PLAB tests and OSCE
This guidance is based in the Immigration Rules.
PLAB test and OSCE

About this guidance

Immigration Rules part 3, paragraphs 75A to 75F

This guidance tells you about the Professional and Linguistic Assessment Board (PLAB) test for overseas-qualified doctors who want to practice medicine in the UK and the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) for overseas qualified nurses wanting to work in the UK in the future (under the points-based system).

Doctors who wish to practice medicine in the UK must register with the General Medical Council (GMC). If they qualify overseas and wish to register they must pass the PLAB test to demonstrate their knowledge of English and their medical expertise.

Doctors sitting the PLAB test and nurses undertaking the OSCE are included in the definition of business visitors, but they must meet the requirements of paragraphs 75A to 75F. For more information, see related link: Business visitors.

Doctors applying to take any other test or examination, such as those needed to enter one of the Royal Colleges, are treated as general visitors and must demonstrate they meet all the requirements of the general visitor route.

This means they must not be granted more than six months leave as a general visitor and they are subject to the normal restrictions on general visitors switching into other categories of leave. For more information, see related link: General visitors.

Dentists do not need to pass the PLAB test.

Doctors with leave to take the PLAB test cannot switch into skilled employment under the points-based system.

Doctors who come to the UK to take the PLAB test can do periods of clinical attachments during their leave. They do not need to apply separately to do a clinical attachment, unless the period of the attachment goes on beyond the end of their leave to take the PLAB test.
Nurses who need to pass an OSCE before taking employment in the UK can enter using either this route or under Tier 2, depending on whether they already have a job offer and the sponsor has issued a certificate of sponsorship. If they enter under the visitor provisions they will not be able to switch into Tier 2 from inside the UK.

Changes to this guidance – This page tells you what has changed since the previous version of this guidance.

Contacts – This page tells you who to contact for help if your senior caseworker or line manager can’t answer your question.

Information owner – This page tells you about this version of the guidance and who owns it.
# PLAB test and OSCE

## Key facts

This page shows you the key facts for the Professional and Linguistic Assessment Board (PLAB) test.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category: Doctors taking the PLAB test</th>
<th>Eligibility criteria</th>
<th>An applicant must:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• be a graduate from a medical school and intend to take the PLAB test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• provide documentary evidence of a confirmed test date or of their eligibility to take the PLAB test by way of a letter or email from the General Medical Council or a test admission card</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• not intend to take employment in the UK</td>
</tr>
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<td>• not intend to produce goods or provide services within the UK, including the selling of goods or services direct to members of the public</td>
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<td>• not intend to do a course of study</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• maintain and accommodate themselves and any dependants adequately without using public funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• be able to meet the cost of their onward journey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• intend to leave the UK when their leave in this category expires unless they pass the PLAB test and are granted leave to do a clinical attachment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• not spend more than 18 months in the UK in this category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• already have leave in this category, if they are applying for an extension of stay in this category.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category: Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)</th>
<th>Eligibility criteria</th>
<th>An applicant must:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• be a graduate of an overseas nursing school and intend to take an OSCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• provide evidence of a confirmed test date or of their eligibility to take an OSCE by way of a letter from the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• not intend to take employment in the UK (as a visitor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• not intend to produce goods or provide services within the UK, including the selling of goods or services direct to members of the public</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• not intend to do a course of study</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• be able to meet the cost of their onward journey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• intend to leave the UK when their leave in this category expires</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- not be applying for an extension.

| Application forms | Application made outside UK – online application/VAF2 (in North Korea only)  
Extension (within UK- PLAB only) – FLR(O)  
Indefinite leave to remain – N/A |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost of application:</td>
<td>Fees for Home Office services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entry clearance mandatory?</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is biometric information required for applications made in the UK?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code of leave to remain granted</td>
<td>Code 3 conditions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Entry clearance endorsements | PLAB  
C: PLAB test. LTE 6 months. Code 3.  
OSCE  
C: Business Visitor. LTE 6 months. Code 3 |
| Conditions of leave to remain | No work or study allowed. No recourse to public funds. |
| How long is leave to remain normally granted for? | Six months. Applications can be made to extend (PLAB only) by six months at a time to a maximum of 18 months. |
| Are dependants allowed? | Only if they qualify as a general visitor in their own right. |
| Work and study allowed? | No. Only observation as part of the clinical attachment as part of the test process is permitted. Clinical attachments do not count as employment for this purpose. |
| Switching into this category allowed? | No. Applicant must already have leave in this category in order to be granted an extension. |
| Does this category lead to settlement (indefinite leave to remain)? | No |
| Is knowledge of language and life required? | No |
| CID case type | CID case type (Business) - LTR |
| Immigration Rules paragraphs | 75A to 75F |
## PLAB test and OSCE

### Changes to this guidance

This page lists the changes to the ‘Professional and Linguistic Assessment Board (PLAB) test and the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)’ guidance, with the most recent at the top.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of the change</th>
<th>Details of the change</th>
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<tr>
<td>6 November 2014</td>
<td>Change request:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Changes made throughout the guidance to reflect the rules change of 6 November 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 January 2014</td>
<td>Six month review by the modernised guidance team:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Minor housekeeping changes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For previous changes you will need to access the archived guidance. See related link: PLAB test – archive.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Related links

- See also
- Contact
- Information owner
- Links to staff intranet removed

### Paragraphs 75A to 75F of the Immigration Rules
## Entry or extension requirements

This section tells you how to check if a person applying for leave to take the Professional and Linguistic Assessment Board (PLAB) test or the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) meets the requirements for that category.

