



## KNOWLEDGE OF LIFE IN THE UK: REQUIREMENTS FOR SETTLEMENT APPLICATIONS

### CONTENTS:

- [BACKGROUND](#)
- [WHAT IS KNOWLEDGE OF LIFE \(KOL\)?](#)
- [EXEMPTIONS](#)
- [CATEGORIES THAT ARE NOT SUBJECT TO THE KOL REQUIREMENT](#)
- [TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS](#)
- [QUESTIONS & ANSWERS](#)
  - [GENERAL QUERIES](#)
  - [LIFE IN THE UK TEST](#)
  - [ESOL WITH CITIZENSHIP](#)

### [BACKGROUND](#)

It is our policy that those who wish to settle in the United Kingdom (UK) should be encouraged to play a full part in the wider community.

Since November 2005 people applying for naturalisation have been required to show that they have sufficient knowledge of the English language, and of life in the UK, by passing either the “Life in the UK test” or obtaining an “ESOL with citizenship” certificate.

From **2 April 2007**, adults aged 18 or over but under the age of 65 who apply for settlement (indefinite leave to remain or indefinite leave to enter) have needed to

demonstrate Knowledge of Language and of “Life in the UK”, unless they are applying under one of the categories which does not contain this requirement.

Applications submitted for settlement on or after 2 April 2007 are required to provide evidence of Knowledge of Life (KOL). Applications made before 2 April 2007 and considered on after 2 April 2007 will be considered under the previous immigration rules and evidence of knowledge of language and life in the UK is not required.

[Back to contents](#)

## **WHAT IS KNOWLEDGE OF LIFE (KOL)?**

**This is the need to demonstrate knowledge of life in the United Kingdom as well as language ability.** There are two ways in which you can do this:

- If you are already at or above ESOL (English for Speakers of other Languages) Entry 3 standard of English you will be able to undertake a specially developed short test called ‘**Life in the UK Test**’.

**or**

- If you have not reached ESOL Entry 3 you will need to gain an approved English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) qualification through attending an **ESOL course which includes citizenship materials**

Details of the two ways in which you can meet the KOL requirement are set out below.

If you are not sure what your level of language ability is, you should work through the tutorial on the Life in the UK Test website at [www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk](http://www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk)

### **Life in the UK Test**

You may take this test if your language ability is the equivalent of ESOL Entry 3 or above. You will need to take the test on a computer at one of the 95 or so Life in the UK Test centres throughout the UK. The test is managed on behalf of the Home Office by Ufi Ltd, which is responsible for "learndirect" and "UK online centres".

The test consists of 24 questions based on the information contained in the handbook *"Life in the United Kingdom: A Journey to Citizenship"*. The handbook was originally published in December 2004 and a revised Second edition of the handbook was published in spring 2007. You need to read the Second edition of the handbook. The handbook, priced £9.99 is available from all TSO bookshops

(The Stationery Office) and other good bookshops. The test itself currently costs £33.28 (VAT inclusive) and you will be told the result on the day.

Further details can be found on the Life in the UK test website at: [www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk](http://www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk). This website also contains a full list of centres where you can take the test. Alternatively you can call the Life in the UK Test helpline on 08000 154 245.

If you pass this test you will **not** need to produce additional proof of your knowledge of English. This is because to pass the test you will need to be competent in English.

### **ESOL with Citizenship Content Courses**

If you are not yet at ESOL Entry 3 level you will be able to meet the new requirements by successfully completing a language course, involving learning materials which includes information about citizenship. These materials are intended to enable you to gain sufficient knowledge of the UK at the same time as developing your knowledge of the English language. In order to meet the requirements for settlement, you will need to show that you have progressed from one ESOL level to the next.

Courses are available at many Further Education, Adult and Community Colleges across the UK. You will need to make sure the college course that you enrol for includes the "language with citizenship" materials and that the college will issue a letter to confirm this when you have successfully gained your qualification. ESOL certificates are issued by one of the approved [Awarding Bodies](#) and not by Colleges themselves, so you will be gaining an externally verified qualification that might be useful to you in work or further study.

You can call the learndirect helpline on 0800 100 900 for details of ESOL providers. Further details on ESOL courses can be found in [Questions and Answers](#) below.

### **EXEMPTIONS**

There are a limited number of exemptions for having to meet the KOL requirement. These are on the basis of:

- **Age**

Those who are aged under 18 years of age and those who are aged 65 years and over at the time of application will not have to satisfy the KOL requirement.

