



Visitors - permitted business activities

Visitors – key requirements

These rules apply to non-EU citizens and from 1 January 2021 to EU citizens who do not qualify for the EU Settlement Scheme. Visitors are not allowed to work in the UK but they can carry out permitted activities. If an intended activity is not covered by the prescribed list of permitted activities, it is likely to be considered as work.

Visitors must show that they intend to leave the UK at the end of the visit, continue to work abroad and have sufficient funds to support and accommodate themselves without recourse to public funds and meet the cost of the return or onward journey.

Visitors in the UK cannot:

- Take paid or unpaid employment, produce goods or provide services, including the selling of goods or services directly to members of the public.
- Fill a role or replace someone, including for short-term cover.
- Establish or run a business as a self-employed person.
- Carry out a work placement or internship.

Length of time in the UK

Visitors should only be entering the UK for a temporary purpose and generally for a maximum of six months and should not live in the UK for extended periods through “frequent or successive visits”, or make the UK their main home, even temporarily.

Payment for UK visitor activity

A visitor must not receive payment from a UK source for any activities undertaken in the UK. Exceptions include:

- **Admin.** Where for administrative reasons, their multinational employer administers payment of worldwide salaries from the UK.
- **Travel.** Reasonable expenses to cover the cost of travel and subsistence are allowed.
- **Bill client.** Billing a client for time in UK where the overseas employer is contracted to provide services to the UK company, so long as the majority of the contract work is performed overseas and payment is less than the salary.
- **Board meetings.** Board-level directors attending board meetings in the UK are allowed to be paid a fee for attending the meeting.
- **Permitted Paid Engagements.** Where entry is granted for a permitted paid engagement visit (outlined below).

General permitted visitor activities

- **Meetings.** Attending meetings, conferences, interviews and seminars.
- **Business transactions.** Negotiating and signing deals and contracts or gathering information for employment overseas.
- **Inspections.** Carrying out site visits and inspections or attending trade fairs for promotional work only, but not directly selling.
- **Customer briefing.** Being briefed on the requirements of a UK based customer, provided any work for the customer is done outside of the UK.
- **Speaking engagements.** Giving a one-off or short series of talks and speeches provided these are not organised as commercial events and will not make a profit for the organiser.

Specific permitted visitor activities

- **Intra-corporate.** An employee of an overseas company can advise and consult, trouble-shoot, provide training or share skills and knowledge on a specific internal project with UK based colleagues of the same corporate group. Must remain employed and paid by the overseas company and not carry out work directly with clients.
- **Auditors.** Those coming as an internal auditor may carry out regulatory or financial audits at a UK branch of the same group of companies as the visitor’s employer overseas.
- **Lawyers.** Those coming as an overseas lawyer to advise a UK based client on specific international litigation and/or an international transaction. Witnesses can attend court hearings.
- **Training.** Employees of an overseas company or organisation may receive training from a UK based company or organisation in work practices and techniques which are required for the visitor’s employment overseas and are not available in their home country.
- **Trainers.** An employee of an overseas based training company may deliver a short series of training to employees of a UK based company, where the trainer is employed by an overseas business contracted to deliver global training to the international corporate group to which the UK based company belongs.
- **Scientists.** Scientists and researchers. Scientists and researchers may gather information and facts for a specific project directly relating to their overseas employment, or conduct independent research. They can also share knowledge/ advise on an international project led from the UK, without carrying out any UK based research.
- **UK export company contract.** A client of a UK export company may be seconded to the UK company in order to oversee the requirements for goods and services that are being provided under contract by the UK company or its subsidiary company, provided the two companies are not part of the same group. Employees may exceptionally make multiple visits to cover the duration of the contract.
- **Overseas manufacturer/supplier.** An employee of a foreign manufacturer or supplier may install, dismantle, repair, service or advise on equipment, computer software or hardware where it has a contract of purchase or supply or lease with a UK company or organisation.
- **Market researchers.** Market researchers and analysts may conduct market research or analysis for their employment outside the UK.
- **Media.** A journalist, correspondent, producer or cameraman gathering information for an overseas publication, programme or film.
- **Film crews.** Actors, producers, directors or technicians employed by an overseas company may visit the UK to take part in a location shoot for a film or programme that is produced and financed overseas.
- **Performers.** An artist, entertainer or musician may give performances as an individual or as part of a group, take part in competitions or auditions, make personal appearances and take part in promotional activities or take part in one or more cultural events or approved festivals.
- **Entourage.** Personal or technical staff or members of the production team of an artist, entertainer or musician may support the above Performers’ activities. Translators. A translator and/or interpreter may support a business person in the UK, provided they will attend the same events as the business person and are employed by that business person outside the UK.
- **Drivers.** A driver on a genuine international route delivering or collecting goods or passengers between the UK and overseas.
- **Tours.** A tour group courier, contracted to a company with its headquarters outside the UK, who is entering and departing the UK with a tour group organised by their company.
- **PAs.** Personal assistants and bodyguards may support an overseas business person in carrying out permitted activities, provided they will attend the same events as the business person and are employed by them outside the UK. They must not be providing personal care or domestic work for the business person.

So long as the main purpose of being in the UK is to undertake a permitted activity, visitors are permitted to undertake some remote working activities relating to their employment overseas such as responding to emails and answering phone calls.

Permitted paid engagements

Certain categories of individual can enter the UK to carry out one-off or a series of paid engagements as a visitor. The permitted paid engagements (PPE) must be:

- For a maximum of one month.
- Arranged before travel to the UK.
- Evidenced by a formal invitation.
- Related to the visitor’s area of expertise and occupation overseas.

The following individuals may enter the UK as visitors for PPE:

- Qualified lawyers providing advocacy, arbitration or alternative dispute resolution for legal proceedings in the UK.
- Professionals in the arts, entertainment, music and sporting sectors.
- Academic examiners/visiting lecturers and designated overseas air-pilot examiners.

Permitted paid engagement visitors should not enter the UK via the eGates (which can be used by nationals of EEA countries, Switzerland, Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea and the USA).

This document should be used for information purposes only. It should not be relied on as an exhaustive explanation of the law or the immigration issues involved. For further information on all aspects of UK immigration and nationality law, please contact a member of our immigration team here or on +44 (0)20 7814 1200. For further details about our immigration department, please visit www.kingsleynapley.co.uk

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