An eVisa Guide
for anyone required to check immigration status in the UK

Key points

- Government is replacing physical immigration documents with a digital proof of immigration status called an eVisa.
- Those who are required to check immigration status, including right to work and right to rent (in England), may see an increase in the number of people presenting share codes to prove their rights throughout 2024, though some physical and legacy paper documents continue to be acceptable in some circumstances.
- Biometric residence permits (BRPs) and biometric residence cards (BRCs) cannot be accepted as evidence of a right to work and right to rent (in England).
- Guidance is available for those who need to check immigration status.
- Customers in the UK who currently use a physical immigration document, such as a biometric residence permit (BRP), or legacy paper document such as a passport containing ink stamps or a vignette sticker (if they have indefinite leave to enter or indefinite leave to remain) should take action now to create a UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI) account to access their eVisa.
- Most new visa applicants will get an eVisa instead of a physical immigration document from autumn 2024 onwards.
- The latest updates and information can be found at www.gov.uk/evisa.

This factsheet is designed for organisations and individuals ('status checkers') who are required to check the immigration status of people in the UK. British and Irish citizens can continue to evidence their rights as they currently do, for example by showing their British or Irish passport.

What is changing?

Throughout 2024, the government is replacing physical immigration documents with digital proof of immigration status for customers already living in the UK and new visa customers too.

By 2025, almost all physical immigration products and services will be replaced with a digital record of a person's immigration status called an eVisa. The documents being replaced include:

- Biometric residence permits (BRPs).
- Legacy paper documents, including passports that contain an ink stamp or vignette sticker (where the holder has indefinite leave to enter or indefinite leave to remain).
- Biometric residence cards (BRCs).

This will increasingly change the way that people prove their rights to you over time, and the latest information on the changes is available at www.gov.uk/evisa.

Individuals and organisations who check individual's immigration status will play a key part in this process, as during this period of transition to eVisas you may need to check the status of people who are using their UKVI account for the first time, or who are unsure of how to prove their rights to you. This factsheet provides guidance on what you will need to do.

What does this mean for those checking someone's immigration status?

The Home Office is delivering a range of communications activity, including by direct customer emails, to ensure that customers are both aware of the changes and take action to create their UKVI account and access their eVisa.

Those whose status you need to check may attempt to prove their rights in several ways:

- **If you are presented with a share code by an individual who needs to prove their rights,** then you can use the status checking service in the usual way to verify their rights. Eventually it is envisaged that everyone with an immigration status will demonstrate their status this way.
- **If an individual has a valid BRP** and they do not have an eVisa, they may present you with their BRP to prove their rights, other than to prove a right to work or rent. If the BRP is valid, then you can accept this as proof of their immigration rights. However, BRP holders need to use the online right to rent service and right to work service when confirming their right to rent in England or right to work in the UK using these links:
    - Right to work: www.gov.uk/prove-right-to-work.
    - Right to rent (in England only): www.gov.uk/prove-right-to-rent.
- BRP holders who already have an UKVI account can also use the view and prove service at www.gov.uk/view-prove-immigration-status
- Those checking status can then use the following links:
    - Check someone's right to work: www.gov.uk/check-job-applicant-right-to-work.
    - Check someone's right to rent: www.gov.uk/view-right-to-rent.
    - Check immigration status: www.gov.uk/check-immigration-status.
- **If an individual presents you with a passport containing an ink stamp, or a vignette sticker (detailing their immigration permissions)** then you should follow the guidance in the links to gov.uk below to check if they are acceptable as proof of the right to work, rent, or immigration status. If you are presented with a passport containing a vignette sticker which was issued under the EEA Regulations, then this document ceased to be valid on 30 June 2021. If you are unsure of the document that they have presented then you can visit:
    - For information on right to work checks: www.gov.uk/legal-right-work-uk.
    - For right to rent checks: www.gov.uk/check-tenant-right-to-rent-documents.

    - Or, if you are still unsure, contact the Home Office UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) team to check. Details of how to do this can be found at www.gov.uk/contact-ukvi-inside-outside-uk.
- **If an individual has an in-date valid BRC and they have status under the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS)** then they already have a UKVI account and an eVisa, so should provide you with a share code using the view and prove services detailed above. You can then check this in the usual way. EUSS status BRC holders will be expected to continue using their eVisa to generate a share code to prove their rights.
- **If someone presents you with a BRC but they do not have status under the EU Settlement Scheme** then they should visit www.gov.uk/evisa for information on what to do next.
- **If you are required to check someone's status as part of UK marriage and civil partnership preliminaries**, then use of digital immigration status remains limited to checks that confirm a non-British/Irish citizen's 'relevant national' status or whether they are settled in UK. Further advice will be provided if this situation changes.

