - (ii) has ceased to have effect (meaning it no longer applies) whether by reason of curtailment, revocation, cancellation, passage of time or otherwise; or
  - (iii) is subject to a condition preventing them from accepting the employment.

'Certificate of Application' (CoA) is a digital, or 'non-digital', document which individuals can rely on to demonstrate their eligibility to work, rent, and access to benefits and services. This document is issued when a valid application is made to the EU Settlement Scheme.

'Civil Penalty Notice' means a notice given under section 15(2) of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 that requires an employer to pay a penalty of a specified amount.

'Current document' means a document that has not expired.

'Document' means an original document unless specified that a copy, electronic or screenshot is acceptable.

'EEA' means citizens of EEA countries or Switzerland.

The EEA countries are: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.

'EUSS' means the EU Settlement Scheme. The EUSS provides a basis for European Economic Area (EEA) and Swiss citizens resident in the UK by 31 December 2020, and their eligible family members, to apply for the UK immigration status which they require to remain here.

'eVisa' refers to a digital visa provided by the Home Office as evidence of a person's immigration status (permission to enter or stay in the UK).

'Home Office Employer Checking Service' refers to the enquiry and advice service operated by the Home Office that employers are required to contact in certain circumstances to check whether a person is allowed to work in the UK and, if so, the nature of any restrictions on that person's right to do so.

'Home Office online right to work checking service' means the online system allowing employers to check whether a person is allowed to work in the United Kingdom and, if so, the nature of any restrictions on that person's right to do so. This system is accessible for employers on the ['Check a job applicant's right to work use their share code'](#) page on GOV.UK. No other online portal relating to immigration status may be used instead for right to work checking purposes.

'Identity Document Validation Technology' (IDVT) are forms of technology operated for the purpose of verifying the identity of a person, whereby a digital copy of a physical document relating to that person is produced for verification of the document's validity, and whether that person is the rightful holder of the document.

An identity service provider (IDSP) is a provider of identity verification services using IDVT. In the context of this guidance, an IDSP may be certified to provide identity verification to specific levels of confidence, specified by government standards. IDSPs are sometimes referred to as 'identity providers'.

'Immigration permission' (also known as 'leave') should be read as 'Permission to Enter / Leave to Enter or Permission to Stay / Leave to Remain.

A 'Joining Family Member' is an individual of any nationality (including EEA) who was not themselves resident in the UK by 31 December 2020, but is joining an EEA national or relevant sponsor in the UK who either holds EUSS status or, in limited circumstances, would be eligible for EUSS status if they applied.

'Leave to Enter' or 'Leave to Remain' see 'Permission to Enter' and 'Permission to Stay'.

'Level of Confidence' (LoC) is determined through a process required of IDSPs called 'identity checking' which is made up of 5 parts. Each step of the identity checking process is scored, and these scores are used to determine the Level of Confidence which has been achieved.

'Negative Verification Notice' (NVN) is a negative confirmation that a person does not have the right to work from the Employer Checking Service. If an employer receives an NVN, but continues to employ this person, the employer will not have a statutory excuse and may be liable for a civil penalty or be committing a criminal offence.

'Non-EEA citizens' means the citizens of countries outside the EEA.

An 'online right to work check' means the response generated by the Home Office online right to work checking service in relation to a person.

‘Permission to Enter’ also known as ‘Leave to Enter’. Immigration documents and guidance may refer to either term, both are appropriate. This means that a person has permission from the Home Office to enter the UK.

‘Permission to Stay’ also known as ‘Leave to Remain’. Immigration documents and guidance may refer to either term, both are acceptable. This means that a person has permission from the Home Office to be in the UK.

‘Positive Verification Notice’ (PVN) is a positive confirmation of a person’s right to work from the Employer Checking Service. This will provide the employer with a statutory excuse for six months from the date specified in the Notice.

‘Pre-settled status (PSS) means limited leave to enter or remain issued under the EU Settlement Scheme. Pre-settled status is initially given for five years and will be extended unless the person no longer meets the requirements for it.

‘Right to work’ means allowed to be employed by virtue of qualifying immigration status.

‘Right to work checks’ refer to prescribed manual document checks, prescribed Home Office online right to work checks and prescribed use of an Identity Service Provider (IDSP).

‘Settled status’ means indefinite leave to enter or remain issued under the EU Settlement Scheme. The person will usually have lived in the UK for a continuous five-year period and not have left the UK for more than five years in a row since then. A person with settled status can stay in the UK indefinitely.

‘Statutory excuse’ refers to an employer’s defence against liability for a civil penalty, which can be obtained where the prescribed right to work checks have been carried out.

‘Valid application’ means individuals who comply with the validation requirements of an application process, including the enrolment of biometrics, if required, and the provision of evidence of nationality and identity.

‘Check a job applicant’s right to work: use their share code’ means the Home Office online checking service on GOV.UK which enables employers to check whether a person has a right to work and, if so, the nature of any restrictions on that person’s right to do so.

‘We’ or ‘us’ in this guidance mean the Home Office.

‘You’ and ‘your’ in the guidance mean the employer.

## 2. How to establish a statutory excuse for right to work checks

You must conduct a right to work check **before** you employ a person to ensure they are legally allowed to do the work in question for you. If an individual's right to work is time-limited, you should conduct a follow-up check shortly before it is due to come to an end.

A statutory excuse is an employer's defence against a civil penalty. In order to establish a statutory excuse against a civil penalty in the event that an employee is found to be working illegally, employers must do one of the following before the employee commences employment:

1. a manual right to work check (all)
2. a right to work check using IDVT via the services of an IDSP (British and Irish citizens only)
3. a Home Office online right to work check (non-British and non-Irish citizens)

Conducting any of these checks as set out in this guidance and in the [code of practice](#) will provide you with a statutory excuse.

You can also use the [Employer Checking Service](#) where an individual has an outstanding application, administrative review or appeal and their digital profile is not yet enabled to evidence this, or if their immigration status requires verification by the Home Office.

### Conducting a manual document-based right to work check

There are three steps to conducting a manual document-based right to work check. You need to complete all three steps before employment commences to ensure you have conducted a check in the prescribed manner, in order to establish a statutory excuse.

#### Step 1: Obtain

You must obtain **original** documents from either [List A or B](#) of the acceptable documents at Annex A.

#### Step 2: Check

You must **check** that the documents are genuine and that the person presenting them is the prospective or existing employee, the rightful holder and allowed to do the type of work you are offering. You must check that:

- photographs and dates of birth are consistent across documents and with the person's appearance in order to detect impersonation;

- expiry dates for permission to be in the UK have not passed;
- any work restrictions to determine if they are allowed to do the type of work on offer (for **students** who have limited permission to work during term-times, you **must** also obtain, copy and retain details of their academic term and vacation times covering the duration of their period of study in the UK for which they will be employed);
- the documents are genuine, have not been tampered with and belong to the holder; and
- the reasons for any difference in names across documents can be explained by providing evidence (for example, original marriage certificate, divorce decree absolute, deed poll). These supporting documents must also be photocopied, and a copy retained.

### Step 3: Copy

You must make a **clear copy** of each document in a format which cannot manually be altered and retain the copy securely: electronically or in hardcopy. You must also retain a secure record of the date on which you made the check. Further information can be found under 'Retaining Evidence' below.

You must copy and retain copies of:

1. **Passports:** any page with the document expiry date, the holder's nationality, date of birth, signature, immigration permission, expiry date, biometric details, photograph and any page containing information indicating the holder has an entitlement to enter or remain in the UK (visa or entry stamp) and undertake the work in question (the front cover no longer has to be copied).
2. **All other documents:** the document in full, including both sides of an Immigration Status Document and an Application Registration Card.

All copies of documents taken should be kept securely for the duration of the worker's employment and for two years afterwards. The copy must then be securely destroyed.

We recommend you use our:

- employers' ['Right to Work Checklist'](#) to ensure you have correctly carried out all the steps you need to; or
- online interactive tool ['Check if someone can work in the UK'](#), which will take you through the process by asking you a series of questions.

Both will help you to confirm that you have undertaken each step correctly to establish your statutory excuse.

## Acceptable documents

The documents you may accept from a person to demonstrate their right to work are set out in two lists – List A and List B as set out in [Annex A](#) of this guidance.

List A contains the range of documents you may accept for a person who has a continuous right to work in the UK (including British and Irish citizens). If you conduct the right to work checks correctly before employment begins, you will establish a continuous statutory excuse for the duration of that person's employment with you. You do not have to conduct any follow-up checks on this individual.

List B contains a range of documents you may accept for a person who has a temporary right to work in the UK. If you conduct the right to work checks correctly, you will establish a time-limited statutory excuse. You will be required to conduct a follow-up check in order to retain your statutory excuse.

## Checking the validity of documents

When you are checking the validity of the documents, you should ensure that you do this in the presence of the holder. This can be a physical presence in person or via a live video link. In both cases you must be in physical possession of the original documents. For example, an individual may choose to send their documents to you by post to enable you to conduct the check with them via live video link. You may not rely on the inspection of the document via a live video link or by checking a faxed or scanned copy of the document.

The responsibility for checking the document is **yours**. Whilst it may be delegated to your members of staff (this includes agency workers engaged by you and working under your control), you will remain liable for the penalty in the event the individual is found to be working illegally and the prescribed check has not been correctly carried out. You may not delegate this responsibility to a third party where you are carrying out a manual check of original documents.

Whilst you may use a third party to provide support in terms of technical knowledge or specialised equipment to prevent the employment of illegal workers, the responsibility for performing the check (in order to obtain a statutory excuse from a civil penalty) will remain with you as the employer.

If you are given a false document, you will only be liable for a civil penalty if it is **reasonably apparent** that it is false. This means that a person who is untrained in the identification of false documents, examining it carefully, but without the use of technological aids could reasonably be expected to realise that the document in question is not genuine.

You will not obtain a statutory excuse if:

- it is reasonably apparent that the person presenting the document is not the person referred to in that document, even if the document itself is genuine.
- you know that the individual is not permitted to undertake the work in question.

- you know that the documents are false or do not rightfully belong to the holder.

You may wish to read the online guidance about recognising fraudulent identity documents. [Guidance on examining identity documents](#) can be found on GOV.UK. You can also compare identity and travel documents against the images published on:

- [PRADO Public Register of Authentic travel and Identity Documents Online](#)
- [EdisonTD](#)

These are archives of identity and travel documents.

If you wish to access Home Office online training on document fraud, please contact the Immigration Enforcement Checking & Advice Service training team at: [IE-CAS@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:IE-CAS@homeoffice.gov.uk)

If someone gives you a false document or a genuine document that does not belong to them, you should use this link to [report the individual to us](#) or call our Employer Enquiry helpline on **0300 790 6268** (Monday to Thursday, 9am to 4:45pm; Friday 9am to 4:30pm).

## Retaining evidence

You must keep a record of every document you have checked. This can be a hardcopy or a scanned copy in a format which cannot be manually altered, such as a jpeg or pdf document. You should keep the copies securely for the duration of the person's employment and for a further two years after they stop working for you. The file must then be securely destroyed.

You should also be able to produce these document copies quickly in the event that you are requested to show them to demonstrate that you have performed a right to work check and retain a statutory excuse.

You must also make a note of the date on which you conducted the check. This can be by either making a dated declaration on the copy or by holding a separate record, securely, which can be shown to us upon request. This date may be written on the document copy as follows: **'the date on which this right to work check was made: [insert date]'** or a manual or digital record may be made at the time you conduct and copy the documents which includes this information. You must be able to show this evidence if requested to do so in order to demonstrate that you have established a statutory excuse. You must repeat this process in respect of any follow up check.

You may face a civil penalty if you do not record the date on which the check was performed. Simply writing a date on the copy document does not, in itself, confirm that this is the actual date when the check was undertaken. If you write a date on the copy document, you must also record that this is the date on which you conducted the check.



## COVID-19 temporary adjusted checks

The temporary adjustments to right to work checks, introduced on 30 March 2020, ended on 30 September 2022.

Since 1 October 2022, employers must carry out one of the prescribed checks as set out in this guidance before employment begins.

You do not need to carry out retrospective checks on employees who had a COVID-19 adjusted check between 30 March 2020 and 30 September 2022 (inclusive). You will maintain a statutory excuse against liability for a civil penalty if the check undertaken during this period was done in the prescribed standard manner or as set out in the [COVID-19 adjusted checks guidance](#). However, any individual identified with no lawful immigration status in the UK may be liable to immigration enforcement action.

## Using an Identity Service Provider (IDSP)

Since 6 April 2022, employers have been able to use IDVT via the services of an IDSP to complete the digital identity verification element of right to work checks for British and Irish citizens who hold a valid passport (including Irish passport cards).

Digital identity verification conducted by IDSPs is the process of obtaining evidence of the prospective employee's identity, checking that it is valid and belongs to the person who is claiming it.

If you use the services of an IDSP for digital identity verification, holders of valid British or Irish passports (or Irish passport cards) can demonstrate their right to work using this method. This will provide you with a continuous statutory excuse. It is your responsibility to obtain evidence of the IDVT check from the IDSP. You will only have a statutory excuse if you reasonably believe that the IDSP has carried out their checks in accordance with this guidance.

You must not treat those who do not hold a valid passport, or do not wish to prove their identity using an IDSP less favourably. You must provide individuals with other ways to prove their right to work and should carry out a manual document-based right to work check in these circumstances.

Prior to the 6 April 2022 changes to right to work checks, employers were already able to use IDSPs to enhance their pre-employment checking processes and minimise the risk of fraud. The Home Office previously published guidance on the use of [IDVT](#) for this purpose. You may, therefore, find IDSPs who offer their services in relation to supporting manual checks of physical documents, or checks via the Home Office online right to work checking service.

