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Purpose of this information

Since the Home Office formally recognised its discretion to allow Students and Skilled Workers¹ access to public funds in 2023, we have been contacted by well over 100 Students and Skilled Workers seeking assistance to access public funds, and this group regularly represents a significant proportion of the referrals we receive. We are also frequently contacted by other organisations for second tier advice in these cases. Clearly there is huge demand for advice and support.

However, of all of the above people, to date we are not aware of a single Student or Skilled Worker who has been granted access to public funds on that visa type unless they also submitted an application for permission to stay in the UK on a different basis.

The system is clearly not working to allow Students or Skilled Workers in need to access public funds, and it is very difficult for organisations to advise in these cases.

We want to share information about:

- The legal and policy context
- Casework approaches, experiences and outcomes
- Our assessment of the key risks and disadvantages of CoCs for this cohort
- Practical support and advocacy options

This briefing does not go into detail about:

- Nitty-gritty of possible legal arguments/preparing stronger CoC applications - we are happy to discuss this/share resources separately
- Broader issues related to Skilled Worker visas and 'earned settlement' proposals, though these have an obvious baring

¹ We use capitalisation to indicate that we are referring to people on a Student or Skilled Worker visa (as opposed to a broader category which might include students/skilled workers on other routes such as the family/private life route).

Legal background/framework

The 'PA' case and judgment

In 2023, the Home Office refused to consider lifting the 'no recourse to public funds' (NRPF) condition from the claimant's leave to remain as the erstwhile dependent of a student, claiming they could not do so because of the type of leave to remain she had. Following a successful FW application the claimant had submitted an application as the parent of a British child in November 2022, which was pending at the time of the CoC application. The claimant challenged the decision, and on 6 October 2023 the High Court declared that the Home Office had been wrong to consider that it could not remove the NRPF condition from this type of leave.

The judgment (PA & Anor, R (on the application of) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2023] EWHC 2476 (Admin)) can be found here:

<https://caselaw.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ewhc/admin/2023/2476>

Read more:

- <https://unity-project.org.uk/home-office-unlawfully-refused-to-grant-access-to-public-funds-to-destitute-mother/>
- <https://dpglaw.co.uk/home-office-unlawfully-refused-to-grant-recourse-to-public-funds-to-destitute-mother/> (published 9/10/23)
- <https://freemovement.org.uk/home-office-concedes-latest-challenge-to-no-recourse-to-public-funds-policy/> (published 16/10/23)

The policy guidance

There are two main guidance documents covering applications to access public funds.²³ Both of these documents have been updated in response to the judgement:

- [‘Public funds: caseworker guidance’](#). This was relevantly updated on 5 October 2023 (version 19⁴)⁵ with the insertion of a section titled ‘Immigration status and access to public funds’⁶.
- [‘Permitting access to public funds’](#) guidance. This was relevantly updated on 15/3/24⁷ (version 2⁸)⁹ when a new 5-page section was inserted at the end, titled ‘Access to public funds for those whose permission is not within the family, private life or Hong Kong BN(O) routes’. This incorporated previously published guidance and is now the most comprehensive guidance on this issue.

Advisors will already be familiar with the contents of the above guidance documents - some key elements of the [‘Permitting access to public funds’](#) guidance are:

² See briefing for more detail about the legal framework/guidance documents:

<https://freemovement.org.uk/briefing-how-to-make-a-change-of-conditions-application-and-remove-the-no-re-course-to-public-funds-restriction/>

³ Other guidance documents may also be relevant, e.g.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/considering-immigration-status-and-deciding-enforcement-action>

⁴ This has been updated again since (e.g. v20 published on 14/1/24), but subsequent changes have not been significant in relation to this issue (e.g. see comparison v19 vs v20 [here](#)).

⁵ Comparison with the previous version is [here](#).

⁶ See pp.10-11 in v21, published April 2025.

⁷ Prior to this, on 10th January 2024, the Change of Conditions [webpage](#) and online guidance [notes](#) were updated, albeit with less detail.

⁸ This has been updated again since, but subsequent changes have not been significant in relation to this issue.

⁹ A comparison with the previous version of the guidance is [here](#).

