

Building a Life Together in the UK

Specialist guidance on the UK Partner visa route
— for spouses, civil partners, fiancé(e)s,
proposed civil partners and unmarried partners

Overview

★★★★★ VERIFIED TRUSTPILOT REVIEW

"My partner visa was approved in just 20 days, something I never imagined possible. From the very first conversation the team put me at ease and explained every single step in clear detail. I never felt lost or alone throughout the whole process."

S. Kaur, UK Partner Visa Applicant



The UK Partner Visa

The UK Partner visa allows the partner of a British citizen or settled person to build a life together in the United Kingdom. It sits within the family route under Appendix FM of the Immigration Rules and leads to settlement, making it one of the clearest paths to a permanent home in the UK.

One route, several starting points

“Partner” is a defined term. It covers a spouse or civil partner who is already married or in a civil partnership, a fiancé(e) or proposed civil partner who is coming to the UK to marry, and an unmarried partner in a long-term relationship. Whichever description fits you, the destination is the same: leave to remain that leads to settlement in the UK.

How the route works

For spouses, civil partners and unmarried partners, leave is granted for 33 months from outside the UK, or 30 months when applying in-country, and the five-year route is completed over two grants of leave before indefinite leave to remain. Fiancé(e)s and proposed civil partners are granted six months to marry, then switch onto that same five-year route. Throughout, the visa carries the freedom to work, study and travel, and dependent children can be included at every stage.

Eligibility

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"The team defined exactly which route applied to us and what evidence it needed. They responded promptly to every email and we are very satisfied — my wife's visa was approved with their help. Five stars."

G. Baicu, UK Spouse Visa Applicant



Who Counts as a Partner

Appendix FM sets out who qualifies as a partner. The correct category depends on your relationship on the date you apply.

Spouse

You are married to a British citizen or settled person, in a marriage recognised as valid under the law of the country where it took place.

Civil partner

You have formed a civil partnership with a British citizen or settled person that is recognised in law.

Fiancé(e)

You are engaged to marry a British citizen or settled person. You enter for six months to hold the wedding, then switch onto the five-year partner route.

Proposed civil partner

You intend to register a civil partnership with a British citizen or settled person. Like a fiancé(e), you enter to complete the formalities, then switch.

Unmarried partner

You are not married or in a civil partnership, but have been in a relationship akin to marriage for at least two years before you apply.

Not sure if your relationship qualifies? We confirm the right route for your circumstances at the outset, so the application is built on the correct footing from day one.

Applying

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"Excellent support, thorough with our document checking and sound communication throughout all of our spouse visa application. The service was reassuring, and sensitive to our personal journey. The whole process was so much easier with their guidance."

N. Marić, UK Spouse Visa Applicant

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How to Apply for a Partner Visa

Step 1 — Confirm your eligibility

Identify which partner category applies to you, then review the relationship, financial and English language requirements together, and decide whether to apply from outside the UK (entry clearance) or from inside the UK (further leave to remain).

Step 2 — Prepare the application and evidence

Collate your evidence that demonstrates the requirements are met and complete the online application.

Dependent children can apply at the same time.

Step 3 — Pay fees and enrol biometrics

Pay the Home Office application fee and the Immigration Health Surcharge, which gives full access to the NHS.

Biometrics (fingerprints and facial photograph) are then enrolled at a visa application centre.

Step 4 — Decision

UKVI aims to decide most applications made outside the UK within 12 weeks of biometrics, and in-country applications within 8 weeks. Priority and super priority services are available on many applications for a faster decision.

Documents

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"This was our second time using Whytecroft Ford and once again the experience was exceptional. They go above and beyond, preparing and supporting the application with comprehensive, fully evidenced documentation. Everything was clear, accurate and properly positioned for approval."

R. Cowley, UK Spouse Visa Client



Key Requirements & Documents

A strong application is built on clear, well-organised evidence. The exact list depends on your category and circumstances; a typical Partner visa application includes:

- ✓ Current passports and any previous travel documents
- ✓ Marriage or civil partnership certificate — or, for unmarried partners, evidence of two years relationship akin to marriage
- ✓ For fiancé(e)s and proposed civil partners, evidence of the intended marriage or civil partnership
- ✓ Evidence of a genuine and subsisting relationship — official documents, photographs, correspondence and time spent together
- ✓ Financial evidence — payslips, bank statements, an employer letter, or qualifying savings
- ✓ Evidence of English language proficiency to the required level, if required
- ✓ Evidence of adequate accommodation in the UK
- ✓ A tuberculosis test certificate, where required by your country of residence

The financial requirement

New applications generally need to show a gross annual income of £29,000, with a transitional £18,600 threshold available to some existing applicants extending with the same partner. Meeting the figure is only half the task — presenting it in the exact format the Immigration Rules requires is what makes an application robust, and we review every document against those rules before submission.

FAQs

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"We had an amazing experience. They made the entire process smooth and stress-free, guiding us step by step with clear, detailed information. Always professional, approachable and patient, and answering all of our questions along the way."

A. Bukhari, UK Partner Visa Applicant



Frequently Asked Questions

Do we need to be married to apply?

No. Spouses and civil partners apply as married couples, fiancé(e)s and proposed civil partners apply to come and marry, and unmarried partners can apply once they have been together in a relationship akin to marriage for at least two years.

What is the difference between a fiancé(e) and a spouse visa?

A fiancé(e) or proposed civil partner visa grants six months to hold the wedding, with no work permitted, and does not lead directly to settlement. Once married, you switch to the partner route, which does carry the right to work and leads to settlement.

How is the financial requirement met?

Through employment income, self-employment, qualifying savings, pension or certain other sources, alone or in combination. Which combination works best depends on your circumstances, and we advise on the strongest route for you.

What level of English is required?

Applicants meet an approved English language test at CEFR level A1 for the first application, with the level rising at the extension and settlement stages.

How long until we can settle?

The partner route leads to indefinite leave to remain after five years, with British citizenship available afterwards for those who qualify. Time spent on a fiancé(e) visa does not count towards those five years.

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