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## What the Global Talent visa offers employers seeking top skills

By [Kathryn Bradbury](#) And [Richard Milford](#) on 30 Apr 2021 in [STEM](#), [Legal sector](#), [Sectors](#), [Financial services](#), [Economics, government & business](#), [Tech sector](#), [Public sector](#), [Latest News](#), [Labour market](#), [Skills shortages](#), [Migrant Workers](#), [Immigration](#)



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**The arrival of the Global Talent Visa has not attracted much attention because the Covid pandemic has seen international travel significantly curtailed. But as lockdown eases, and, hopefully, the crisis diminishes elsewhere in the world, businesses should take note of this flexible route to attracting much-needed skills. Kathryn Bradbury and Richard Milford explain why.**

Introduced in February 2020 to replace the Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) route, is the Global Talent visa simply a rebranding of the Exceptional Talent visa or does it offer employers and applicants extended flexibility and opportunity? Here, we examine the

key differences between the Global Talent route and its predecessor, highlighting matters for employers to keep in mind for employees with this visa.

Previously, applications for the Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent) route were capped at a maximum of 2,000 per year, but the Global Talent visa now has no cap, allowing for a greater number of qualifying candidates. However, because of the pandemic in 2020 only 1,093 entry clearance Global Talent visas were granted.

As well as increasing the number of potential beneficiaries, the Global Talent provisions extend into new sectors, broadening the spectrum of talented individuals who may now apply. Universities make up a significant portion of employers already benefiting from this new route, as, while the Exceptional Talent route mainly attracted applicants from the digital technology, arts and culture sectors, the Global Talent route now includes research and science. Applications still require endorsement.

In light of this expansion, taking into account the nature of research within the sciences, engineering, humanities and medicine, periods spent abroad for research will no longer be counted as absences for purposes in settlement applications.

## Appeal of the Global Talent route to employers

The Skilled Worker route requires an individual to have been offered a job by a UK-based company that holds a sponsor licence to employ international workers through the route. In contrast to this Global Talent is primarily handled by the applicant themselves. An employer will have no role in the Global Talent application process other than providing a reference.

Employers may see this as a benefit since they will not require a sponsor licence to employ an individual holding a Global Talent visa. This is in contrast to the Skilled Worker route, where the licensed sponsor assumes the workload and cost of bringing a foreign worker to the UK. They also take on the burden of keeping the Home Office updated regarding those employees.

The other side of this coin is that, since the visa is applicable to the individual, they are not tied to any single employer and are free to move jobs without needing to secure

### Immigration rules

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further sponsorship. This is one of the most common reasons an individual may apply to switch from Skilled Worker to the Global Talent route.

An obvious benefit of the Global Talent route, which both the employee and employer can profit from, is if an employee continues to satisfy the requirements for an extension and demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the English language, they will be eligible to apply for indefinite leave to remain after spending a continuous period of three years in the UK. Most other categories require five years' residence.

Furthermore, Global Talent visa holders can bring their spouse, civil partner or unmarried partner to the UK. They can also bring their children, providing they are under the age of 18 when they make their first visa application to enter the country.

### Obtaining a visa

An applicant must be deemed to have exceptional talent or exceptional promise in their chosen field. An application will need to evidence that the applicant is already a leader in their specific field, whereas those with promise will need to evidence they have the potential to become leaders. The various fields can be found in part one of the [Global Talent appendix to the Immigration Rules](#).

**Endorsement** The most complex part of the process is obtaining an endorsement from a Home Office-approved endorsing body. Each endorsing body must approve a Global Talent application before a person can apply for a visa. Having an external third-party contribute to the process follows the trend of the Home Office moving responsibility from themselves to third parties for the decision process (see the Skilled Worker route). Each body has different criteria, adding further a layer of complexity to the procedure. However, to make it more palatable, each endorsing body has provided guidance on how they consider applications.

**Evidence** For a successful application applicants will need a body of work and the endorsement of other leaders in the field. Normally an individual must submit their CV and at least three letters of recommendation from organisations or individuals who are endorsing the application. Depending on the endorsing body, an applicant will need to submit other evidence of work to fulfil the body's mandatory criteria.

**Application process** Making an application to an endorsing body costs an applicant £456 at the time of writing; these fees are reviewed at least once a year. This is applicable to all endorsing bodies. If an applicant is refused they can incorporate the endorsing body's reasoning behind their refusal into the next application; another factor

that makes this route more flexible than its predecessor. There is no limit to the number of applications for endorsement.

For this route there is no English language requirement and no financial requirement. In most instances all that is needed is: (i) confirmation of endorsement; (ii) a valid passport; and (iii) a TB test result (if you're from certain countries).

The most likely reason for any refusal will often arise from the “general grounds for refusal”, which can be found in [part nine of the immigration rules](#). It is important to seek advice if an applicant has ever had any previous immigration refusals or issues.

The application form itself must be filled in online and an in-country application can be made if the applicant has valid permission to stay in the UK, except for certain categories.

## More flexibility

This route provides both the employer and employee far more flexibility with regard to their immigration status. The Global Talent route is still highly competitive but, without a cap on applications, the sky is the limit for talented and promising migrants wanting to contribute to UK based industries and institutions.

About Kathryn Bradbury and Richard Milford

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