

UK to attract top global talent, including from Singapore

Singapore, 20th February 2020

There are an estimated 40,000 Singaporeans in the UK. In the academic year 2017-2018, there were nearly 8,000 Singaporean students enrolled for full-time study at UK universities. In the reverse direction, Singapore is the gateway for UK business to East Asia with over 4,000 UK companies having a presence here.

The two nations have several bilateral cooperation agreements in place that foster collaborations in fields such as digital governance, data protection regulation, financial cooperation as well as research and development.

The deep-rooted and forward-focused ties between the UK and Singapore are set to further strengthen as the UK announces new routes and opportunities for the brightest of minds from around the world to work and live in the country.

On 19 February, the UK's Home Secretary Priti Patel announced a new points-based immigration system that will take effect from 1 January 2021.

Under the revised system, points will be assigned for specific skills, qualifications, salaries or professions with the points' threshold carefully set to attract the talent that the UK needs. Anyone who meets the required number of points will be eligible to apply for a UK visa.

Student visas will also implement this points-based system to ensure that the brightest minds from around the globe have access to the UK's world-class universities. Those wishing to study in the UK will need to demonstrate that they have an offer from an approved educational institution, evidence of financial support and proficiency in English.

This new single global system will give top priority to those with the highest skills and the greatest talents from around the world, including Singapore.

This follows the changes to the UK's Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) visa and a new immigration route for graduates that was announced last year. This enables international students to remain in the UK for two years after completing their studies in order to look for top jobs in their chosen fields.

Following the latest announcement, British High Commissioner to Singapore, Kara Owen, said:

By attracting the best talent from around the world, the new points-based system supports an increase in people to people exchanges and knowledge partnerships – both of which are key focus

points for us in Singapore.

We are committed to working together on trade, investment, science and research that will help ensure the continued prosperity of both our nations and to invest in the futures of our younger generations.

About the UK's Global Talent Visa:

Launched today [20 February 2020] the Global Talent visa, formerly known as the Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) visa, has been expanded to include a new fast-track scheme arranged by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) for world-leading scientists, top researchers and mathematicians to come to the UK. The Global Talent visa will continue to be open to talented applicants within the digital technology and arts and culture sectors.

Additionally, under the reformed Global Talent visa route, there will now be no cap on the number of people able to come to the UK, demonstrating the UK government's commitment to supporting top talent from around the world.

About the UK's Graduate Immigration Route:

A new immigration route will also enable international students to remain in the UK for two years after they have completed their studies.

This will be available to those who have completed a degree at undergraduate level or above at a Higher Education Provider with a track record of compliance and who have a valid Tier 4 visa at the time of application.

Successful applicants on this route will be able to stay and work, or look for work, in the UK at any skill level for a maximum period of two years after their graduation. Graduates will be able to switch into skilled work once they have found a suitable job.

This new route will be launched in the summer of 2021 and eligible students who graduate in the summer of 2021 or after will be able to apply for the route. This includes students who have already started their courses.