



AUREOL GLOBAL
CONNECTIONS

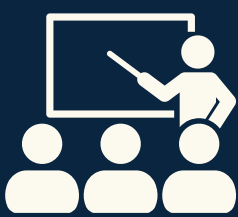
INTERNATIONAL REACH - LOCAL SERVICE

The bar is **higher**. The skills gap **remains**.

The UK's Skilled Worker route is now **more selective**.

Candidates face higher language requirements, tighter occupation eligibility and increased salary thresholds.

At the same time, the industries responsible for building, manufacturing and moving the economy are **still struggling to find** experienced people.



B2 English

New Skilled Worker applicants must demonstrate B2-level English across reading, writing, speaking and listening, increased from B1 for first applications made from 8 January 2026.



£41,700

The usual salary requirement is now at least £41,700 or the occupation's going rate, whichever is higher. Limited exceptions and discounted routes apply.



RQF Level 6

Most sponsored roles must now be skilled to graduate level. Selected medium skilled roles can remain eligible through the Temporary Shortage List or transitional arrangements. The worker does not personally need a degree, but the job must be skilled to that level.

The new system is **deliberately selective**. The answer is not to lower standards. It is to find workers who **already meet them**.

The regulations have changed

1

Role eligibility

The correct occupation code must be identified. The position must normally be RQF Level 6 or appear on an eligible shortage list.

2

Salary compliance

The salary must meet both the applicable general threshold and the occupation's going rate.

3

English verification

New applicants must meet B2 English unless they qualify through an accepted degree, nationality or other permitted form of evidence.

4

Sponsorship

The employer must hold the correct sponsor licence, assign a Certificate of Sponsorship and maintain the required compliance records.

5

Employer costs

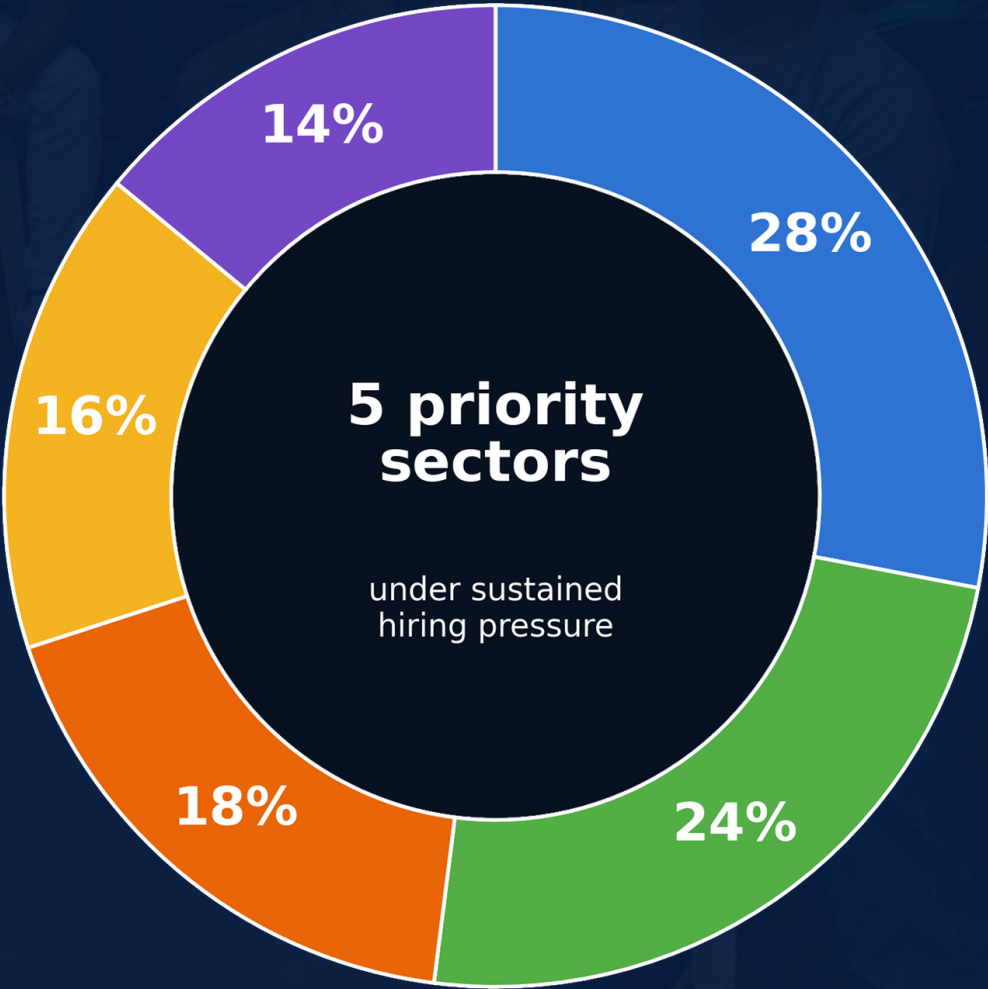
The Immigration Skills Charge for the first 12 months is currently **£480** for a small or charitable sponsor and **£1,320** for a medium or large sponsor, with further charges for each additional six months.