- **Physical impairment**

The KOL requirement will be waived for those with a physical condition which would make it unreasonable to expect them to fulfil the requirement. For example, those suffering from a long term illness or disability which severely restricts the ability to attend ESOL classes or to prepare for the test, or a person who is deaf and without speech or suffers from any speech impediment which limits ability to converse.

- **Mental Impairment**

The KOL requirement will be waived for those with a mental condition which would make it unreasonable to expect them to fulfil the requirement. For example, a person who has a mental impairment and, although able to meet the full capacity requirement, is not able to speak or learn a language.

In cases where a person claims to have a physical disability or a mental impairment the exemption request must be supported by original medical evidence from an appropriate medical practitioner for example a registered NHS Consultant.

[Back to contents](#)

### **CATEGORIES THAT ARE NOT SUBJECT TO THE KOL REQUIREMENT**

Persons applying under the following categories do not need to satisfy KOL.

- Foreign and Commonwealth citizens on discharge from HM Forces (including Gurkhas)
- Spouses of Foreign and Commonwealth citizens on discharge from HM Forces (including Gurkhas)
- Victims of domestic violence
- Bereaved Spouses/Bereaved Unmarried Partners/Bereaved Civil Partners
- Parents/Grandparents/Other Dependant Relatives - applications made under Paragraph 317 of the Immigration Rules. Please note applicants in this category aged between 18-64 are not subject to KOL
- Retired Persons of Independent Means, because everyone applying for settlement under it will be aged 65 or over at the time they apply
- European Nationals and their non EEA family members, making an application under the Free Movement of Persons provisions (not Immigration Rules based).
- Turkish nationals applying under ECAA
- Persons applying for settlement following 5 years leave as a refugee
- Persons applying for settlement following 6 years Discretionary Leave
- Persons applying for settlement following 4 years Exceptional Leave To Remain
- Persons applying for settlement following 5 years Humanitarian Protection
- Applicants granted settlement outside of the Immigration Rules

- Dependant Children of persons in pre Point Based System employment categories (paragraphs 128-193 of the Immigration Rules excluding 135L-135K) and persons applying for settlement in the United Kingdom as a businessman, self-employed person, investor, writer, composer or artist (paragraphs 200-239 of the Immigration Rules). This includes children who are 18 or over at the time of their application.

[Back to contents](#)

## **TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS**

Those applying for settlement who have met all the criteria except for the KOL requirement have had their applications automatically considered instead as an application for further leave to remain under transitional arrangements. This arrangement came to an end on 30 March 2009.

From 31 March 2009, those submitting a settlement application without the necessary KOL evidence may have their application refused. We do not refund fees where applications are refused.

[Back to contents](#)

## **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

### **General Queries**

#### **1. When was the requirement introduced for settlement?**

The requirement was introduced for all applications for settlement posted to the Home Office on or after 2 April 2007.

#### **2. When was this announced?**

The intention to introduce knowledge of life and language testing to settlement applications was announced in the UK Border Agency's 5 year strategy (published in February 2005), and the UK Border Agency's review (published July 2006) it was confirmed that by April 2007 all migrants wishing to settle in the UK would have to have English language skills.

#### **3. Why was it introduced for settlement?**

By introducing knowledge of life and language testing at settlement stage, we wished to ensure that migrants have an understanding of life in the UK and the requisite skills to allow them to fully integrate. Studying for and taking the test

gives applicants the practical knowledge needed to live in this country and to take part in society.

#### **4. Why was the requirement introduced for citizenship first?**

It was always envisaged that there would be a phased introduction of these new requirements. This was to enable us to develop robust systems and to develop capacity in a structured manner. KOL has been a requirement for citizenship for many years. The changes introduced in July 2004 simply formalised the requirement by specifying the level of competence required and bringing in a more objective assessment process. We then added to this the citizenship knowledge requirement and this, the final stage, was extending the requirement to settlement applicants. Because the settlement requirements are identical to the citizenship requirements, over time the need for citizenship testing will reduce.

#### **5. What do I need to do if I think I am exempt?**

You will need to include in your application to the UK Border Agency, detailed reasons for claiming exemption. You should contact the Immigration Enquiry Bureau on 0870 606 7766 for further advice if you are unsure.

#### **6. What evidence do I need to provide if I think I am exempt?**

You will need to supply documentary evidence of your age, e.g. a passport or birth certificate, or evidence from an NHS qualified medical practitioner. The evidence should give details of any physical and/or mental health condition(s) that prevent you from studying for or taking the test, or prevents you undertaking an ESOL language course. You should be aware that test centres can cater for applicants with a range of disabilities, for example limited mobility and visual impairment, and you should contact your nearest centre for advice on what they provide.

