

Chapter 1 - The Values and Principles of the UK

Britain is a fantastic place to live: a modern, thriving society with a long and illustrious history. Our people have been at the heart of the world's political, scientific, industrial and cultural development. We are proud of our record of welcoming new migrants who will add to the diversity and dynamism of our national life.

Applying to become a permanent resident or citizen of the UK is an important decision and commitment. You will be agreeing to accept the responsibilities which go with permanent residence and to respect the laws, values and traditions of the UK. Good citizens are an asset to the UK. We welcome those seeking to make a positive contribution to our society.

Passing the Life in the UK test is part of demonstrating that you are ready to become a permanent migrant to the UK. This handbook is designed to support you in your preparation. It will help you to integrate into society and play a full role in your local community. It will also help ensure that you have a broad general knowledge of the culture, laws and history of the UK.

The values and principles of the UK

British society is founded on fundamental values and principles which all those living in the UK should respect and support. These values are reflected in the responsibilities, rights and privileges of being a British citizen or permanent resident of the UK. They are based on history and traditions and are protected by law, customs and expectations. There is no place in British society for extremism or intolerance.

The fundamental principles of British life include:

- Democracy
- The rule of law
- Individual liberty
- Tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

- Participation in community life.

As part of the citizenship ceremony, new citizens pledge to uphold these values. The pledge is:

'I will give my loyalty to the United Kingdom and respect its rights and freedoms. I will uphold its democratic values. I will observe its laws faithfully and fulfil my duties and obligations as a British citizen.'

Flowing from the fundamental principles are **responsibilities and freedoms** which are shared by all those living in the UK and which we expect all residents to respect.

If you wish to be a permanent resident or citizen of the UK, you should:

- Respect and obey the law
- Respect the rights of others, including their right to their own opinions
- Treat others with fairness
- Look after yourself and your family
- Look after the area in which you live and the environment.

In return, the UK offers:

- Freedom of belief and religion
- Freedom of speech
- Freedom from unfair discrimination
- A right to a fair trial
- A right to join in the election of a government.

Becoming a permanent resident

To apply to become a permanent resident or citizen of the UK, you will need to:

- Speak and read English
- Have a good understanding of life in the UK.

There are currently (as of January 2013) two ways you can be tested on these requirements:

- Take the Life in the UK test. The questions are written in a way that requires an understanding of the English language at English for Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) Entry Level 3, so there is no need to take a separate English language test. People here on work visas, including those on Tier 1 and Tier 2 of the points-based system, normally must pass the Life in the UK test to become permanent residents.
- Pass an ESOL course in English with Citizenship. You will need to take this course if your standard of English is below ESOL Entry Level 3. The course will help you to improve your English and learn more about life in the UK. At the end of the course you will take a test.

Once you have passed one of these tests, you can make an application for permanent residence or British citizenship. The form that you have to complete and evidence that you need to provide will depend on your personal circumstances. There is a fee for submitting an application, which is different for the various types of application. All of the forms and a list of fees can be found on the UK Border Agency website, www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk

From October 2013, the requirements will change. From that date, for settlement or permanent residence, you will need to:

- Pass the Life in the UK test

AND

- Produce acceptable evidence of speaking and listening skills in English at B1 of the Common European Framework of Reference. This is equivalent to ESOL Entry Level 3.

The requirements for citizenship applications may also change in the future. Further details will be published on the UK Border Agency website and you should check the information on that website for current requirements before applying for settlement or citizenship.

Taking the Life in the UK Test

This handbook will help prepare you for taking the Life in the UK test. The test consists of 24 questions about important aspects of life in the UK. Questions are based on ALL parts of the handbook. The 24 questions will be different for each person taking the test at that test session.

The Life in the UK test is usually taken in English, although special arrangements can be made if you wish to take it in Welsh or Scottish Gaelic.

You can only take the test at a registered and approved Life in the UK test centre. There are about 60 test centres around the UK. You can only book your test online, at www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk. You should not take your test at any other establishment as the UK Border Agency will only accept certificates from registered test centres. If you live on the Isle of Man or in the Channel Islands, there are different arrangements for taking the Life in the UK test.

When booking your test, read the instructions carefully. Make sure you enter your details correctly. You will need to take some identification and proof of your address with you to the test. If you don't take these, you will not be able to take your test.

How to use this handbook

Everything that you will need to know to pass the Life in the UK test is included in this handbook. The questions will be based on the whole book, including this introduction, so make sure you study the entire book thoroughly. The handbook has been written to ensure that anyone who can read English at ESOL Entry Level 3 or above should have no difficulty with the language.

The glossary at the back of the handbook contains some key words and phrases, which you might find helpful.

The 'Check that you understand' boxes are for guidance. They will help you to identify particular things that you should understand. Just knowing the things highlighted in these boxes will not be enough to pass the test. You need to make sure that you understand everything in the book, so please read the information carefully.

Where to find more information

You can find out more information from the following places:

- The UK Border Agency website (www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk) for more information about the application process and the forms you will need to complete
- The Life in the UK test website (www.lifeintheuktest.gov.uk) for more information about the test and how to book a place to take one
- Gov.uk (www.gov.uk) for information about ESOL courses and how to find one in your area.

Check that you understand

- The origin of the values underlying British society
- The fundamental principles of British life
- The responsibilities and freedoms which come with permanent residence
- The process of becoming a permanent resident or citizen