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## **UNITED KINGDOM: NEW IMMIGRATION RULES TAKE EFFECT OCTOBER 1ST**

On September 6, 2013, a number of changes to the Immigration Rules were announced. The changes, effective October 1, 2013, will mean greater flexibility for businesses and workers and include the easing of some immigration requirements and expansion of permissible activities under business and tourist visas.

Under the new rules, Tier 2 Intra Company Transfer (ICT) – Long Term Staff extension applicants will no longer be required to show proof of proficiency in the English language. Another change in the rules allows for Unrestricted Tier 2 (General) applicants, who have traditionally not been able to own more than 10% of their sponsor company's shares, to increase their shareholding percentage as long as they have a minimum remuneration package totaling £152,100.

Changes to the rules will also affect the permissible activities allowed under the Business and Tourist visa classifications. Business visitor activities will be expanded to include the performance of short-term internal auditing for foreign advisors, consultants, trainers, and troubleshooters employed with a related entity abroad. Business visitors will also be allowed to receive corporate training benefiting their employment overseas from an unrelated non-professional training entity in the UK. Corporate training is currently restricted to internal professional training by a related entity or professional training organization.

Tourist visitor activities have been expanded to include undertaking a course of study for less than 30 days, as long as it is recreational, is not an English language course and is provided by an eligible UK institution.

The Priority Visa services offered by the UK Border Agency, which allows for the expedited processing of applications, has been implemented in the following countries: South Korea, Australia, Malaysia, Qatar, UAE, and South Africa.

As always FosterQuan will continue to monitor global immigration regulations and procedures and will provide additional information in future Immigration Updates®, and on our firm's website at [www.fosterquan.com](http://www.fosterquan.com).