However, other than where you use an IDSP expressly for right to work checks of British or Irish citizens with a valid passport (or Irish passport card), it is not possible to establish a statutory excuse against liability for a civil penalty if the manual document-based check, or online service right to work check, is performed by an IDSP.

For a detailed guide on how to complete a right to work check using an IDSP, please refer to Annex C of this guidance.

## Basic steps to conducting a RTW check using an IDSP:

- IDSPs can carry out digital identity verification to a range of standards or levels of confidence. The Home Office recommends that employers only accept checks via an IDSP that satisfy a minimum of a Medium Level of Confidence. A list of certified providers is available for you to choose from on GOV.UK: [Digital identity certification for right to work, right to rent and criminal record checks](#). It is not mandatory for you to use a certified provider: you may use a provider not featured within this list if you are satisfied that they are able to provide the required checks.
- Satisfy yourself that the photograph and biographic details (for example, date of birth) on the output from the IDVT check are consistent with the individual presenting themselves for work (i.e., the information provided by the check relates to the individual and they are not an imposter). This can be done in person or by video call.
- You must retain a clear copy of the IDVT identity check output for the duration of employment and for two years after the employment has come to an end.

Should you be found to be employing individuals without their identity and eligibility being verified correctly in the prescribed manner, you will not have a statutory excuse in the event the individual is found to be working illegally by reason of their immigration status. The employer remains liable for any civil penalty if there is no statutory excuse.

## Conducting a Home Office online right to work check

A Home Office online right to work check will provide you with a statutory excuse against a civil penalty in the event of illegal working involving the subject of the check. You can do an online check by using the online service, entitled '[Check a job applicant's right to work: use their share code](#)' on GOV.UK.

It will not be possible to conduct a Home Office online right to work check in all circumstances, as not all individuals will have an immigration status that can be checked online. The online right to work checking service sets out what information you will need to complete an online check. In circumstances in which an online check is not possible, you should conduct the manual check.

Currently, the Home Office online service supports checks for a range of individuals, depending on the type of immigration documentation they are issued with. The use of digital proof of immigration status forms part of our move towards a UK immigration system that is digital by default. This will be simpler, safer and more convenient.

Some individuals have been issued with an eVisa and can only use the online service to prove their right to work.

Biometric Residence Card (BRC), Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) and Frontier Worker Permit (FWP) holders are also only able to evidence their right to work using the Home Office online service. This means you cannot accept or check a physical BRC, BRP or FWP as proof of right to work.

## How does the service work?

Individuals using the service must select one of the three reasons for sharing their immigration status. For prospective or existing employees, they must select choose to prove their right to work in the UK.

After selecting the correct option, in this case '[Prove your right to work to an employer: get a share code](#)' the individual can then generate a 9-character long share code that can be passed on to an employer which, when entered alongside the individual's date of birth, enables you to access the required information.

The share code will be valid for **90 calendar days** from the point it has been issued and can be used as many times as needed within that time.

Share codes can only be used for the purpose they were originally selected for. All share codes begin with a letter denoting the purpose the share code can be used for. Where a share code begins with the letter '**W**', this will indicate that the share code has been generated by a prospective or existing employee to evidence their right to work. Employers will not be able to accept or use share codes which begin with the letter '**R**' or '**S**' as these are designed for other services.

If a share code has expired, or the individual has used a code generated by another service, you must ask them to resend you a new right to work share code.

Where an individual provides you with a share code, you must carry out the check by accessing the employer part of the online service at '[Check a job applicant's right to work: use their share code - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)' page on GOV.UK in order to obtain a statutory excuse against a civil penalty. It is not sufficient to view the details provided by the prospective or existing employee on the migrant part of the service.

The online service allows checks to be carried out by video call. You do not need to see physical documents as the right to work information is provided in real time directly from Home Office systems.

## Step 1: Use the Home Office online service

The individual may provide the share code to you directly, or they may choose to send this to you via the service. If they choose to send it to you via the service, you will receive an email from [right.to.work.service@notifications.service.gov.uk](mailto:right.to.work.service@notifications.service.gov.uk).

To check the person's right to work details, you will need to:

- access the service [Check a job applicant's right to work: use their share code - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-a-job-applicant-s-right-to-work-use-their-share-code)
- enter the 'share code' provided to you by the individual, and
- enter their date of birth

It is not sufficient to simply view the details provided to the individual on the migrant part of the service and doing so will not provide you with a statutory excuse.



The above image is an example of the message an employer receives when an individual has sent their share code to the employer via the online service.

## Step 2: Check

You must check that the photograph on the online right to work check is of the individual presenting themselves for work (i.e. the information provided by the check relates to the individual and they are not an imposter). This can be done in person or by video call.

If the image of the individual on their digital profile is showing incorrectly or is of poor quality, you should advise the individual to update the image on their account. They can do this by visiting: [Update your Visas and Immigration account details](#). Further information and support is also available via the [UKVI Resolution Centre](#).

You must only employ the person (or continue to employ an existing employee, if you are conducting a follow-up check) if the online check confirms they have the right to work and are not subject to a condition preventing them from doing the work in question.

If you employ someone on the basis of the online check, but it is reasonably apparent from the photograph that the individual working is not the individual to whom the information provided in the check relates, you may face a civil penalty in the event of illegal working or risk being found guilty of a criminal offence.

GOV.UK View a job applicant's right to work


BETA This is a new service - your feedback will help us to improve it.


Right to work

**Erika Mustermann**

They can work in the UK.

**Details**  
They can work in any job. There is no limit on how long they can stay in the UK.



Rotate 

**If you employ this person**  
To avoid a penalty, you must:

- check this looks like the person you meet face to face
- keep a secure copy of this online check (either electronically or in hard copy), for the duration of the employment and for 2 years after

You don't need to do the check again.  
Read the employers' code of practice to find out more about right to work checks.

**Details of check**

Company name	Date of check	Reference number
Acme Ltd	8 January 2018	WE-RHQDFMC-57

[Print page](#) [Download PDF](#)

[Finish and leave service](#)

The above image is from the online service and shows the individual has a continuous right to work.

GOV.UK View a job applicant's right to work


BETA This is a new service - your feedback will help us to improve it.


Right to work

**Erika Mustermann**

They have permission to work in the UK from 19 October 2021. They can work in the UK until 19 November 2023.

**Details**  
They can work in any job.



Rotate 

**If you employ this person**  
To avoid a penalty, you must:

- check this looks like the person you meet face to face
- keep a secure copy of this online check (either electronically or in hard copy), for the duration of the employment and for 2 years after
- do this check again when their permission to be in the UK expires on 19 November 2023

Read the employers' code of practice to find out more about right to work checks.

**Details of check**

Company name	Date of check	Reference number
Acme Ltd	8 January 2018	WE-BNFEEUJN-64

[Print page](#) [Download PDF](#)

[Finish and leave service](#)

The above image is from the online service and shows the individual has a time-limited right to work and confirms the date that their permission to enter or stay expires.

GOV.UK View a job applicant's right to work

BETA This is a new service - your feedback will help us to improve it.

Right to work

**Erika Mustermann**

They can work in the UK until 19 November 2023.

**Details**

They can work:

- up to 10 hours a week during term time
- full time during the holidays

They must share proof of their term dates with their employer.

They can also work on a placement which is part of the course their student visa is based on. The work placement must be:

- a compulsory part of their course
- assessed as part of their course

Read more about [volunteering, working for a student union and other types of work](#).

**Conditions**

They cannot:

- work as a doctor or dentist in training - except on a Health Education England foundation programme
- work as an entertainer
- work as a professional sportsperson or coach
- run a business or be self-employed - unless they have applied for a start-up visa

**If you employ this person**

To avoid a penalty, you must:

- check this looks like the person you meet face to face
- keep a secure copy of this online check (either electronically or in hard copy), for the duration of the employment and for 2 years after
- get and keep details of their academic term and vacation times
- do this check again when their visa expires on 19 November 2023

Read the [employers' code of practice](#) to find out more about right to work checks.

Details of check		
Company name	Date of check	Reference number
Acme Ltd	8 January 2018	WEYVFCXEU-86

Print page Download PDF

[Finish and leave service](#)

The above image is from the online service and shows the individual has a restricted, time limited right to work. It confirms the hours they can work and the date that their permission to enter or stay expires.

### Step 3: Retain evidence of the online check

You must retain evidence of the online right to work check. This should be the 'profile' page confirming the individual's right to work. This is the page that includes the individual's photo and date on which the check was conducted. You will have the option of printing the profile or saving it as a PDF or HTML file.

You should store this securely, (electronically or in hardcopy) for the duration of employment and for two years afterwards. The file must then be securely destroyed. You should also be able to produce these document copies quickly in the event that you are requested to show them to demonstrate that you have performed a right to work check and retain a statutory excuse.

You must repeat this process in respect of any follow up check.

### Biometric Residence Permits

Biometric Residence Permits (BRPs) provide evidence of the holder's immigration status in the UK. They contain the holder's unique biometric identifiers (fingerprints, digital photograph) within

the chip. They also display a photograph and biographical information on the face of the document and details of entitlements, such as access to work and/or public funds.

As part of the development of a border and immigration system that is digital by default, physical documents are to be phased out by the end of 2024, replaced with a system of digital immigration status (eVisa). Therefore, you may see BRP cards with an expiry date of 31 December 2024 where the holder has permission to stay in the UK that ends after that date. This is not an error and the holder's rights and entitlements are unaffected as the date refers to the expiry of the document only, and not to the holder's immigration status. When the holder provides you with a share code to prove their right to work, their online profile will display the expiry date of their immigration permission, rather than the card expiry date of 31 December 2024. Those with a BRP expiring on 31 December 2024 can now create a UKVI account and access their visa, without needing an invitation from UKVI to do so. Further information is available: [Online immigration status \(eVisa\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

A follow up check is not needed until the employee's permission is due to expire. Where the 31 December 2024 was taken as the expiry date, a follow up check will be required.

Further information is available on [Biometric Residence Permits \(BRPs\): What a BRP is - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

For migrants overseas who are granted permission to enter the UK for more than six months, they are issued with a vignette (sticker) in their passport which is valid for **90 calendar days** to enable them to travel to the UK. Following their arrival, they will have **10 calendar days** or before their vignette expires (whichever is later) to collect their BRP from the Post Office branch detailed in their decision letter.

BRP holders must still collect their card, but they prove their right to work using the Home Office online service rather than showing the physical document. Those permitted to work in the UK are strongly encouraged to collect their BRP before they start work in order to use the information to generate a right to work share code. If they need to start work for you prior to collecting their BRP, they will be able to evidence their right to work by producing the short validity vignette in their passport which they used to travel to the UK. You will need to conduct a manual right to work check on the basis of this vignette, which must be valid at the time of the check. However, as this will expire **90 calendar days** from issue, you will have to repeat the check using the online service, for the statutory excuse to continue.

If you employ someone on the basis of the short validity vignette and they are unable to access their BRP information to use the online service when the vignette time expires, you are not required to immediately terminate the employment if you believe the employee continues to have the right to work. However, once the **90 calendar days** has expired, you will not be able to establish a statutory excuse if it transpires that the employee is working illegally.

## Biometric Residence Permits (BRPs) and National Insurance numbers

Some individuals are automatically issued a National Insurance Number (NiNo) as part of their immigration application. This currently applies to most migrants and dependants who have been granted permission in any skilled worker category or as a refugee, including those granted settled status through a protection route. In such cases, the NiNo will appear in the remarks on the reverse of the BRP or on their online profile. In these cases, there is no need for the migrant or the employer to make a separate application to the Department for Work and Pensions to obtain one.

## Changes to the way in which biometric cards are used to evidence right to work

The way in which Biometric Residence Card, Biometric Residence Permit and Frontier Worker Permit (“Biometric cards”) holders evidence their right to work has changed.

Since 6 April 2022, biometric card holders are required to evidence their right to work using the Home Office online service only. Employers cannot accept physical cards for the purposes of a right to work check even if it shows a later expiry date. Biometric cards have been removed from the lists of acceptable documents used to conduct a manual right to work check.

Retrospective checks will not be required on biometric card holders who, before 6 April 2022, used their physical card to demonstrate their right to work. Employers will maintain a statutory excuse against a civil penalty if the initial checks were undertaken in line with the guidance that applied at the time the check was made.

If an employer chooses to undertake a retrospective check and identifies an existing employee who no longer has a right to work, they are required to take the appropriate action.

## When to contact the Home Office Employer Checking Service to verify right to work

In certain circumstances, you will need to contact the Home Office’s [Employer Checking Service](#) (ECS) to establish a statutory excuse. These are when:

1. You are presented with a document (non-digital CoA or an acknowledgement letter or email) confirming receipt of an application to EUSS on or before 30 June 2021.
2. You are presented with a non-digital CoA confirming receipt of an application to the EUSS on or after 1 July 2021.
3. You are presented with a valid Application Registration Card stating that the holder is permitted to undertake the work in question. Any work will be restricted to employment in a shortage occupation.
4. You are satisfied that you have not been provided with any acceptable documents and are unable to carry out a check using the online service.



5. The person presents other information indicating that they have an outstanding application for permission to stay in the UK with the Home Office, which was made before their previous permission expired or has an appeal or administrative review pending and, therefore, cannot provide evidence of their right to work.
6. You consider that you have not been provided with any acceptable documents, but the person presents other information indicating they are a long-term resident of the UK who arrived in the UK before 1988.

In the above circumstances, you will establish a statutory excuse only if you are issued with a **Positive Verification Notice (PVN)** confirming that the named person is allowed to carry out the type of work in question.

