XIPHIAS Immigration

COUNTRY BROCHURE



CORPORATE MOBILITY | COUNTRY GUIDE

# United Kingdom Corporate Mobility

Open a UK branch or sponsor key staff through a UK company, with the Home Office rules, fees and risks set out plainly.

| PROGRAMMES | CAPITAL | CURRENCY | LANGUAGE |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2 | London | Pound Sterling (GBP £) | English |

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# United Kingdom at a glance

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|---|---|
| CAPITAL<br>**London** | POPULATION<br>**68 million** |
| LANGUAGE<br>**English** | CURRENCY<br>**Pound Sterling (GBP £)** |
| TIME ZONE<br>**UTC+0** | PROGRAMMES WE ADVISE ON<br>**2** |
| LAST UPDATED<br>**1 October 2026** | |

# Overview

The United Kingdom gives overseas businesses two practical ways to put people on the ground. An overseas business that is not yet trading in the UK can send a senior manager or specialist on the Expansion Worker visa to set up its first branch or subsidiary. A UK company that holds a sponsor licence can employ skilled staff, including in some cases its owner or director, under the Skilled Worker route. Both routes depend on a Home Office sponsor licence and a genuine role. XIPHIAS assesses viability against the Home Office's tests before any fee is paid, then manages the licence, the Certificate of Sponsorship and the visa.

# Key points

- Expansion Worker: £52,500 minimum salary, £340 visa fee, £55 Certificate of Sponsorship, maximum two years, no settlement.
- Skilled Worker: £41,700 minimum salary (or the going rate), degree-level (RQF 6) role, English at B2, settlement after five years.
- Sponsor licence: £611 for small or charitable sponsors; £1,682 for medium or large sponsors on the Skilled Worker route.
- Immigration Health Surcharge: £1,035 per adult per year, £776 per child.
- A company set up mainly to bring its owner to the UK faces close Home Office scrutiny of whether the role is genuine.

# Programmes in United Kingdom



### UK Expansion Worker Visa

Send a senior manager or specialist to open your company's first UK branch or subsidiary: a sponsored Global Business Mobility route for up to two years, with a £52,500 minimum salary and no path to settlement.

**Two stages: sponsor licence, then visa**



### Sponsoring Yourself Through a UK Company — How the Skilled Worker Route Works

There is no Home Office self-sponsorship visa. A UK company holds a sponsor licence and employs its owner-director as a Skilled Worker. How it works, what it costs and how the Home Office tests it.

**Two stages: sponsor licence, then visa**

{/ restored from the 2019–2026 site /}

# Corporate UK Migration Services

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is simply called the United Kingdom or UK. It has the fifth largest economy in the world.

## Sponsor Licence

In order to recruit and sponsor migrant workers in the UK, the employing organisation shall require a sponsors licence to do so. Only organisations that meet the Home Offices standards toward eligibility and suitable systems to manage their migrant workers will be granted a Sponsors Licence.

## Prevention of Illegal Working

Illegal working often results in abusive and exploitative behaviour, the mistreatment of illegal migrant workers, tax evasion and illegal housing conditions. It can also undercut legitimate businesses and have an adverse impact on the employment of people who are lawfully in the UK.

## Training & HR Services

The importance of maintaining and updating your Sponsor Licence is paramount. The need to maintain and uphold correct HR procedures and systems is a necessity to avoid the potential consequences of failing to do so can be severe and damaging to your business

## Skilled Worker

A skilled worker in any Tier 2 category must not displace a suitable settled worker.

## Tier 2 ICT

Tier 2 Intra Company Transfer (ICT) enables the UK organisation to employ and transfer skilled workers from an overseas branch to the UK. Dependant on the needs of the UK organisation, their are 4 types of Intra Company Transfer.

# UK Tier 2 ICT Visa Consultants in Dubai, UAE

*Tier 2 (Intra-Company Transfer) was replaced by the Senior or Specialist Worker visa under Global Business Mobility on 11 April 2022. The outline below describes the route under its old name.*

### Tier 2 ICT

Tier 2 Intra Company Transfer (ICT) enables the UK organisation to employ and transfer skilled workers from an overseas branch to the UK. Dependant on the needs of the UK organisation, their are 4 types of Intra Company Transfer

### Long-Term Staff

### Short-Term Staff

### Graduate Trainee

This visa is for transfers into graduate trainee programmes for specialist roles.

### Skills Transfer

This visa is for transfers that allow people to gain skills and knowledge needed to perform their role overseas, or to pass on their skills to UK colleagues. You do not need to have been with your employer overseas for a set period of time.

### How Long You Can Stay

You can come to the UK with a Tier 2 (Intra-company Transfer) visa for up to the maximum stay allowed for your visa type, or the time given on your certificate of sponsorship plus one month, whichever is shorter.

The maximum stay for each type of Tier 2 (Intra-company Transfer) visa is:

### Appropriate Salary

You shall need to earn one of the following:

- Staff already in the UK on a Tier 2 (Intra-company Transfer) visa or work permit issued before 6 April 2011 – at least the appropriate rate

# How the application works

1. **Assess which route fits: Expansion Worker or Skilled Worker sponsorship**
2. **Set up the UK branch or company and the evidence the Home Office will test**
3. **Apply for the sponsor licence**
4. **Assign the Certificate of Sponsorship**
5. **Submit the visa application and attend biometrics**
6. **Meet sponsor duties for the life of the licence**

## General requirements

- Valid passport
- A Certificate of Sponsorship from a licensed UK sponsor
- A genuine role that meets the route's salary threshold
- English at CEFR level B2 for the Skilled Worker route

## Sectors in demand

- Finance
- Technology
- Healthcare
- Engineering

## Questions clients ask

### Is there a UK self-sponsorship visa?

No. The Home Office has no route by that name. A UK company holding a sponsor licence can employ its owner or director under the Skilled Worker route, but the Home Office tests closely whether the company and the role are genuine.

### Can I bring my family to the UK?

Yes. Partners and children can join as dependants on both routes; each pays their own visa fee and the Immigration Health Surcharge.

### Which routes lead to settlement?

Skilled Worker leads to settlement after five years under the current rules. Expansion Worker does not lead to settlement and allows a maximum of two years.

### How long does the process take?

Both routes run in two stages: the Home Office decides the sponsor licence first, then the visa. XIPHIAS confirms current processing times when we plan your case.

### Does XIPHIAS help with company setup?

Yes. We coordinate company setup, the sponsor licence, the Certificate of Sponsorship and the visa, with compliance support afterwards.

XIPHIAS Immigration



NEXT STEP

# Discuss your United Kingdom options with our Dubai team

Tell us about your profile, family and timeline. We will compare the United Kingdom routes that fit you, set out the full cost in writing and manage the application with you from start to finish.


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## CREDENTIALS

- Advising clients on global mobility since 2009; XIPHIAS Immigration DMCC in Dubai since 2017.
- Named Best Immigration Consultant by The Times of India in 2022.
- Canada files handled by a CICC-licensed Regulated Canadian Immigration Consultant, licence R516194.
- Australia files handled by a registered migration agent, MARA 1680615.


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