



Home Office

Worker and Temporary Worker Points-based system sponsor licensing: renewals

Version 11.0

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About this guidance

This guidance tells you about how sponsors apply to renew their licence, the mandatory checks you need to make on the application as a caseworker and deciding the outcome.

You must use this guidance together with the existing [sponsor guidance](#) and casework guidance on checks and decision making. Any differences in this guidance to the existing consideration and workflow processes are highlighted.

Contacts

If you have any questions about the guidance and your line manager or senior caseworker cannot help you or you think the guidance has factual errors then email the Migration Policy Unit.

If you notice any formatting errors in this guidance (broken links, spelling mistakes and so on) or have any comments about the layout or navigability of the guidance then you can email the Guidance Rules and Forms team.

Publication

Below is information on when this version of the guidance was cleared:

- version **11.0**
- published for Home Office staff on **11 October 2021**

Changes from last version of this guidance

The guidance has been updated to reflect changes to the immigration system, which came into force on 11 October 2021. The changes are largely ones of new terminology.

Related content

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Streamlined renewal process

This section tells you about exemptions in various sections in this guidance, where sponsors have been identified as eligible for a streamlined licence renewal consideration process.

For streamlined licence renewal cases, where the sponsor has successfully renewed their licence twice before and there are no compliance concerns, you do not have to:

- perform [company and insolvency](#) checks
- [review certificate of sponsorship usage](#)
- [review licence structure](#)
- [review visit history](#)
- [review outstanding change requests](#)
- [review risk profiles](#)
- [check accreditation and registration details](#), unless the sponsor is operating in the Education or Human Health and Social Work Activities sectors
- conduct 'other trading checks'
- complete a [compliance visit referral](#)
- record a [review outcome in case actions in Metastorm or issue a decision letter](#)

Compliance concerns, as above, are mainly with regard to (but not limited to) sponsors:

- who are currently suspended
- who are currently subject to an action plan
- for whom there is an on-going compliance investigation
- for whom a “special marker” has been added to the Sponsorship IT system, for example security service concerns or civil penalties

Licence renewal caseworkers should refer to streamlined renewal sponsor data on sponsors eligible for streamlined licence renewal, which contains information such as:

- a pre-assessment of the fee the sponsor should pay for their licence renewal
- previous licence renewal fees paid, and any refunds made in respect of those fees
- where a sponsor operates in the education or human health and social work activities sectors
- licence expiry dates
- licensed routes

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Renew a sponsor licence

This section tells you the stages of a renewal consideration, when a sponsor must renew their licence, how they should renew it and what will happen if they fail to renew.

A renewal application should be considered in 2 stages:

- 1) [Validation](#)
- 2) [Review](#)

When and how to renew a licence

There are specific rules a sponsor must follow when renewing their licence:

- sponsor licences need to be renewed every 4 years
- sponsors can ordinarily apply to renew their licences from 3 months before their expiry date
- the sponsor can view their licence expiry and earliest renewal dates in their sponsorship management system ([SMS](#)) account
- sponsors must apply to renew their licence by submitting an application using their SMS account and paying the [appropriate fee](#) online

Failure to renew a licence

A sponsor may decline to renew their application or fail to respond to their invitation to renew. If a sponsor:

- does not wish to renew their licence, they can use their SMS account to decline to renew; the sponsor's licence will expire automatically on the scheduled expiry date and they will no longer be able to act as a licensed sponsor from that date
- does not respond to the invitation to renew their licence before the scheduled expiry date, their existing licence will expire on the scheduled expiry date and they will no longer be able to act as a licensed sponsor from that date
- declines to renew or fails to renew their licence and they are recorded as still sponsoring workers after the expiry date of their licence, a management information (MI) report will be produced by the MI team to notify the casework teams to curtail their permission

If the sponsor wishes to surrender the licence and has completed the surrender declaration, you must:

- review the service standards
- pass the case to the Post-Licence team

Sponsors who need to provide new documentary evidence for renewal

There are some sponsors licensed in particular routes and operating in certain sectors that must provide new copies of some documents on renewal.

For example:

International Sportsperson sponsors must provide a sports governing body endorsement.

Temporary Worker - International Agreement sponsors which are a diplomatic or consular mission or international organisation must provide a signed letter from the head of the mission, the consulate or the organisation's office in the UK to confirm they:

- agree to the licence renewal application
- wish to continue to sponsor workers on the Temporary Worker - International Agreement route
- accept the sponsorship requirements to:
 - give the Home Office express consent to enter their premises
 - accept the limited waiver of diplomatic immunity and privileges to allow the Home Office to carry out any compliance activity as set out in published guidance

You must record details of any additional information requested, including relevant bring forward (b/f) dates in Metastorm 'Perform actions' using the perform actions template.