You should not contact the ECS where employment commenced before 29 February 2008 and has been continuous ever since. You will receive a Negative Verification Notice because this employment is out of scope of the civil penalty scheme. This notice does not require you to take action and does not indicate that they do not have the requisite permission to work.

The ECS aims to provide a response within **five working days** of receiving a valid request. It is your responsibility to inform the person you intend to employ, or continue employing, that you are carrying out this check on them.

To find out if you need to request a verification check from the ECS and to conduct that check, you should use the online tool '[Use the Employer Checking Service - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/use-the-employer-checking-service)'.

## Application Registration Card and asylum seekers

The Application Registration Card (ARC) is the card used by asylum claimants to demonstrate they have made an asylum claim. Since 2017, ARC closely resemble the Biometric Residence Permit, including extra security features, a biometric facial image and an expiry date. Whilst the earlier version of the ARC is no longer being issued, the cards already in circulation will continue to be acceptable until they expire.

Asylum claimants are provided with accommodation and support to meet their essential living needs if they would otherwise be destitute. Asylum claimants can apply for and may be granted permission to work if their claim has been outstanding for more than 12 months through no fault of their own.

Claimants granted permission to work on or before 3 April 2024 are restricted to working in jobs on the [shortage occupation list](#) published by the Home Office. Their ARC will state “**work permitted shortage OCC**”.

Claimants granted permission to work on or after 4 April 2024 are restricted to working in jobs on Appendix: [Immigration Salary List](#) published by the Home Office. Their ARC will state “**Permission to Work para 360**”.

You may accept a new biometric style or an old-style ARC, provided you verify the right to work and any work restrictions by obtaining a Positive Verification Notice (PVN) issued by the ECS. This excuse will expire six months from the date of the PVN, when a follow-up check must be undertaken if the statutory excuse is to be retained.

The follow up check must be carried out before the six-month statutory excuse expires. Any permission to work granted will come to an end if their claim is refused and any appeal rights are exhausted. Provided you have obtained a PVN from the ECS, you will continue to have a statutory excuse for the duration stated in the PVN unless you become aware that the worker is working illegally within that six-month period and you continue to employ them in spite of that knowledge.

Anyone who is granted permission to stay in the UK as a refugee, or who is granted humanitarian protection has unrestricted access to the labour market. A refugee may demonstrate their right to work through the Home Office online service (if they have a BRP) or Immigration Status Document, requiring a manual check (an older form of document issued to refugees and certain other categories of migrant prior to the introduction of the BRP).

## Outstanding applications, Appeals and Administrative Reviews

If you request verification from the ECS, because the employee or potential employee has an outstanding application with us or appeal or administrative review against a Home Office decision, you should wait at least **14 calendar days** after the application, appeal or administrative review has been delivered or posted to us or the court, before requesting a verification check. This is because it takes this amount of time for most cases to be registered with the Home Office.

In order to make the verification request with the ECS, you must obtain confirmation from your employee or potential employee of when the application, appeal or administrative review was made to the Home Office. This information must be included in the request form.

## In-time applications (3C leave)

Where an in-time application to extend or vary leave is made and the application is not decided before the person's existing leave expires, section 3C of the Immigration Act 1971 extends the person's existing leave.

An application for further immigration permission to stay in the UK must be made before existing permission expires for it to be deemed 'in-time'. Upon doing this, any existing rights (including a right to work) will continue until that in-time application (and any appeal or administrative review) has been determined. Where section 3C is triggered, it will extend leave while any appeal or administrative review they are entitled to is pending.

The Home Office online service now supports a range of individuals, who have outstanding, in-time applications for permission to stay in the UK. Where an individual advises you that they have an outstanding, in-time application, and they are an eVisa holder, you should ask them to provide you with a share code. Once in receipt of the share code, you can use the online service to carry out the right to work check as set out in this guidance.

In such circumstances, the online service will provide confirmation of the individual's right to work and will provide you with a statutory excuse for a period of six months. This is the standard duration when right to work checks are conducted on individuals who have an outstanding, in-time immigration application. Upon any subsequent application to renew the right to work, you must carry out a follow-up check.

Some users may not be supported by the online service at this time as work continues to move to digital by default. In circumstances where the individual is unable to provide you with a share code, yet they have an outstanding, in-time application, please contact the ECS for verification of this.

## Appeals and Administrative Reviews

Administrative reviews have replaced some rights of appeal where the applicant believes our decision to refuse their application is incorrect. For decisions made in the UK, the review application must be made within **14 calendar days** from notification of the decision. Any previous permission to work continues during the period that an administrative review can be made and, if made, will continue until the administrative review has been determined (decided or withdrawn). This will normally be within **28 calendar days**.

Where an application for an administrative review is brought after the period for making an application has expired, we may decide to accept the application as valid. If so, any permission to work will continue from the date that the administrative review is accepted. This will be confirmed by a PVN from the ECS. The individual will not be permitted to work between the date that their previous permission to work expired and the date the administrative review was deemed valid.

Further detail on [administrative reviews](#) can be found on GOV.UK.

## Windrush generation individuals

The Government has put in place additional safeguards to ensure that those who have lived lawfully in the UK since before 1988 are not denied access to work. In some circumstances, individuals of the Windrush generation (those who arrived in the UK before 1973) and those non-UK citizens who arrived in the UK between 1973 and 1988, may not be able to provide documentation from the lists of acceptable documents to demonstrate their entitlement to work in the UK. The Home Office has established the [Windrush Help Team](#) which is handling applications under the Windrush Scheme for confirmation of indefinite leave to remain, including a biometric residence permit or applications for British citizenship.

In these circumstances, you should contact the [Employer Checking Service](#) (ECS).

The ECS will notify the Windrush Help Team, who will contact the individual to confirm their circumstances and arrange for their status to be resolved. Working with the Windrush Help Team, the ECS will be able to confirm an individual's right to work in these circumstances and will do so by issuing you with a PVN.

A PVN issued by the ECS will provide you with a statutory excuse for six months from the date stated in the PVN. The information provided by the ECS will clearly set out whether a repeat check will be required, and if so, when.

[The Windrush Help Team](#) can offer support and guidance about the Windrush Scheme and advise individuals on how to apply. It can also help vulnerable people or those who need additional support. If a prospective or existing employee has been affected, they can contact the Windrush Help Team via the above link or by calling **0800 678 1925**.

## EEA citizens

Following the UK's exit from the EU, the Immigration and Social Security Coordination (EU Withdrawal) Act 2020 ended free movement law in the UK on 31 December 2020 at 23:00 (11pm) GMT. There followed a grace period of six-months during which relevant aspects of free movement law were saved to allow eligible EEA citizens and their family members resident in the UK by 31 December 2020 to apply to the EUSS. This period ended on 30 June 2021.

## Right to work checks for EEA citizens since 1 July 2021

EEA citizens and their family members are required to have immigration status in the UK. They can no longer rely on an EEA passport or national identity card to prove their right to work as this only confirms their nationality. They are required to provide evidence of lawful immigration status in the UK, in the same way as other foreign nationals.

There is no requirement for a retrospective check to be undertaken on EEA citizens who entered into employment before 1 July 2021. You will maintain a continuous statutory excuse against liability for a civil penalty if the initial checks were undertaken in line with the guidance that applied at the time you made the check.

If you choose to carry out retrospective checks, you must ensure that you do so in a non-discriminatory manner. The [Code of practice for employers: avoiding unlawful discrimination while preventing illegal working](#) provides practical guidance on how to avoid unlawful discrimination when conducting right to work checks.

## Irish citizens

Irish citizens continue to have unrestricted access to work in the UK. They can prove their right to work using their Irish passport or Irish passport card (in either case, whether current or expired), or their Irish birth or adoption certificate together with an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a government agency or a previous employer.

Eligible Irish citizens may choose to apply to the EUSS (see below for information on how to check the right to work of an EUSS status holder).

Irish citizens can also apply for a frontier worker permit, this permit can be issued digitally or as a physical permit, so they can prove their right to work using the [Home Office online right to work service](https://www.gov.uk/prove-right-to-work-work-service).

## How EEA citizens are required to prove their right to work

### EEA citizens granted status under the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS)

The majority of EEA citizens now prove their right to work using the Home Office online service.

The Home Office no longer requires employers to carry out repeat checks on holders of pre-settled status. Accordingly, a right to work check on holders of pre-settled and settled status granted under the EUSS is only required prior to the commencement of employment.

Where initial checks were correctly undertaken prior to the commencement of employment on a holder of pre-settled status, and providing you are not knowingly employing someone without the right to work, the Home Office shall not take civil penalty action against you.

If you choose to carry out follow-up checks, you must ensure that you do so in a non-discriminatory manner. The ['Code of practice for employers: avoiding unlawful discrimination while preventing illegal working'](#) provides practical guidance on how to avoid unlawful discrimination when conducting right to work checks.

### Frontier workers

A 'frontier worker' is an EEA citizen who is resident outside the UK but is economically active (employed or self-employed) in the UK. They have rights under the Withdrawal Agreement, the EEA European Free Trade Association (EFTA) Separation Agreement or the Swiss Citizens' Rights Agreement ('the Agreements') to enter the UK and work for as long as they remain a frontier worker.

Frontier workers are issued with a frontier worker permit either digitally or, in a small number of cases, physically. Using the online service, as set out in this guidance, will provide you with a statutory excuse against liability for a civil penalty.

It is mandatory for frontier workers to obtain a frontier worker permit as evidence of their right to enter the UK. However, it is not mandatory for frontier workers, who have rights under the Agreements, to use a frontier worker permit to evidence their rights (including their right to work) in the UK.

Consequently, it is open to any frontier worker protected under the Agreements to demonstrate the existence of their rights in a different way to using the online service. To obtain a statutory excuse against liability for a civil penalty in such cases, if a frontier worker chooses not to provide a share code, or they were issued with a physical permit, you must request a right to work check from the ECS.

In these cases, you must obtain a copy of the employee's documents which evidence that they were exercising rights as a frontier worker on 31 December 2020 and have continued to do so, as these will form part of your statutory excuse.

Before providing you with a response, the ECS may contact you and ask you to send them a copy of the documents you have checked. The ECS will confirm if the individual has the right to work, and when you need to carry out a follow-up check. Where the ECS can issue a Positive Verification Notice (PVN) in the absence of a frontier worker permit, you will be required to carry out a follow-up ECS check in six months to maintain your statutory excuse.

If you choose to employ the individual as a frontier worker, without checking their frontier worker permit via the online service or securing a PVN from the ECS, you will not establish a statutory excuse against liability for a civil penalty should the individual be found to be working illegally.

Evidence required in the absence of a frontier worker permit:

- evidence of the applicant's own identity and that they are an EEA citizen – such as a passport or national identity card
- evidence they are primarily resident outside of the UK, such as utility bills or bank statements which include proof of address outside the UK
- evidence they were working in the UK as an employed or self-employed person on 31 December 2020
- evidence they have continued to be employed or self-employed in the UK since 31 December 2020

## Retained frontier worker status

A frontier worker who has (or had) temporarily stopped working can still be treated as a worker if they can provide proof that they are, or were:

- temporarily unable to work because of illness or an accident
- in duly recorded involuntary unemployment
- involuntarily unemployed and in vocational training
- temporarily unable to work following pregnancy or childbirth
- voluntarily stopped working to start vocational training related to their previous occupation

Guidance on what is considered sufficient evidence for retaining frontier worker status can be found in the frontier worker permit case working guidance here: [Frontier Worker Permit Scheme Guidance](#).

## Service provider from Switzerland

A 'Service provider from Switzerland' (SPS) is an individual of any nationality, who is required by their employer (who must be based in Switzerland) or Swiss national who is self-employed, to execute contracts to temporarily provide services for a party based in the UK. The contract to carry out work must have been signed and started before 11pm on 31 December 2020. Eligible

companies have rights under the Swiss Citizens' Rights Agreement to enable employees, or self-employed Swiss nationals to travel to the UK to provide services for up to 90 calendar days per year. An SPS must obtain their visa in advance of travel.

An SPS visa is a hard copy document without an online checking function. The visa will be in the form of a vignette and will identify the individual as a 'Service Provider from Switzerland', and can be issued in two ways:

- (All nationalities) within a passport
- (Swiss citizens only) on an official form ("Form for Affixing a Visa") If the individual is a Swiss citizen, they can choose to apply to the immigration route using their Swiss identity card. In this circumstance, the vignette will be attached to an official Home Office form.

As an employer you are not required to carry out a right to work check on an individual with an SPS visa, as they are not in your employment. You may, however, be asked to provide a copy of the contract held with the Swiss company for which the visa holder is carrying out work or services.

The SPS visa specifies that an individual is permitted to provide services for up to 90 calendar days per calendar year or less if there is another employee working on the same contract. The 90 days' work can be spread over the entire calendar year. The visa allows the individual to enter and leave the UK multiple times during the visa period.

Further information is available in the [Service Providers from Switzerland Guidance](#).

## Applications submitted to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS)

EEA citizens, and their family members, who have made a valid application to the EUSS have temporary protection of rights under the Withdrawal Agreement, the EEA EFTA Separation Agreement or the Swiss Citizens' Rights Agreement, which gives them a right to work until their application is finally determined. This includes pending the outcome of any administrative review or appeal against a decision to refuse status. Employers should not treat those with an outstanding, valid application less favourably.

## Certificate of Application (CoA)

Where an individual has been issued with a CoA, you must first check whether this is a 'digital' or 'non-digital' CoA. A CoA is evidence that an individual has made a valid application to the EUSS and should be used to evidence their right to work until their application (and any appeal or administrative review) is finally determined.

