

Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) visa

1. Overview

You can apply for a Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) visa if you've been endorsed in your field in science, humanities, engineering, medicine, digital technology or the arts as:

- a recognised leader (exceptional talent)
- an emerging leader (exceptional promise)

You must also be from outside the [European Economic Area \(EEA\)](#) and Switzerland.

Application process

There's a 2-stage application process to get this visa.

You first need to apply to the Home Office for [endorsement](#) as a leader or an emerging leader in your particular field.

Then, once you have been endorsed, you can apply for the visa.

There are limited places available under this visa category, with 500 places released on both 6 April and 1 October each year.

How long it will take

After you get your endorsement, the earliest you can apply for a visa is 3 months before you travel.

Example You can apply from 16 March if you plan to travel on 15 June.

You should get a decision on your visa within 3 weeks when you apply from outside the UK.

Check the [guide to processing times](#) to find out how long getting a visa might take in your country.

Fees

You must pay a separate fee for the 2 stages of this process:

- stage 1 - endorsement (£292)
- stage 2 - visa application (see table below)

You also have to [pay the healthcare surcharge](#) as part of your application. Check how much you'll have to pay [before you apply](#).

Stage 1

All main applicants must pay the £292 fee to get an endorsement when applying for the first time or switching to this visa category.

You won't automatically get a visa if you've been endorsed. You won't be reimbursed your endorsement fee if your visa application is turned down.

Stage 2

How much you pay to apply for a Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) visa depends on your circumstances.

Who you're applying for	Stage 1 - endorsement application	Stage 2 - visa application
You	£292	£293
You if you're from Turkey or Macedonia	£292	£238
All dependants	-	£585

How long you can stay

You can stay in the UK for up to:

- 5 years and 4 months if you apply outside the UK
- 5 years if you apply inside the UK

You can choose how long you want to apply for, up to the maximum time allowed. You only have to pay the [healthcare surcharge](#) for the amount of time you choose to stay.

You can [apply to extend](#) this visa for another 5 years.

You can [apply for settlement](#) once you've been in the UK for 5 years.

What you can and can't do

You can:

- work - for an employer, as a director of a company or be self-employed
- change jobs without telling the Home Office
- do voluntary work
- travel abroad and return to the UK
- bring [family members](#) with you

You can't:

- get [public funds](#)
- work as a doctor or dentist in training
- work as a professional sportsperson or sports coach

2. Eligibility

To get a Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) visa, you need to be endorsed as a leader (exceptional talent) or emerging leader (exceptional promise) in one of the following:

- science
- engineering
- humanities
- medicine
- digital technology

- the arts

Read the [eligibility and assessment criteria](#).

How to get endorsed

You can apply [online](#).

If you're a digital technology specialist you'll also need to [apply for a Tech Nation Visa Scheme endorsement](#).

How long it takes

You'll usually get a decision within 8 weeks. You may get a faster decision if you're a digital technology specialist and one of the following applies:

- you'll work in, or set up a company in, certain cities in northern England
- you have certain technical or business skills
- you're in a team of 5 or more people relocating to the UK

You may also get a faster decision if you hold an approved peer-reviewed fellowship.

There's more information about getting a faster decision in the [guidance to filling in the form](#).

What happens next

If you're successful you'll receive an email from the Home Office with a copy of your endorsement letter. You'll need these for your visa application.

You won't automatically get a visa if you've been endorsed. If your application is turned down you can request an [endorsement review](#). You must apply for your visa within 3 months of receiving your letter of endorsement from the Home Office.

3. Documents you must provide

When you apply for your visa you'll need to provide:

- a current passport or other valid travel identification
- a printed copy of your [endorsement letter](#)
- your [tuberculosis test results](#) if you're from a country where you have to take the test

You need a page in your passport that's blank on both sides for your visa.

You need to provide [a certified translation](#) of any documents that aren't in English or Welsh.

Read the [guide](#) for a list of documents you can provide.

You may need to provide additional documents depending on your circumstances.