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Validation

This section tells you what checks you must undertake and how to accept or reject the application.

Validation checks

To ensure the renewal application is valid, you must:

- check the licence status
- check the application fee
- complete any outstanding change requests

You must record all findings and actions taken in Metastorm 'Perform actions' as set out in the perform actions template.

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[Renew a sponsor licence](#)

Check licence status

This page tells you how to perform a licence status check.

You must check the sponsor licence has not been:

- revoked
- surrendered
- made dormant as the result of a merger or takeover

To perform a licence status check, you must first open a 'sponsor summary search' on Metastorm and note the sponsor's route rating and licence status as per the perform actions template. Details of the sponsor's status will be found in the top right-hand corner of the screen and the 'cases linked to sponsor' tab.

A-rated and fully active, B-rated or suspended

If the sponsor's licence is either:

- A-rated and fully active
- B-rated
- suspended

then the licence has valid status. You must record the result in Metastorm and proceed to [check the licence application fee](#), unless the sponsor is eligible for [streamlined renewal](#) consideration, in which case you do not need to record this result.

Dormant, revoked or surrendered

You will be able to see whether a sponsor's licence has been made dormant, revoked or surrendered by looking at their Metastorm profile change of conditions requests and checking the top right-hand corner of the screen for the sponsor's status. Information will also be available on [the Companies House website](#) regarding any mergers or takeovers the sponsor may have had.

The sponsor may wish to surrender the licence and submit a surrender declaration through SMS. This will show up in 'cases linked to sponsor'. You must:

- review the service standards
- pass the case to the Post-Licence team

If the sponsor is subject to a merger or takeover, you must:

- check with the Post-Licence team to decide if the sponsor's licence will be revoked or made dormant

- bring forward (b/f) the renewal request until the Post-Licence team's decision is completed, and make sure to inform your line manager if the b/f date needs to be extended past 10 working days
- review and record the service standard date, found in the Service Standards tab in Metastorm, to ensure the end date has not passed
- [reject](#) the licence renewal application if it is found that the licence has been made dormant, or the licence status is revoked or surrendered

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Check licence application fee

This page tells you how to check a sponsor has paid the correct application fee.

A renewal application is not valid unless the sponsor has paid the appropriate fee online. The fee paid must be consistent with the costs set out under the 'points-based system – sponsorship charges' section of [Home Office immigration and nationality fees](#) and the sponsor's:

- routes
- size
- charitable status

Streamlined renewal consideration fees – sponsors licensed in Worker routes

The Worker routes are:

- Skilled Worker
- Intra-Company routes
- International Sportsperson
- Minister of Religion

If a sponsor licensed in a Worker route is eligible for [streamlined licence renewal](#) consideration, you should refer to the streamlined renewal sponsor data. This data features complete pre-assessments of fees to be paid by streamlined sponsors during the 2020-21 licence renewal surge, as well as previous licence renewal fees paid by these sponsors and any refunds made to them in respect of licence renewal fees.

If the fee has not been pre-assessed for the sponsor whose renewal application you are considering, follow the process in the remainder of this section for assessing the renewal fee.

Routes

You must check the routes currently active in the sponsor licence and record these on Metastorm 'Perform actions' using the perform actions template.

If the sponsor is licensed in:

- Minister of Religion
- Temporary Work - Religious Worker
- Temporary Work - Charity Worker

You must check whether the sponsor is a [registered charity](#), or is an [unregistered charity and exempt from registering](#).

Size

You must determine the sponsor's size and record this in Metastorm 'Perform actions' using the perform actions template.

Small employer

A sponsor is eligible to pay the 'small' licence fee if it either:

- has [charitable status](#)
- is subject to the small companies' regime
- is applying for a Temporary Worker licence only

Sponsors that are not eligible to pay the small licence fee have to pay the large sponsor fee.

Charity status

If the sponsor claimed that they either:

- have charitable status
- have the same name as their registered charity
- are a charity exempt from registration, for example, a university or college
- have applied under a different name to their registered charity

but does not meet the requirements of a [registered charity](#) or a [charity exempt from registering](#), then [the sponsor has paid the incorrect fee](#).

Registered charity

You must check online that the sponsor is registered with the appropriate charity regulator for the organisation according to location:

- [Charity Commission for England and Wales](#)
- [Charity Commission for Northern Ireland](#)
- [Scottish Charity Regulator](#)

Charity exempt from registering

If a charity is not registered with the relevant charity regulator, you must [check whether the sponsor is exempt from the requirement to register](#).