*‘discretion will only be used where there are **particularly compelling circumstances**¹⁰ which justify giving access to public funds and lifting the NRPF condition. Occasions when discretion is used are likely to be **rare**.’*

*‘it will **normally** be appropriate for a person to leave the UK if they can no longer comply with the conditions of their permission or cannot financially support themselves and their families in the UK.’*

*‘The information provided as part of the application to lift the NRPF condition may provide information which suggests the applicant is no longer meeting the requirements of the Immigration Rules of the route they are on.¹¹ **If a decision is made not to lift the NRPF condition**¹², the case should be referred [to the ‘Status Review Unit’ (SRU)] for consideration of cancellation of their permission to enter or stay. This referral should include any reasons why it is considered, as a result of the Change of Conditions application, the person may no longer meet the requirements of the Rules under which they were granted permission. A copy of the Change of Conditions application and any accompanying representations will be available on the Home Office document database.’*

The [online guidance notes](#) further clarify:

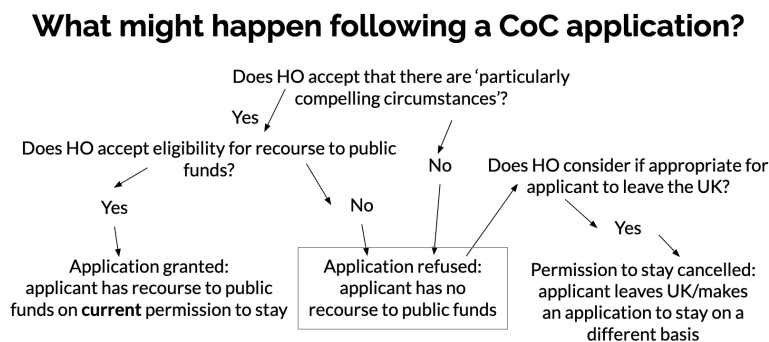
‘Your circumstances will be reassessed when you apply for further permission and, to remain on that route, you will need to meet all requirements of the relevant rules at the time you apply, including any financial requirements.’

¹⁰ The guidance elaborates (emphasis added): ‘**Generally**, it will **not** be regarded as a particularly compelling circumstance where an applicant has been granted permission on the basis they can maintain themselves and their family members without access to public funds and their circumstances change and they can no longer do so, **regardless of the reason**. The appropriate action is for them to leave the UK. Similarly, if they have the right to work but are not earning enough to support themselves and their family, they should **normally** be expected to leave the UK. It will also not be regarded as a particularly compelling circumstance if the individual lacks the financial means to leave the UK, such as travel costs or a passport application fee.’

¹¹ See for example Part Suitability for more detail.

¹² The Home Office further clarified in a stakeholder meeting in March 2024: ‘An individual will not be referred to the Status Review Unit (SRU) if a decision was made to lift the NRPF condition from their immigration permission. A case will only be referred to the SRU if a decision was made to not lift the NRPF condition. Furthermore, a referral to the SRU does not necessarily mean that their existing permission will be cancelled, but that there will be a review as to whether they continue to meet the requirements of their immigration permission.’

In our reading, the guidance suggests that applications will be considered as below:



The policy is also mentioned in other places, such as the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) of October 2024¹³.

- The EIA summarises in the section headed ‘Discretion’ (p.6): ‘Following a recent JR challenge: R v (PA & Anor) v Secretary of State for the Home Department [2023] EWHC 2476 (Admin), it was confirmed that a ‘Change of Conditions’ application cannot be rejected just because the applicant is not on a family, private life or Hong Kong BN(O) route.’
- In relation to protected characteristics for this cohort, the EIA states: ‘In determining whether there are particularly compelling circumstances, all relevant factors raised will be considered, and that may include circumstances relating to [insert protected characteristic]. **However, the threshold for particularly compelling circumstances is high and circumstances in which the NRPF condition is lifted using discretion are likely to be rare.**’
- In ‘3c. Consideration of limb 3: Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.’, the EIA emphasises the importance that ‘public confidence is maintained in a fair immigration system’ and states (emphasis added):
 - ‘It is considered this can be achieved by continuing to apply the NRPF condition across all migration routes, at the same time as ensuring there are safeguards to protect those who are vulnerable, and those who require additional support. This is achieved through the ability for **migrants on all**

¹³ This was disclosed in litigation in 2025, but is yet to be published.

immigration routes to apply to have the NRPF condition lifted as well as through local authority support where there are additional needs or child welfare issues.

