



Home Office

BIOMETRIC RESIDENCE PERMIT (BRP) – OVERSEAS APPLICANT PROJECT

FAQ

Why are you changing the visa process for overseas customers?

BRPs provide a more secure, streamlined and faster method for applicants, businesses and our services to verify someone's identity and right to be in the UK. Introducing BRPs is a legal requirement that allows the Home Office to comply with EC regulations to issue BRPs in place of long term vignettes.

What is the main difference for customers?

Customers successfully applying for leave to enter the UK for more than six months will receive a multiple entry 30 day vignette (sticker) in their passport/travel document and the customer will no longer receive a longer term vignette.

What do customers need to know?

Customers will need to supply a postcode and 30 day travel window as part of their application. Once the customer makes an application they will then be required to book an appointment to enrol their biometrics at a Visa Application Centre (VAC) and they will submit their documents. Upon notification of a successful application, the documents will be collected. The passport/travel document will contain a 30 day vignette. Included as part of the documentation will be a decision letter informing them of their full period of leave to enter and when and where to collect their BRP.

What are the changes taking place for overseas customers?

The vignette is being replaced by a two stage process, which will see customers receive:

- a) a temporary vignette in their passport to gain access to the UK; and
- b) the longer term vignette is replaced by a Biometric Residence Permit which includes the full conditions of stay, which is to be collected once the customer enters the UK.

Who is responsible for the production of BRPs?

Delivery partners are working alongside the Home Office from production through to implementation to deliver the Biometric Residence Permits. The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) will deal with the production of cards and Post Office Limited will provide collection points for permits in the UK.

How will a customer know they need a Biometric Residence Permit?

The Visa4UK website will be updated with the relevant information and guidance for customers. The GOV.UK website will be updated to reflect the changes and direct people to relevant guidance.

Are there any changes to the application process as a result of these changes?

Anyone making an application must already provide their intended date of travel as part of the application process. It is also important that customers consider carefully their expected travel date when making their application, as they will only have a 30 day travel window. If they fail to travel within the period stated they will need to apply for a new short term visa to enter the UK.

How will the Border Force officers know that the customer has been given permission to enter and collect their BRP?

The short term vignette in the passport/travel document will provide the necessary information to Border Force Officers. It would be helpful also if the customer presents their decision letter to the Officer.

What will the BRP be used for and does it need to be carried at all times?

The purpose of the BRP is to evidence the holder's immigration status. Whilst the permit does not need to be carried at all times, it will need to be produced if the person needs to demonstrate their entitlement to work or to access benefits or public services. Foreign nationals may choose to use it as a means of demonstrating their conditions and entitlements whilst living in the UK.

What happens if a customer loses their BRP in the UK?

Customers must report promptly the loss of their Biometric Residence Permit and comply with the process to replace it. All losses and thefts of BRPs must be reported to the police and the Home Office immediately. If a customer loses their BRP in the UK, they must follow the standard replacement process and pay the required fee. Further details will be available on our website at: <https://www.gov.uk/biometric-residence-permits>

Someone has lost their BRP after travelling abroad however they have retained a valid passport. What do they need to do?

- If a BRP has been lost overseas, visa nationals should make an application for a single entry visa which will allow them to travel back to the UK. Once in the UK, they will need to make an application for a replacement BRP.
- A non-visa national will be able to travel using only their passport, but run the risk of losing their conditions upon arrival in the UK. They should be advised to apply for a replacement BRP visa following the correct procedure.

Who will be required to obtain a BRP?

Any non-EEA national applying from overseas for permission to stay in the UK for more than six months will be required to apply for a BRP. They have ten days to collect it when they first arrive in the UK.

Why can't the expiry date on the short term vignette be longer?

The short term vignette is issued only for the purpose of facilitating travel to the UK and to collect the BRP.

Will it cost more?

No, there is no additional fee for the customer. The visa application fee remains the same.