More information on reasons for non-registration for organisations based in England, Wales and in Scotland can be found in the following legislation:

- [Charities Act 2011 for England & Wales, Part 3](#)
- [Charities and Trustee Investment \(Scotland\) Act 2005, Part 1](#)

Note: all charities based in Northern Ireland must be registered.

Some schools can claim charitable status under the Charities Act 2006 but are exempt from the requirement to register. As they will not have documentary evidence to show they are a charity, you can accept they have charitable status if the school is:

- a foundation
- a trust
- voluntary aided
- voluntary controlled
- an academy

Universities and academies both have automatic charitable status. If an application is from a state funded school and a fee of £536 has been paid, you must check to see if a change of circumstance (CoC) request has been made to change the school's name and status to that of an academy. If there is no CoC request, you must check [Get information about schools](#) to find out if it is an academy.

Companies Act

A company qualifies as small if it meets 2 of the below criteria, unless it is excluded from doing so:

- turnover is not more than £10.2 million
- balance sheet total is not more than £5.1 million (aggregate of the amounts shown as assets in the company's balance sheet)
- number of employees does not exceed 50 (taken as an average across the financial year)

A parent company qualifies as a small company only if the group headed by it qualifies as a small group, that is it meets 2 of the above criteria.

A company qualifies as small in relation to its first financial year if the qualifying criteria are met in that year. It qualifies as small in a subsequent financial year if the qualifying criteria are met in that year.

In relation to a subsequent financial year, where, on its balance sheet date, a company meets or ceases to meet the qualifying criteria, that affects its qualification as a small company only if it occurs in 2 consecutive financial years.

Companies excluded from the small companies' regime are:

- a company that was at any time within the financial year to which the accounts relate:
 - a public company (a company limited by shares or limited by guarantee and having a share capital, whose certificate of incorporation states it is a public company)

- a company that is an authorised insurance company, a banking company, an e-money issuer, a Markets in Financial Investments Directive (MiFID) investment firm (providing investment services relating to MiFID financial instruments) or an Undertakings for Collective Investment in Transferable Securities Directive (UCITS is a management company that is established in the United Kingdom and is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority), carries on insurance market activity (a regulated activity relating to contracts of insurance written at Lloyd's) and is a scheme funder of a Master Trust scheme (a multi-employer occupational pension scheme)
- a group is ineligible if any of its members is:
 - a traded company (a company any shares of which carry rights to vote at general meetings, and are admitted to trading on a regulated market in an EEA State with the consent of the company)
 - a corporation (other than a company) whose shares are admitted to trading on a regulated market in a European Economic Area (EEA) State
 - a person (other than a small company) who has permission to carry on a regulated activity as monitored by the Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA)
 - an e-money issuer
 - a small company that is an authorised insurance company, a banking company, a MiFID investment firm or a UCITS management company
 - a person who carries on an insurance market activity
 - a scheme funder of a Master Trust scheme

Useful links:

- [Financial Services Register](#)
- [Companies House](#)
- [UK Authorised Insurers](#)
- [List of Authorised Master Trust Schemes](#)

The sponsor has paid the correct fee

If these checks confirm the sponsor has paid the correct fee, record your results in Metastorm 'Perform actions' using the perform actions template and proceed with the validation.

The sponsor has paid the incorrect fee

If these checks tell you the sponsor has paid the wrong fee, you must:

- refund the balance and continue to casework if they have overpaid:
 - add the applicant's details to the sponsorship ex gratia spreadsheet (S:\She_Shared\SPONSORSHIP (DO NOT USE)\Sponsorship Refunds)
 - update the payment screen on Metastorm to reflect the refund issued
- [reject](#) the application if they have underpaid
- record your results in Metastorm using the perform actions template

If it is not clear whether the sponsor has paid the correct fee and you need further information, you must:

- issue a letter to request further information and evidence to establish their status, for example:
 - annual accounts to determine annual turnover and the amount on the balance sheet
 - staff hierarchy charts and/or payroll evidence to check the number of employees
 - interim accounts; if they submit these because final accounts are not available, you must decide if the correct fee was paid based on the interim accounts and other information available to you
- complete this action in line with the guidance on requesting information online
- record actions taken in Metastorm using the perform actions template

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[Charity status](#)

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Check outstanding change requests

This page tells you how to check whether the sponsor has any outstanding change requests that need resolving.

There may be existing change of circumstances requests submitted by the sponsor that have not been reviewed. These could be requests to change:

- key personnel
- organisation details
- Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) allocation

If the sponsor is eligible for [streamlined renewal](#) consideration, outstanding change requests do not need to be checked.

