

Your Permanent Home in the UK

Specialist guidance on Indefinite Leave to
Remain — settlement for those on a work or
family route

Overview

★★★★★ VERIFIED TRUSTPILOT REVIEW

"A big thank you to the team after a successful ILR application. Brilliant advisers — knowledgeable, approachable, and giving the best advice on every aspect of the application and document requirements. Their service is second to none and exceeded my expectations."

M. Afrasiyab, UK ILR Applicant



Indefinite Leave to Remain

Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) is permanent settlement in the UK. It removes the time limit on your stay, lets you live, work and study freely, and is the final step before British citizenship.

What is Indefinite Leave to Remain?

ILR confirms that you have settled status in the UK with no restrictions on work or study and no ongoing visa fees or Immigration Health Surcharge. Once granted, it gives you the security of a permanent home and opens the door to naturalisation as a British citizen.

Who can apply?

Most people qualify after five continuous years on an eligible route — for example a work route or the spouse or partner route — or after ten years of lawful continuous residence. Whichever route you are on, you will usually need to meet a continuous-residence test, pass the Life in the UK test and meet the English language requirement, unless an exemption applies.

Applying

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"They helped put together my successful super-priority ILR application. The application was prepared immaculately and the entire process ran like clockwork. I can't emphasise enough how pleased I am with Whytecroft Ford's services."

R. Singh, UK ILR Applicant

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How to Apply for ILR

Step 1 — Confirm your qualifying period

Check that you have completed the required years on your route and that your absences from the UK stay within the limits across the whole qualifying period.

Step 2 — Prepare evidence and tests

Gather your supporting documents, pass the Life in the UK test, and meet the English language requirement at the required level.

Step 3 — Complete and submit the application

Apply online using the correct settlement form, pay the fee, and book your biometric appointment. Family members can often apply together.

Step 4 — Decision

The standard service aims to decide within six months, and a priority service is available on many applications for a faster decision.

Documents

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"Their assistance in securing my leave to remain was exceptional. The attention to detail and genuine care made the process smooth from start to finish. I wholeheartedly recommend them to anyone needing immigration support."

T. Pham, UK Settlement Applicant

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Documents You Will Need

A strong settlement application rests on clear, well-organised evidence. The exact list depends on your route; a typical ILR application includes:

- ✓ Current passport and any previous passports covering your qualifying period
- ✓ Your evidence of valid immigration status - eVisa details
- ✓ Evidence of continuous residence and your travel history
- ✓ Your Life in the UK test pass certificate
- ✓ An approved English language qualification at the required level, if required
- ✓ Route-specific evidence for your category — such as employment, relationship or financial documents

We review every document against the Rules before submission, so your application is presented at its strongest.

Planning

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"I never felt anxious or unprepared. Everything was laid out clearly and simply, which was such a relief with such complex subject matter. My ILR was approved in four weeks with no issues."

JB, UK ILR Applicant



Good to Know Before You Apply

A little planning around these points keeps a settlement application on track.

Continuous residence and absences

Most routes (other than family routes) allow no more than 180 days outside the UK in any rolling 12-month period across your qualifying years.

Life in the UK and English

You will usually need a Life in the UK test pass and English at the required level. Both can be arranged well ahead of your application date, and the certificates remain valid for future use.

After ILR, British citizenship is usually available after a further twelve months — or immediately if you are married to a British citizen. UK immigration rules change frequently, so applying under the current rules and taking advice early protects your position.

FAQs

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"The consultant was proactive, helpful and professional throughout my settlement application. Some invaluable guidance strengthened the whole application, and it was successful in the end. I would definitely recommend."

AS, UK ILR Applicant



Frequently Asked Questions

How long does ILR take to decide?

The standard service aims to decide within six months, and a priority service is available on many applications for a faster outcome.

How much time can I spend outside the UK?

Most routes allow up to 180 days abroad in any rolling 12-month period during your qualifying years.

Do I need the Life in the UK test?

Yes, unless you are exempt — for example by age. The pass certificate remains valid for later citizenship applications too.

Can my family settle at the same time?

Often yes. Partners and children on the same route can usually apply together, each with their own form and documents.

What comes after ILR?

British citizenship — usually after holding ILR for twelve months, or sooner if you are married to a British citizen.

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5.0 on Google

Based on 150+ reviews across Trustpilot & Google

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Why Families Choose Us

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Authorised by the Immigration Advice Authority



Member

Member of the Immigration Law Practitioners' Association



Rated Excellent

4.9 on Trustpilot and 5.0 on Google, across 150+ verified client reviews



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Speak with our team

PHONE
020 8757 5751

OFFICE
450 Bath Road, Longford, UB7 0EB

EMAIL
info@whytecroftford.com

HOURS
Mon–Fri, 09:00–17:00

Book a consultation

whytecroftford.com/contact