Can someone work in the UK before they collect their BRP?

If they need to start work before collecting their BRP, they will be able to evidence their right to work by producing the short validity (travel) vignette in their passport which they used to travel to the UK. This must still be current. In these circumstances, an employer will need to ask to see their BRP when this vignette expires.

What happens if someone is applying for a T2 ICT Short Term visa for 6 months and the additional 1 month is added to the visa – will they be issued with a BRP?

Yes, if the ICT short term visa is for 6 months then the Entry Clearance Officer will add one month, making it a total of 7 months, so a BRP will be issued.

What happens if the intended date of travel changes by the time the temporary visa has been issued?

If the short term vignette has expired or will expire before the customer travels then they will need to apply for a new short term vignette.

Students

Will students be allowed to enrol at their institutions and commence studying before they have collected their BRP?

We strongly encourage students to collect their BRPs as soon as possible, and prior to enrolment, so that just one check of their right to study is carried out by their institution. However, if an institution wishes to allow a student to enrol before they collect their BRP, they will be able to do so providing they check that the student's short-term vignette has not expired. The BRP will also need to be checked once it has been collected.

How quickly will an institution need to take a copy of a student's BRP?

The institution must take a copy of the BRP when the short term vignette expires.

How confident are you that the Post Office network can cope with demand, particularly with large numbers of students arriving in the UK at peak times?

Post Office Ltd. has significant experience of the issues surrounding BRPs with its involvement in registering biometrics for the in-country process, and particularly handling large volumes of service requests at peak periods of demand. The Post Office has worked closely with the Home Office to map the likely monthly demand across the country and has proposed using a network of 200 branches to handle BRP collections.

Can an educational establishment collect a BRP on behalf of someone under the age of 18 years?

Yes, if the young person under the age of 18 is registered as student at that particular establishment, they may make an application for authority to collect the BRP by completing the on-line form at: <https://www.gov.uk/biometric-residence-permits>.

What happens if there is a mistake on the short validity vignette?

As now, mistakes on vignettes should be corrected before travelling to the UK. This means that the customer must contact the Visa Application Centre with details of the error and provide supporting documentation as required.

What happens if there is an error on the BRP?

Any errors identified on a BRP must be promptly corrected. Customers must contact the Home Office immediately with details of the error and provide supporting documentation as required. Instructions on how to do this will be provided at the point the customer collects their BRP. In exceptional circumstances, customers may be required to provide their fingerprints again. Further details will be available on our website at: <https://www.gov.uk/biometric-residence-permits>

What happens if the customer fails to travel within the 30 day short validity (travel) vignette period?

Any customer who does not travel to the UK within the 30-day period of their vignette must apply to the Entry Clearance Officer for a replacement short-term visa to enable them to travel to the UK.

Is the replacement short-term visa just a replacement vignette or does the customer have to apply for the same visa again?

It is a replacement vignette. If the circumstances have not changed there is no requirement to reapply for a full period of leave.

How much does the short term replacement vignette cost?

Details of the most up to date fees can be found on the Gov.UK website at <https://www.gov.uk/visa-fees>.

If a migrant does not travel within the 30 day period and needs to apply for a replacement, will they have to resubmit biometrics?

Yes, the migrant will have to re-submit biometrics as they did with their initial application.

BRP Collection

How will customers know where to collect their BRP?

BRPs will be available from a designated Post Office branch in the UK. The details will be provided on the decision letter the customer receives notifying them that their application for permission to enter the UK has been successful. Once someone has arrived in the UK It will be possible for them to request that their BRP be transferred to a different Post Office for collection. However, this will incur a charge and will delay the collection of the BRP. It is therefore important for a customer to carefully identify the most convenient Post Office location when they are making their entry clearance application.

Why can't the BRP collection period be longer than 10 days?

The Home Office has established this requirement to reflect the importance of customers collecting their BRP as quickly as possible on arrival in the UK. As customers will need their BRP as evidence to allow sponsors to complete their checks.

