



MIGRATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Migration Advisory Committee

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Response to the Law Commission's Consultation on Simplification of the Immigration Rules

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) is an independent, non-statutory, non-time limited, non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Home Office, that advises the government on migration issues.

The Committee provides evidence-based advice to Government on immigration issues. The Committee is chaired by Professor Alan Manning and consists of five immigration and labour market experts and an ex-officio member from the HO. The MAC is supported by a secretariat of analysts, researchers and policy officials.

The Home Secretary commissions the MAC to report on immigration issues. In July 2017 the Home Secretary commissioned the MAC to advise on the economic and social impacts of the UK's exit from the European Union and also on how the UK's immigration system should be aligned with a modern industrial strategy. In August 2017 the MAC was then asked to report on the economic and social impacts of international students on the UK. Both of these reports were published in September 2018. The MAC is currently undertaking a full review of the Shortage Occupation List, the review will be published by Spring 2019.

Each commission is informed by a call for evidence which includes the opportunity to provide both written evidence and the opportunity to meet the MAC. The secretariat and members of the Committee undertake widespread stakeholder engagement with businesses and sector specific bodies representing sectors. Because of the nature of the recent work of the Committee our stakeholder engagement has specifically focused around the Tier 2 visa system.

One of our recommendations to government in the EEA Migration in the UK: final report (September 2018) was to "Consult more systematically with users of the visa system to ensure it works as smoothly as possible."

We comment in the report that in response to our call for evidence "many employers complained about the red tape associated with the current Tier 2 (General). Problems with the administration of Tier 2 (General) are raised at almost every

meeting the MAC has with employers.” We go on to say that there should be consideration as to whether the bureaucratic requirements of the current sponsorship and sponsor licensing processes can be reduced in order to facilitate high-skilled migration.

Stakeholders consistently inform us that the complicated Rules are a hindrance to their ability to recruit through the Tier 2 visa system. They find it confusing and overly complex and many do not understand the current system. Many firms have reported that they have had to hire immigration lawyers to undertake the task of dealing with Tier 2 recruitment as the task is too complex for them to do it themselves.

The MAC understands the trade-off between the tailored detail required in the system and the ease at which employers and migrants can access the system. Wherever possible the MAC would like to see more simplification within the migration system.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alan Manning". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the "Yours Sincerely" text.

Professor Alan Manning
Chair Migration Advisory Committee