## Digital Certificate of Application

Most individuals with an outstanding valid application made to the EUSS have been issued with a digital CoA. In this instance, you should check with the individual and ask them to provide you with a share code. This means you can check their right to work immediately via the online service and do not need to contact the ECS. The online service will provide confirmation of their right to work and advise when a follow-up check is required.

Previously, where the individual had a digital CoA to evidence a valid application made to the EUSS on or after 1 July 2021, the online service would direct the employer to verify this via the ECS. Since 17 October 2023, employers have no longer been directed to verify such a check with the ECS.

## Non-digital Certificate of Application

A 'non-digital' CoA is a PDF document attached to an email or a letter, sent to the individual, advising them how prospective employers can verify their right to work. Where a prospective employee provides you with a 'non-digital' CoA as evidence of an application made to the EUSS, you should check with the individual and ask them to provide you with a share code to verify their right to work as per the 'Digital Certificate of Application' section above.

If they have not been issued a digital version and are unable to provide you with a share code, you should contact the ECS. You must make a copy of the 'non-digital' CoA and retain this copy, together with a PVN from the ECS. In doing so, you will have a statutory excuse for six months from the date stated on the PVN.

You can request a right to work check from the ECS using the online form ['Home Office right to work check'](#) on GOV.UK.

## EU Settlement Scheme status granted by a Crown Dependency

The Crown Dependencies (the Bailiwick of Jersey, the Bailiwick of Guernsey, and the Isle of Man) each operate their own equivalents of the EUSS for those eligible to apply. The UK and the Crown Dependencies recognise status granted under each other's scheme, so an individual granted settled or pre-settled status by a Crown Dependency will be considered to have settled or pre-settled status in the UK.

The Isle of Man and Guernsey issue a letter to those granted EUSS status. Jersey issues a letter and operates an immigration status checker service for individuals to obtain confirmation of their status at any point.

When presented with a letter or email confirmation of EUSS leave from a Crown Dependency, you must request a right to work check from the ECS. You must keep a copy of the Crown Dependency letter or email and retain this with the response from the ECS to have a statutory excuse against liability for a civil penalty.



The Home Office will no longer require employers to carry out repeat checks on holders of pre-settled status. Accordingly, a right to work check on holders of pre-settled and settled status granted under the EUSS will only be required prior to the commencement of employment. Where initial checks were correctly undertaken prior to the commencement of employment on a pre-settled status holder, and provided you are not knowingly employing someone without the right to work, the Home Office shall not take civil penalty action against you.

## Outstanding EU Settlement Scheme applications in a Crown Dependency

Where an individual has an outstanding application to the EUSS of the Crown Dependencies they will have a letter or email notification confirming their outstanding application. You must request a right to work check from the ECS.

You must retain a copy of the letter or email notification with the response from the ECS to have a statutory excuse against liability for a civil penalty.

## EEA citizens with Indefinite Leave to Enter or Remain

EEA citizens with Indefinite Leave to Enter or Remain (ILE/R) are not required to make an application to the EUSS but can do so if they wish.

Since 1 July 2021, EEA citizens with ILE/R are required to prove their right to work in the same way as other foreign nationals who do not have a digital status. You can carry out a manual check of their Home Office documentation such as an endorsement / vignette in a current passport stating 'Settlement', 'Indefinite Leave to Enter or Remain' or 'No Time Limit'. Some citizens may have a current Biometric Residence Card (BRC) to confirm their ILE/R and this can be used to access the online right to work service.

### Further information:

If you encounter EEA citizens who believe that they have ILE/R but do not have a document to confirm this, please encourage them to:

- [apply to the Windrush Scheme](#) to get proof of their ILE/R status
- see if they are eligible to [apply to the EU Settlement Scheme](#), if they have reasonable grounds for the delay in making their application

If they are from Malta or Cyprus, they may also be able to apply for British citizenship through the [Windrush Scheme](#).

Applications for either scheme are free of charge.

## Points-Based Immigration System

EEA citizens who come to the UK to live, work or study since 1 January 2021 need to obtain immigration status under the points-based system in the same way as other foreign nationals. The majority of EEA citizens will be provided with an eVisa. However, this will be dependent upon

the immigration route and how they made their application. Some EEA citizens will have a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP). Those with a valid BRP must use the online right to work service.

To prove their right to work from 1 July 2021, individuals will provide you with a share code and their date of birth which will enable you to check their Home Office immigration status via the online service, [Check a job applicant's right to work: use their share code](#) available on GOV.UK.

## EEA citizens and non-EEA family members without lawful immigration status

We recognise that employers wish to have a lawful and stable workforce and maintain compliance with the Right to Work Scheme. You will have a continuous statutory excuse against a civil penalty if you carried out an initial right to work check in the prescribed manner as set out in legislation and guidance that applied at the time you completed the check. For example, where an EEA citizen provided their valid passport or national identity card to you to prove their right to work prior to 30 June 2021.

There may be situations in which you identify an EEA citizen or non-EEA family member in your workforce who has not applied to the EUSS and does not hold any other form of permission to stay in the UK.

You may become aware of this if you have chosen to carry out a retrospective check, completed an internal audit or have been made aware that your employee does not have a lawful status in the UK.

If an employer identifies an existing employee who no longer has a right to work, they are required to take the appropriate action. This may include contacting the Home Office for support or taking steps to terminate employment.

If an EEA citizen, or a non-EEA family member, applies for a job but has not applied to the EUSS and has no alternative immigration status in the UK, then they will not be able to pass a right to work check.

It should be noted that the criminal offence of employing an illegal worker is generally reserved for the most serious cases of non-compliance with the Right to Work Scheme. It is not intended for employers who have employed EEA citizens or non-EEA family members in good faith having completed a right to work check in the prescribed manner.

## Family members

Where they were resident in the UK before 11pm GMT on 31 December 2020, non-EEA family members of EEA citizens are required to make an application to the EUSS to continue living in the UK after 30 June 2021. They will provide a share code and their date of birth which will enable you to check their Home Office immigration status via the online service, [Check a job applicant's right to work: use their share code - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) available on GOV.UK.

Eligible family members of persons of Northern Ireland who were resident in the UK by 31 December 2020 can apply for an EUSS family permit to join or visit their family member in the UK. EUSS family permits are valid for six months.

Those with a valid passport will be issued with a EUSS family permit vignette. Where an individual presents a vignette, the employer must take a copy of the passport as well as the vignette and ensure the photographs are of the same person. For more information please see [EU Settlement Scheme Family Permit](#) guidance on GOV.UK.

Family members who wish to stay in the UK beyond the validity of their family permit should apply to the EUSS within 3 months of arriving in the UK. Where a joining family member makes a valid application to the EUSS, they will receive a CoA issued by the Home Office. They will be able to use their CoA for the purpose of a right to work check, please see the section above which gives more details regarding CoAs.

## Support for employees and employers carrying out a right to work check

### Employer Enquiry helpline / UKVI Resolution Centre

If you need help carrying out a right to work check you should call the Employer Enquiry helpline: Telephone: **0300 790 6268** Monday to Thursday, 9am to 4:45pm Friday 9am to 4:30pm. If you need access to a device or the internet, many local libraries have computers where you can access the internet. Please visit [your local library](#) to access these facilities.

If you wish to access Home Office online training on right to work checks, please contact the Immigration Enforcement Checking and Advice Service training team at: [IE-CAS@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:IE-CAS@homeoffice.gov.uk).

### Further support available

If any of your existing or prospective employees require further advice or support with regard to their immigration status, they can access information on '[View and prove your immigration status: get a share code](#)' on GOV.UK. This also provides further information on how to prove immigration status, how to update personal details, and support available.

If your employee needs help accessing or using their Home Office online immigration status services, they can contact the UKVI Resolution Centre: Telephone: **0300 790 6268**, select option 3, Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays), 8am to 8pm Saturday and Sunday, 9:30am to 4:30pm.

## 3. Who do you conduct checks on?

You should ask all prospective employees to demonstrate their right to work through a manual document check, using the services of an IDSP, or by using the Home Office online right to work checking service. You cannot mandate how an individual proves their right to work. To ensure that you do not discriminate against anyone, you should provide reasonable opportunity to enable an individual to prove their right to work.

### Discrimination

You should not discriminate when conducting right to work checks. You should:

- be consistent in how you conduct right to work checks on all prospective employees, including British citizens
- ensure job selections are made on the basis of suitability for the post
- ensure that no prospective job applicants are discouraged or excluded, either directly or indirectly, because of known or perceived protected characteristics.

You should not:

- discriminate when conducting right to work checks
- only check the status of those who appear to you likely to be migrants
- make assumptions about a person's right to work in the UK or their immigration status on the basis of their colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, accent, surname or the length of time they have been resident in the UK.

Otherwise, you may be acting in a discriminatory manner, and it could be used as evidence against you in proceedings under the Equality Act 2010 or the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997, as amended.

The [Code of practice for employers: Avoiding unlawful discrimination while preventing illegal working](#) provides practical guidance on how to avoid unlawful discrimination when employing individuals and conducting right to work checks. We strongly recommend that you refer to this code and the [Code of practice on preventing illegal working: Civil penalty scheme for employers](#) when conducting right to work checks.

Anyone who believes that they have been discriminated against, either directly or indirectly, by an employer, a prospective employer or an employment agency, because of their race or a protected characteristic may bring a complaint before an Employment Tribunal, or an Industrial Tribunal in Northern Ireland. If the claim is upheld, the Tribunal will normally order the employer to pay compensation, for which there is no upper limit.

If you need expert advice and support on discrimination, you can call the [Equality Advisory Support Service \(EASS\)](#) on **0808 800 0082**.

In Northern Ireland the advisory service is provided by the [Equality Commission for Northern Ireland](#). The telephone helpline number is **028 90 500600**.

## 4. When do you conduct follow-up checks?

You need to recheck the right to work of those individuals who have time-limited permission to work in the UK if they are going to continue working for you after their current permission expires. If the initial check confirmed the employee has indefinite leave to enter or remain in the UK, or status under the EU Settlement Scheme, then there is no requirement to carry out a follow-up check.

Where your employee has time-limited permission to work in the UK, a follow-up check should take place on, or before, the date their permission comes to an end. The follow-up check supports employers by ensuring they are not inadvertently employing those who no longer have the right to work, whilst also dissuading people from considering overstaying their time-limited immigration permission. You will have a statutory excuse against liability for a civil penalty provided you carried out an initial check before you started employing the person, and the required follow-up checks as set out in legislation and published guidance that applied at the time the checks were made.

If an employee is unable to provide evidence that they have continuing permission to work when you conduct a follow-up right to work check, this may not necessarily mean that they no longer have permission to work. For example, in cases where an employee benefits from section 3C leave while their in-time application is being considered, or in the event of a technical issue beyond the employee's control which results in the production of an incorrect share code, online right to work check result or they are temporarily unable to generate a share code.

In these circumstances, if you or your employee needs help accessing or using the Home Office online immigration status services, you may contact the UKVI Resolution Centre: Telephone: **0300 790 6268**, Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays), 8am to 8pm Saturday and Sunday, 9:30am to 4:30pm. Please refer to 'Support for employees and employers carrying out a right to work check'.

You should provide an employee with reasonable opportunity to prove that they continue to have a right to work. You are able to contact the Employer Checking Service (ECS) to confirm the right to work of an employee who is unable to do so online using a share code or manually using original, hard-copy documents which are acceptable evidence to prove their right to work. Please refer to 'When to contact the Home Office Employer Checking Service to verify right to work'.

### Contacting the Home Office

If you previously carried out a manual check of a physical document or a check via the online right to work checking service before you employed the person and, on the date on which your excuse is due to expire, you are reasonably satisfied that your employee:

- has an outstanding application to extend or vary their permission to be in the UK; or

- has an appeal or an administrative review against a decision on that application which is pending; or
- is unable to provide acceptable documentation but presents other information indicating they are a long-term lawful resident of the UK who arrived here before 1988,

then your statutory excuse will continue from the expiry date of your employee's permission for a further period of up to 28 calendar days to enable you to obtain a Positive Verification Notice (PVN) from the ECS or carry out a Home Office online check.

The 'grace period' **does not** apply to checks carried out before employment commences. In such circumstances, you should consider delaying employment of the individual until such time you are able to carry out a prescribed check or you receive a six-month PVN from the ECS, otherwise a statutory excuse will not be established.

This 'grace period' will also come to an end before the expiry of 28 calendar days if you receive a negative verification from the ECS. In this case, it comes to an end on the date of notification from the ECS of the result.

If, during either the initial 28 calendar days, or the six-month PVN period your employee provides evidence that their case has been determined with permission to stay granted, you can maintain a statutory excuse for the duration of their immigration permission by conducting a right to work check in the normal way if the check confirms they have a right to work in the job for which you are employing them. A letter from a solicitor indicating a successful case outcome or a copy of a successful court judgment will not provide you with a statutory excuse by itself.

You can reasonably satisfy yourself that a person has a pending application through for example, a Home Office acknowledgment letter or a Home Office or appeal tribunal reference number and proof of date of postage in a 'digital' or 'non-digital' format. These documents will not provide you with a statutory excuse by themselves however, you may wish to retain an original or electronic copy of this information to support that you are reasonably satisfied that a pending application has been made. If your employee cannot provide this evidence, this does not necessarily mean that they have not made an application, appeal or applied for an administrative review.

In the event that a follow-up check confirms an employee is working illegally in your workforce, you will no longer have a statutory excuse if you continue to employ them in spite of that knowledge. You are advised to report the circumstances to the Home Office via the UKVI Helpline on **0300 790 6268** selecting the employer's option, Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays), 8am to 8pm Saturday and Sunday, 9:30am to 4:30pm. You must state that you are reporting illegal working in your workforce and request a Unique Reference Number (URN).