If the change request involves a merger or takeover, guidance on processing these changes can be found in the guidance on completing change of circumstances requests at [review stage](#).

You must record in Metastorm 'Perform actions' whether the sponsor has any outstanding change of circumstances as per the perform actions template.

If you are unable to complete a specific type of change request you must inform your line manager, who will discuss it with the Post-Licence team to action the change.

When you review or complete any outstanding additional requests for allocation, you must also complete the [non-genuine vacancy](#) checks.

If the sponsor has an outstanding change of circumstances request, but has not provided sufficient information, you should:

- 1) Discuss the case with your line manager.
- 2) If appropriate, issue a letter to request further information.
- 3) Record all actions taken in Metastorm 'Perform actions' using the perform actions template.

If, at validation stage, you write out for further information that will not affect the validity of the renewal application, such as evidence of a change of address, then you can 'accept' the validation in Metastorm before you bring forward (b/f) the case.

If you require further information because you are unsure whether the sponsor is listed in the appropriate route and therefore you are uncertain whether the sponsor has paid the correct fee, you must not accept the validation until you are certain the correct fee has been paid.

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Validation summary

This page tells you how to complete the validation stage of a renewals case.

Once you have completed the validation checks, you must decide what actions to take next in line with the outcome of these checks and record them in Metastorm 'Perform actions' using the perform actions template.

Valid

A valid application will either be A-rated and fully active, B-rated or suspended, with the correct fee paid.

A-rated and fully active or B-rated

If the sponsor licence is valid A-rated and fully active or B-rated and you have recorded the above checks in 'Perform actions', 'accept' the application in Metastorm and proceed to the [review stage](#).

Suspended

If the sponsor licence is valid but suspended, a compliance visit should have already been made to the sponsor. The outcome of the visit should be available in the [cases linked to sponsor, action plan & all notes](#) tabs in Metastorm. You must:

- issue a letter to inform the sponsor there are delays, but the licence can continue as normal
- assign the case to the Sponsor Compliance team

Official sensitive – start of section

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Official sensitive – end of section

- if the key personnel named on the sponsor licence have worked at another organisation whose licence was revoked in the past 12 months or have been named as key personnel on a licence that has been revoked within the last 2 years, discuss with your line manager before taking further action, which may include referring to the Sponsor Compliance team

Invalid

If a licence has been [revoked, surrendered, made dormant](#) or the sponsor has [failed to pay the correct fee](#), or provide information that would otherwise validate the application, the case is invalid and you must reject.

Rejection

If the renewal application is not valid and you do not require any further information, or the sponsor has failed to send the requested evidence within the specified period after writing out to them, you must:

- issue the decision notification reject letter to the authorising officer (AO) and key contact (KC)
- refund the application fee
- 'close' the renewal case on Metastorm
- make sure the outcome and all actions have been recorded in Metastorm using the perform actions template

If the application falls for rejection and the sponsor's licence renewal date has past you must also:

- advise the sponsor, if they are currently employing workers in the UK, they must apply for a new licence within 20 working days as they cannot apply for another renewal

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- request the following action: 'expired renewal, pass to pre-licence manager'

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[Dormant revoked or surrendered](#)

Review

This section tells you what checks you are required to complete to review a sponsor licence as part of a renewal application.

You must perform the checks listed in the subsequent pages in the order they appear. Once each check is completed, you must record the outcome of checks and the actions taken in Metastorm 'Perform actions' as per the perform actions template.

Once you are satisfied with the result, set the action status to 'completed' and the outcome to 'result'.

Where you do not undertake a check because it has been recently completed as part of another consideration, state which case the check was undertaken on, the date of that check and the result.

Where a check has been listed in the perform actions template and does not feature in this guidance, caseworkers do not have to perform the check.

For streamlined licence renewal cases, where the sponsor has successfully renewed twice before and there are no compliance concerns, you do not have to:

- perform [company and insolvency](#) checks
- [review certificate of sponsorship usage](#)
- [review licence structure](#)
- [review visit history](#)
- [review outstanding change requests](#)
- [review risk profiles](#)
- [check accreditation and registration details](#), unless the sponsor is operating in the education or human health and social work activities sectors
- conduct '[other trading checks](#)'
- complete a [compliance visit referral](#)
- record a [review outcome in case actions in Metastorm or issue a decision letter](#)

Compliance concerns, as above, are mainly with regard to (but not limited to) sponsors:

- who are currently suspended
- who are currently subject to an action plan
- for whom there is an on-going compliance investigation
- for whom a 'special marker' has been added to the Sponsorship IT system, for example security service concerns or civil penalties

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System checks on key personnel

This page tells you how to complete checks on the sponsor's key personnel.