- It should **however** be noted that for those on an immigration route outside of family and private life, or the Hong Kong BN(O) routes, NRPF condition may be lifted using discretion only if there is evidence of compelling circumstances which justify giving access to public funds. Lifting the NRPF condition in these circumstances **should** also be rare.'

The application form

The online application form was also updated in January 2024 to allow applicants to select 'other' under 'Current status in the UK'. If this option is selected, the following notification appears:

At the end of your application you will have the opportunity to give additional information about your request. You should include details about:

- information that relates to the [welfare of any dependent child/children](#)
 - any [exceptional circumstances relating to your income or expenditure](#)
 - any compelling reasons why you cannot return to your home country
 - any other particularly compelling reasons as to why the no recourse to public funds (NRPF) condition should be lifted
- The links take you here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/application-for-change-of-conditions-of-leave-to-allow-access-to-public-funds-if-your-circumstances-change/guidance-on-applying-to-change-your-permission#further-information>

TUP caseworking approach

TUP wrote a brief online advice note¹⁴ for the general public and a more detailed and particularised advice [note](#)¹⁵ to send to people who contacted us directly.

In the first instance, we make clear the risk of visa cancellation so that applicants could make an informed decision about whether to proceed with a CoC. We initially had 121 discussions with everyone who contacted us, but found that most people decided not to apply after we had discussed the risks, so started running regular online information sessions about the risks, so that we could explain this initial advice to multiple people at the same time.

We have only provided substantive follow up advice to people who have already submitted a CoC, or who are still interested in proceeding with the CoC in light of the risks.

We would generally only assist someone to make a CoC if:

- They understand and are prepared to take the risk of visa cancellation
- They have an alternative basis to remain in the UK (and, ideally, have made a pending and meritorious application on this basis) (i.e. want RPF whilst this other claim is pending, as with PA)

If anyone wants to go ahead in light of the risks, we initially explore at least the following:

- Whether they are still meeting terms of visa (including financial requirements), aside from the need for public funds (e.g. working required hours, etc)
- Reasons that they 'cannot reasonably be expected to return to their home country'
- Potential alternative immigration routes
- Whether change/need for public funds is short-term/temporary
- Whether they are supported under s17
- Prospects/ongoing plans after current visa expires
- Fitness to travel

¹⁴ <https://unity-project.org.uk/public-funds-on-other-visas/>

¹⁵ Please contact TUP if it would be helpful for you to see this advice note.

- Likely eligibility for legal aid

TUP caseworking experience¹⁶

Referrals to TUP

Since the judgment of Oct 2023 and as of end Jan 2026, we advised over 100 people who contacted us about applying for RPF on another visa type.

The majority were on Skilled Worker visas (65%), graduate visas (15%) or Student visas (8%).¹⁷ Often, the visa holder needed recourse to public funds after they or a family member had unexpectedly become seriously unwell after coming to the UK.

The applications roughly break down into the below categories:

1. Decide not to proceed at all/withdraw pending CoC - this represents the vast majority
2. Proceed with CoC:
 - a. During 3c leave, after submitting FLR on basis of family/private life
 - b. Due to lack of other options, leading to refusal followed by JR proceedings where applicant is willing to pursue this

CoC applications that TUP has been involved in

Of those who proceeded with CoCs:

- 14 people had already submitted a CoC by the time they'd contacted us.
- 4 decided to submit a CoC after contacting us.

Our contact with these people was various. We lost touch with people in a couple of cases, and in others didn't intervene as the applicant had another representative. We can however provide some more details based on the cases where we were more involved.

¹⁶ More detail [here](#).

¹⁷ A handful of people were on Ancestry visas, dependents of Skilled Workers, and some other categories.

Of the 14 who had already submitted a CoC:

- The outcome in 2 cases is unknown, as we lost contact with the applicant
- 6 people decided to withdraw their CoC applications
- 6 applications were refused. Of these, **two are preparing for/pursuing JR**: WW (submitted Mar 2025) is self-represented and ZZ (submitted Feb 2024) is being advised by Bhatt Murphy (see more details below)

Of the 4 who submitted a CoC after contacting us:

- Two were in s17 support and nearing/at the end of their current visa. They wanted to submit a simple CoC based on their receipt of s17 support. Both CoC applications were void after the applicants' leave expired.
- Two had 3c leave, having submitted pending FLR applications as the parent of a British child (see below for further details).

What happens in practice?

