

After Lockdown: Bates Wells Guide

On how to apply for an immigration permit from within the UK

As the coronavirus continues to cause issues across the world, we have been helping our clients with all their immigration concerns, including applying for permits. Here are some key pointers to get you started

1. Decide which route to apply under

Before making an application you need to decide which route to apply under. If you had been planning on extending your current leave or applying for a new type of leave from within the UK before the coronavirus crisis, you should still do so as planned.

If you do not plan to stay in the UK long term, but your current leave is expiring and you cannot leave the UK because of coronavirus, you can apply for a temporary extension until 31 July.

If you had planned to leave the UK to make an application for a new type of leave and then return to the UK, you may be able to benefit from a temporary concession introduced by the Home Office. This allows those whose current leave expires between 24 January and 31 July 2020 to exceptionally 'switch' routes from within the UK. For more information on this, [see our Q&A](#).

2. Fill out an application form online

The form you need will depend on which category of the Immigration Rules you come under. This can be found on the [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) website.

You will need to complete the form and pay a [fee](#) to submit it. In most cases you will also need to pay the '[Immigration Health Surcharge](#)'. It is very important to submit your application online before your current leave expires. If you apply after your current leave expires you will become an overstayer, meaning your application might be refused for this reason. This will also likely cause problems in the future.

3. Upload your supporting documents and submit your biometrics

As part of the overall application process, you will have to submit your biometrics by attending an appointment where your fingerprints and photo are taken. Once you submit your application online, you will be redirected to the [UKVCAS](#) website. You will be prompted to create an account from which you can then book an appointment and upload scans of your supporting documents.

Currently, due to the coronavirus crisis, only some biometrics processing centres are open and applicants are being invited to book appointments in batches, depending on when they registered with the UKVCAS system. Some applicants whose biometrics can be re-used will be invited to submit a photo of their face and their supporting documents without having to attend an appointment. If you apply now, your application will effectively be put on hold until you are able to book an appointment. Make sure you create your UKVCAS account straightaway once you have submitted your application, to receive email updates about when the service will fully resume and when you will be able to book an appointment.

4. English language and 'Life in the UK' tests

You may need to take an English language or 'Life in the UK' test to meet the requirements of the rules. Some Life in the UK test centres have started re-opening and you can [book a test online](#). Many English language test centres in the UK have re-opened. You should keep checking the website of your test provider for the latest updates. If your current leave is expiring and you have been unable to take a Life in the UK test or English language test due to the Covid crisis, you should still apply online to protect your status. Our [Q&A](#) has more info to help you, and we do recommend taking advice if you are in this situation.

5. Receive your decision

Once everything is submitted, the Home Office will process your application and make a decision, which can take several months. If your application is successful, you will receive a biometric residence permit with details of your new grant of leave. If your application is refused, then you still have other options and a refusal does not necessarily mean you need to leave the UK straightaway, but you should seek advice immediately to make sure you protect your status and pursue any avenues that may be open to you for remaining in the UK.

If you would like advice on any of these issues, then please do get in touch with our [immigration team](#). We can assist right the way through the process, from initially advising you on your options, assisting with the application process, and supporting you following a refusal.

For more advice, please get in touch with our
[Immigration team](#)



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