System checks will tell you whether the sponsor's key personnel pose a risk to immigration control.

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Official sensitive – end of section

Nationality and immigration status checks

You must confirm whether the sponsor's personnel who are subject to immigration control have valid permission to be in the UK by searching the names of the sponsor's:

- authorising officer (AO)
- key contact (KC)
- level 1 users

using the following systems:

- Case Information Database (CID)
- Central Reference System (CRS)
- Integrity Search (I-Search)

Further guidance on how to perform checks in CRS, CID and I-search can be found using the following online documents:

- Searching CID best practice
- CRS user guide
- Operating mandate for UK Visas and Immigration
- I-Search

You must record the immigration status of all the sponsor's key personnel in Metastorm as per the perform actions template. Should one of the sponsor's key personnel have expired permission, or appear to be breaching conditions of their permission, you must discuss [requesting a compliance visit](#) with your line manager.

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Review a licence structure

This page tells you how to review a sponsor's licence structure.

For [streamlined licence renewal](#) cases, where the sponsor has successfully renewed twice before and there are no current compliance concerns, you do not have to review the sponsor's licence structure.

To review a licence structure, you must review the sponsor's branch, intra-company and partnership details and log these in Metastorm 'Perform actions' as set out in the perform actions template.

If the sponsor is licensed:

- in Intra-Company routes
- as 'head office and all branches'
- as a group of branches, and the sponsor:
 - has been identified as a multinational
 - has not previously provided details of their branches, linked entities and partnership agreements
 - does not hit a [risk profile](#)

you must:

- check Metastorm notes for details of the sponsor branches, linked entities and partnership agreements previously provided
- confirm their details online using the relevant third-party website (for example, the governing body website)
- open a Word document and summarise the details you found on the sponsor's website
- save the document to Metastorm under the correspondence tab of the renewal application and name it 'branches/linked entities/partnership details'
- update the 'Renewal ICT/Branch/Partnership details' in the 'Correspondence' tab on Metastorm to list all branches: if low risk, add a link to the sponsor's website

If the sponsor is licensed in Intra-Company routes or as 'a head office and all branches' and hits a [risk profile](#), you must:

- check Metastorm notes to see if the sponsor has previously provided details of their branches, linked entities and partnership agreements
- confirm the details online using a third party trusted website (such as a governing body website)

If no details are recorded in Metastorm and you are unable to verify the information using a trusted website, you must discuss the case with your line manager. You may be advised to issue a letter to request further information to request details of their branches, linked entities and partnership agreements.

If the sponsor provides further information after you have requested it, you must use the information provided to update the 'Renewal ICT/Branch/Partnership details' in the 'Correspondence' tab of the renewal application and continue with the review actions.

If you ask the sponsor for details of their branches, linked entities and partnerships and they do not provide them within the specified period, you must send a second letter to request further information to ask for all the relevant details and request a reply within 5 working days.

If the sponsor does not provide the requested details after a second reminder, you must telephone the sponsor to request a response, noting the date and time of the call and the name of the call handler.

If the sponsor fails to provide further information after 2 reminder letters and a telephone call, you must refer the case to the Suspensions and Revocations team by email, providing details of the case, copies of correspondence and read receipts and the reason for referral.

If you identify inconsistencies in the details held about the sponsor on Metastorm, such as:

- a minor error, for example:
 - additional letters in an address
 - names spelt differently from in the rest of the application
 - too many digits in the telephone number provided
- an error that could affect the caseworking or the decision

you must discuss any concerns with your line manager and review the guidance on amendments you may make to check the application is accurate.

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Special interest markers

This page tells you how to identify whether a sponsor has any special interest markers.

You must confirm whether there are any markers against the sponsor, what the markers relate to and the action you have taken.

To find out whether there is a marker you must:

- look in Metastorm 'sponsor summary search' for a red banner along the top of the window
- view the 'Markers' tab in Metastorm
- check notes in Metastorm and cases linked to sponsor

If there is a marker against the sponsor:

- discuss with the team that put the marker on
- discuss with your line manager before contacting the following teams:
 - litigation
 - Sponsor, Assurance and Investigations Team (SAIT)
 - Intel
 - relevant financial investigation team

You must record all findings and actions taken in Metastorm 'Perform actions' as per the perform actions template.

If a sponsor that is eligible for [streamlined renewal](#) has one of the following special interest markers on their licence:

- Q6
- SIT
- Litigation
- Student sponsor casework team
- Sponsor licence renewal team
- HEAT
- High profile
- Sponsor Casework Ops Monitoring
- Suspension / revocation

please refer the case to a manager.

