MAC Call for Evidence on the Shortage Occupation List – on behalf of own organisation

Introduction

What is the Shortage Occupation List?

In August 2022, the Government commissioned the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) to review the <u>UK Shortage Occupation List</u> (SOL). This was subsequently put on hold by the Government, and we were asked to start the commission in February 2023

The SOL comprises occupations in shortage (i.e. where employers find it problematic to secure adequate numbers of workers with the required skills to fill their vacancies) **and** where migration is considered to be a sensible response to that shortage.

The occupations on the list are given some dispensations within the immigration rules, designed to make it easier for employers to access migrant labour to fill vacancies in those areas of identified shortage. Having a job on the SQL confers the following benefits:

• A lower salary threshold of either £20,480 or 80% of the going rate for that occupation (whichever is higher). For example, it the going rate for an electrical engineer is £37,000, the salary would be reduced to 29,600 if it was on the SOL. The Government is planning to uprate salary thresholds across the Skilled Worker routes as part of the routine Spring package of immigration rules changes expected to lay on 9th March. Subject to Parliamentary approval, this will see the Skilled Worker general threshold increase to £26,200, and the lower SOL salary threshold to £20,960. You can find the latest values in the immigration rules appendix. The MAC have decided to recommend to Government that this salary threshold discounting will no longer apply to occupations which are on a national pay scale or subject to a binding going-rate threshold above the general threshold. We will be conducting this SOL review on the basis of this recommendation, so many occupations previously eligible for consideration will be excluded. Reduced visa fees: Standard visa fees for a Skilled Worker visa application range from £625 (less than 3 years) to £1,423 (over 3 years), for occupations on the SOL the costs are £479 and £943 respectively. A reduction of just under 25% and just over 35% respectively for visas.

- The salary discount that applies to applications for SOL occupations also applies at the time of making an application for settlement (or Indefinite Leave to Remain).
- Although supplementary work is not allowed in most circumstances whilst on a Skilled Worker visa, a Skilled Worker visa holder can engage in supplementary work where that work is in an occupation on the SOL.
- Asylum seekers whose claim has been outstanding for more than 12 months may apply for permission to work. Those who are allowed to work are restricted to occupations which are on the SOL.

About our Commission

We have been asked to consider:

- 1. Whether the salary requirement for occupations on the SOL should, in future, be whichever is higher of the going rate (rather than 20% less than the going rate) or £20,480, subject to an absolute minimum of £10.10 per hour,
- 2. Which occupations on the current SOL should continue to be included and which should be removed;
- 3. Which occupations, if any, based on evidence provided by stakeholders, should be added to the SOL, at:
 - a. RQF6 or above;
 - b. RQF3-5;
 - C. RQF1-2 in exceptional circumstances

The MAC have already decided that we will recommend that the SOL salary threshold discount for those occupations subject to a binding going rate be abolished, and will conduct this SOL review on that basis. This will mean that occupations on national pay scales and occupations where the going rate is above the Skilled Worker general salary threshold are excluded (as these occupations cannot benefit from a salary discount). Salary thresholds are likely, subject to Parliamentary approval, to be uprated as part of the routine Spring package of immigration rules changes expected to lay on 9th March. In practice, this means that the only occupations that will benefit from being on the SOL are those for which the occupation's going rate falls between £20,960 to £26,200.

This is a major review of the SOL and no occupation currently on the SOL will be guaranteed to remain on the list. We will only be considering occupations for inclusion on the SOL where stakeholders provide evidence through this Call for Evidence.

We have been asked to consider occupations skilled at RQF3 and above which are currently eligible for Skilled Worker visas and therefore the SOL. We have also been asked by the

Government to consider the evidence for occupations at RQF1-2- these jobs are currently not eligible for a Skilled Worker visa.

