

**03 April 2007**

**BORDER AND IMMIGRATION LAUNCH, NEW IMMIGRATION FEES FROM 2 APRIL 2007  
AND THE INTRODUCTION OF NEW TESTS FOR APPLICANTS SEEKING SETTLEMENT**

**(i) Border and Immigration Agency Launch**

As I am sure you are aware 1 April saw the launch of the Border and Immigration Agency. Our new status will help bring greater focus on our core objectives, provide more freedom on resource management and make us more accountable to the public with clear published targets. It will also redefine the way we work with ministers, the wider Home Office and our key partners and stakeholders. These measures will drive us to improve our performance and put us in a stronger position to deliver a high quality service.

The timing of transition to full agency status is not fixed – it will depend on progress with the reform agenda but if all goes well we expect it to be in 2008. This is not a 'big bang' change nor is it a trial; rather the shadow agency year is a time for us and ministers to get the approach right through action learning. As part of this change, you will see that the new Border and Immigration Agency will have a new identity and logo. This will be rolled out over the next 12 months. During the roll out some things will change to carry the new identity from the 1 April. As the change-over process takes time, there will be a mix of old and new branded items in circulation as old items carrying IND are phased out. This also means that Work Permits UK no longer exists and will be phased out over the next year but the existing teams will continue to provide the same services. The use of a single identity will help us take the credit for our successes and also signifies a move away from a culture of individual businesses towards an organisation that thinks and acts together, an organisation with a reputation for being fair, effective, transparent and trusted.

**(ii) New immigration fees**

Following Parliamentary approval, the new immigration fees announced on the 07th March will now be introduced from Monday 2 April 2007 for all those coming to the UK to work, stay or study.

The new fees will support the improvement of the UK immigration system for genuine applicants, making it quicker and easier to use, while enabling us to take tough action against those who abuse it.

The fees have been set at a level that will ensure the UK remains competitive in a global market and is able to attract the migrants it needs. The Government consulted on the new charging regime last year, which along with extensive research has informed the new fee

levels. Details of the new fee levels are attached **at Annex 1**. Please visit our website at [www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk) for further information and to view the new application forms

**Please note that all applications received after 2 April 2007 will need to be made on the new application forms and must enclose payment at the new fee level.**

As a transitional measure, applicants who submit their indefinite leave to remain (settlement) applications with the incorrect fee before the 21 May 2007, will be contacted in writing to request the correct fee payment within 28 days. If the correct fee is not received within this 28 day period the application will be classified as withdrawn and any supporting documents and monies submitted will be returned.

**(iii) Introduction of tests for English Language and Knowledge of British Life for applicants seeking settlement in the UK**

From 2 April we are also introducing tests of English language ability and knowledge of British life for indefinite leave to remain (settlement) applicants. Applicants will now need to provide evidence that they have passed either the Life in the UK test or an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) which includes citizenship materials. This change was originally announced on 4 December 2006.

The Life in the UK test questions have been developed based on the second edition of the handbook "Life in the United Kingdom: A Journey to Citizenship", which was published on 26 March 2007 and is available from the Stationery Office and good bookshops.

For the period 2 April through to 30 June 2007 applicants will be able to take the test based on either the first or second editions of the handbook. However, after 30 June 2007, tests will be solely based on the second edition. The applicant simply needs to tell the test centre which test they wish to take.

Further information can be found **at Annex 2**. More detail is available on our website at [www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk), including the new application forms.

A poster and information leaflet has been produced to publicise the changes to people who may wish to live permanently in the UK. These can also be found on our website. I would like to ask for your support in raising awareness across your sector or community of the new requirement by displaying the poster and circulating the leaflet. Additional bulk copies can be ordered free of charge by emailing [homeoffice@prolog.uk.com](mailto:homeoffice@prolog.uk.com) or by telephoning 0870 2414680.

Yours sincerely



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