Depending on the nature of the marker and associated details it might be necessary to re-route the renewal application to the standard renewal consideration process.

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Outstanding compliance activity

This page tells you how to identify current or potential compliance action outstanding against the sponsor.

Compliance activity includes:

- surrender, suspension and revocation of the licence
- downgrading of the sponsor's licence
- outstanding action plans

You must search the relevant tabs in Metastorm:

- cases linked to sponsor
- action plans
- all notes

If there is outstanding compliance activity, you must email the Sponsor Assurance and Investigations Team (SAIT) and ask them how they wish to proceed with the renewal.

Make sure to record all results and actions taken in Metastorm 'Perform actions' as per the perform actions template.

Licensing bans

You must check the Tier 2 and Tier 5 'Directors and level 1 users subject to a cooling-off period' spreadsheet.

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You must ask your line manager whether you should [request a compliance visit](#). The result of the compliance visit will confirm whether you are required to reassign to the Suspensions and Revocations team.

If you have any concerns with the [number of CoS](#) requested for the size, nature and type of organisation, you must discuss the possibility of [referring to compliance](#) with your line manager.

Cases linked to sponsor, action plans and all notes

You must check the 'Cases linked to sponsor' tab in Metastorm to see whether compliance action has been taken against the sponsor in the last 4 years, and 'Action plans' and 'All notes' to see if there is any further information relating to the sponsor's compliance history.

- if the sponsor has previously held a licence which has been revoked in the last 12 months you must discuss the reasons for previous revocation with your line manager and the possibility of [requesting a compliance visit](#)
- if the sponsor has outstanding suspension, revocation or surrender activity, you must assign the case to the Compliance Casework team
- if the sponsor has outstanding compliance issues like outstanding re-rate A to B decisions, outstanding action plans or outstanding B to A decisions, you must assign the case to the Compliance Casework team
- record all actions taken in Metastorm 'Perform actions' using the perform actions template

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[Check outstanding change requests](#)

[Validation summary](#)

Visit history

This page tells you how to review a sponsor's visit history.

For [streamlined licence renewal](#) cases, where the sponsor has successfully renewed twice before and there are no current compliance concerns, you do not have to review the sponsors visit history.

To review the sponsor's visit history, you must check the:

- 'visit history' screen in Metastorm
- offline historical visits information
- Metastorm notes, to see if a self-generated visit has been recorded and a visit report received, but not yet saved to either the visit case in Metastorm or the offline historical visits information

If the sponsor has been visited, you must note when and where the visit report or reports are located, for example:

- saved to a visit case
- in a shared folder

You must review the sponsor's visit history and, if the sponsor has been visited within the lifetime of the licence, review the visit report.

This will help you understand the sponsor's compliance history and, if the sponsor's circumstances have changed since the last visit, you must discuss whether you will need to [request a compliance visit](#) with your line manager.

You must record all actions taken in Metastorm 'Perform actions' using the perform actions template.

Related content

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[Review](#)

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Check accreditation and registration details for sponsor licences

This page tells you how to check the sponsor is registered with an appropriate governing body.

Some sponsors must be inspected, audited, reviewed by or registered with an appropriate governing body to hold a licence. You must check whether the sponsor is required to be accredited or registered to be a licensed sponsor operating in the UK and record:

- whether the sponsor requires accreditation/registration
- the name of governing body
- the registration number
- the method of verification (for example, online)
- all actions taken in Metastorm 'Perform actions' using the perform actions template

If the sponsor does not hold the appropriate accreditation or registration and is not exempt, you must discuss whether it is appropriate to refer the sponsor to the Suspensions and Revocations team with your line manager.

For [streamlined licence renewal](#) cases, where the sponsor has successfully renewed twice before and there are no current compliance concerns, you only need to check accreditation and registration details for sponsors operating in the **Education** and **Human health and social work activities** sectors. These sponsors are indicated on the streamlined renewal sponsor data and in the 'Business Sector' field on the 'Application' tab of a Sponsor Summary Search for the sponsor.

Examples of sponsors with no governing body for their profession include nutritionists, world musicians and some smaller sports.

Online registration or accreditation

If the sponsor is required to be accredited or registered and you can check the status of the registration online, you must do so by looking on the relevant body's website. For example, the inspection reports for sponsors operating in the care sector who need to be inspected by the [Care Quality Commission](#) can be checked on their website.

Registration or accreditation is not online

If you cannot verify the accreditation or registration online, you must discuss with your line manager about contacting the relevant governing body.