Requests for further information

All cases received at least one request for further information before being refused¹⁸. The request tended to include:

'You currently have permission in a temporary immigration route and are expected to be able to support yourself financially or leave the UK. If you are unable to return home, please provide the reasons why and supporting evidence.'

Refusals

The letters we have seen tend to reference some of the reasons for application and s55 duties, but focus on reasons that an applicant is unable to return to their country of origin, e.g.

You have permission to remain in the UK on a [work visa].

You have requested that the no recourse to public funds be lifted as [insert reason].

You were granted permission on the expectation that you should financially support yourself and your family without access to public funds while you are in the UK.

Discretion will only be used where there are particularly compelling circumstances which justify giving access to public funds and lifting the NRPF condition and it will normally be appropriate for a person to leave the UK if they can no longer comply with the conditions of their permission or cannot financially support themselves and their families in the UK.

¹⁸ Note that the policy guidance states the following, which suggests that an application will not be refused until HO have first made at least one further information request: 'If an applicant has provided minimal or no evidence in their application, and the information provided is not sufficient to make an informed decision, you can reject the application if they have failed to provide the information after 2 further information requests have been made.'

You have not provided any evidence which demonstrates there are particularly compelling circumstances which are preventing you from returning home./You have claimed that you are unable to return to [country of origin] because [x]. I am not satisfied the reasons you have provided are particularly compelling and it is considered reasonable for you to return to [country of origin] because [x].¹⁹

You have provided information which suggests that your circumstances may be more suitable to another immigration route rather than your current permission as a [e.g. skilled worker (healthcare)]. You may wish to seek legal advice on whether to make a new application which will vary your current permission.²⁰

Delays

Home Office decision making in these cases seems to be taking longer than in others. In three of the cases where we know the date of the refusal, the decision timeframe was at least 320 days (in 'ZZ' case, the CoC application was submitted in Feb 2024 and was finally refused around 18 months later, in summer 2025).

Visa cancellation

We haven't been informed of visa cancellations in any of the above cases, but this obviously doesn't preclude the possibility of visa cancellations in due course.

As part of the Public Accounts Committee's (PAC) inquiry on Immigration: skilled worker visas, the Home Office [confirmed](#) on 8 May 2025: 'In terms of care workers, we have not been cancelling their visas since late 2023.'²¹

¹⁹ See [Anon](#) and [IN](#).

²⁰ See AR.

²¹ See:

<https://committees.parliament.uk/work/9040/immigration-skilled-worker-visas/publications/oral-evidence/>. The committee report (published: Friday 4 July 2025) noted: 'The Home Office told us it has not been

Case studies

Applicants with grounds for FLR on the basis of family/private life

Below are some case studies from TUP and other organisations for these groups.

Case studies from TUP

- PA was granted RPF pending the outcome of her FLR, following JR.
- XX was in s17 support. We submitted a simple CoC by email, followed by RFI responses and refusal review request based on welfare of children, etc. They were advised about proceeding with a JR, but decided in early Jan 2025 not to pursue this and to instead await outcome of FLR.
- YY has an immigration advisor who is representing her with her FLR. We advised them about applying for RPF pending the outcome of this FLR; they requested RPF in December 2025 referring back to submissions/evidence re destitution in the FLR. We then assisted with HES referral in Jan 2026. We responded to a request for further information in Feb 2026 and the application was refused in Mar 2026. We requested reconsideration of the refusal and have referred the case for JR. The FLR application remains pending.
- VV was in s17 support after becoming unable to work due to the birth of her child as she was unable to negotiate hours around her childcare commitments as a single

cancelling care workers' visas since late 2023. However, in written evidence submissions, FLEX and the Work Rights Centre said that the Home Office has been known to delay issuing curtailment letters, which can create uncertainty, with workers lacking clear information on this policy.' - see: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm5901/cmselect/cmpubacc/819/report.html>. The written evidence from [Work Rights Centre](#) (WRC) (available [here](#)) explains (emphasis added): 'These measures also leave wide protection gaps for workers. Given the number of workers impacted by licence revocation, it is damning that there is no official policy that protects migrants from having their visas curtailed if, through no fault of their own, their sponsor loses the licence to employ them because of Home Office enforcement action. Even though in practice frontline advisers have reported delays in curtailment, the absence of an official written policy in Home Office guidance makes this a highly precarious status which, from workers' perspective, could end at any point. **There is also no policy to give exploited migrant workers access to public funds or the unrestricted right to work while they are looking for a new sponsor.** This puts them at risk of destitution or re-exploitation in the black market, especially given that they would have to pay the Home Office substantial fees to obtain a new visa sponsored by a different employer.'

parent. She submitted a FW application in April 2025 which was granted, and she then submitted an FLR application on the basis of her British child in May 2025. She submitted a CoC on in March 2026 which was escalated via HES. She was then granted FLR with RPF 5 days later.