Stakeholders will be asked to demonstrate that an occupation (or a specific job within the occupation) requires substantial training/qualifications and prior experience and that the job/occupation should be recategorized to RQF3 to be made eligible for Skilled Work visas. Alternatively, it may be that the occupation is facing severe and unexpected shortage and that despite the efforts of employers/sectors it is proving impossible to recruit resident workers. We will then consider this evidence as a request for temporary inclusion for eligibility of Skilled Worker visas. Only in exceptional circumstances, with compelling evidence such as the MAC received for the <u>Social Care commission</u>, will occupations at RQF1-2 level be considered for inclusion on the SOL.

Given the recent nature of our recommendation to include care workers on the SOL and the continued failure of the Government to respond to that report, we will not be asking the social care sector to resubmit evidence to this review for their continued inclusion on the SOL. This also applies to senior care workers, which will also continue to be included.

As the SOL is part of a strategy to address shortage for a particular job in the UK market, no jobs will remain on the SOL indefinitely. You should save your submission to this questionnaire for your own records so that you can add to your submission for future SOL reviews.

How can I respond?

This questionnaire will remain open until **26th May 2023.** We really value your input and would find it helpful if you could respond as soon as possible so that we can start considering your views and information.

We have updated our guidance which accompanies our CfE, this is available on our webpage and we strongly recommend that you read this before completing this CfE. It may be helpful to share a version of this questionnaire on our webpage with your organisation, to collate your response before completing the online questionnaire.

All identifying and personal information will remain confidential, however aggregated and anonymised information in the form of summary statistics will be published as part of our final report. We will ask your permission to quote from your response and name you, but this will be on an opt-in basis. You can view a full description of our personal <u>data policy here</u>. At any point you may save your response to continue later before submitting. We look forward to hearing from you,

Migration Advisory Committee

mac@homeoffice.gov.uk

You can find guidance which accompanies the CfE questionnaire on our <u>webpage</u>. WWW. COMPLETER

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Section A: About you and your organisation

A1. What is the name of your organisation?

A2. What is your email address?

In this section we ask for some information about the characteristics of your organisation such as the sector(s) in which it operates, size of your organisation and location(s).

A3. Which of the sectors below best describes your organisation/business? Select all sectors that apply.

If you are unsure of the sector that best describes your organisation, please refer to the following link for more detailed descriptions of sectors and which sector group (A-U) they belong to: <u>https://resources.companie.house.gov.uk/sic/">sic/</u>

Please select all that apply

- Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
- Mining and Quarrying
- Manufacturing
- Electricity, Gas, Steam and Air conditioning supply
- Water supply, Sewerage, Waste management and Remediation activities
- Construction
- Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and Motorcycles
- Transportation and Storage
- Accommodation and Food Service Activities
- Information and Communication
- Financial and Insurance Activities
- Real Estate Activities
- Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities
- Administrative and Support Service Activities
- Education
- Human Health and Social Work Activities

- Arts, Entertainment and Recreation
- Other Service Activities
- Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods
- Activities of extraterritorial organisations and bodies
- We operate across all sectors
- Don't know

A4. Approximately how many people does your organisation employ in the UK?

8

Please select one option only

- 0-9 employees
- 10-49 employees
- 50-249 employees
- 250-499 employees
- 500-4,999
- 5,000+

A5. In which region / country of the UK are employees in your organisation located?

Please select all that apply.

- North East
- North West
- Yorkshire and the Humber
- East Midlands
- West Midlands
- East of England
- London
- South East
- South West
- Scotland
- Wales
- Northern treland
- All regions/countries

In which of these locations does your organisation have the most employees?

Please select all that apply.

- North East
- North West
- Yorkshire and the Humber
- East Midlands
- West Midlands

- East of England
- London
- South East
- South West
- Scotland
- Wales
- Northern Ireland
- All regions/countries
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

A7. Does your organisation have multiple sites in or outside the UK?

EEA countries: the EEA includes all the European Union (EU) countries (except the Republic of Ireland) plus Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway. We also include Switzerland as part of our definition. Non-EEA countries: countries outside of the EEA.