Related content

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Other trading checks for sponsor licence renewals

This page tells you how to check whether the sponsor is trading.

If you are in doubt about the sponsor's trading status after you complete all the previous checks, you can search the internet for:

- any news items relating to the sponsor
- details of the sponsor's premises

For [streamlined licence renewal](#) cases, where the sponsor has successfully renewed twice before and there are no current compliance concerns, you do not need to conduct any other trading checks.

Related content

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[Streamlined renewal process](#)

Review certificate of sponsorship (CoS) usage

This page tells you when to review a sponsor's CoS usage.

For [streamlined licence renewal](#) cases, where the sponsor has successfully renewed twice before and there are no current compliance concerns, you do not have to review CoS usage.

The Sponsor, Assurance and Investigations team (SAIT) normally does these checks if this information may aid a compliance visit.

If the sponsor has an outstanding request to renew or increase their CoS allocation, then the Post-licence team will review CoS used by the sponsor as part of the allocation request.

If there is no outstanding request to renew or increase the CoS allocation, you must review the sponsor's use of CoS.

As part of the renewal review and allocation consideration, you must consider the sponsor's use of CoS and immigration history and whether the number of CoS requested is proportionate to the size and nature of the sponsor and is justified.

If a whole licence has not been used for 12 months or more, contact the sponsor by telephone to see if they still need the licence. If you do not get an immediate answer, proceed with the renewal case.

Where the sponsor has assigned one or more CoS in the last 12 months, you must consider:

- any previous or current justification for the number of CoS requested
- the sponsor's previous immigration history and their record in dealing with the Home Office

Digital technology workers

The qualifying company criteria for digital technology occupations specified in Appendix K to the Immigration Rules were deleted on 6 October 2019. If the Sponsor assigns a certificate of sponsorship (CoS) in a digital technology occupation on or after that date, they no longer need to meet the specific digital technology qualifying company criteria. They must, however, meet the general requirements for sponsoring a worker in a [shortage occupation](#).

Related content

[Contents](#)

[Non-genuine vacancy](#)

High-risk representatives

[Streamlined renewal process](#)

Company and insolvency checks

This page tells you how to undertake checks on Companies House and the insolvency register.

For [streamlined licence renewal](#) cases, where the sponsor has successfully renewed twice before and there are no current compliance concerns, you do not have to perform company and insolvency checks.

Check the sponsors entry on the Companies House website

You must search on [the Companies House website](#) for:

- the sponsor, to see whether:
 - the organisation has ceased trading
 - is in administration
 - the directors have been struck off
- the company contact details, to see whether:
 - the applicant uses a web-based email address, such as Hotmail or Yahoo, rather than one with the company name in the address
 - the telephone number is an 0870 or a mobile number rather than local to the area
- the length of time the company has been trading

You must complete the above checks for all sponsors or applicants, regardless of sector, size of company or any other profiling attribute. Record the outcome of the checks in Metastorm 'Perform actions' using the perform actions template.

Check the insolvency register

An undischarged bankrupt cannot act as an authorising officer (AO) or level 1 user. You must check the named AO or level 1 user on the [English and Welsh](#), [Scottish](#) and [Northern Irish](#) insolvency registers, regardless of where the person is currently based. Horizon contains further information on how to perform insolvency checks.

You can also [visit 'searching disqualified company directors' on GOV.UK](#) as an additional resource for Companies House and insolvency checks on directors.

Related content

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[Review](#)

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Forecast risk attributes

This page tells you about new risk attributes and what to do if a sponsor hits more than one of them.

Ahead of the introduction of the new Points-Based Immigration System, Intel has created a spreadsheet which lists risk attributes for each occupation sector. These are grouped in the following areas:

- migrant immigration history
- sponsor details
- sponsor types
- job skill level
- salary
- immigration representatives

If the sponsor hits more than one risk attribute you must:

- consider whether there are any [special interest markers](#)
- consider whether there have been any compliance issues
- consider whether the date of the sponsor's last compliance visit was within the past 12 months
- take the above information to discuss with your line manager

You may be advised to [request a compliance visit](#)

If a '[large](#)' sponsor has never had a compliance visit, but does not hit a risk profile and has used fewer than 5 certificates of sponsorship (CoS) in the lifetime of their licence, you must also refer to your line manager.

Related content

[Contents](#)

[Review a licence structure](#)

High risk representatives

[Streamlined renewal process](#)

Review outstanding change requests

This page tells you how to check if the sponsor has any outstanding change of circumstances (CoC) requests at review stage. As this is the same check that you will have completed at Validation Stage, you must [return to the section on outstanding change requests at the beginning of this document](#) for examples of changes to:

- key personnel
- organisation details
- CoS allocation

and how to resolve these.