6

Visa and mobilisation

The application, documentation, relocation and onboarding process must be properly coordinated.

Demand is persistent and extensive



	Construction and infrastructure	28%
	Engineering and technical services	24%
	Manufacturing	18%
	Transport and logistics	16%
	Automotive and advanced manufacturing	14%



More than 1 in 4

Employer reported vacancies are difficult to fill because applicants lack the required skills.



55,000 Vacancies

UK manufacturing has approximately 55,000 long term unfilled positions, estimated to cost the economy **£6 billion** in lost output each year.



24% over 55

Almost one-quarter of the construction workforce is aged over 55, compared with approximately 13% in 2000. The average construction worker is now over 42.

The UK is not facing one national labour shortage. It is facing a series of specialist shortages concentrated in the sectors the economy relies upon most.

Where the workforce is being lost



Retirement

Experienced tradespeople, drivers, technicians and engineers are reaching retirement age faster than equivalent replacements are being trained.



Competing sectors

People with transferable technical skills can move into industries offering better progression, working conditions, flexibility or long-term security.



Reduced purchasing power

In February to April 2026, regular earnings grew by **3.4%** in cash terms but by only **0.1%** after inflation. Pay increased, but the real improvement in workers' living standards was minimal.



A narrower international pipeline

Main-applicant Skilled Worker visa applications fell by 39% in the year ending June 2026. That does not prove the regulations were the sole cause, but it shows that the available international recruitment pipeline has already contracted considerably.

What happens without skilled workers?

Role remains vacant

Existing capacity is immediately reduced.



Work is redistributed

Overtime, contractor spending and pressure on experienced staff increase.



Delivery Slows

Projects, maintenance, production and customer orders take longer.



Costs Rise

Delays, rework, downtime and lost opportunities affect margins.



Experienced Staff Leave

Pressure creates further burnout, absence and turnover.



The shortage deepens

Another vacancy opens before the original skills gap has been solved.



£6 Billion in lost output

The estimated annual cost of long term **manufacturing** vacancies alone.

International skills and domestic training must work together



Protect capacity

Keep production lines, fleets, workshops and construction projects operational.



Transfer knowledge

Experienced workers can support apprentices, junior employees and developing teams.



Deliver investment

Infrastructure, housing, energy, transport and manufacturing investment only creates economic value when businesses have the people needed to deliver it.



Support regional growth

Technical and industrial roles are often concentrated outside London, supporting employment, supply chains and communities throughout the UK.



Create breathing room

International recruitment fills immediate gaps while apprenticeships, training and domestic skills programmes develop longer term capacity.

A more predictable route



Profile

Define the real technical and behavioural requirements.



Source

Access a larger international candidate pool.



Test

Verify practical ability before mobilisation.



Select

Use structured interviews and consistent scoring.



Mobilise

Coordinate permits, relocation and onboarding.

Don't just read what candidates say they can do.
See them do it.

Work with Aureol Global Connections

100%

Success Rate

If we're given a role to source for, we find highly qualified candidates every time.

4,000

Workers Placed

in businesses since 2022 in hard to fill roles

4

Offices Worldwide

with testing facilities in Philippines, Dubai and South Africa

Some of our clients

LIEBHERR



Hertz

KARSTENSENS SKIBSVÆRFT A/S



Keltech



**MIDLAND
STEEL**



**Brett
Martin**

**Practical testing.
International sourcing.
End-to-end mobilisation.**

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Sources: GOV.UK Skilled Worker guidance; Home Office Monthly Entry Clearance Visa Applications, June 2026; Skills England Annual Skills Report 2026; Office for National Statistics Average Weekly Earnings, June 2026; Make UK Industrial Strategy Skills Commission; CITB Industry Picture; Logistics UK Skills and Employment Update.