You may want to tell those presenting you with a physical proof of status who do not have UKVI account and an eVisa that the border and immigration system is becoming 'digital by default' and direct them to www.gov.uk/evisa for the latest information on what this means for them.

What is an eVisa?

An eVisa is a digital record of an individual's immigration status. It removes the need for physical documents such as the biometric residence permit (BRP), passports containing a visa vignette sticker (a physical visa sticker in a passport) or an immigration ink stamp, or the biometric residence card (BRC).

What are the benefits of an eVisa?

These changes will bring significant benefits to customers who hold an immigration status in the UK:

- An eVisa cannot be lost, stolen or damaged.
- Customers can prove their rights instantly, accurately and securely to anyone who requests it while sharing only necessary information.
- It will prevent unnecessary delays when travelling internationally where customers travel using the passport/national identity document linked to their UKVI account.
- Customers can access many UK government services and benefits without needing to present proof of immigration status. This is because selected government departments and authorities can securely access immigration status information. Immigration data is held securely, and government will never sell customer data. Further information on how the Home Office handles customer data can be found here on GOV.UK.

BRP holders will still be able to use the online right to work and rent services to prove their rights once their BRP expires – provided they still have valid status – although they are encouraged to register for a UKVI account and to use that to access those services.

Will an eVisa be needed to access public services?

Some government bodies, including the Department for Work and Pensions and the National Health Service in England and Wales can already securely access the immigration status of existing eVisa customers when they seek to claim benefits or access healthcare to ensure eligibility. This means that when these customers seek to access UK government services and benefits, they will not be asked to present proof of status when their entitlement to access those services is assessed. Immigration data is held securely, and government will never sell customer data.

How will eVisas impact international travel?

Customers should continue to carry their in-date physical immigration documents with them when they travel internationally, if they have been issued with such a document. Customers who already have an eVisa should tell the Home Office about any passport on which they intend to travel if this is not already linked to their account. They can do this using the 'Update your UK Visas and Immigration account details' service at www.gov.uk/update-uk-visas-immigration-account-details.

During 2024, the Home Office is taking steps to allow carriers, including transport operators such as airlines, ferry, and international train operators, to securely and automatically access the immigration status of passengers travelling on their services when they present their passport which is linked to their UKVI account.

This will automate the existing routine checks completed whenever a passenger presents the passport when travelling internationally. This will provide a more convenient customer journey, and enhanced border security.

What will this mean for the individuals whose status is being checked?

Information on what individuals who only have physical proof of immigration status need to do is available at www.gov.uk/evisa. Some customers already have both an eVisa and a physical document to prove their rights and will not need to take any action other than keep their UKVI account up to date with their latest passport and contact details. Customers who are not sure if they already have a UKVI account and eVisa can either check here on GOV.UK or refer to their original grant email or letter.

- **All BRP holders should visit www.gov.uk/evisa now** to create a UKVI account to access their eVisa. Holders of other physical immigration documents, including passports containing vignette stickers or ink stamps (for those who hold indefinite leave to enter or indefinite leave to remain), and BRCs, can also find information here on what they need to do to create a UKVI account to access their eVisa. BRP holders should retain their BRP

after they have created a UKVI account as they may need the reference number for future applications to stay in the UK.

- **For customers who already have and use a UKVI account**, for example customers who have been granted status through the EU Settlement Scheme or who used the ID checking app when applying for their visa, nothing will change. They should continue to present checkers with a share code which checkers can use to verify, and should keep their UKVI account up to date with their latest passport and contact details.
- Individuals who have a **passport containing ink stamps or a vignette, and** who hold indefinite leave to enter or indefinite leave to remain, will need to make a 'No Time Limit' application at www.gov.uk/evisa, and continue to use their original documents to prove their rights whilst they await the outcome of that application. Successful No Time Limit applicants are issued a BRP, which they should use to create a UKVI account and access their eVisa. The latest updates on how to make a No Time Limit application and how to use a BRP to create a UKVI account to access an eVisa can be found at www.gov.uk/evisa.
- **Individuals who hold a BRC and have been granted status under the EU Settlement Scheme** already have a UKVI account and eVisa, and do not need to do anything other than keep their UKVI account up to date with their latest passport and contact details. They can prove their rights using the view and prove service www.gov.uk/view-prove-immigration-status. EUSS status holders should be using their eVisa now, and information on how they can be found at www.gov.uk/government/publications/view-and-prove-your-immigration-status-evisa.
- **Individuals who have a BRC but who have not been granted status under the EU Settlement Scheme** will need to ensure that they have a valid immigration status and should be directed to www.gov.uk/evisa for guidance on what they need to do.

When will this change occur?

eVisas will be further rolled-out throughout 2024, and by 2025, almost all physical immigration products and services will be replaced with an eVisa.