- Note that in the above cases, the FLR was submitted prior to the CoC.

Case studies from British Red Cross (BRC)

- Applicant was a dependant on a student visa and in receipt of s17 support:
 - Feb 2025 - Solicitor submitted Parent of British Child application (varied from dependant on student visa), and BRC submitted the Change of Conditions application on the same date, and referenced the PoBC application submitted.
 - 03 Apr 25 - Followed up with the FHR9 team a couple of weeks after submission, explaining that the family are relying on Children's Services support under s17.
 - 07 Apr 25 - Change of Conditions application granted (**prior to FLR decision**).²²
 - 9 June 25 - LTR granted.

²² The decision letter made clear that RPF was granted following expiry of previous FLR (i.e. during 3c leave):

'On 11 February 2025 you requested that we remove the no access to public funds condition from your permission to stay in the United Kingdom (UK). Your request has been successful and the no access to public funds condition has been removed with immediate effect.

Your other conditions are unchanged. This change of conditions does not affect or extend the period of your permission to stay in the UK. Your current permission ended on 02 February 2025...

If you make a further application for permission to stay in the UK, your circumstances will be re-assessed. At that time, a new decision will be made on whether you should have access to public funds. You will only be granted further permission with access to public funds where: • without access to public funds you would be destitute or at imminent risk of destitution • there are reasons relating to the welfare of a child which outweigh the considerations for maintaining the condition (treating the best interests of a child as a primary consideration), or • you are facing exceptional circumstances affecting your income or expenditure. If you believe you will continue to require access to public funds, the reasons for this should be stated, supported by the relevant evidence, with any future application for permission to stay.'

Case studies from Work Rights Centre (WoRC)

- Two change of conditions applications for someone on a Skilled Worker and someone on a graduate route:
 - Case 1 was a person on graduate leave, client had dependents (children and partner).
 - One of the children had a severe medical condition that unexpectedly required intensive care.
 - Their leave was expiring and we submitted a fee waiver before the expiry date, we also submitted the change of conditions at the same time. The fee waiver was granted and we then submitted FLR HRO on the basis of Article 8 and Article 3.
 - FLR HRO was decided positively, the change of conditions was not decided as the main application already granted recourse to public funds. It took 7 months in total.
 - Case 2 is a person with leave as a skilled worker, health and care, client has dependents (children and partner).
 - Client has been diagnosed with cancer that required a specific treatment.
 - The family leave was expiring and we submitted a fee waiver before the expiry date and a change of conditions at the same time.
 - The fee waiver was granted and we then submitted FLR HRO on the basis of Article 8 and Article 3.
 - FLR HRO was refused and we appealed within the time frame.
 - Prior to the refusal we chased the change of conditions 3 times. The change of conditions was refused one month after FLR HRO was refused, it took 9 months. We received a decision for the refusal but the client did not wish to proceed with a JR at the time.
 - Case 2 above is an ongoing immigration case, the appeal is still pending.

Case studies from Northern Ireland Law Centre (NILC)

- Bereaved dependent of Skilled Worker where there is a Coroner's process
 - The visa holder, the client's wife, died shortly after childbirth.
 - Applied to lift CoC for him to care for their two young children. Then subsequently applied for LOTR to enable him to participate in coroner's process.
 - The HO never responded to our CoC application however the issue is now resolved as Home Office granted new period of Private Life leave on a route to settlement (rather than LOTR) and without NRPF condition, after 5 months 17 days.
 - No decision on CoC application.

