

Caroline Russell
City Hall
Kamal Chunchie Way
London
E16 1ZE

caroline.russell@london.gov.uk

DECS Reference: TRO/1408804/25

30 October 2025

Dear Caroline Russell,

Thank you for your letter of 16 October to the Minister for Migration & Citizenship about the impact of immigration rules changes on workers using the immigration system. Your correspondence has been passed to a Home Office official to provide a response.

On 12 May, the Government published an Immigration White Paper, outlining our future approach to legal migration routes. We have now made Immigration Rules Changes to bring the first of these reforms into effect. The 22 July changes include raising the skills threshold to RQF 6 and a routine uplift of salary going rates.

Those already in medium skilled roles, RQF 3 to 5, made using a certificate of sponsorship issued before 22 July, can extend their visas. New applicants must meet the new degree level skills threshold.

The salary changes only affect those already in the route when they next make an application to change employment, extend their stay or settle. Sponsors must increase wages in line with national minimum wage legislation, but they are not required to increase salary in line with the new salary requirements of the immigration system where a worker has already been granted permission. This is in line with normal practice.

On 2 July, we commissioned the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) to undertake a thorough review of salary requirements (including discounts). Any decision about transitional arrangements relating to that review will be made after the MAC have made their recommendations.

Those coming to the UK as students or on Youth Mobily Schemes should be aware that this does not guarantee them future employment or extensions to their immigration permission. The Graduate route is designed to allow UK graduates time to work, or look for work, for a set period after completing their studies. It does not guarantee progression to the Skilled Worker route, for which an individual would need to find higher skilled, higher

salaried employment after graduation and meet the requirements in place at the time they make their Skilled Worker application.

The Student visa route is for those coming to the UK to study an eligible course of study at an institution that holds a student sponsor licence. It is a temporary route that doesn't lead to settlement and is not a guarantee of any future immigration permission. Its purpose is to share education opportunities.

There are other "transitional protections" for current workers. Where they are time limited that is written into the rules. The transitional arrangements relating to occupations below RQF 6 do not currently have an end date, but they will not be in place indefinitely and will be reviewed in due course.

We have introduced a new interim Temporary Shortage List (TSL) which was based on advice from the Department of Business and Trade and His Majesty's Treasury. Being on the TSL will allow for applications to be made in occupations which are below the new RQF level 6 threshold. Occupations will only be included where they are key to the industrial strategy or delivering critical infrastructure, where the MAC has advised it is justified, where there is a workforce strategy in place, and where employers seeking to recruit from abroad are committed to playing their part in increasing recruitment from the domestic workforce.

We commissioned the MAC to assess the TSL and they have published an interim report - www.gov.uk/government/publications/temporary-shortage-list-stage-1-report.

They have now launched a call for evidence inviting government sector leads and organisations to provide evidence on workforce shortages and initiatives to maximise the domestic workforce. www.gov.uk/government/calls-for-evidence/temporary-shortage-list-review-stage-2

Rail Travel Assistant has not been included on the jobs they advise taking forward.

Thank you once again for taking the time to write to the Home Office.

Yours sincerely,

P. Kirkup

Email: Public.Enquiries@homeoffice.gov.uk