If you are claiming exemption because you are applying for settlement under one of the categories to which knowledge of language and life does not apply, you should ensure that you can meet the strict criteria applied in each of these categories and can supply the documentary evidence required to support this.

#### **7. Why aren't any other categories of applicants exempt?**

We believe that all migrants should have the opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills they need to function effectively in UK society. We do not want any individual to feel isolated or alone here. Therefore we will generally only exempt those people who would find it extremely difficult to demonstrate knowledge of life and language.

**8. Why does someone whose first language is English, or has lived and been educated here have to meet the requirement?**

The requirement is that applicants must have knowledge of both English language **and** of life in the UK. The Life in the UK test allows those applicants who are already English speakers a simple way to demonstrate that they also meet the KOL requirement.

**9. I have invested financially and employ people in the UK, why should I have to prove I can speak English and have knowledge of life in the UK?**

Investors and employers still need to interact with other members of the community, even for basic functions such as shopping or going to the doctor. Embracing a common language and an understanding of life in the UK is important in achieving effective integration, good race relations and community cohesion. This applies equally to all migrants including those who make an economic contribution to the UK such as investors and employers.

**10. The Highly Skilled Migrant Programme/Tier 1 (General) has recently introduced a language requirement. Will people who have come to the UK by this route be exempt from the knowledge of life and language requirement at settlement stage?**

No. Migrants who entered the UK using the HSMP/Tier 1 (General) route will need to provide the same knowledge of life and language evidence as any other applicant.

While HSMP/Tier 1 (General) migrants may have already demonstrated that they meet the language requirements for settlement, they will not have previously had to demonstrate knowledge of life in the UK. The "Life in the UK" test provides a simple way for those people already fluent in English (such as Highly Skilled/Tier 1 (General) Migrants) to demonstrate that they also meet the KOL requirement.

**11. Will EEA nationals need to take the test?**

Not when applying for permanent residence as an EEA national. The provisions of the European Charter concerning free movement of labour mean that we cannot impose these requirements on nationals of the EEA. However, we would encourage EEA nationals to read the handbook, or to undertake language courses if they need to, so that they can lead full and active lives here. EEA nationals will however have to meet the KOL requirement if they go on to apply for naturalisation as a British citizen or if they apply for settlement under the Immigration Rules rather than through residency under European Law.

**12. What about those living in the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man – will they need to provide knowledge of life and language evidence?**

People applying for settlement in the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man will have to either take the test or successfully complete an ESOL with citizenship course by progressing from one level to the next. Tests on the Islands will be paper-based and will consist of 25 questions, with 6 questions being based on local information about the island where the test is taken.

**13. Why is it becoming harder to get settlement?**

We simply want to ensure that those with a long-term future in the UK have the right skills to allow them to fully participate in their wider community. Most people already do so, and this requirement actively encourages everyone to do so.

**14. Will I be refused settlement if I continue to fail the test or cannot progress one ESOL level?**

Yes. Unless you qualify for an [exemption](#) or one of the [categories not subject to KOL](#), you will only be granted settlement if you can provide evidence of KOL.

If you apply for settlement and meet all the requirements except for KOL (either because you do not provide any evidence of KOL or the evidence submitted is not to the required standards) your application for settlement will automatically be considered as one for further leave to remain (for applications submitted up to and including 30 March 2009 – see [transitional arrangements](#) above). If you submit an application for settlement on or after 31 March 2009 and you have not provided evidence that you meet the KOL requirement, your application may be refused.

If your leave is due to expire before you can obtain the necessary KOL evidence, you should apply to the UK Border Agency to extend your current leave to remain. Failure to do so will mean that you are in the UK illegally and may be subject to removal.

**15. Will I be removed from the UK if I am unable to obtain evidence of KOL?**

There are no plans to remove people from the UK if they continue to meet the other requirements of the Immigration Rules, but have not been able to meet the KOL requirement.

If you do not meet the requirements for settlement you must ensure that you apply for further leave to remain in the normal way. If you do not have valid leave to remain in the UK, or break the conditions of your leave to remain, you may be subject to removal.



**16. If I pass the ESOL course/Life in the UK test will there be a time limit or will the pass stand indefinitely?**

A pass in either the Life in the UK test or an ESOL with citizenship course is not time-limited and will remain valid indefinitely. You can also use the result to help you meet the requirements for citizenship if you wish to take this further step in the journey.

