

SeldonGill
INTERNATIONAL

UK Visa Information

Visa information for Australian/NZ candidates

Recent changes to the visa restrictions on the working holiday visa (WHV) and the introduction of the highly skilled migrant programme (HSMP) has meant that there are now a few more confusing options for consultants dealing with candidates from Australia and New Zealand. Obviously, the best way to clarify visa restrictions is to contact the home office in London, but this is a summary of the four most common visas in the UK and their restrictions.

Working Holiday Visa

All candidates under the age of 30 are eligible for one WHV, which entitles them to enter the UK for a period of two years but only work for a year of the two years. WHV holders must be single, or married to someone who also qualifies as a working holidaymaker and plan to take the working holiday together. They must have not spent time in the UK on a previous working holidaymaker visa and cannot undertake permanent employment.

Ancestry Visa

Candidates are eligible to apply for a UK Ancestry Visa or Right to Abode if either of their parents (Right to Abode) or their grand parents (Ancestry Visa) were born in the UK. The validity of the Ancestry Visa is 4 years (renewable) and indefinite for Right to Abode. There are no restrictions on type or duration of work for the Ancestry visa or for the Right to Abode certificate.

Highly Skilled Migrant Programme

The programme is designed to allow highly skilled people to migrate to the United Kingdom to look for work or self-employment opportunities. The scheme now has a new assessment for applicants aged under 28 as well as an assessment for those 28 and over. The Highly Skilled Migrant Programme is different from the work permit scheme because you do not need a specific job offer in the UK to apply. There is a points-based immigration scheme. Points are scored in five main areas:

- educational qualifications;
- work experience;
- past earnings;
- your achievement in your chosen field; and
- your husband's, wife's or unmarried partner's achievements.

You need to score 65 points or more to qualify as a highly skilled migrant. At first, the candidate has permission to stay in the UK for a year to seek work or self-employment opportunities. After a year, they can apply to stay for longer as long as they are economically active.

Work Permit (or Sponsorship)

Applications for permits can only be made by UK-based employers on behalf of the person they wish to employ. There is no provision within the current arrangements for individuals to apply on their own behalf. Work Permits are only issued for full time posts requiring specific qualifications or skills). Recent changes to the Work Permit legislation has made it very difficult for candidates to transfer from a WHV to a Work Permit – the candidate now needs to return to their home country in order to transfer the visa, unless they have been in the UK for more than 12 months.

Note – these figures were taken from reputable websites. Seldon Gill takes no responsibility for inaccurate data.

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