

#LondonIsOpen

Regulators and Associations

Immigration law is tightly regulated in the UK. This protects the public against inaccurate immigration advice.

There are two main regulators: the [Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner](#) (OISC) and the [Solicitors Regulatory Authority](#) (SRA).

The OISC regulates immigration advisers who specialise in immigration and can only advise on this subject unlike solicitors who can advise across a wide variety of issues. The SRA regulates all solicitors working in England and Wales.

Both bodies have useful resources online.

- The OISC has an [Immigration Adviser Finder](#), which you can use to find a qualified immigration adviser near you, either one which offers free advice or who will charge a fee. Don't forget that the Mayor of London has a similar tool EU Londoners can use which includes lawyers, unions, embassies, mental health services and charities; you can find it [here](#).
- The OISC has [guidance on what constitutes immigration advice](#). Advice can only be provided by organisations that are properly regulated. Immigration law is very complex, so if you need advice always go to someone who is fully qualified and regulated – rather than a friend, relative or colleague. You should also be careful of rogue advisers – people who claim to be experts, but are just trying to make money out of you. Only seek advice from trusted sources, such as those the Mayor has [listed on the Hub](#).
- On 1 February 2019, the OISC opened a new registration scheme of immigration advisors that can provide OISC level 1 immigration advice limited to the EU Settlement Scheme. This level of immigration advice is provided by immigration advisers who are not solicitors, barristers or CILEx qualified and who worked in not for profit or charitable organisations that intend to offer their clients advice and services in this area only and can offer free advice and services or charge only a modest fee to contribute to the running of the organisation. You can find OISC level 1 EU Settlement Scheme immigration advisors [here](#).
- The OISC has guidance on what [fees you would ordinarily have to pay](#) when making an application to the Home Office. Remember, it is free to apply under the EU Settlement Scheme. If you paid a fee when you applied to the EU Settlement Scheme, you'll [get a refund](#).

- It is not essential for you to get your documents checked or to seek immigration advice – this need only arises should your case be complicated for some reason. However, if you do need to get your documents checked, many industry experts agree that the best value for money is [Free Movement](#). The [organisations listed on the Hub](#) provide pro bono support in certain cases (e.g. for those on low incomes or victims of domestic abuse), but even where their services cost money they are still reliable and cost-efficient.
- The SRA has [guidance on finding and using a solicitor](#). In the vast majority of cases, engaging a solicitor will cost you money. Those listed on the Hub provide pro bono support in some cases, in particular by hosting [events](#) that you can attend for free. If you choose to hire a solicitor, it is best to compare costs between firms – and always ensure that they are regulated by the SRA.

You will also find useful information from the [Immigration Law Practitioners Association](#) (ILPA). ILPA represents immigration advisers across the UK; including solicitors, barristers, advocates and OISC-regulated advisers. They also have a [Directory](#) where you can find an adviser in an area near you.

Please note that the Home Office has awarded up to £9 million of grant funding to 57 organisations across the UK to help organisations both inform vulnerable individuals about the need to apply for settled status and support them to complete their applications to protect their status as the UK exits the EU. You can find the list of organisations funded to provide support to vulnerable and at risk EU citizens [here](#).