Millions of customers already use their UKVI account and as a checker, you may already have experience of checking someone's right to work, right to rent (in England), or their immigration status using a share code that customers have generated using the view and prove service.

The Home Office delivered an initial rollout of eVisas to BRP holders by email invitation only before the service was opened to all BRP holders. Customers with BRPs should take action now to create a UKVI account to access their eVisa. The latest information is available on www.gov.uk/evisa and holders of other physical immigration documents, including (for those who hold indefinite leave to enter or indefinite leave to remain) passports containing vignette stickers or ink stamps, and BRCs, can also find information here on what they need to do to create a UKVI account to access their eVisa.

The latest information on eVisas for customers who need to take action will be available at www.gov.uk/evisa and stakeholders and customers can register to be notified when this webpage is updated. Those who check immigration status should refer to guidance in the usual way.

I am an employer – is there anything else I need to consider?

- Employers should continue to ask new/prospective employees who have a BRP to prove their status using the online right to work service to generate a share code at www.gov.uk/prove-right-to-work. Those with eVisas/UKVI accounts should use the view and prove service at www.gov.uk/view-prove-immigration-status. Some physical documents will also remain a valid means of proving the right to work, and further details can be found at www.gov.uk/government/publications/right-to-work-checks-employers-guide.

- Employers will maintain a statutory excuse against a civil penalty if they undertook initial/follow up checks in line with the guidance that applied at the time they made the check.

- Where the most recent check was undertaken before 6 April 2022, and the evidence of status was a physical BRP or BRC that expires on 31 December 2024, this expiry date refers to the document only, and not to the holder's immigration status. A repeat check is not needed until the employee's permission is due to expire. If the BRP or BRC confirmed that person has settled status in the UK (also known as indefinite leave to enter or remain), then the check does not have to be repeated.

- If a customer presents a BRP, then you should direct them to use the online right to work service at www.gov.uk/prove-right-to-work to generate a share code, which you can then use to check their right to work. BRP holders can use this service to generate a share code even if they do not have a UKVI account. If they wish, employers can direct BRP holders to www.gov.uk/evisa to find out more about the benefits of creating a UKVI account, and information on how to create one.

- When presented with a legacy paper immigration document, such as an expired passport with a vignette sticker (where the holder has indefinite leave to enter or indefinite leave to remain), you should direct the person whose status you are checking to www.gov.uk/evisa for details of how they can create a UKVI account by making a No Time Limit application. A current passport endorsed with an ink stamp or vignette sticker (where the holder has indefinite leave to enter or indefinite leave to remain) should continue to be accepted as proof of right to work throughout 2025.

- British and Irish passports, including expired British and Irish passports, can be used to evidence right to work, provided the person is the rightful holder of the passport.

- If you are unsure if a document is valid, you can visit www.gov.uk/check-job-applicant-right-to-work for more information or contact the Home Office for guidance using the details at www.gov.uk/contact-ukvi-inside-outside-uk.

- Further guidance for employers is available at www.gov.uk/government/publications/right-to-work-checks-employers-guide.

I am a landlord (in England) – is there anything else I need to consider?

- For new/prospective tenants in England, who have a BRP, landlords and letting agents should continue to ask those who need to prove their status to use the online right to rent service to generate a share code at www.gov.uk/prove-right-to-rent. Those with eVisas/UKVI accounts should use the view and prove service at www.gov.uk/view-prove-immigration-status. Some physical documents will remain a valid means of proving the right to rent, and further details can be found at www.gov.uk/landlord-immigration-check.

- Landlords and their letting agents will maintain a statutory excuse against a civil penalty if they undertook initial/repeat checks in line with the guidance that applied at the time they made the check. Landlords will only need to carry out a follow-up repeat check to maintain a statutory excuse when the period of statutory excuse obtained at the initial or repeat check is due to expire, if applicable, or there is a change in tenancy such as variation, reassignment or surrender.

- Where the most recent check was undertaken before 6 April 2022, and the evidence of status was a physical BRP or BRC that expires on 31 December 2024, this expiry date refers to the document only, and not to the holder's immigration status. A follow up check is not needed until the tenant's permission is due to expire. If the BRP or BRC confirmed that person has settled status in the UK (also known as indefinite leave to enter or remain), then the check does not have to be repeated.

- If a customer presents a BRP or BRC, then you should direct them to use the online right to rent service at www.gov.uk/prove-right-to-work to generate a share code, which you can then use to check their right to rent. BRP holders can use this service to generate a share code even if they do not have a UKVI account. If they wish, landlords can direct BRP holders to www.gov.uk/evisa to find out more about the benefits of creating a UKVI account, and information on how to create one.