**17. Will this increase the overall fee?**

For some, this will increase the overall cost of getting settlement. But with planning, people can spread the cost over a period of time by getting on to a course at an earlier stage, and the changes will allow us to put greater resources into helping those people with the greatest need.

**18. Will my fee be refunded if I apply for settlement but I am not eligible?**

No. The fee is to cover the cost of processing an application, regardless of the outcome.

**19. Can I submit my application early?**

No. Applications for settlement cannot be submitted more than 28 days before you can meet the residence requirements for settlement.

**20. Will I be refused if I submit my application more than 28 days before I meet the residence requirements for settlement?**

Yes. It is our policy to refuse applications that are submitted more than 28 days before a person can meet the residence requirements for settlement.

**21. What should I do if I can't pass a Life in the UK test or ESOL course before my leave expires?**

If your leave is due to expire before you can obtain the necessary evidence, you should apply to the UK Border Agency to extend your leave to remain. Failure to do so will mean that you are in the UK illegally and may be subject to removal. To find out how to extend your leave to remain you should either contact the Immigration Enquiry Bureau on 0870 606 7766, or visit our website at [www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk). It will be cheaper for you to apply for further leave to remain than for settlement if you do not have evidence that you can meet the language and KOL requirement.

**22. My ESOL course does not finish until after my leave to remain has expired, what do I do?**

You should apply for further leave to remain before your current period of leave expires. Alternatively, if your tutor thinks you may already have progressed from one level to the next, he or she might recommend that you take an ESOL Skills for Life examination before the end of the course.

To find out how to extend your leave to remain you should either contact the Immigration Enquiry Bureau on 0870 606 7766, or visit our website at [www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk)

**23. What should I do if I have tried to obtain KOL evidence but keep failing the test/course?**

You should ensure that you have valid leave to remain in the UK (to find out how to extend your leave to remain you should either contact the Immigration Enquiry Bureau on 0870 606 7766, or visit our website at [www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk)).

You should also continue to try and obtain the necessary knowledge of life evidence, either by studying for the Life in the UK test or your ESOL with citizenship course.

**24. If I need to extend my leave to remain how long will it be extended for?**

Your leave will be extended according to the provisions relevant to the category that you are in. For example, if you came to the UK as a spouse of a settled person and you continue to meet the criteria for that category, you can apply for and be granted further leave to remain any number of times on that basis.

**25. How many times can I extend my leave to remain while I am trying to obtain KOL evidence?**

There will be no limit on the number of times you (and your dependents) can extend your leave to remain in order to enable you to meet the KOL requirement. This is providing that you continue to meet the criteria for that category and make applications for further leave to remain when required. However, you will not qualify for settlement until the KOL requirement is met.

**26. If I am granted further leave to remain and pass the test before that limited leave expires will I be able to apply for settlement straight away?**

You will be able to apply for settlement as soon as you pass the test, as long as you satisfy the rest of the criteria and have completed the qualifying period for the application you are making.

**27. Will I have to pay a fee each time I extend my leave?**

Yes.

**28. Why will I have to pay a fee each time until I meet the requirement?**

The fee paid covers the costs of processing applications, therefore, each time an application is made a fee is charged.

**29. Will people still be able to be granted settlement from overseas?**

Spouses and partners of persons with settled status in the UK can apply for settlement from overseas, as long as their relationship has existed for four or more years. Since 2 April 2007 these applicants have also had to meet the KOL requirement or benefit from one of the [exemptions](#). As the Life in the UK test and ESOL courses cannot be taken overseas, it is unlikely that many applicants will qualify for settlement in this way. These applicants can qualify for settlement in the UK as soon as they satisfy the KOL requirement and will not have to complete an additional qualifying period.

**30. Will my dependants have to meet the requirements?**

If your dependants are aged 18 or over and under 65, they will also need to meet the requirement, unless they fall into one of the [exempt categories](#).

**31. What happens if my dependant spouse/partner doesn't meet the requirement but I do?**

Your dependant spouse/partner should apply for further leave to remain. The Life in the UK test is about qualifying for settlement, not about remaining in the UK. No-one will be asked to leave the UK just because they have not been able to pass this test.

Our experience in the citizenship context is that it is unusual for an applicant and a dependant spouse/partner not to qualify together.

**32. What happens if my dependant spouse/partner meets the requirement but I don't?**

A dependant spouse/partner over the age of 18 may take the Life in the UK test and pass, but they will not be able to qualify for settlement as a dependant until the main applicant has qualified for settlement.

