

Tier 2 Immigration Skills Charge of £1,000 to be introduced on 6 April 2017

Subject to parliamentary approval, from 6 April 2017 you may be required to pay the Immigration Skills Charge when you sponsor a migrant to work for you under Tier 2 of the Points Based System.

The charge will apply to both the Tier 2 'General' and 'Intra-company Transfer' categories and where applications are submitted from:

- outside the UK for a visa
- inside the UK to switch to Tier 2 from another visa
- inside the UK to extend an existing Tier 2 visa

Exemptions to the skills charge

The skills charge will not apply when sponsoring:

- A Tier 2 migrant that was sponsored before 6 April 2017 and is applying from inside the UK to extend their Tier 2 stay with the same or different sponsor
- Tier 2 (Intra-company Transfer) Graduate Trainees
- a Tier 2 migrant to do a specified PhD level occupation
- a Tier 4 student visa holder in the UK switching to a Tier 2 (General) visa
- Tier 2 family members ('dependants').

You will usually be considered to be a small business if:

- your annual turnover is £10.2 million or less
- you have 50 employees or fewer

The skills charge will be per Certificate of Sponsorship per year. A reduced rate of £364 per Certificate of Sponsorship per year will apply to small or charitable sponsors.

The charge is in addition to all other application fees. As such, sponsoring a migrant under Tier 2 for five years will attract an additional £5,000 (or £1,820 if you are a small or charitable sponsor) Home Office fee. This fee will be payable upfront and for the total period of time covered by the Certificate of Sponsorship.

We are currently awaiting confirmation of whether or not the fee will be refunded if the migrant fails to take up the post, or partially refunded if the period of sponsorship ends earlier than expected.

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