



MIGRATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Migration Advisory Committee

1st Floor, Peel Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

18 March 2020

Rt Hon Priti Patel MP
Home Secretary
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Dear Home Secretary,

Thank you for your letter of 17 March 2020 commissioning the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) to advise on the composition of the Shortage Occupation List (SOL), as outlined in the recent Home Office Policy Statement on *The UK's Points-Based Immigration System*¹.

This is a substantial piece of work, on an important issue that will help shape the UK migration system and economy for years to come. Last time we reviewed the SOL, in 2019, that review took around 8 months, but we are confident that we can respond to your commission in the shorter amount of time available. We will also take the opportunity to review the methodology we use to construct the SOL and to comment on how the SOL may be developed and reviewed in the future.

As part of our response to this commission the MAC intends to conduct its usual programme of engagement, though this is likely to be affected by the emerging advice around the impacts of, and response to, Covid-19, so we will consider alternative approaches to face-to-face events. We will also, as usual, run an online call for evidence with business, Government and all other interested parties. Together these should help us produce a report that reflects interested parties' views and the evidence they are able to provide. We shall start our call for evidence imminently. This will need to progress with a tight deadline to enable us to report in September 2020 so that the new immigration system can be in place for 1 January 2021. We hope stakeholders will understand the necessarily compressed timescales at what may already be a difficult time for many of them.

As an evidence-based body it is also important for us to be able to undertake the necessary research and modelling to fully inform our response. This will be helped by having access to the necessary data, in a timely fashion, and in a form suitable for analysis. We also intend

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https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/866664/CCS207_CCS0120013106-001_The_UKs_Points-Based_Immigration_System_print.pdf

to undertake new research with employers to understand more about recruitment and employment where skills shortages might exist.

We had written to you on 28 January 2020² setting out our plans for our first annual report, with an expected delivery date of Autumn 2020. Because of this commission we will have to delay that slightly and will, instead, aim to publish that before the end of 2020.

We shall respond in full to this commission by September 2020.

On behalf of the Migration Advisory Committee

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'B' followed by a horizontal line and the word 'Bell' written in a cursive-like font.

Professor Brian Bell
Interim Chair, Migration Advisory Committee

²

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/860780/Letter_to_the_Home_Secretary.pdf