## Transfer of undertakings

Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) Regulations 2006 provide that right to work checks carried out by the transferor (the seller) are deemed to have been carried out by the transferee (the buyer). As such, the buyer will obtain the benefit of any statutory excuse established by the seller.

However, if the seller did not conduct the original checks correctly, the buyer would be liable for a penalty if an employee, who commenced work on or after 29 February 2008, is later found to be working illegally. Also, a check by the buyer may be the only way to determine when any follow-up check should be carried out in respect of employees with time-limited permission to work in the UK.

For these reasons, employers who acquire staff in cases of TUPE transfers are advised to undertake a fresh right to work check on those staff they have acquired. Employers are not required to have a statutory excuse in respect of employment which commenced before 29 February 2008, where the individual has been in continuous employment prior to that date. This includes where employment has continued as part of a TUPE transfer.

We recognise that there may be practical problems in undertaking these checks before employment commences for workers acquired as part of a TUPE transfer, and for this reason a grace period has been provided during which you should undertake the check. This period runs for 60 calendar days from the date of the transfer of the business to correctly carry out fresh right to work checks in respect of those TUPE employees acquired. There is no grace period for any subsequent follow-up checks.

This 60-day grace period applies in all situations where there is a “relevant transfer”<sup>1</sup>, even if the transferring business is subject to “terminal” insolvency proceedings falling within regulation 8(7) of the 2006 TUPE Regulations, such as cases involving compulsory liquidation<sup>2</sup>.

## Changes in the Employer’s legal constitution

Where the employer is a corporate body and there has only been a change in the employer’s legal constitution, for example, a change from a private limited company to a public limited company or change from a partnership to a limited company or a limited liability partnership or a TUPE transfer within the same group of companies, the right to work check does not need to be repeated because of this change. This is only the case when the employer is effectively the same entity and is only changing its legal status. Where there is any doubt, we recommend that the employer checks the person’s right to work, rather than risking liability for a civil penalty should an employee be found to be working illegally.

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<sup>1</sup> as defined by Regulation 3 of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (the “**TUPE Regulations**”)

<sup>2</sup> The employment protections set out in Regulations 4 (continuation of employment) and 7 (protection from dismissal) of the TUPE Regulations are dis-applied in Regulation 8(7) cases.

## 5. What are the sanctions against illegal working?

Illegal working is tackled through a 'whole government approach'. Co-ordination across agencies in government, including HMRC, to ensure that illegal working is detected more effectively, is conducted through the sharing of intelligence and joint enforcement operations. When illegal working is identified, a range of sanctions are applied.

If you are found to be employing someone illegally and you have not carried out the prescribed checks you may face sanctions including:

- civil penalty of up to £60,000 per illegal worker.
- in serious cases, a criminal conviction carrying a prison sentence of up to five years and an unlimited fine.
- closure of the business and a compliance order issued by the court.
- disqualification as a director.
- not being able to sponsor migrants.
- seizure of earnings made as a result of illegal working.
- review and possible revocation of a licence in the alcohol and late-night refreshment sector and the private hire vehicle and taxi sector.

You may also appear in the publication of non-compliant employers in [Employers: illegal working penalties](#).

This is a quarterly report showing the total number of civil penalties for illegal working issued to non-compliant employers in each region of the UK. The report shows the number of illegal workers found and the value of the penalty issued.

Employment of illegal workers within the previous three years means you have been issued with a civil penalty or warning notice in respect of a breach of the 2006 Act for one or more workers which occurred within three years of the current breach, and where your liability was maintained following the exercise of any objection and/or appeal, or you have committed an offence under section 21 of the 2006 Act, as amended by the Immigration Act 2016, during the same period.

### Civil penalties

The amount of any civil penalty issued is determined on a case-by-case basis. The '[Code of practice on preventing illegal working](#)' explains how a penalty is calculated, including mitigating factors which may reduce the penalty amount.

If you are found liable, you will be issued with a **Civil Penalty Notice** setting out the total penalty amount you are required to pay, and the date by which you must pay it. It will also inform you how you can exercise your right to object, following which you will be able to appeal. The employer must always object against the penalty notice before appealing to the court, except if served with a penalty notice for a higher amount following an objection.



Further information is contained in the [‘Employer’s guide to administration of the civil penalty scheme’](#) sets out in more detail the stages of the civil penalty process, how the penalty is calculated, the range of notices you may receive and the deadlines by which you need to take action at each stage.

Receipt of a civil penalty could also affect your ability to sponsor migrants who come to the UK in the future (including those under the points-based immigration system) or your eligibility to hold a Gangmaster’s licence. Being issued with a civil penalty may also affect your ability to hold a licence in the private hire and taxi sector and the alcohol and late-night refreshment sector.

If an employee is undertaking a role which is different from that for which the certificate of sponsorship was issued and permission to enter or stay was granted, you are employing the worker illegally. Further information on sponsoring migrants may be found on [Sponsorship: guidance for employers and educators](#).

If you are an employer who is subject to immigration control, you should also be aware that if you are liable for a civil penalty, this will be recorded on Home Office systems and may be taken into account when we consider any future immigration application that you make.

## The offence of employing an illegal worker

You will commit a **criminal offence** under section 21 of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006, as amended by section 35 of the Immigration Act 2016, if you **know or have reasonable cause to believe that you are** employing an illegal worker. You may face up to five years’ imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine.

It is illegal to employ someone aged 16 or over who is subject to immigration control and who is not allowed to undertake the work in question (by reason of their immigration status). The civil penalty scheme is the sanction applied in most routine cases involving the employment of illegal workers. If you know that you are employing someone who is not allowed to carry out the work in question, you will not have a statutory excuse, regardless of whether you have conducted right to work checks. However, in more serious cases, prosecution may be considered where it is deemed the appropriate response to the non-compliance encountered.

## The offence of illegal working

Working illegally is a criminal offence. Illegal workers face having their wages seized. They may also be prosecuted and can be imprisoned for up to six months.

The Immigration Act 2016 made it an offence to work illegally in the UK. A person commits this offence if they are subject to immigration control, and they work when they are disqualified from working by reason of their immigration status. The offence applies when they know, or have reasonable cause to believe, that they are disqualified from working.

‘Disqualified from working by reason of their immigration status’ means that they:

- have not been granted leave to enter or remain in the UK; or

- their leave to enter or remain in the UK
  - o is invalid,
  - o has ceased to have effect (whether by reason of curtailment, revocation, cancellation, passage of time, or otherwise), or o is subject to a condition preventing the person from doing work of that kind.

As well as including those working illegally under a contract of employment, the offence also applies to work undertaken by those who are self-employed. The offence covers both informal and formal working arrangements.

The offence carries a maximum penalty of six months' imprisonment and/or an unlimited fine in England and Wales and six months' imprisonment and/or a fine of the statutory maximum in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Wages gained from illegal working may be seized as the proceeds of crime and assets may be confiscated.

## Closure notices and compliance orders

The 2016 Act (Section 38 and Schedule 6) introduced [illegal working closure notice and compliance order provisions](#) to provide a power to deal with those employers who have continued to flout the UK's laws by using illegal labour where previous civil and/or criminal sanctions have not curbed their non-compliant behaviour. Serious or persistently non-compliant employers may face temporary closure of their business. The employer is then placed under special conditions to support compliance, as directed by the Court, and may be inspected by Immigration Officers.

The provisions commenced on 1 December 2016. The notice prohibits access to the premises and paid or voluntary work on the premises, unless it is authorised in writing by the Home Office. The closure notice does not prevent access to the premises by any person who habitually lives there. In addition to the issue of the notice, consideration will also be given to the service of penalties or prosecution for illegal working and other immigration offences.

Whenever an illegal working closure notice has been issued, and which has not been cancelled, the Home Office must make an application by complaint to a Magistrates' Court for a compliance order. The application is sent to the Court and served on the respondent before the hearing and forms the basis of the application to the court for the compliance order. The aim of a compliance order is to prevent an employer operating at the premises from employing illegal workers. The employer is placed under special conditions to support compliance, as directed by the Court, and may be inspected by Immigration Officers.

## Preventing illegal working in licensed sectors

The Immigration Act 2016 amended existing licensing regimes in high-risk sectors of the economy (private hire vehicles and taxi sector and the alcohol and late-night refreshment sector). Licences will not be issued to those who break the UK's immigration laws and may be revoked where an existing licence holder commits immigration crime or receives a civil penalty for employing illegal workers.

Licensing authorities carry out right to work checks when considering applications for licences in the taxi and private hire vehicle sector and the alcohol and late-night refreshment sector.

Applicants need to provide evidence of their right to work in the UK and licences will not be issued to those who do not have the right to do the work in question.

Where the holder of a licence breaches immigration laws or receives a civil penalty, this will be grounds for licensing authorities to review, suspend or revoke a licence. In the case of licences for sale and supply of alcohol and late-night refreshment, the Home Office as a responsible authority under the Licensing Act 2003 receives a copy of these applications and may make representations to the relevant licensing authority when we believe that to grant a licence will be prejudicial to preventing immigration crime and illegal working in licensed premises.

Immigration Enforcement have the same power of entry as licensing enforcement officers to facilitate joint operations and inspections for immigration offences in relation to the licensable activity. Provisions commenced in April 2017 in England and Wales. Equivalent provisions in regulations will be made for Scotland and Northern Ireland.

## 6. Do you have any questions?

In the first instance, please refer to the relevant section in this guidance:

- The online interactive tool: [‘Check if someone can work in the UK’](#)
- The online interactive tool: [‘Employer Checking Service Enquiries’](#)
- An employer’s [‘Right to Work Checklist’](#)
- The [code of practice on preventing illegal working: Civil penalty scheme for employers](#)
- The [code of practice for employers: Avoiding unlawful discrimination while preventing illegal working](#)
- Guidance on [‘An employer’s guide to the administration of the civil penalty scheme’](#)

If you cannot find the answer to your question, please contact the Employer Enquiry helpline on **0300 790 62**.

# 7. Annex A: Lists of acceptable documents for manual right to work checks

Where a right to work check has been conducted using the online right to work checking service, the information is provided in real-time directly from Home Office systems and there is no requirement to check any of the documents listed below.

## List A – acceptable documents to establish a continuous statutory excuse

1. A passport (current or expired) showing the holder is a British citizen or a citizen of the UK and Colonies having the right of abode in the UK.
2. A passport or passport card (in either case, whether current or expired) showing that the holder is an Irish citizen.
3. A document issued by the Bailiwick of Jersey, the Bailiwick of Guernsey or the Isle of Man, which has been verified as valid by the Home Office Employer Checking Service, showing that the holder has been granted unlimited leave to enter or remain under Appendix EU(J) to the Jersey Immigration Rules, Appendix EU to the Immigration (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Rules 2008 or Appendix EU to the Isle of Man Immigration Rules.
4. A current passport endorsed to show that the holder is exempt from immigration control, is allowed to stay indefinitely in the UK, has the right of abode in the UK, or has no time limit on their stay in the UK<sup>3</sup>.
5. A current Immigration Status Document issued by the Home Office to the holder with an endorsement indicating that the named person is allowed to stay indefinitely in the UK, or has no time limit on their stay in the UK, **together with** an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a government agency or a previous employer.
6. A birth or adoption certificate issued in the UK, **together with** an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a government agency or a previous employer<sup>4</sup>.
7. A birth or adoption certificate issued in the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man or Ireland, **together with** an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a government agency or a previous employer.

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<sup>3</sup> 'Definition includes those with a document which shows that the holder is entitled to readmission to the UK (RUK endorsement)' and ILR endorsements from a Crown Dependency.

<sup>4</sup> Definition includes a full birth certificate issued by a UK diplomatic mission (British Embassy or British High Commission) and consular birth certificates.

8. A certificate of registration or naturalisation as a British citizen, together with an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a government agency or a previous employer.

### List B Group 1 – documents where a time-limited statutory excuse lasts until the expiry date of permission to enter or permission to stay

1. A current passport endorsed to show that the holder is allowed to stay in the UK and is currently allowed to do the type of work in question<sup>5</sup>
2. A document issued by the Bailiwick of Jersey, the Bailiwick of Guernsey or the Isle of Man, which has been verified as valid by the Home Office Employer Checking Service, showing that the holder has been granted limited leave to enter or remain under Appendix EU(J) to the Jersey Immigration Rules, Appendix EU to the Immigration (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Rules 2008 or Appendix EU to the Isle of Man Immigration Rules.
3. A current Immigration Status Document containing a photograph issued by the Home Office to the holder with a valid endorsement indicating that the named person may stay in the UK, and is allowed to do the type of work in question, together with an official document giving the person's permanent National Insurance number and their name issued by a government agency or a previous employer.

### List B Group 2 – documents where a time-limited statutory excuse lasts for six months

1. A document issued by the Home Office showing that the holder has made an application for leave to enter or remain under Appendix EU to the immigration rules (known as the EU Settlement Scheme) on or before 30 June 2021 together with a Positive Verification Notice from the Home Office Employer Checking Service.
2. A Certificate of Application (non-digital) issued by the Home Office showing that the holder has made an application for leave to enter or remain under Appendix EU to the immigration rules (known as the EU Settlement Scheme), on or after 1 July 2021, together with a Positive Verification Notice from the Home Office Employer Checking Service.
3. A document issued by the Bailiwick of Jersey, the Bailiwick of Guernsey or the Isle of Man showing that the holder has made an application for leave to enter or remain under Appendix EU(J) to the Jersey Immigration Rules or Appendix EU to the Immigration Rules (Bailiwick of Guernsey) Rules 2008, or Appendix EU to the Isle of Man Immigration Rules **together with a Positive Verification Notice** from the Home Office Employer Checking Service.
4. An Application Registration Card issued by the Home Office stating that the holder is permitted to take the employment in question, **together with a Positive Verification Notice** from the Home Office Employer Checking Service.

