

# Global Immigration alert

July 2025

## Saudi Arabia

### New work permit classification system for foreign skilled talent

#### Executive summary

On 3 July 2025, the Ministry of Human Resources and Social Development (MHRSD) issued [Guidelines for Classification of Work Permits by Skill](#), introducing a new classification system for work permits. This system categorizes work permits by skill level and is being implemented in two phases. The first phase is effective from 5 July 2025 for foreign nationals currently working in Saudi Arabia. The second phase will go into effect on 3 August 2025 for new applicants who seek to work in Saudi Arabia and are not currently present in the country.

#### Background

The work permit classification system aligns with Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, which aims to diversify the economy and create a competitive labor market. By attracting foreign skilled talent, the MHRSD seeks to strengthen the local workforce through knowledge transfer and training opportunities.

#### Key developments

The new system classifies work permits into three categories: Highly Skilled, Skilled and Basic, based on the [Saudi Standard Classification of Occupations](#). The specific criteria for each category are as follows:

- **Highly Skilled:** This category applies to occupations in major groups one to three. Qualifying applicants must receive an income that equals or exceeds the minimum salary requirement for their occupation as well as an accreditation from the Qualification Verification Program (QVP). They will undergo a point-based evaluation that assesses their educational qualifications, work experience and wage level.
- **Skilled:** This category applies to occupations in major groups four to eight. Qualifying applicants must receive an income that equals or exceeds the minimum salary requirement for

their occupation as well as an accreditation from either the QVP or the Skill Verification Program (SVP), if applicable. Foreign workers in occupation groups one to three who do not meet the Highly Skilled criteria may qualify for this category.

- **Basic:** This category applies to occupations in major group nine (i.e., elementary occupations). Qualifying applicants may require relevant accreditation from either the QVP or the SVP. They must not be above the age of 60. Workers in occupation groups one to eight who do not qualify for the categories above may qualify for this one.

The classification process is carried out automatically through the [Qiwa platform](#) using information previously provided by employers.

#### Impact on employers

Employers may align workers' roles, wages and qualifications with the new classification criteria to facilitate compliance. Employers may reassess job offers, contract terms and job titles for both current and new employees to adhere to the new regulations.

#### Key steps

EY will continue to monitor these developments. Should you have any questions, we encourage you to contact one of our immigration professionals.



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