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Please select one option

- Multiple sites in the UK only
- Multiple sites in the UK, with sites in EEA countries
- Multiple sites in the UK with sites in non-EEA countries
- Multiple sites in the UK with sites in FEA and non-EEA countries
- Single site in the UK only
- Single site in the UK with sites in EEA countries
- Single site in the UK with sites in non- EEA countries
- Single site in the UK with sites in EEA and non-EEA countries
- Don't know
- Prefer not to say

Section B: Occupations in shortage

In this section you will be asked to provide the job title(s) and corresponding Standard Occupation Classification (SOC) codes for the jobs which you have found hard to fill in the past 12 months. A SOC code is a common classification of occupational information used in the UK which classifies jobs in terms of their skill level and skill content. Only include jobs which you think will be particularly helpful to have on the SOL; these are jobs which you have had difficulties in recruiting from the resident labour market.

How to find the SOC code for an occupation

In order for us to be able to make valid comparisons it is important that you match as closely as possible the job you have in mind to the correct 4-digit SOC code.

To do this we recommend you make use of the coding tool from the Office for National Statistics (ONS), linked below. We will assume that your response to the rest of this questionnaire will be in reference to the occupations which you have identified here.

Step 1: Follow the <u>ONS 2010 SOC toolkit here</u> and enter the name of the job you want to find an occupation code for in the text box highlighted below.

What is this?							
	Tool has been developed to assist users to code occupation titles. It matches inserted text against the Standard Occupation:						
classification 2010 (SOC2010) Volume 2 coding index. If you would like to use the version of this tool designed for mobile phones, please click here.							
	either because the search term is uniquely stylised and not suitable for a coding index, or it is a new or emerging occupation tie that you consider appropriate for inclusion in the index, please contact the Occupation and Social Classification Helpdes						
If you have an occupati	on code and want to know more about it, please type into this box and click the button Thew specific 500						
If you need to find an o	ccupation code, please type your occupation title into the box below.						
When the search is complete, t code is appropriate, and to find	he results presented are an aid to help you select the code you deem appropriate. Please click on the result links to confirm your related NS-SEC code.						
If the Coding Tool does not pro-	vide an appropriate result, it might be beneficial to amend your search term and try searching again, or the Occupational isist in datamining the correct code.						
Note: The search facility does a searched for.	not allow punctuation or symbols, and the search time is dependent on the speed of your computer and the number of word						
Occupation Title	Search Cancel search						
Results of your search	Enter the job title						
Insufficient text provided in sea	rch box.						

Step 2: Select the result that best matches your search.

If the Coding Tool does not provide an appropriate result, it might be beneficial to amend your search term and try searching again, or the Occupational Classification Hierarchy may assist in determining the correct code.

Note: The search facility does not allow punctuation or symbols, and the search time is dependent on the speed of your computer and the number of words searched for.

Occupation Title car mechanid	Search	Cancel search		
Results of your search				
You searched for: car mechanic				
5Z31. Mechanic, car	t the result that best m search	natches	hing your search term.	t for further
Step 3: Check the match by review	ing the desc	ription of the o	occupation code	, the tasks
required, and the jobs related with	-			
5231: VEHICLE TECHNICIANS, MECHANICS				own the page.
Job description:				
Vehicle technicians, mechanics and electricians accept the mechanical parts and electrical/electronic circuitry buses, motorcycles and other motor vehicles, and rep systems.	and components	of cars, lorries,		
Entry requirements of this job: There are no formal academic entry requirements, alt GCSEs/S grades or an equivalent qualification. Traini NVQS/SVQs at Levels 2 and 3 are available. Apprenti are available and take three to four years to complete	ing is undertaken o iceships at NVQ/S	off- and on-the-job.		
 Tasks required by this job include: visually checks, test drives or uses test equipment faults; removes, dismantles, repairs and replaces defective appropriate tools; reassembles, tests, adjusts and tunes the appropriate carries out routine maintenance checks on oil and parts/systems; diagnoses faults in electrical/electronic circuitry, replacements; checks condition of electrical/electronic systems ar installs additional electrical amenities such as radio repairs and services air conditioning, heating and end 	ve parts and prepa iate parts, systems air filters, brakes a moves faulty comp nd carries out serv o/CD players, aeria	res new parts using a or entire engine; and other vehicle bonents and fits icing tasks; als;		
NS-SEC categorisations: The simplified NS-SEC analytic class for this code is The simplified NS-SEC operational category for this of To find your exact NS-SEC code, please use the NS-	code is 11.1			
Jobs related to this code: Auto electrician Car mechanic HGV mechanic Mechanic (garage) MOT tester Motor mechanic Motor vehicle technician Technician (motor vehicles)				
This unit group is part of:				