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<sup>5</sup> This includes a current passport endorsed with a stamp showing an individual has been granted leave to enter and there are no work-related conditions attached. If, under the conditions of the individual's leave, work was restricted or prohibited the endorsement placed in the individual's passport would explicitly set that out as a condition.

5. A Positive Verification Notice issued by the Home Office Employer Checking Service to the employer or prospective employer, which indicates that the named person may stay in the UK and is permitted to do the work in question.

# 8. Annex B: Employment of specific categories of workers

## Sponsored work routes

You will usually need a sponsor licence to employ someone to work for you from outside the UK. This includes EEA citizens who arrived in the UK after 31 December 2020.

You will not need a sponsor licence to employ certain categories of workers, including:

- Irish citizens
- those with settled or pre-settled status under the EUSS
- those with indefinite leave to remain / settlement in the UK

For an overview of the requirements for a sponsor licence, see [‘UKVI Visa sponsorship for employers on GOV.UK’](#).

For detailed information on the requirements, see [‘Workers and Temporary Workers: guidance for sponsors’](#) on GOV.UK.

## Supplementary Employment

The [Skilled Worker guidance](#) states that a Skilled Worker can undertake supplementary employment if the supplementary employment is in an occupation listed in Tables 1, 2 or 3 of [Appendix Skilled Occupations](#).

Workers on the following sponsored routes can undertake supplementary employment that appears in [Appendix Immigration Salary List](#) or is in the same profession and at the same professional level as the job for which the certificate of sponsorship (CoS) was assigned:

- the Intra-Company routes in place before 11 April 2022
- Senior or Specialist Worker (but only if they qualify under a [transitional arrangement](#))
- T2 Minister of Religion
- International Sportsperson
- Creative Worker
- Government Authorised Exchange
- International Agreement (but only if the worker has been granted as an employee of an overseas government or international organisation)
- Religious Worker

Unless an exception applies in the Sponsorship Guidance, the supplementary employment will only be permitted if the sponsored worker continues to work for their sponsor.



In any case in which you are offering supplementary employment to an eligible sponsored worker, the supplementary employment must not:

- exceed 20 hours per week
- take place during the contracted hours for their sponsored employment

In order to obtain a statutory excuse against a civil penalty, you are required to confirm that the worker has the right to work in the UK and is allowed to carry out the work in question. When carrying out the check, you will need to ensure that the supplementary employment meets the above requirements by, for example, asking the worker to provide a letter or other evidence from the sponsor confirming:

- They're working for their sponsor;
- The job description and occupation code of their sponsored employment (for routes other than Skilled Worker whose supplementary employment is not in the [Immigration Salary List](#));
- Their contractual working hours.

You will no longer have a statutory excuse if, during the course of employment, you become aware that a sponsored worker is working in breach and you continue to employ them in spite of that knowledge.

If, at any point during the course of employment, you believe that the sponsored worker may have ceased working for their sponsor, or that their contractual hours have changed, you should request further information to confirm whether they are still eligible to carry out the supplementary employment.

If you identify that the sponsored worker is working in breach, you are required to take the appropriate action. This may include contacting the Home Office for support and/or taking steps to terminate employment.

For further information on supplementary employment, see [Sponsor a worker: sponsor guidance part 2 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) section S8 of Part 2 of the sponsor guidance (sponsor a worker).

## Students

Not all international students are entitled to work while they are in the UK, but some are allowed to take limited employment if the conditions of their permission to study permit this.

A student who has been granted permission to be in the UK and is permitted to work may have an endorsement in their passport which states that they are permitted to work and the number of hours of work permitted during term time, for example, 10 hours or 20 hours a week.

Alternatively, they may have an eVisa or a BRP which will also show this information online, in which case employers can do a check by using the online service, entitled '[Check a job applicant's right to work: use their share code](#)' on GOV.UK.

A week is considered in this context to run from Monday to Sunday. If permission to work is not stated in one of these documents, the student is not permitted to work. Students who have the right to work are permitted to work full-time before their course starts, during vacations or during the period they hold permission for after they have completed their course.

Study term times may end on any day of the week, depending upon the education provider. Therefore, if the educational institution's term time ends on a Friday, full-time work would be permitted from the next day (in this scenario, a Saturday). Students should confirm with their sponsor what the term end date is and verify this with their employer as part of the right to work checking process when considering working full time hours. This will allow employers to ensure students are not in breach of their visa conditions.

Students are not permitted to fill a permanent full-time vacancy unless they are applying to switch into the Skilled Worker or Graduate routes during their study. Changes to the [Immigration Rules](#) allow students with valid applications for these routes to take up permanent, full-time vacancies either, up to three months prior to the course completion date for the Skilled Worker route, or once they have successfully completed their course of study for the Graduate route) or where they have permission under the Doctorate Extension Scheme. Students are not permitted to work as an entertainer or professional sportsperson.

For students who have limited permission to work during term-times, you must also obtain, copy and retain details of their academic term and vacation times covering the duration of their period of study in the UK for which they will be employed.

The dates should be provided by the sponsoring education provider, either directly or indirectly if the student is providing a letter or email, they have received from their sponsoring education provider setting out the required details.

It would be for you, as the employer, to determine if the information provided is sufficient, whether received from the sponsoring education provider directly or via the student. For instance, where information showing course dates on the education provider's website differs from that in any letter received, you may wish to seek further clarification.

More information about student work entitlements is available in the [Student route caseworker guidance](#).

## Work placements

Work placements are intended to enable the student to gain specific experience of working in the field for which they are studying. Work placements are distinct from any employment that a student may (if permitted) take while they are following a course of study.

Students, including child students aged 16 or over, are allowed to undertake work placements where they are integral and related to the course and are assessed as part of the course. Where their student sponsor is a Probationary Sponsor, such courses must be at least RQF level 6 or SCQF level 9. Activity as part of a course-related work placement is restricted to no more than one third of the total length of the course undertaken in the UK unless:

- the student is following a course at degree level or above and is sponsored by Higher Education Provider (HEP) with a track record of compliance, or by an overseas HEI to undertake a short-term Study Abroad Programme in the UK, in which case the work placement is restricted to no more than 50 per cent of the total length of the course.
- the student is a child student aged 16 or over, in which case the work placement can form no more than 50 per cent of the total length of the course.
- there is a statutory requirement for the course to include a specific period of work placement which exceeds this limit.

Student sponsors should provide a **letter** addressed to you as the work placement provider confirming that the work placement forms an integral and assessed part of the course and does not, by itself or in combination with other periods of work placement, breach the above restrictions. The letter must also include the terms and conditions of the work placement, including the work that the student will be expected to do, and how and when they will be assessed. You are strongly advised to obtain and retain such a letter as evidence of the work placement and that the work placement restrictions have not been breached as you may be liable for a civil penalty if your student employee does not comply with their immigration conditions.

While your student employee is undertaking a work placement as required by their course, this period of placement does not count towards the period of term time employment permitted by their immigration conditions.

Further information on [Student visa](#), including work placements, is available on GOV.UK.

The student route replaced Tier 4 on 5 October 2020. Where a student holds Tier 4 leave, they will be considered to hold the same work rights as someone who holds Student immigration permission.

## Impact of a change in circumstances on a student's right to work

**The student has made an application to the Home Office to vary their immigration permission** – If the student is in the UK and has made a valid in-time immigration application (one made before their existing immigration permission expired), their existing conditions and work entitlements continue until their application is decided. If the application is approved, their immigration permission will be varied, and they will get new conditions of permission to stay. If the application is refused, their existing conditions continue to apply until their immigration permission expires.

**The student has stopped studying or their sponsor has lost its licence** – If there has been a significant change in the student's circumstances which means they no longer qualify for their grant of Student immigration permission, the Home Office will curtail their permission. Any permission to work will expire on the new date that the student's leave will expire following curtailment. Curtailment can be with immediate effect or take effect 60 calendar days from the date the student was notified that their leave was curtailed.

## Volunteering, voluntary work and voluntary fieldwork

A Volunteer is not the same as a Voluntary Worker. Volunteers are those who give their time for free to charitable or public sector organisations willingly without compensation and any contractual obligation or entitlement. Visitors can volunteer for a registered charity for a maximum of 30 calendar days during their visit, but volunteering cannot be the main purpose of their visit and they cannot do voluntary work. Asylum seekers can also volunteer whilst their claim is considered without being granted permission to work, but they can only carry out voluntary work if they have been granted permission to work under [Paragraph 360 or 360C of the Immigration Rules](#).

An individual is generally understood to be a genuine volunteer (and not an [employee or worker](#)) if there is no intention to create legal relations i.e. there is no contractual relationship, they are not obliged to work and are unpaid (except some limited expenses). Without any obligation to work, and consideration as payment, there would not normally be an intention to create legal relations and a contract would not be formed. The contract does not have to be in writing.

A Voluntary Worker may either be a worker or an employee. Voluntary workers would have a contractual obligation to personally perform work or provide services and carry out specific tasks.

An individual will only be a Voluntary Worker (or employee) if they work for (or are employed by) a charity; a voluntary organisation, an associated fund-raising body (e.g., a charity shop) or a statutory body (e.g., a school or hospital) in circumstances in which the worker receives:

- No money payments of any description, or no monetary payments except
  - in respect of expenses actually incurred in the performance of the workers duties; or
  - Reasonably estimated as likely to be or to have been so incurred in the performance of their duties
- No benefits in kind of any description other than the provision of some or all of the workers subsistence or of such accommodation as is reasonable in the circumstances of the performance of their duties-

A worker is not a Voluntary Worker, and will need permission to work (paid or unpaid) if they receive:

- Payment(s) other than a payment in respect of expenses actually incurred, or expenses reasonably estimated as likely to be incurred or to have been incurred in the performance of their duties (e.g., purchase of uniform or tools)
- Any benefits in kind other than the provision of reasonable subsistence or accommodation
- A monetary payment of subsistence, except where the voluntary worker has been placed with the host employer by a charity, and the host itself is a charity, voluntary organisation, associated fund-raising body or statutory body (i.e., a central volunteering organisations placing the voluntary worker with voluntary organisations away from home)
- Reimbursements to enable the worker to perform their duties (unless they are expenses to enable the voluntary worker to undertake the duties and are both necessary to undertake the voluntary work and reasonably incurred and that are not accommodation expenses (e.g. cost of care of dependants to enable worker to do the voluntary work and travel to and from voluntary work)

Some individuals, including students, who have been granted immigration permission to be in the UK are permitted to carry out voluntary work. Students, including child students aged 16 and over, can do voluntary work if they are permitted to work, but this work and any other (for example, paid) work must not exceed the total number of hours they are permitted to work during term time. For example, if a student is permitted to work 20 hours a week during term-time and has paid work of 15 hours a week during term time, they cannot do more than 5 hours voluntary work. If they are not permitted to work, they cannot do voluntary work.

Charitable organisations looking to employ a voluntary worker for up to 12 months may need to apply for a sponsorship licence under the [Charity Worker](#) route in certain circumstances. Under that route, sponsors must ensure the role meets the requirements for voluntary work and that the worker is not paid or otherwise remunerated, including receipt of benefits in kind, except for reasonable expenses as defined in the National Minimum Wage Act 1988.

Charity Workers are only permitted to carry out voluntary fieldwork, as defined by the Immigration Rules. Charity Workers are not permitted to carry out routine back office administrative roles, retail or other sales roles, fund-raising roles, roles involving the maintenance of the sponsor's office and other assets or other work ancillary to the sponsor's charitable purposes.

An individual may be committing a criminal offence by knowingly engaging in voluntary work or voluntary fieldwork without permission (or with reasonable cause to believe they do not have permission). Where a voluntary worker or charity worker is employed under a contract of service, the employer might also be liable for a civil penalty if they knowingly employ that worker without permission (or if they have reasonable cause to believe that the worker does not have permission to carry out the work in question).

If an employer is in doubt about whether a specific opportunity constitutes work (paid or unpaid), a Voluntary Worker, voluntary fieldwork or volunteering, employers should seek independent legal advice.

# 9. Annex C: Digital identity verification – Guidance for employers and Identity Service Providers (IDSPs)

## 1. Introduction

1.1 This guidance follows the [Home Office announcement of 27 December 2021](#) and updated information available on GOV.UK about [digital identity certification for right to work, right to rent and criminal record checks](#). It sets out how employers can comply with their responsibilities to conduct right to work (RTW) checks, when using Identity Service Providers (IDSPs) to complete the identity verification element of checks involving British and Irish citizens who hold a valid passport (including Irish passport cards).

1.2 'Identity Document Validation Technology (IDVT)' are forms of technology operated for the purpose of verifying the identity of a person, whereby a digital copy of a physical document relating to that person is produced for verification of the document's validity, and whether that person is the rightful holder of the document.

1.3 'Identity Service Provider (IDSP)' is a provider of identity verification services using IDVT. In the context of this guidance, an IDSP may be certified to provide identity verification to specific levels of confidence, specified by government standards. IDSPs are sometimes referred to as 'identity providers'.

1.4 'IDVT identity check' means the response generated by an IDSP, using IDVT, when undertaking identity verification with respect to a person.

### **1.5 The relevant changes to legislation came into force from 6 April 2022.**

1.6 IDSPs act on behalf of the employer (with the employer becoming a 'relying party' in that transaction).

1.7 This guidance sets out the required steps to verify a person's identity and eligibility using IDVT, for the purposes of RTW checks in order to obtain a statutory excuse against liability for a civil penalty.

