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UK opens up immigration for Highly skilled workers and professional Point based system:

Currently, it is not possible for individuals, other than those with ancestral ties to the UK, to come to UK to seek and take up work in the absence of a job offer. This makes it difficult to attract highly mobile people with the special talents that are required in a modern economy. UK government is therefore introducing a program specifically for highly skilled migrants which will enable them to come to the UK and seek work.

This program is designed to allow highly skilled people to migrate to the UK in order to seek and take up work. It differs from the work permit scheme, as new immigration regulation does not require an employer to obtain a permit for the individual, and from the existing business routes (e.g. the Innovators scheme or other business categories) in that it does not require a detailed business plan or investment in the UK. It will initially be run as a concession outside the current Immigration Rules.

In order to qualify, applicants will need to demonstrate that they score 75 points or more. Points can be scored in five areas:

1. Educational Qualifications,
2. Work experience,
3. Past earnings,
4. Achievement in chosen field and
5. "HSMP priority applications".

This final area has been specifically designed to facilitate the recruitment and retention of suitably qualified overseas doctors who wish to work as General Practitioners for the NHS.

Applicants will also have to demonstrate that they can continue their chosen careers and that they will be able to maintain and accommodate themselves and any family whilst in the United Kingdom.

Those already in the UK in a capacity leading to settlement may apply directly to the Home Office to obtain this status. The UK government will also allow those graduating from a UK university, or completing their post-graduate medical studies, to apply whilst remaining in the UK, provided they have not been sponsored by their home governments.

The Highly Skilled Migrant Program will run for an initial period of twelve months and will come into force in January 2002. Applications will be accepted by Diplomatic posts overseas from 28 January 2002.

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