- This unit group is part of: Minor Group 523; VEHICLE TRADES Sub-Major Group 52: SKILLED METAL, ELECTRICAL AND ELECTRONIC TRADES Major Group 5: SKILLED TRADES OCCUPATIONS

Step 4: If you are unhappy with the match suggested by the tool, go back to step 2 and select another suggested match and/or go back to step 1 and alter your search term.

In this example we are happy with the match and can conclude that the job "Car Mechanic" is associated with occupation code 5231.

B1. Using the ONS toolkit below, please tell us about the jobs which you currently have or have had difficulties in recruiting for in the past 12 months. These must be jobs which you think should be on the SOL.

You can provide up to a maximum of 5 occupations

Complete the field(s) below by telling us:

• The occupation SOC code(s)

B2. Where are jobs likely to be based and how many staff are required?

	Occupation SOC code	What is the job title?	Where is this job likely to be based?	How many staff have you needed to
			intery to be based:	recruit for this role?
	1. Occupation 1			
	carried over from B1			
N	2			
	3.			
	4.			
	5.			

Section B: Shortage Indicators

This section presents the data that the MAC considers on shortage. In this section you will be asked how the data on pay, hours worked, number of people employed, and vacancies compares with your own experience.

You will be presented with 4 charts in an Excel dashboard along with instructions (in the excert dashboard) on how to bring up the data for your occupations.

Please click on <u>here</u> to download the Excel dashboard. Once you have looked at the charts for your jobs, please answer the questions below.

B3. How similar or different is Chart A on pay, compared to your organisation's experience?

- Very similar
- Similar
- About the same
- Different
- Very different
- Don't know

B4. Tell us more about your answer to the previous question

- Why you think the data is similar or different to your organisation's experience;
- If your organisation pays below the general threshold, tell us to what extent your organisation is able to increase pay;
- If there are specific differences which you think might relate to the location of the job(s) or location of your organisation, please explain.



- Very similar
- Similar
- About the same
- Different
- Very different
- Don't know

B6. Tell us more about your answer to the previous question

Why you think the data is similar or different compared to your organisation's experience? If there are specific differences which you think might relate to the location of the job(s) or location of your organisation, please explain.

B7. How similar or different is Chart C on employment, compared to your organisation's experience?

- Very similar
- Similar
- About the same
- Different
- Very different
- Don't know

B8. Tell us more about your answer to the previous question

Why you think the data is similar or different compared to your organisation's experience? If there are specific differences which you think might relate to the location of the job(s) or location of your organisation, please explain.

B9. How similar or different is Chart D on vacancies, compared to your organisation's experience?

Very similar

- Similar
- About the same
- Different
- Very different
- Don't know

B10. Tell us more about your answer to the previous question

Why you think the data is similar or different compared to your organisation's experience? If there are specific differences which you think might relate to the location of the job(s) or location of your organisation, please explain.

B11. Please tell us about any other data you think might be relevant in assessing shortage for the jobs which you have mentioned

Section C: Why an occupation should be on the SOL

In this section we will ask you some questions about why you think a job should be on the SOL. This section is the main part of the questionnaire, and it consists of 3 parts. The questions in this section are about understanding why you think migration is a sensible response to shortage. Please let us know of any factors which are specific to the job such as the nature of the job or location. It will be helpful to us if you can provide examples or case studies to illustrate or support your response.

Section C: part

In this part, we will ask you to tell us:

- How you recruit for jobs which are hard to fill;
- Why those jobs are hard to fill;
- The types of skills and experience required for those jobs and why;
- Why these skills are hard to fill from the local area;
- How, if at all, any changes to recruitment have been experienced as a result of recent events such as the ending of freedom of movement or COVID-19 to recruitment;
- Your organisation's experience of retention.