Some issues/questions to consider

- Order of CoC/FLR and the overlap in both applications
- Additional scrutiny of FLR
- Delays/mechanisms for expedition

Applicants who are ready to pursue JR

Case studies from TUP

- ZZ:
 - Nurse; single parent of 5 children following DV
 - Submitted own CoC in Feb 2024 - TUP assisted with further submissions, and then referred to Bhatt Murphy (BM) with prospect of JR
 - BM advised about RFI and refusal and made arguments including about:
 - DV and recovery, current financial situation, inability to return to Philippines, s55, public interest (e.g. LT benefit to NHS in terms of career progression, etc)
 - The applicant not making asylum/HR claim
 - The applicant still meeting requirements of SW visa
 - Circumstances being particularly compelling

- Provided WS, independent social worker (ISW) report, etc. The ISW was received late in the application process, so wasn't properly considered in the CoC
- PAP sent in June 2025 (i.e. over a year after CoC submission)
- CoC challenge put on hold due to visa expiry/renewal in Dec 2025
- Once new visa granted, applicant intends to submit a new CoC and if necessary JR new refusal decision
- WW - pursuing own JR (we have limited information).

Case study from ILC

- Health & social care worker where applicant has '3C leave' and pending asylum application.
 - Sponsor's license had been revoked.
 - Living in refuge to avoid street homelessness.
 - Refuge assisted applicant to make CoC.
 - The application was initially refused.
 - ILC sent PAP to challenge the refusal, but the refusal was upheld. In the interim, the applicant claimed asylum.
 - ILC therefore sent a second PAP to challenge both refusal decisions in December 2025.
 - The SSHD then agreed to reconsider the decision within 4 weeks.
 - On reconsideration, the CoC was granted, in early Feb 2026 (prior to asylum interview scheduled for the following week).
 - Arguments included reference to:
 - Considerations relating to her sponsor, in the context that the SW visa route has led to much exploitation and people coming to UK under false pretences
 - Reasonableness of return to Bangladesh, including country information about Bangladesh and gender-based violence and reference to the casework barriers that prevent removal
 - Fettering of discretion

- The assertion that she could notionally apply for and rely on asylum support and how this would fetter discretion²³; evidence included a letter from the refuge explaining that asylum support would not be appropriate alternative to public funds
- Domestic abuse and the compelling circumstances

Case study from IOM

- Refused and review dismissed. Considered JR issued but decided not to pursue and instead initially make an FLR application (and potentially a fresh CoC).

Some issues/questions to consider

- Very few people will be prepared to pursue JR
- Possible legal aid issues (particularly where Skilled Workers are meeting requirements of visa). Note that LA eligibility is likely to change in the period between CoC submission and JR
- Capacity demands of CoC
- Applicants meeting other requirements of visa
- Possible referral routes

²³ The policy guidance states: 'If the reasons why the applicant cannot be expected to leave are linked to a risk of persecution or ill treatment on return to their home country then the appropriate action is for them to make an asylum (protection) claim, where they will normally be entitled to apply for asylum support, not for the NRPF condition to be lifted.'

National stats

We have been told by the Home Office-convened NRPF Forum that the statistics for people on other visa types are included in the quarterly CoC data²⁴, but that they cannot currently be disaggregated. This was raised again most recently in the November 2025 NRPF Forum meeting and the HO noted: 'This had previously been raised within the HO as something which would be useful to have. The HO will continue to look into this'.

The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) of October 2024 states the following:

- 'since the 'Change of Condition' was extended to all immigration routes (other than Family or Private Life or Hong Kong BN(O) route) in October 2023, only 162 applications have been received from this cohort from 1 October 2023 to 1 October 2024. Although currently this data is gathered using the cases recorded on a manually gathered spreadsheet for discretion cases, as such cannot be treated as completely accurate or reliable data.'
- 'Since 'Change of Conditions' was extended to include all other immigration routes on a discretionary basis in October 2023, only 162 applications have been received up to the 1 October 2024. Of those 162 applications, 3 were granted, 9 were refused and 118 are awaiting a decision. It should, however, be noted this data has been gathered from a manual reporting tool and may not provide accurate or reliable data.'

A FOI was submitted on 20/3/25 asking for data about the number of CoCs granted 'to those on immigration routes other than family and private life routes (i.e. the cohort of migrants affected by the PA case and new policy instruction)', but this received the response on 13/5/25: 'Regarding your request the cost of locating and collating any relevant information and extracting the information to meet your request would exceed the appropriate limit of £600 specified in the Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees) Regulations 2004.'²⁵

²⁴ The latest data release is here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/border-force-transparency-data-q4-2024>

²⁵ FOI and response [here](#) for internal reference.