**33. What happens if my dependant spouse/partner continues to fail the test?**

A person's dependant spouse/partner can still qualify to remain in the UK, providing they continue to meet the criteria set out for dependant

spouse/partners, and they make applications for further leave to remain when required. However, they will not qualify for settlement until the KOL requirement is met.

### **34. If I already have settlement will I need to meet the KOL requirement for citizenship?**

The requirement to demonstrate KOL for citizenship applicants will remain. Applicants who have not demonstrated knowledge of life and language at settlement stage will have to do so before they can be naturalised as a British citizen. For further details of the requirement at citizenship stage please see the following page of our website:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/ukresidency/settlement/languageandlifeinuk/>

[Back to contents](#)

## **Life in the UK test**

### **35. How can I find out if my English is good enough to take the test?**

If you are not sure what your level of language is, you should work through the tutorial on the Life in the UK test website [www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk](http://www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk) . If you do not fully understand the information then it is likely you will need to enrol on an ESOL with citizenship course.

### **36. What about those living in the Channel Islands – will they need to pass the test?**

People applying for settlement in the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man will have to take the test (or successfully complete an ESOL with citizenship course). Tests on the Islands will be paper-based and will consist of 25 questions, with 6 questions being based on local information about the island where the test is taken.

### **37. What does the test consist of?**

The test will be taken on a computer at one of around 95 Life in the UK Test centres in the UK. The test consist of 24 questions based on the information contained in chapters 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the Second edition of the handbook *"Life in the United Kingdom: A Journey to Citizenship"*. 45 minutes will be allowed for the test, but most people are able to complete it in less time.

We advise you to read them very carefully and make notes. Also look at the "Prepare for the test" section of the Life in the UK Test website.

### **38. Does the test include history?**

No. We decided when testing was first introduced that it would be unfair for migrants to have to answer questions that many British people would have difficulty with. However, reading the history chapter will help people better understand some of the later chapters, especially those on the British electoral system and on the UK today.

Chapters 7 and 8 contain useful information about the UK and candidates are not be tested on these chapters. Chapter 9 is about getting involved with the community and whilst we will not be testing on this chapter we recommend that you read it carefully if you want to become an active citizen. This change is in line with the initial recommendations of the independent Life in the UK Advisory Group.

### **39. Will the same questions be used each time?**

No. Applicants will have to answer 24 questions chosen randomly, but all based on the contents of the handbook. If you take the test in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man some of the questions will relate to that country/island.

### **40. Is the test available in any other languages?**

The test is offered routinely in English. However, if you are taking the test in a centre based in Wales you may ask to take a test in the Welsh language, or if taking the test in Scotland you may ask to take the test in Scottish Gaelic. You can get further details from your test centre.

### **41. What is the pass mark for the test?**

The pass mark varies slightly, based on the questions asked in each test, but will generally be in the region of 75%. This variation in the pass mark is a normal feature of this type of test, and ensures a fair result for all candidates. Candidates will not be informed of their overall mark but will be told if they have passed or failed. Candidates who fail the test will be given advice on their areas of weakness and the topics in the handbook they should revise.

### **42. Will I get a certificate?**

You will get a letter which proves you have been successful. It is called your **Pass Notification Letter**. It needs to be kept safe and then submitted with your completed settlement application form when you send it to the Home Office. As

confirmation, the test centre will also notify the Home Office of all results electronically.

#### **43. Will there be training or coaching available for the test?**

Guidance is available on the [Life in the UK Test website](#). Visit the Navigation tutorial to practice finding your way around the test system.

Some Further Education and Adult colleges are offering preparatory courses for the test, and in the future some private sector colleges may do so too.

The only study guide which is officially endorsed by the Home Office is the "*Life in the United Kingdom: Official Citizenship Test Study Guide*" The guide is available from all TSO bookshops ([The Stationery Office](#)) and other good bookshops and is priced at £5.99 (ISBN: 9780113413249). **Please note:** This study guide does not contain the learning materials for the test and should be read in conjunction with the "*Life in the United Kingdom: A Journey to Citizenship*" 2nd Edition (2007) handbook.

There are a number of other so-called "study guides" to the Life in the UK test available commercially; they vary greatly in quality. None are officially endorsed, and none contain genuine test questions, even though they might say they do. Some of these study guides are of limited value and some will actually mislead you, so you should think carefully before you spend your money.

#### **44. Can I practice taking the test?**

The Life in the UK Test website ([www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk](http://www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk)) includes a short tutorial to help you prepare for the test. At the test centre you will have ten minutes to try a short practice test before the real test starts.