C1. How do you (or others on your behalf) recruit for jobs that are hard to fill? These are jobs which you have listed in section B

When responding to the questions in this section (Section C), let us know If there are any factors specific to the job, such as the nature of the job or location. It will be helpful to us if you can provide examples or case studies to illustrate or support your response.

In your response tell us:

- Where you advertise or look for applicants;
- Why you recruit through these methods;
- Approximately how often you recruit for these jobs;
- Who tends to apply to these job vacancies;
- Whether you receive applications from within or outside the UK.

C2. Which skills do you most commonly find hard to fill and why?

Tell us:

- What these skills are;
- Why they may be hard to find in the resident labour market

To help you think about your response we have provided some examples of the skills commonly reported by employers below (this list is not exhaustive).

- Instructing, teaching or training people;
- Reading and understanding instructions, guidelines, manuals or reports;
- Sales or customer handling skills ;
- Writing instructions, guidelines, manuals or reports;
- Persuading or influencing others;
- Basic, more complex numerical or statistical skills and understanding;
- Managing or motivating other staff;
- Communicating in a foreign language;
- Setting objectives for others and planning human, financial and other resource;
- Manual dexterity, for example to amend, repair, assemble, construct or adjust things;
- Technical or job specific skills or knowledge needed to perform in the role;
- Adapting to new equipment or materials, knowledge of products/services offered by your organisation and others;
- Computer literacy basic, advanced or specialist IT skills;
- Driving skills/licences.

To help you think about your response, we have provided some examples of why these skills may be hard to recruit (this list is not exhaustive).

- A lack of supply of local courses which train in these skills;
- Skills may be new/emerging;
- Lack of demographics with these skills;
- Require a large volume of these skills.

C3. What level of experience is required for these jobs and why?

To help you think about your response, we have provided some explanations about why jobs may require some experience (this list is not exhaustive).

- Tasks are required to be done independently or with minimal supervision;
- It is a leadership role;
- It requires subject knowledge for the job;
- Particular technical skills which can only be learned on the job.

C4. In the past 2 years, COVID-19 and other changes, such as the ending of freedom of movement on 31st December 2020, have changed the way some employers recruit. With reference to the past 2 years what changes (if any) have you experienced when recruiting/finding workers?

The ending of the freedom of movement refers to the end of reciprocal non-visa travel and work arrangements between the UK and EU countries which came into effect on the 31st of December 2020 following the UK's exit from the European Union (EU). EU, European Economic Area (EEA), or swiss citizens living in the UK before the 31st of December 2020 were required to apply for the

EU settlement scheme to continue living in the UK after the 30th of June 2021 (this does not include the Republic or Ireland).

In your response tell us:

- How you previously recruited before COVID-19/ending of freedom of movement and whether this has changed;
- Who tended to fill these jobs;
- Whether applicants found within the UK or from abroad;
- How long on average these workers stay in post and whether this has changed;
- Other legislative context which may have changed the situation.

C5. Has your organisation experienced difficulties with retaining staff in the past year?

Tell us:

- What you think the causes might be;
- Where staff are moving to, such as a similar occupation with another organisation, a different occupation or leaving work?
- Whether the organisations you represent have experienced EU workers with settled status leaving and not returning;
- What age group of workers are being lost or employers are struggling to retain;
- If applicable, what your organisations is doing to improve this.

Section C part 2 In this part, you will be asked:

- What steps your organisation has taken to overcome difficulties in recruiting for those hard to fill jobs;
- How effective these steps have been;
- What your organisation's approach is to developing skills for jobs which are hard to fill.

C6. Which of the following steps has your organisation taken to overcome difficulties in filling vacancies for those hard to fill jobs?