For [streamlined licence renewal](#) cases, where the sponsor has successfully renewed twice before and there are no current compliance concerns, you do not have to review outstanding change requests.

To find out whether there are any change requests, check the 'Cases linked to sponsor' screen in Metastorm to identify any outstanding CoC requests.

If there are any outstanding change requests, you must action any straightforward changes yourself.

If the change is not straightforward, discuss with your line manager, who will contact the Post-Licence team to action the change as a priority.

If the outstanding CoC request concerns mergers and takeovers, you must:

- discuss with your line manager
- check with the Post-Licence team if the merger or takeover request needs completing before renewal
- query the expected completion date of the merger or takeover (this may be exempt from service standards)
- bring forward (b/f) the renewal case in line with this date

Once you have completed all the review actions, you must make sure any other cases you have started in connection with the review, for example, visit cases or surrender actions, are completed and closed.

You must record all outcomes and actions templates in Metastorm 'Perform actions' as per the perform actions template.

Related content

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[Streamlined renewal process](#)

Compliance visit referral

This page tells you how to refer the sponsor to compliance and conclude the renewals case after a compliance visit is completed.

Compliance visit referrals should not be necessary for sponsors eligible for [streamlined renewal](#) consideration, but where any compliance issues are indicated on these licences the process below should be followed.

Pre-visit referral checks

You must check the sponsor's immigration history and Intelligence Management System (IMS) checks prior to raising a visit referral with a compliance officer.

Sponsor's immigration history checks

You must undertake a separate search using the sponsor summary search and case search functions on Metastorm for:

- sponsor's name
- sponsor's address
- sponsor's postcode
- names of sponsor's key personnel

This will identify if the sponsor has:

- held a Worker or Temporary Worker licence which has been revoked in the last 12 months
- held a Student licence which has been revoked in the last 2 years
- named key personnel who have worked at a Worker or Temporary Worker sponsor institution which has been revoked in the last 12 months
- named key personnel who have worked at a Student sponsor institution which has been revoked within the last 2 years and a ban is in place

Official sensitive – start of section

The information on this page has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use.

Requesting a compliance visit

If, from the findings of the review checks, the sponsor does not meet the renewal requirements you need to find out whether compliance action should be taken against the sponsor. To do this, you need to request a visit report. You must:

- ensure you complete the [pre-visit referral checks](#)
- raise a visit referral with a compliance officer

Once the visit is completed, you will be told about any recommended compliance action by email from the Management Information (MI) Team in an MI report.

Compliance report – quality check

You must quality check the compliance visit report to ensure it meets tasking, is factually correct and has been written in line with the published guidance. If you have concerns about the visit report, you must ask your line manager for advice.

Compliance visit result

In cases where the review has included a visit, there will be a licence outcome recorded against the visit case. The licence review outcome records whether:

- [the rating should be maintained with no further action required](#)
- [further action is required to re-rate, surrender or revoke the licence](#)

You must then close all visit cases that are related to the renewal in order to remove them from the live visit work in progress (WIP).

A-rate maintain

Following a compliance visit in which the review outcome is 'rating maintained, no action required', you must issue the 're-rate maintain rating and status notification letter' and include details of the overall 'sponsor compliance summary' in the sponsor compliance report.

You must:

- record the review outcome in the renewal review case
- create a 're-rate maintain rating and status notification letter'
- close the renewal review case
- send the decision letter
- review the service standard in Metastorm
- 'complete' renewal in Metastorm

Re-rate, surrender, revoke

If compliance action is recommended then the visit case and the renewals case are reassigned to Suspensions and Revocations Team with the visit report. They will re-rate, suspend and/or revoke the sponsor licence as necessary.

Related content

[Contents](#)

No compliance action

This page tells you how to conclude a renewals case after the review checks have been completed and no compliance action is required.

For [streamlined licence renewal](#) cases, where the sponsor has successfully renewed twice before and there are no current compliance concerns, you do not have to record a review outcome in case actions in Metastorm or issue a decision letter.

If you have completed the review checks and the sponsor has not breached the conditions of their sponsor licence and no compliance action is recommended, you may accept the renewal case with the same rating.

You must:

- record the review outcome in the renewal review case
- close the renewal review case
- send the 're-rate maintain rating and status notification letter'
- review the service standard in Metastorm
- 'complete' renewal in Metastorm

Related content

[Contents](#)

[PNC/WI outcome action](#)

[Nationality and Immigration status checks](#)

[Non-genuine vacancy](#)

[Visit history](#)

[Registration or accreditation is not online](#)

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