#### **45. Will those who pass the Life in the UK Test still have to prove knowledge of English to ESOL Entry 3?**

No. The language used in the UK test will be at ESOL Entry 3 level and so applicants who pass the test will automatically have shown that they have the required level of ability in English.

#### **46. Who manages and runs the Life in the UK Test?**

The Life in the UK Test service is managed by Ufi Ltd on behalf of the Home Office. Ufi Ltd is an organisation based in Sheffield, which is responsible for "learn direct" and "UK online centres". It was established by the Government in 1998 to promote e-learning. It operates a network of more than 2,000 learning centres providing access to a range of e-learning opportunities.

#### **47. What are Life in the UK Test centres?**

Each test centre is an independent organisation with experience in delivering courses and computerised tests for English language, maths and IT. They specialise in supporting adult learners who are new to computers. Each one has had to meet rigorous criteria for selection and approval as a Life in the UK Test Centre.

#### **48. How can I find a test centre?**

The addresses and contact details of test centres can be found on the Life in the UK Test Website [www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk](http://www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk). Alternatively you can contact the Life in the UK Test helpline, telephone number 0800 015 4245.

#### **49. What happens if there is no test centre near me?**

There are around 95 centres throughout the UK including Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland. You can choose the one most convenient for you.

#### **50. How do I book a test? When are the centres open?**

You can contact a test centre during opening hours by telephone or in person. Centres offer testing at different times. You can find these details on the Life in the UK test website [www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk](http://www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk) or by contacting the Life in the UK Test helpline 0800 015 4245.

#### **51. What is the waiting time for taking the test?**

This will vary from centre to centre, but you should not normally have to wait for more than one month.

#### **52. Will I have to pay for a Life in the UK test?**

Yes. Everyone sitting the test will have to pay a fee. There will be no exemptions. The stand-alone Life in the UK test currently costs £33.28 (VAT inclusive). The fee covers the cost of administration, which is in line with Government policy that the costs of providing services should be recovered from those people using them. The Life in the UK Test website ([www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk](http://www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk)) or the UK Test Helpline will give information on the methods of payment accepted by individual centres.

#### **53. What happens if I have to cancel or postpone my test?**

Tell the test centre as soon as possible. The test centre will try to offer an alternative date for you to sit the test. If you give less than 7 days' notice, the test

centre may charge a £10 administration fee. Please check with the test centre to find out if this is the case before booking your test.

**54. If I fail my test will I have to pay to re-sit the test?**

Yes. The normal fee of £33.28 (VAT inclusive) will apply.

**55. How many times can I take the test?**

There is no limit to the number of times you can take the test. Candidates are advised to study the handbook further before trying again and feedback is given to unsuccessful candidates to help with this. However, if you repeatedly fail the test it may mean that you should consider taking an ESOL with citizenship course instead.

**56. What happens if I repeatedly fail the test?**

You will need to wait until your knowledge of life in the UK, as set out in the handbook, is at the required level before trying again. You may also want to check that your English is up to the required standard of ESOL Entry 3, as this could be a factor in your performance. You are strongly advised to visit the Life in the UK Test Website ([www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk](http://www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk)) which includes a short tutorial to help you prepare for the test and see if you are ready to sit the test. If you still cannot pass the test you may want to consider taking an [ESOL with citizenship](#) course or private tuition in preparation.

**57. Where can I get the “*Life in the United Kingdom: A Journey to Citizenship*” Handbook?**

The handbook, price £9.99 available from all TSO bookshops (The Stationery Office) and other good bookshops. If it is not readily available it can be ordered from TSO by the following ways:

Online at [www.tsoshop.co.uk](http://www.tsoshop.co.uk)

By telephone +44 (0)870 243 0123

by textphone +44 (0)870 240 3701 quoting ref:CTU

by fax +44 (0)870 243 0129

by post to:

Marketing,

TSO,

Freepost ANG4748,

Norwich,

NR3 1YX



**58. Has the handbook been revised?**

Yes. The revised Second Edition of the handbook was published in March 2007. This is the version of the handbook that applicants must use in order to sit the test.

**59. Were the test questions changed when the new book was published?**

Yes. A new test based on the Second Edition of the handbook was introduced on 2 April 2007.

**60. Why was the Life in the United Kingdom handbook and test revised?**

Feedback on the First Edition of the handbook suggested that it was written in a way that might make study a little difficult for those with language skills at or around ESOL Entry 3 level. The purpose of rewriting was, therefore, to make it more accessible to this group, update the information it contained and include some advice on key areas to concentrate on. We also added a glossary to help people whose first language is not English understand it better. The test was revised to reflect this.