You will be asked to select:

- Yes, have tried
- No, haven't tried
- Don't know

For the following strategies:

- Automating roles to reduce the amount of labour required
- Increasing salaries
- Increasing the training given to existing workforce
- Redefining existing jobs
- Increasing advertising/recruitment spend
- Using new recruitment methods or channels
- Using existing networks to recruit such as through staff referrals
- Recruiting workers who are non-UK nationals
- Increasing/expanding trainee or apprentice programmes
- Bringing in contractors to do the work or contracting it out
- Being prepared to offer training to less well qualified recruits
- Something else

C7. If there are other actions or steps taken that we have not listed in the previous question, tell us about this here and to which job(s) they apply to

How effective have these actions or steps been in managing those hard to fill jobs and

C9. What is your organisation's approach to skills development/training for the jobs which are hard to fill?

Let us know if there are any factors specific to the job, such as the nature of the job or location. It will be helpful to us if you can provide examples to illustrate or support your response.

Tell us:

:FER

- What training is offered to existing staff as well as new recruits;
- What skills you are looking to develop in relation to the training that you offer,
- Why you are looking to develop those skills.

The list below is to help you think about your response (this list is not exhaustive):

- Job specific training;
- Health and safety/first aid training;
- Basic induction, training new staff when they start the job;
- Training in new technology;
- More extensive induction training for new staff;
- Management training;
- Supervisory training;
- Personal development training;
- GDPR and data privacy training.

C10. To what extent has your organisation been involved in the development of the training described in the previous question?

Let us know if there are any factors specific to the job such as the nature of the job or location. It will be helpful to us if you can provide examples to illustrate or support your response. Tell us:

- Whether your organisation has developed the training content from scratch;
- Whether your organisation has tailored the content of external training to make it suitable for the needs of your organisation
- Whether your organisation has had no involvement in designing the training content,
- If applicable, tell us what prevented your organisation from designing the content of the training;
- How useful or successful any training in which your organisation was involved in habeen.

Section C: part 3

This is the final part of Section C. We will ask you about the impact of having an occupation on the SOL. It will be helpful to us if you can provide examples or case studies to illustrate or support your response.

C11. Thinking about the jobs which you have referenced throughout this questionnaire, what difference (if any) would having an occupation on the SOL make to your recruitment practices?

It will be helpful to us if you can provide examples to illustrate or support your response.

Tell us about:

Salaries:

Whether this is likely to change, is so why?

ob requirements:

- Whether job role requirements will remain the same or change Ability to recruit:
 - What difference will having an occupation on the SOL make to resolving your shortages

C12. If the occupation(s) that you referenced were not on the SOL, what options would your organisation consider filling those jobs?

Let us know if there are any factors specific to the job, such as the nature of the job or location. It will be helpful to us if you can provide examples to illustrate or support your response.

Tell us about:

- Changes to investment;
- Changes to recruitment practices;
- Changes to job specifications, such as if jobs be can done remotely;
- Changes to production output or strategy;
- Other considerations.

C13. What impact (if any) would there be to your organisation, of not having your occupation(s) on the SOL?

Tell us about the following impacts (if any):

- On service delivery or production,
- Knock on effect to other industries;
- Wellbeing of individuals;
- Anything else.

14. Do you have any other comments?

C15. If you have supplementary information or data that directly relates to your response to this CfE questionnaire, please attach here. If there are specific pages you want us to view, please list them in the previous question or highlight in the attachment.

Section D: Closing questions

Thank you for completing this questionnaire on the SOL. We have a final few questions about how we use your response to this questionnaire and about contacting you in the future.

D1. Would you be happy for us to quote anonymously from your response to this CfE?

- Yes
- No

D2. Would you be happy for us to name your organisation in the published report?

- Yes
- No

D3. Would you be happy for us or Revealing Reality, who are independent research contractors appointed by the MAC, to recontact you in the next 12 months to invite you to take part in follow-up research regarding similar issues covered in this questionnaire?

- Yes
- No

D4. And would you be willing for us to contact you if we needed to clarify or supplement responses you have given in this questionnaire?

- Yes
- No

5. Have you attended a MAC stakeholder event for the SOL?

D6. If you haven't attended a MAC stakeholder event for the SOL, please tell us how you AFFERENCE ONLY. COMPLETE WANNED UN heard about this Call for Evidence questionnaire?