1.8 Employers and IDSPs must discharge their duties in accordance with this guidance and RTW legislation.

1.9 Changes to the RTW regulations permit the use of IDSPs for identity verification, enabling employers to delegate elements of the checking process to IDSPs. This allows employers and IDSPs to utilise IDVT to carry out remote digital checks when using these services. Where the services of an IDSP are used, employers are encouraged to:

- Use an IDSP that is a certified provider.

- Provide appropriate training and guidance to their staff for example, on what information they must obtain from an IDSP to confirm verification of identity, what the information can be used for, and the additional steps they must take to establish eligibility to work.
- 1.10 The 2018 [Identity Document Validation Technology guidance](#) recognises the role of IDSPs in identity verification and should be read in conjunction with this guidance.
- 1.11 This guidance makes extensive reference to the [UK Digital Identity and Attributes Trust Framework](#). The UKDIATF will make provision for IDSPs to be certified as providers of identity verification services.
- 1.12 Certification provides a number of benefits. It is capable of providing reassurance the services can be trusted and are secure. It allows a single identity provider to complete a fully remote pre-employment checking process. It can also provide certainty for employers in an evolving technology and digital identity framework.
- 1.13 The UKDIATF defines:
- the organisational responsibilities of IDSPs that must be met, in order to be certified, and references the [Government Good Practice Guide 45](#) (GPG45) as the standard that is used to define how identities should be verified.
  - the 'levels of confidence' (LoC) in identity verification and 'identity profiles' that can meet the aforementioned levels of confidence.

## 2. A right to work check using IDVT via the services of an IDSP

2.1 The Home Office prescribes the nature of the checks required and the information that must be retained by employers in order to have a statutory excuse against liability for a civil penalty. The responsibility for the check remains with the employer, and they must ensure the IDSP they select to complete the identity verification element of the check carries out a prescribed check **prior to the commencement of employment.**

2.2 Employers will obtain a statutory excuse where they can demonstrate that they have complied with all the statutory requirements to conduct right to work checks. Where they have used an IDSP, the statutory excuse will only be obtained where that IDSP has also complied with the required steps. Should they be found to be employing an individual without their identity and eligibility being checked correctly in accordance with legislation and this guidance, the employer will not have a statutory excuse in the event the individual is found to be working illegally by reason of their immigration status.

## 3. Documents

3.1 For the purposes of verifying identity for RTW checks through IDVT, only the following specified documents can be accepted:

- valid British passports
- valid Irish passports
- valid Irish passport cards

3.2 For employers to be able to rely upon the IDVT identity check carried out by an IDSP to prove eligibility for the purpose of a RTW check and obtain a statutory excuse, a valid British or Irish passport (including passport cards) must be provided to the IDSP and checked by them using IDVT for the purposes of identity verification.

3.3 If an individual is reliant upon an expired British or Irish passport (including passport cards) to prove their eligibility for the purpose of a RTW check, an IDVT check is not valid. The employer will need to carry out a manual check of the original document in the prescribed manner to obtain a statutory excuse.

#### 4. Required steps to be taken by the IDSP

4.1 The IDSP must take all reasonable steps to check the validity of the document and take all reasonable steps to verify the prospective employee is the rightful holder of the document. The IDSP must also record in a format that cannot subsequently be altered the date on which the check was carried out.

4.2 For each identity verified by the IDSP using IDVT, the following information must be obtained during the check. This must be provided to the employer (relying party) in a clear, legible format which cannot be altered, and must be stored securely by the relying party in electronic or hard copy for audit and investigation purposes:

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Mandatory / Optional</b>	<b>Sent to Relying Party</b>
Forename	Mandatory	Y
Middle names	Mandatory if applicable	Y
Present surname(s)	Mandatory	Y
Date of birth	Mandatory	Y



<p>Image of the biometric page of the identity document, including details of: • the holder's personal details including name, date of birth and nationality • the holder's photograph</p> <p>• the date of expiry of the identity document</p> <p>In the case of an Irish passport card, an image must be taken of the document in full.</p>	Mandatory	Y
<p>Photograph / image</p> <p>IDSPs are required to verify that the image supplied with the IDSP check matches the identity document.</p> <p>Employers are required to verify that the image supplied with the check from the IDSP matches the prospective employee</p>	Mandatory	Y
Identity verified (Y/N)	Mandatory	Y
Evidence checked by	Mandatory	Y
Date of ID check	Mandatory	Y
GPG45 profile	Mandatory	N

## 5. Required steps to be taken by the employer

5.1 Where an IDSP is used, employers retain obligations that they must comply with under the RTW Scheme. The employer needs to complete the following steps before employment commences to ensure a prescribed check has been undertaken, in order to establish a statutory excuse.

- Use an IDSP to check a prospective employee's valid British or Irish passport (or Irish passport card) using IDVT.

- Obtain an output of the IDVT identity check from the IDSP containing a copy of the IDVT identity check, and the document checked, in a clear, legible format that cannot be altered.
- Carry out their own due diligence to satisfy themselves to a reasonable belief that their chosen IDSP has completed the check correctly in the prescribed manner.
- Satisfy themselves that the photograph and biographic details (for example, date of birth) on the output from the IDVT identity check are consistent with the individual presenting themselves for work (i.e., the information provided by the check relates to the individual and they are not an imposter).
- Where names differ between documents, the employer must establish why this is the case and must not employ that individual unless they are satisfied that the documents relate to them. A statutory excuse will not be obtained where it is reasonably apparent that the prospective employee is not the individual linked to the identity which was verified by the IDSP.
- Employers must retain this information securely for the duration of employment and for a further two years after the employment has ended. The copy must then be securely destroyed.

The following parts of this guidance set out various recommendations in addition to the requirements set out above.

## 6. Verifying identities IDSPs

6.1 This guidance recommends that, in order for an IDSP to carry out an identity check, the IDSP should undertake identity verification following GPG45. Verifying an individual's identity following GPG45 requires IDSPs to follow a process known as 'identity checking'. This process is made up of 5 parts:

- get evidence of the claimed identity
- check the evidence is genuine or valid
- check the claimed identity has existed over time
- check if the claimed identity is at high risk of identity fraud
- check that the identity belongs to the person who's claiming it

6.2 Each step of the process is scored, and these scores are used to determine what Level of Confidence (LoC) has been achieved.

## 7. Identity profiles

7.1 There are several ways to combine the scores for each part of the identity checking process. These combinations are known as identity profiles. GPG45 has four LoCs. IDSPs can carry out digital identity verification to a range of standards or levels of confidence. The Home Office recommends that employers only accept checks via an IDSP that satisfy a minimum of a **Medium** LoC.

7.2 This is the minimum LoC recommended for RTW checks. Employers may choose an IDSP who proofs individuals to a higher LoC (i.e., in employment situations, where there may be a

requirement for a Standard, Enhanced, or Enhanced with Barred Lists DBS check) if their business needs require, but this is not needed for the purposes of undertaking eligibility checks for RTW.

7.3 An activity history or identity fraud check is not required to meet some identity profiles. The Home Office recommends, where possible, an identity fraud check is undertaken on the claimed identity for all profiles, including those where GPG45 profile does not require it.

7.4 GPG45 treats all profiles within a level of confidence as being equal. The Home Office recommends that the strongest piece of evidence available is used to prove the identity exists, such as a passport, and the strongest method of matching the individual to this evidence.

## 8. Operational Procedures Manual (OPM) for identity verification

8.1 The OPM (available at [Appendix A](#)) details how IDSPs can complete identity verification to the recommended LoC, in relation to GPG45.

## 9. Certification and audit of IDSPs

9.1 Whilst it is not mandatory for employers to use a certified IDSP for the purposes of right to work checks, the Home Office recommends employers use a certified IDSP. This will provide assurance that their chosen IDSP has been independently assessed as being capable of providing ID verification services in accordance with this guidance and the standards set out in the trust framework. However, as set out above and regardless of whether or not the IDSP is certified, the responsibility for the check remains with the employer, and they must ensure the IDSP they select to complete the identity verification element of the check carries out a prescribed check prior to the commencement of employment.

9.2 The UKDIATF is currently in its 'beta' version (v0.3) following two earlier prototypes (or 'alphas'), IDSPs who choose to become certified, to carry out RTW checks on behalf of employers must have a valid certificate against a current version of the UKDIATF. To remain certified, IDSPs must maintain their UKDIATF certification, including uplifting to any new publications in line with the dates specified within the UKDIATF, IDSPs will be required to undertake annual surveillance audits and biennial recertification against the version of the UKDIATF which is current at the time.

9.4 In addition to this guidance, an Operational Procedures Manual (OPM) is available at [Appendix A](#) for IDSPs. The OPM provides additional guidance around how to verify an individual's identity, alongside how GPG45 should be used to meet government guidance for digital identity verification.

9.5 IDSPs who choose to become certified will be certified by an independent certification body to assure that they are capable of providing identity verification services in accordance with this guidance and meet the standards set out in the UKDIATF. Further information about the certification bodies available to certify IDSPs can be found [here](#).

9.6 This guidance recommends that, in order for an IDSP to carry out an identity check, the IDSP should undertake identity verification following GPG45. The Home Office has adopted specific profiles of GPG45 as the basis of this guidance for IDSPs carrying out RTW checks. This guidance is consistent with the standards set out in the UKDIATF.

9.7 Therefore, IDSPs that are certified and assessed to meet the terms of the UKDIATF, and whose certification includes those specific profiles, will be able to demonstrate to employers that they are capable of complying with this guidance.

9.8 Certified IDSPs carrying out identity verification for RTW checks must be:

9.8.1 Certified they are aware of the purpose of the checks (i.e., to demonstrate they know that the identity checking is to determine eligibility to work in the UK. IDSPs must be aware and acknowledge the sanctions and criminal offences that supplement the RTW Scheme and identity checking in the event of noncompliance.

9.8.2 Certified that the requirements in 9.8.1 are also met by ensuring appropriate training of their employees and members of staff involved in the identity checking process, with appropriate records maintained of such training.

9.8.3 Certified to demonstrate the information security requirements in section 10.1 – 10.2 are met.

9.8.4 Certified to demonstrate the identity assurance requirements in 11.1 – 11.3 are met.

## **10. Certified against industry standards for information security**

10.1 Certified IDSPs must have appropriate information security management systems in place to look after people's data and keep it secure.

10.2 They must be certified to confirm that they meet an industry standard for information security management. This involves demonstrating that they have adequate processes in place to look after information securely and safely, and how they set up, maintain, and continuously improve an information security management system (ISMS). The ISMS must meet the requirements of [ISO/IEC 27001:2013](#) or another recognised standard that includes all the requirements of ISO/IEC 27001:2013.

## **11. Certified against government standards for identity assurance**

11.1 Certified companies also have to be certified by an independent certification body, to assure that their service meets recommended Home Office standards for identity assurance.

11.2 Certification must be conducted by a certification body which is approved by the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT). This will require the certification body to be

accredited by, or part of the pilot assessment to become accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) against the UKDIATF.

11.3 Certification will confirm the IDSP meets the recommended standards set out in this guidance, for example, that they have reached a medium level of confidence and identify profiles required.

## Appendix A

# Right to Work Scheme digital identity operational procedures manual (OPM)

### 1. Introduction

1.1 This OPM provides additional guidance for identity service providers (IDSPs) to undertake identity verification, on behalf of employers for the purposes of verifying an individual's identity, as part of a right to work (RTW) check.

1.2 This OPM references the [UK digital identity and attributes trust framework](#) (UKDIATF) and the Government Good Practice Guide 45 ([GPG45](#)).

1.3 Therefore, the UKDIATF and GPG45 should be followed as normal unless otherwise specified.

### 2. Verifying identities

2.1 This section should be read with reference to the guidance in Annex D above.

#### Choosing an identity profile

2.2 GPG45 treats all profiles within a Level of Confidence (LoC) as being equal. Home Office recommends that the strongest piece of evidence available is used to prove the identity exists (for example, a valid passport), and the strongest method of matching the individual to this evidence.

#### Medium level of confidence

2.3 To achieve a 'medium' level of confidence, the following profiles can be used. A single document is acceptable using digital means, as long as it meets the strength, validity, and verification scores detailed below.

Score					
Profile	Strength	Genuine / Valid	Activity history	Identity fraud	Verification
M1A	4	2	N/A	1	2
M1B	3	2	1	2	2

M1C	3	3	N/A	N/A	3
M1D	2	2	2	1	3
M2A	2	2	3	2	2
	2	2			
M2B	3	2	1	1	2
	2	2			
M2C	3	2	N/A	1	3
	2	2			
M3A	2	2	2	2	2
	2	2			
	2	2			

2.4 Profiles marked as 'M1' only require a single high-strength document. Profiles marked as 'M2' require two documents - the second document is only checked for 'Strength' and 'Genuine / Valid'. Profiles marked 'M3A' require three documents.

2.5 Although some identity profiles do not require an activity history or identity fraud check to be completed, the Home Office recommends, where possible, an identity fraud check is undertaken on the claimed identity for all profiles, including those where GPG45 profile does not require it.

### 3. Scoring identity evidence

3.1 GPG45 provides a detailed explanation of how identity evidence is scored. This document details specific guidelines applicable to Home Office RTW check requirements. Home Office guidance may restrict how evidence is scored or may provide additional guidance where it is considered that GPG45 does not provide sufficient clarity to enable IDSPs to operate as Home Office intends.

3.2 Where an IDSP is certified, they will have a valid certificate against a current version of the UKDIATF, following GPG 45 guidance as specified in a current version of the UKDIATF, and must, therefore, refer to the published versions of both UKDIATF and GPG45.