**61. What happens if I have revised from the old version of the Life in the UK handbook?**

Candidates were only able to take the test based on the First Edition of the handbook up to 30 June 2007.

From 1 July 2007 onwards, the test has been based on the Second Edition of the handbook. You should therefore ensure that you have studied the correct version of the handbook.

**62. What identification should I take with me to the test?**

You will need to confirm your identity by presenting photographic identification at the test centre. Acceptable forms of ID are:

- a passport (from your country of origin)
- a UK photo card driving licence, full or provisional
- one of the following Home Office travel documents: a Convention Travel Document (CTD), a Certificate of Identity Document (CID) or a Stateless Person Document (SPD)
- an Immigration Status Document, endorsed with a UK Residence Permit and bearing a photo of the holder

If you have one, you must bring a document which shows your Home Office Reference, as you will be asked for this when registering for the test. Further information can be found at [www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk](http://www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk)

**63. What do I do if I do not have a form of identification accepted by the test centre?**

In exceptional circumstances, another form of identification can be accepted and arrangements will be made with the test centre. Such requests are considered on a case by case basis.

**64. What if I am visually impaired?**

The Life in the UK test handbook is available in large print for people with visual impairment. The computer can read out each question if required, and in some cases it will be possible for someone to help you enter your answers on the computer. Test centres can also provide support for people with special needs. Check this with your chosen test centre.

**65. I do not have access to the internet. What can I do?**

In England, contact UK Online Centres on 0800 77 1234 for details of local centres providing computer and internet access. In other parts of the UK, contact your local library or Citizen's Advice Bureau for information on free or low cost access to computers and the Internet.

**66. I have no experience of using a computer? Is the test only available on computer?**

Yes it is. However the test requires only very basic mouse or keyboard skills. The Life in the UK website contains free training and the test centres themselves specialise in supporting learners who are new to computers.

**67. Where can I get further information?**

Information can be found on the UK Border Agency website and from the Life in the UK Test website. Alternatively, you can telephone the Life in the UK Test Helpline on 08000 154 245, or, if you only want information about language courses, the learndirect helpline on 0800 100 900 or the learndirect website at [www.learndirect.co.uk](http://www.learndirect.co.uk) may be able to help.

The Home Office can be contacted by telephone or in writing at:

UK Border Agency  
Lunar House

40 Wellesley Road  
Croydon  
CR9 2BY

Telephone: 0870 606 7766

[Back to contents](#)

## **ESOL with Citizenship**

### **68. What is ESOL?**

ESOL stands for English for Speakers of Other Languages. The courses teach English to speakers of other languages who wish to live and work in the UK. Successfully gaining an ESOL qualification in speaking and listening, through attending a course with language and citizenship elements will mean that you meet the KOL requirement for settlement. It is also a useful qualification to have if you want to get a job.

### **69. Where do I go to find an ESOL course? What do I need to ask for?**

The courses are available at many Further Education and Adult and Community Colleges across the UK. If you wish to undertake a course that will meet the KOL requirement, you should make sure that the college course leads to an ESOL qualification from one of the approved [Awarding Bodies](#) and is taught using a citizenship syllabus. You should check that the college will give you a letter to this effect when you successfully complete the course.

### **70. Will I have to pay for a course?**

You should check with your local college whether or not you are eligible for free tuition and, if not, how much you will have to pay.

### **71. Why do I have to pay for the ESOL course?**

Paying for an ESOL course is consistent with other areas of further education, where beneficiaries are normally expected to meet at least part of the cost unless they are in receipt of benefits. This ensures that publicly-funded provision is targeted towards those in greatest need. It is important to emphasise that learners will not be paying the full costs of courses as there will still be a substantial subsidy from State funds.

### **72. What ESOL qualification do I need to obtain?**

If studying ESOL course in England, Wales and Northern Ireland:

- You need to progress one ESOL level in speaking and listening (in a course taught using a citizenship syllabus) and submit with your application for settlement the original certificate from the approved [Awarding Body](#) and a letter from the college to confirm that the course was taught with citizenship materials.

If studying an ESOL course in Scotland:

- You need to complete 1 ESOL unit at Access 2, Access 3 or Intermediate 1 level. You must include the original certificates from the [Awarding Body](#) and a letter from the college to confirm that the course was taught with citizenship materials with your settlement application.

