

**Closure of the work permit scheme
Winter 2008**

Tier 2 of the Points Based System approaching – Apply for work permits by Wednesday 26 November 2008

The current **work permit scheme will close on Wednesday 26 November 2008** and shall be replaced by Tier 2 of the Points Based System as the mechanism for UK businesses to employ skilled migrant workers from outside the EEA.

Such workers may fill specific job vacancies in the UK provided that they have a Certificate of Sponsorship issued by a UK employer. To issue Certificates of Sponsorship employers will need to have obtained a Sponsor Licence issued by the UK Border Agency (UKBA).

What does this mean for your business?

Once Tier 2 goes live on Thursday 27 November 2008 if UKBA has not issued your business with a Sponsor Licence you will no longer be able to recruit sponsored migrants.

Businesses should act now to apply for the work permits necessary to fill any gaps in the current workforce and to avoid any delay to international transfers into the UK from the business' overseas offices. Employers may continue to use the current work permit scheme **only until 26 November 2008**. All employers who wish to continue to employ non EEA migrant workers should apply for a Sponsor Licence.

Legal assistance from LDS

LDS can assist with all aspects of immigration including offering bespoke advice on applying for your business' sponsor licence with particular emphasis on preparation for a compliance visit by UKBA to your organisation and how to comply with the new legal duties and liabilities imposed on employers under this new scheme.

For assistance with work permit applications before 26 November 2008 or a sponsor licence application contact our specialist immigration team which is recognised in all the legal directories as being in the top tier of immigration law firms. LDS is also listed by UKBA on its website as an "assessed adviser" having the expertise to assist employers with sponsor licence.

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