3.3 IDSPs applying to become certified will be required to undergo a specific audit and certification.

3.4 In so doing, IDSPs must be certified by an independent certification body, which is approved by the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT). This will require the certification body to be accredited by, or part of the pilot assessment programme to become

accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) against the UKDIATF. Certification will confirm the IDSP has been independently assessed as being capable of providing ID verification services in accordance with this guidance and the standards set out in the UKDIATF.

3.5 The following information provides additional clarity to enable IDSPs to operate as Home Office intends. Please note, headings correlate to those within GPG45.

**Get evidence of the claimed identity:**

3.6 No amended or supplementary requirements to GPG45.

**If the user has changed their name:**

3.7 No amended or supplementary requirements to GPG45.

**Scoring evidence of the claimed identity:**

**3.8 Score 1**

Evidence that only score 1 are not acceptable.

**3.9 Score 2**

No amended or supplementary requirements to GPG45.

**3.10 Score 3**

No amended or supplementary requirements to GPG45.

**3.11 Score 4**

No amended or supplementary requirements to GPG45.

**Check the evidence is genuine or valid:**

**3.12 Score 1**

Evidence that only score 1 are not acceptable.

**3.13 Score 2**

Detailed below are some clarifications to the GPG45 requirements and a number of examples. If the evidence is being checked by a person, they must:

- be trained in how to detect false documents by a specialist trainer; evidence of the trainer's specialist capability will be required to be presented to the certification auditor
- refresh their training at least every 3 years

All other requirements are as documented in GPG45.

**3.14 Score 3**

The requirement to confirm any physical security features are genuine and assess UV or IR security features is for physical, in person checks only.



Any evidence protected by cryptographic security features will have a score of 3 if it is ensured that these security features are genuine. Therefore, for a mobile-based automated process, mobile chip checking capability must be used to obtain a minimum score of 3.

All requirements are as documented in GPG45.

### 3.15 **Score 4**

All requirements are as documented in GPG45.

#### **Document validation technology:**

3.16 Please refer to [Identity Document Validation Technology guidance](#).

#### **Check the claimed identity has existed over time – activity history**

3.17 No amended or supplementary requirements to GPG45.

#### **Check if the claimed identity is at higher risk of identity fraud**

3.18 The Home Office recommends an identity fraud check is undertaken on the claimed identity for all profiles, including those where GPG45 profile does not require it.

#### **Check that the identity belongs to the person who's claiming**

3.19 The Home Office recommends the highest-strength identity document available is used to prove the identity belongs to the individual claiming it.

This means that biometric verification of an individual should be used where documents containing biometric information have been used to prove the identity is real. Sources such as digital authentication of bank accounts as verification of identity are preferred to knowledge-based verification (KBV) as they present a simpler user journey and are less susceptible to user error. All other requirements are as documented in GPG45.

## **Reusable Identities**

IDSPs or attribute service providers who want to create a reusable digital identity or attribute service, must link the digital identity and/or attributes to an authenticator (such as a password, piece of software, or device).

In addition to GPG45, you must follow the [guidance on using authenticators to protect an online service](#). This is also known as GPG44.

The reusable digital identity must be protected in accordance with GPG44 medium protection and include medium quality authentication factors as a minimum. It is recommended that one of the authentication factors used is biometric information.

Right to work checks and an employer's statutory excuse against liability for a civil penalty are not transferrable from one employer to another.

The IDSP must be able to assure the employer, at the time the identity is asserted, that there exists in relation to the employee a relevant IDVT document. A relevant IDVT document is a current British or Irish passport (or Irish passport card). If the document has expired the assertion is not valid for the purposes of the Scheme. The check must be completed prior to the commencement of employment.

It is the responsibility of the IDSP to ensure that the asserted identity meets the identity assurance requirements and the prescribed requirements specified in legislation and this guidance at the time the identity is asserted. An employer will only obtain a statutory excuse if they are reasonably satisfied that the IDSP has complied with the requirements of the Scheme at the time the identity is asserted.

Further information on the required steps to be taken by an IDSP and an employer when carrying out the checks in line with the requirements of the Scheme can be found in sections 4 and 5 of Annex C in this guidance.

## Appendix B

### Glossary

#### **Certification**

Is when an independent auditor checks that organisations follow the rules of the trust framework.

Independent certification builds trust that approved IDSPs will protect an individual's privacy and keep their data safe and secure.

Certification will be undertaken by an independent certification body to assure their service is capable of providing ID verification services in accordance with this guidance and the standards set out in the UKDIATF.

#### **Disclosure and Barring Service**

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) delivers disclosure and barring functions on behalf of government. This includes DBS checks for England, Wales, Jersey, Guernsey, and the Isle of Man, and barring functions for England, Wales, and Northern Ireland. More information about DBS and their work to make recruitment safer can be found on the [DBS website](#).

#### **Enhanced DBS check/certificate**

An Enhanced DBS certificate is a DBS product that shows spent and unspent convictions, cautions plus any information held by local police that is considered relevant to the role being applied for.

#### **Enhanced with Barred Lists DBS check/certificate**

An Enhanced with Barred Lists DBS certificate is a DBS product that shows the same as an Enhanced DBS certificate, alongside whether the applicant is on the Adults' Barred List, Children's Barred List, or both.

#### **Good Practice Guide 45**

[The Good Practice Guide 45 \(GPG45\)](#) is the government standard for identity verification, against which IDSPs will be certified.

#### **Identity profile**

GPG45 has four levels of confidence in terms of proof of identity. These are:

- low confidence
- medium confidence
- high confidence
- very high confidence

This guidance document refers to medium confidence and high confidence only.

There are several ways to combine the scores you get for each part of the identity checking process. These combinations are known as [‘identity profiles’](#).

### **Identity service providers**

An identity service provider (IDSP) is a provider of identity verification services. In the context of this Home Office guidance document, they may be certified to provide identity verification to specific levels of confidence, specified by government standards. IDSPs are sometimes referred to as ‘identity providers’.

### **Identity verification**

Identity verification (IDV) refers to the process of proving that an identity exists and that the individual making the claim is the owner of the identity.

### **Level of confidence**

Completion of the identity proofing process will result in a proof that has a ‘level of confidence’ (LoC). The higher the LoC, the stronger the evidence required to support that LoC. The evidence needed to achieve an LoC is defined within GPG45.

### **Operational procedures manual**

The operational procedures manual (OPM) is a document that provides detailed procedures for IDSPs to meet the Home Office guidance. The OPM aims to aid interpretation of GPG45, to allow IDSPs to develop solutions with certainty and provide a simple reference for auditors to certify against.

### **Relying party**

The role of relying party is defined in the UKDIATF as an organisation that receives, interprets, and, depending on the use case, stores information received from other trust framework organisations. Relying parties do not need to be certified against the UKDIATF. The employer is the relying party when a right to work (RTW) check is carried out.

### **Standard DBS check/certificate**

A Standard DBS certificate is a product of DBS that shows spent and unspent convictions, cautions.

### **UK digital identity and attributes trust framework**

The UK digital identity and attributes trust framework (UKDIATF) is published by the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology. This guidance is being created in line with the UKDIATF.

# 11. Annex D: Employment of Ukrainian nationals

## Introduction

In response to the evolving conflict in Ukraine, the Home Office introduced bespoke visa schemes to support Ukrainian nationals and their family members to come to the UK. Those who are granted a visa under these schemes are able to work, rent a home, and access, benefits and public services, such as medical treatment and education.

On 14 February 2022, changes were made to the Standard Family Visa route to make it easier for dependants of British citizens who were resident in Ukraine to apply. Successful applicants were issued with a visa in their passport. On 1 March 2022, the scheme was extended to include family members who were not living in the Ukraine as a family unit. Where requirements for a Standard Family Visa were not met, visas were issued in some cases stating Leave Outside the Rules (LOTR). These visas allowed travel to the UK, where individuals could then collect a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP). The Standard Family Visa concession then closed on 4 March 2022, as the established Ukraine Schemes were introduced.

## The Ukraine Schemes

On the following dates the Ukraine Schemes were launched/closed:

- 4 March 2022 - the Ukraine Family Scheme (Closed to new applicants from 19 February 2024)
- 14 March 2022 - the Homes for Ukraine Scheme (Open)
- 3 May 2022 - the [Ukraine Extension Scheme](#) (Closed to new applicants on 16 May 2024, other than for Ukrainian children born in the UK)

These schemes are fee free and do not include salary or language requirements for applicants.

Under these schemes, successful applicants are able to stay in the UK for up to three years. However, changes made to the Homes for Ukraine Scheme mean some visa holders, who applied to the scheme after 19 February 2024, will have been issued 18 months permission to remain in the UK rather than three years.

Under each scheme individuals are able to work, study, rent a home and access benefits in the UK.

## Ukrainians with a valid Ukrainian Passport

A concession to the Ukraine Schemes was introduced on 15 March 2022, which allowed those with a valid Ukrainian passport to submit an application, without attending an overseas Visa

Application Centre (VAC) to submit biometrics. Those who are assessed without submitting their biometrics are issued with a permission to travel letter. Permission to travel letters are not evidence of immigration rights to access work benefits and services in the UK.

**Since 7 December 2023**, the Home Office ceased this concession and aligned the Ukraine scheme application processes with those used by other visa nationals to the UK, requiring all new applicants to attend an overseas VAC to provide their full biometrics prior to the consideration of their application.

If their application is approved, they will need to collect their visa before traveling to the UK.

Applicants who applied to the schemes before 7 December 2023 will continue the pathway they used to apply. Therefore, those who have already received a Permission to Travel Letter will still be able to use this to travel to the UK.

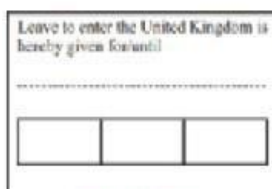
On arrival, Border Force should stamp the passport with permission to enter the UK, valid for six months with no restrictions on taking employment or recourse to public funds – Leave Outside the Rules (LOTR). This is a Code 1A or Amended Code 1 endorsement.

Where Border Force have granted LOTR for six months, the individual will need to obtain a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) which will be endorsed with up to 36-month permission to stay. This can be done at any point during the six-months validity of the stamp.

Those with a stamp or a visa in their valid Ukrainian passport, granting permission to stay under the Ukrainian Schemes, have a time-limited right to work. If an employer manually checks this document as outlined in this guidance and records it correctly, this will give them a time-limited statutory excuse. These endorsements are already included in the acceptable documents for a manual check under Annex A of this guidance, List B, Group 1, Number 1.

Employers will need to carry out a follow-up check of those individuals who have time-limited permission to work in the UK. This should occur when their previous permission comes to an end. All Ukrainian nationals arriving under the Schemes should obtain a BRP granting them up to 3 years (36 months) leave. BRP holders will need to use the Home Office online checking service as set out in this guidance to prove their right to work in the UK.

### **Example Code 1A and Code 1 stamps, endorsed with an Immigration Officer's date stamp**

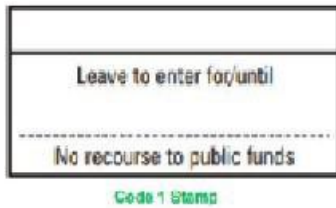


Code 1A Stamp



Immigration Officer's Date Stamp

In a small number of cases, when the Schemes went live, a Code 1A was not available, in place of this a Code 1 was used with the “no recourse to public funds” scored out in ink and possibly initialled by the Officer.



Similarly, a Code1/Code 1A may have been endorsed in Ukrainian passports, if those individuals had entry stamps to Ireland from 25 February 2022. The stamps were manually amended from ‘Leave to enter’ to ‘Leave to remain’ possibly with the Officer’s initials.

There may be situations in which you identify an individual who has an Irish entry stamp in their passport but does not have a Code 1/Code 1A stamp and does not hold any other form of permission to stay in the UK. In these situations, you must point the individual to the Home Office to make an application to stay in the UK.

Any prospective employee who is a Ukrainian national, who has not applied for permission to stay in the UK, will not have a right to work. This means you should not employ them until they have taken action to regularise their status in the UK.

### Example Ukraine Scheme Entry Clearance Vignette / Visa



### Ukrainian nationals who do not have a valid Ukrainian passport

If an individual does not have a valid Ukrainian passport, they will be required to provide their biometric information at a VAC and will then be provided with an entry clearance vignette attached to a ‘Form for Affixing the Visa’ (FAV). Shortly after arrival, a BRP is available for collection, and this can be used to access the Home Office online checking service as set out in guidance to prove a right to work. Where necessary, individuals can use their FAV document as proof of their right to work, in conjunction with confirmation from the Home Office Employer Checking Service (ECS) in the form of a Positive Verification Notice (PVN).

Therefore, once an individual with an entry clearance vignette attached to a FAV is in the UK, they are expected to collect their BRP urgently, which can be used for right to work checks as normal, and a statutory excuse obtained for the full period of permission to stay. This means, once they have collected their BRP employers are not required to make a check with the ECS. Where employers contact the ECS and Home Office systems show that the individual has a BRP available, employers will receive a response from the ECS directing them to advise the individual to collect their BRP and prove their right to work using the Home Office online checking service. In this scenario ECS will not issue a PVN to provide a statutory excuse and employers should use the online checking service.

### Example of a Form for Affixing the Visa (FAV)

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND  
ROYAUME-UNI DE GRANDE-BRETAGNE ET D'IRLANDE DU NORD

FORM FOR AFFIXING THE VISA  
FEUILLET POUR L'AFFICTION D'UN VISA

21 UK

ISSUING AUTHORITY/AUTORITE DE DELIVRANCE

(1) Name/Nom (2) Surname/Prénoms

Stamp  
Caract

(3) Date of birth/Date de naissance

(4) Passport number/Numéro de passeport

Signature  
Signature

Date/Date

Visa Stamp  
Signature Visa