- When presented with a legacy paper immigration document such as a passport with a vignette sticker (where the holder has indefinite leave to enter or indefinite leave to remain), you should direct the person whose status you are checking to www.gov.uk/evisa for details of how they can create a UKVI account by making a No Time Limit application. Legacy paper immigration

documents should continue to be accepted as proof of right to rent throughout 2025.

- If you are unsure if a document is valid, you can contact the Home Office for guidance www.gov.uk/contact-ukvi-inside-outside-uk.

- Further guidance for landlords is available at www.gov.uk/government/collections/landlords-immigration-right-to-rent-checks.

Are educational institutions (e.g. college/university) required to check the immigration status of international students – is there anything else I need to consider?

- The Home Office will continue to issue BRPs to new/prospective students until autumn 2024, when BRPs will be fully decommissioned and successful Student visa applicants will receive an eVisa instead. Students with an eVisa can use it to prove their immigration status.
- You should continue to accept valid BRPs as proof of immigration status for new/prospective students throughout the remainder of 2024.
- Some students, especially those coming to the UK towards the end of the year, may present you with a share code to prove their immigration status, which you should check in the usual way.
- The BRPs issued to students in 2024 will expire on 31 December 2024, along with most other BRPs, as we phase them out. Students who do not yet have a UKVI account will need to follow the instructions in their grant email/letter or at www.gov.uk/evisa to create their UKVI account, so that they can access their eVisa and continue to prove their rights after their BRP has expired.
- You should not direct students to renew their BRPs if they expire on 31 December, because any newly-issued BRP will also expire on 31 December 2024. Instead, they should visit www.gov.uk/evisa for guidance on how to create a UKVI account to access their eVisa.
- Your support in directing students to take action before the end of 2024 by visiting www.gov.uk/evisa is therefore much appreciated. This is especially important as students may plan to leave the UK for the 2024-2025 Christmas period and find that their BRP has expired when attempting to return to the UK.
- For existing students, if you have already checked a student's immigration status and their immigration leave extends throughout their entire course of study, then there is no need to recheck their status regardless of the expiry of their physical immigration document, such as a BRP. The expiry of these documents is not always linked to the expiry of their immigration leave.

- You may still need to check the status of students who prove their rights using visa vignette stickers in their passport, to ensure students have entered the UK at the correct time, during the period of validity of their Student immigration leave. The Home Office will continue to issue visa vignette stickers into 2025 until they begin to be decommissioned. Further updates on this will be issued in due course.
- Out of country students will not need to wait until the start date of their studies to travel to the UK with their eVisa. They will be able to enter the UK as a student from the start date of their Student visa, as at present.
- Once a student has created a UKVI account, they must keep it updated with their current passport which they plan to use to travel internationally by following the instructions at www.gov.uk/update-uk-visas-immigration-account-details.
- When checking a student's status using a share code, details such as a student's sponsor license number and list of entitlements do not currently appear alongside immigration status. However, the service will include these in the future.
- We understand the BRP end date has been used as the visa end date for many students and we appreciate the potential disruption this may cause. We are working on a solution and are establishing if bulk data of visa end dates can be shared with universities. We will provide update on this in the ARC stakeholder group.

I am a transport operator (such as an airline, ferry or rail operator) – is there anything else I need to consider?

There are no immediate changes in the way that you are expected to check a passenger's documentation.

Separate guidance will be made available in due course, for those who will have secure automated access to a traveller's immigration status later in 2024.

I am a financial institution or another business that needs to check a person's identity – is there anything I need to consider?

- Foreign nationals who have permission in the UK are increasingly being issued with evidence of their immigration status in the form of an eVisa.
- Updated guidance was published in April 2023 on Know-Your-Customer: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1149193/Guidance_Notes_for_KYC_-_April_2023.pdf.
- Where a customer presents a share code, this will allow for a real time check of identity and lawful immigration status. Legacy documents, such as visas,

ink stamps, immigration status documents and immigration decision letters will still be acceptable evidence in the absence of a share code.

I am required to check immigration status in relation to UK marriage and civil partnership preliminaries – is there anything I need to consider?

You can check someone's immigration status using a share code, but only to confirm a person's 'relevant national' status, or whether they are settled in the UK, as outlined in internal handbooks and guidance. Further advice will be provided if this situation changes.

Further information

- The Home Office will be issuing further communications on the rollout of eVisas in due course.
- The latest information on eVisas is available at www.gov.uk/evisa and you can register to receive updates whenever this page is updated. It will be updated throughout 2024.
- Customers who already hold an eVisa but are not sure how to use it can find further information in their original grant letter or email or at www.gov.uk/guidance/using-your-uk-visas-and-immigration-account.
- Guidance for employers when checking employee's right to work is available at www.gov.uk/government/publications/right-to-work-checks-employers-guide.
- Guidance for landlords on checking prospective tenant's right to rent is available at www.gov.uk/government/collections/landlords-immigration-right-to-rent-checks.