

Changes to Tier 1 of the Points-Based UK Immigration System Announced

17 March 2011

On 16 March 2011, the UK government published its statement of policy in relation to the changes to Tier 1 of the points-based immigration system in the UK. From 6 April 2011, Tier 1 (General) will be closed not only for applicants from outside the UK, but also for any applicants within the UK, although transitional arrangements will be in place to enable existing Tier 1 migrants to extend their leave in the UK.

There will be a new Tier 1 “Exceptional Talent” route under the points-based system for exceptionally talented migrants in the fields of science, the arts, and humanities. However, this route will be limited to 1,000 places for the year 2011 to 2012 (to be subsequently reviewed), and will only be available to applicants from outside the UK. Furthermore, in order to enter the UK under this route, an applicant will need to be endorsed by a “competent body”, which is an expert within the relevant field. The government expects this route to be reserved for “world leaders in their field, or potential leaders”.

Consequently, in our opinion, the relevance of Tier 1 as a route to bring employees into the UK from 6 April 2011 will be limited.

If you have any questions or would like more information on the issues discussed in this LawFlash, please contact any of the following Morgan Lewis attorneys:

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