Broader context

The Skilled Worker route was discussed a lot in the news and in Parliament in 2025, particularly in terms of exploitation and net migration. Some key moments:

- [Statement of changes to the Immigration Rules: HC 733](#), 12 March 2025²⁶
 - The government acknowledged issues with sponsors having licenses revoked²⁷ and [explained](#) '[there is a] growing pool of care workers and senior care workers in this route who no longer have sponsorship [...] The changes require providers to try to recruit from this pool of workers who are seeking new employment, before seeking to sponsor new recruits from other immigration routes or from overseas.'
- [NAO report](#), March 2025
 - Highlighted lack of review of how the SW route is working out and recommended it 'improve its understanding of the extent to which the Skilled Worker visa route is meeting its objectives'²⁸
- [Immigration White Paper](#) 'Restoring control over the immigration system', Published 12 May 2025
 - Various changes including an end to the overseas recruitment for social care visas. In the surrounding debates the government:
 - [stated](#) 'we also need to act on social care. The introduction of the social care visa led not only to a huge increase in migration, but to a shameful and deeply damaging increase in abuse and exploitation.'

²⁶

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statement-of-changes-to-the-immigration-rules-hc-733-12-march-2025>

²⁷ FreeMovement reports that 'According to the most recent Home Office transparency statistics, between July 2024 and June 2025 the Home Office revoked 1,948 sponsor licences — a dramatic increase from 937 in the previous year.' - see:

<https://freemovement.org.uk/surge-in-sponsor-licence-enforcement-what-immigration-practitioners-need-to-know>

²⁸ 'By completing and publishing its evaluation of the Skilled Worker visa route within the next three months; complete an assessment of what happens to people at the end of their visa period by the end of 2025, five years after the route was introduced; and identify the data it needs – including from other departments – to allow it to better understand how the route is being used on an ongoing basis;'

When proper checks were finally brought in, 470 care providers had their licence to sponsor international staff suspended, and 39,000 care workers were displaced. Overseas recruitment to care jobs has since dropped, but it must not surge like that again. It is time we addressed the domestic issues, including with a proper fair pay agreement, to show respect to people who do some of the most important jobs in the country. We are therefore ending overseas recruitment of care workers. It will continue to be possible to extend existing visas, and to recruit displaced care workers and people on other visas, with working rights, who are already in the UK.'

- [stated](#) 'for too long, sectors have become reliant on [Skilled Workers] to fill those gaps and have not sought to invest in our domestic workforce. The reforms that we have set out in the immigration White Paper are addressing the balance and reversing the long-term trends of overseas recruitment increasing, at the same time as reducing investment in skills and training and increasing levels of unemployment and economic inactivity in the UK, which I know we are all concerned about in our communities.'

- Government [evaluation of the Skilled Worker Route](#), Published 12 May 2025²⁹
- [Statement of changes to the Immigration Rules: HC 997](#), 1 July 2025
 - Salary threshold for general Skilled Workers increased from £38,700 to £41,700 and overseas recruitment for care workers and senior care workers ended on 22 July 2025.
- Skilled worker visas - PAC Inquiry, published 4 July 2025
 - Written evidence received until 24/4/25 - these can be found [here](#), including evidence from TUP re NRPF
 - Oral evidence given on 8/5/25 - see [here](#) - mention of destitution in the context of visas having been revoked
 - [Report](#) published 4 July 2025
- [Consultation](#) about 'earned settlement', Published 20 November 2025

Where are we?

- Most people decide not to proceed in light of risks/likely delays vs benefits
- No known successful applications after PA, except where an FLR application or asylum claim is pending
- Applicants need to be prepared to take risks and probably proceed to JR
- CoCs in these cases are often demanding on capacity
- Context is not favourable

Where might we go from here?

Cases that may be worth pursuing

- Where applicant is eligible for legal aid (as case is likely to require JR)
- Where applicant is meeting other requirements of visa (e.g. is still studying/working to the same extent)
- Where applicant is prepared to take risk of visa cancellation
- Where applicant/advisor is prepared to potentially proceed to JR
- Where applicant has clear alternative basis for FLR (e.g. parent of British child) and means to apply

Practical support

- Support with CoCs in limited cases above
- Information sharing (for applicants and advisors)
- Forum to share experience (including about ongoing JRs)
- Advice about support that is not a 'public fund'.

Data collection

It may be helpful to collect data, e.g.:

- Number of people approaching them for support
- Visa categories
- Why people need RPF
- Numbers of people who go ahead with CoCs and outcomes