### **73. Will you accept certificates from any college?**

No.

Certificates are issued by recognised [Awarding Bodies](#) only, and **not** by colleges themselves.

### **74. Who are the approved Awarding Bodies?**

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland the Awarding Bodies approved by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority are

- Cambridge ESOL
- City and Guilds (Pitmans)
- Edexcel, Education Development International (EDI)
- English Speaking Board (International) Ltd
- National Open College Network
- Open College of the North West and Trinity College, London

In Scotland, the only Awarding Body is:

- Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA)

### **75. Why should someone who already has an ESOL Entry 2 certificate – have to improve further when someone with no language ability only has to get to ESOL Entry 1?**

The point of this provision is to demonstrate that someone has the commitment to learn or improve their competence in English. Someone may have achieved ESOL Entry 2 in the past but may not necessarily have had the benefit of

studying in the context of the citizenship learning materials that have been specially developed to aid integration.

**76. Will I get a certificate at the end of the course?**

Yes. The Home Office will need to see the original ESOL certificate from one of the approved [Awarding Bodies](#) and a letter from the college where you studied confirming that you have progressed one ESOL level and that the qualification was gained on a course using citizenship materials. These documents must be submitted to the Home Office when you make your application for settlement.

**77. How long will it take me to complete the course?**

This will depend on the level of language skills that you have at the moment and how quickly you learn, however on average students take between 200 and 450 hours of tuition for each ESOL level. The college you approach should be able to advise you on how long it might be.

**78. I am eligible to apply for settlement. What do I do if I want to do an ESOL course with citizenship content now but all my local colleges have waiting lists?**

You should ensure that your leave to remain in the UK is still valid and, if necessary, apply for further leave to remain before your current period of leave expires. To find out how to extend your leave to remain you should either contact IEB on 0870 606 7766, or visit our website at [www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk)

Inevitably there has been increased demand for courses as the new requirements have come into force, and it is possible that there will be waiting lists in some areas. The Government will work to keep these waiting periods as short as possible. If you are in work and can afford to do so, you might want to consider going to a private sector language school to get your competence in English to the level you need to do the stand alone test. For your own protection, you are advised to go to a private college that is accredited under the "English UK" scheme, which will guarantee you a high quality course at a fair price.

**79. How long will I have to wait to get on a course?**

This will depend on what area you live in. Some areas will have waiting lists. We advise that you enrol on a course as soon as possible to ensure that you have completed it before your leave to remain expires.

**80. What if I can't get on an ESOL course or complete my ESOL course before my current leave expires?**

If your leave is due to expire before you can obtain the necessary KOL evidence you should apply to the UK Border Agency to extend your leave to remain. Failure to do so will mean that you are in the UK illegally and may be subject to removal. To find out how to extend your leave to remain you should either contact IEB on 0870 606 7766, or visit our website at [www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk)

### **81. Can I take an ESOL with citizenship course at any time?**

Yes, you can take the course at any time, even before you are considering applying for settlement. A recognised ESOL qualification, or part of one, has no expiry date. Bear in mind that you will need to keep the qualification you get and the letter from the college safely until you are eligible to apply for settlement/naturalisation.

### **82. What is English UK?**

English UK is the association for British Council accredited English language centres in the UK. It has a Website: [www.englishuk.com](http://www.englishuk.com) which contains details of privately owned schools, as well as state sector centres offering English courses in the UK. Your local further education college, library or Basic Skills provider will also be able to give you details of state sector courses.

### **83. Will the provision of ESOL with citizenship courses be increased?**

Demand for these programmes has been low in some areas until now. However, the Learning and Skills Council is experiencing a growth in learners for which ESOL with citizenship programmes are relevant. Therefore the LSC are planning to review the level of provision in order to better meet demand.

### **84. What should I do if I am doing an ESOL course but it doesn't have the citizenship content?**

This will not be valid for the purposes of becoming settled. You will have to ask your tutor if it is possible to introduce the citizenship materials, change to a course with citizenship content or, if you have reached ESOL Entry Level 3, take the stand alone Life in the UK Test.

### **85. Where can I get further information?**

Information can be found on the UK Border Agency website. Alternatively, you can telephone the learndirect helpline on 0800 100 900 or the learndirect website at [www.learndirect.co.uk](http://www.learndirect.co.uk) may be able to help.

The Home Office can be contacted by telephone or in writing at:

UK Border Agency  
Lunar House  
40 Wellesley Road  
Croydon  
CR9 2BY

Telephone: 0870 606 7766

[Back to contents](#)