Why do BRPs have to be collected in the UK?

Whilst it would be ideal for customers to have their BRP before they travelled this is not practical for a number of reasons which would add cost to the vignette fee and a degree of inconvenience to the customer. The customer could not travel before they had received their BRP; the specialist security printing could not be done in Entry Clearance Posts; and the cost of secure courier delivery from the UK to each customer would be prohibitively expensive. We are working closely with the education sector to ensure the process for students in collecting their BRP runs as smoothly as possible.

What happens if the customer needs to travel (out of the UK) before they have collected their BRP?

The customer can use their 30 day short validity (travel) vignette for multiple entries until it has expired, but they need to be aware that they will not be able to return to the UK once the vignette has expired and they would then have to apply for a new short validity (travel) vignette.

What happens if the travel document is lost before collecting the BRP?

If a customer loses their passport or travel document immediately after arriving in the UK they will be unable to collect their BRP in the usual way.

The customer must notify the Home Office immediately by emailing BRPCollection@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk. Further details will be available on our website at: <https://www.gov.uk/biometric-residence-permits>

How can the customer change the designated Post Office?

The customer will need to contact the Post Office directly to make this request, and will have to pay a fee to the Post Office.

Can someone collect the BRP on behalf of someone else?

The named individual or a family member who is 18 years or older who has travelled to the UK with that individual may collect the BRP on their behalf. They will need to provide evidence that they have travelled together. We will also put in place a process to enable limited collections by pre-approved representatives. Further details will be available on our website at:

<https://www.gov.uk/biometric-residence-permits>

Can someone collect my BRP on my behalf?

There will be situations where a customer may be unable to collect their BRP in person or unaccompanied, or it may be inappropriate to expect them to go to a Post Office to collect their BRP. Examples of such situations include:

- Vulnerable adults with physical or mental impairment; and
- Young people under the age of 18.

Further details can be found on our website at: <https://www.gov.uk/biometric-residence-permits>

What happens if a customer does not collect their BRP within 10 days of arrival in the UK?

If a customer fails to collect their BRP it will be returned to the Home Office by the Post Office and the customer may be subject to sanctions such as a financial penalty or cancellation of leave. The Post Office will retain the BRP for a maximum of 60 days before it is returned to the Home Office. This is an administrative process to facilitate anyone who does fail to collect within 10 days, and places themselves at risk of being non-compliant.

Biometric Residence Permit – International Rollout Schedule

Phase 1 – 18 March 2015

- Pakistan

Phase 2 – Mid April 2015 (estimated, subject to the exact date legislation comes into force)

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| • Armenia | • Gibraltar | • North Korea |
| • Bangladesh | • Iceland | • Norway |
| • Bhutan | • India | • Portugal |
| • Burma | • Indonesia | • Republic of Ireland |
| • Cambodia | • Italy | • Spain |
| • China | • Laos | • Sri Lanka |
| • Cyprus | • Libya | • Sweden |
| • Denmark | • Maldives | • Thailand |
| • Estonia | • Malta | • Vietnam |
| • Finland | • Nepal | |
| • Germany | • Netherlands | |

Phase 3 – 31 May 2015

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| • Afghanistan | • Falkland Islands | • Philippines |
| • Ascension Island | • Fiji | • Qatar |
| • Australia | • Guyana | • St Helena |
| • Bahamas | • Iran | • St Lucia |
| • Bahrain | • Jamaica | • Singapore |
| • Barbados | • Japan | • South Korea |
| • Bermuda | • Malaysia | • Taiwan |
| • Brunei | • Mongolia | • Trinidad & Tobago |
| • Canada | • New Zealand | • United Arab Emirates |
| • Cayman Islands | • Nigeria | • United States of America |
| • Dominican Republic | • Oman | • Yemen |
| • Egypt | • Papua New Guinea | |

Phase 4 – 31 July 2015

- Rest of World