When considering an application you must check:

- the application is valid
- the applicant's passport or travel documents are genuine
- the applicant meets the substantive requirements for the category
- there are no general grounds for refusal.

For more information, see related links:

- Specified application forms and procedures
- General grounds for refusal.

People taking the PLAB test or the OSCE are included in the definition of a ‘business visitor’ in paragraph 6 of the Immigration Rules. An applicant must meet the requirements of paragraph 75A to 75F of the Immigration Rules. They must:

- be a graduate from a medical school and intend to take the PLAB test or a graduate from an overseas nursing school and intend to take the OSCE
- provide documentary evidence of a confirmed test date or of their eligibility to take the PLAB test by way of a letter or email from the General Medical Council or a test admission card or provide evidence of a confirmed test date or of their eligibility to take an OSCE by way of a letter from the Nursing and Midwifery Council.
- not intend to take employment in the UK
- not intend to produce goods or provide services within the UK, including the selling of goods or services direct to members of the public
- not intend to do a course of study
• maintain and accommodate themselves and any dependants adequately:
  o out of resources available to them without recourse to public funds or taking employment, or
  o be maintained and/or accommodated by relatives or friends who can prove they are able and intend to do so, and are legally present in the UK, or will be at the time of their visit
• be able to meet the cost of their onward journey

For PLAB only they must meet all the above plus the following:

• intend to leave the UK when their leave in this category expires unless they pass the PLAB test and are granted leave to do a clinical attachment
• not spend more than 18 months in the UK in this category
• already have leave in this category, if they are applying for an extension of stay in this category.

**PLAB extensions only**
The applicant must not be in breach of immigration laws, except for any period of overstaying:

• for 28 days or less which will be disregarded, or
• where the application was submitted before 9 July 2012.

For more information, see related link: Applications from overstayers (non family routes).

**More information**
For more information on these requirements and when doctors are eligible to take the PLAB test, see related links:

• PLAB testing process
• Documents the applicant must provide.
PLAB test and OSCE

**PLAB testing process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>About this guidance</th>
<th>This page tells you how the Professional and Linguistic Assessment Board (PLAB) testing process works.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Key facts</td>
<td>Doctors who qualify overseas, and hold a qualification not recognised in the UK, must pass the PLAB test in order to register with the General Medical Council (GMC).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entry or extension requirements</td>
<td>Before coming to the UK, they must pass a pre-assessment International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test. This is designed to find out if the doctor has a reasonable command of the English language before they can sit the PLAB test. IELTS tests can be taken in various countries, including the UK.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Granting or refusing</td>
<td>If the doctor passes the different stages of the test, they can sit the PLAB test in the UK.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependants</td>
<td>Doctors must take the PLAB test to demonstrate their knowledge of medical English and their medical skills and knowledge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The PLAB test consists of two separate assessments, part 1 and part 2. The GMC requires doctors to pass part 1 before they can take part 2 of the test. If a candidate fails part 1 by a wide margin, the GMC does not allow them to re-sit part 1 for a period of at least four months from the date of the failed test.</td>
</tr>
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In this section

- Objective Structured Clinical Examination process
- Documents the applicant must provide
- External links
  - Paragraphs 75A to 75F of the Immigration Rules
# Objective Structured Clinical Examination process

This page tells you how the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) process works.

Nurses from an overseas nursing school, who wish to work in the UK as a nurse at some point in the future are required to take an Objective Structured Clinical Examination.

Typically, they will have undertaken a three year nursing programme in their country. Their qualifications gained overseas are assessed by the Nursing and Midwifery Council before they make a decision on the applicant’s eligibility to take the OSCE.

Applicants will receive a confirmation letter from the NMC detailing their eligibility to take the OSCE in the UK. It is then up to the applicant to schedule a test.

Where the individual is sponsored to work in the UK under Tier 2, they can take the OSCE on the Tier 2 visa. See related links.

## About this guidance

This page tells you how the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) process works.

## Key facts

Nurses from an overseas nursing school, who wish to work in the UK as a nurse at some point in the future are required to take an Objective Structured Clinical Examination.

## Entry or extension requirements

Typically, they will have undertaken a three year nursing programme in their country. Their qualifications gained overseas are assessed by the Nursing and Midwifery Council before they make a decision on the applicant’s eligibility to take the OSCE.

Applicants will receive a confirmation letter from the NMC detailing their eligibility to take the OSCE in the UK. It is then up to the applicant to schedule a test.

Where the individual is sponsored to work in the UK under Tier 2, they can take the OSCE on the Tier 2 visa. See related links.

## Granting or refusing

Applicants will receive a confirmation letter from the NMC detailing their eligibility to take the OSCE in the UK. It is then up to the applicant to schedule a test.

Where the individual is sponsored to work in the UK under Tier 2, they can take the OSCE on the Tier 2 visa. See related links.

## Dependants

Where the individual is sponsored to work in the UK under Tier 2, they can take the OSCE on the Tier 2 visa. See related links.

## In this section

- [Documents the applicant must provide](#)
- [PLAB testing process](#)
- [Links to staff intranet removed](#)
- [External links](#)
  - [Paragraphs 75A to 75F of the Immigration Rules](#)
PLAB test and OSCE

Documents the applicant must provide

| About this guidance | This page tells you the documents a person applying for leave to take the Professional and Linguistic Assessment Board (PLAB) test must provide from the General Medical Council (GMC) to show they are eligible to take the test or to take the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE).

A candidate who applies for leave to sit the PLAB test must produce evidence from the GMC that they have a test date or are eligible to take the test. This can be a:

- GMC letter or email
- test admission card.

A candidate who applies to take the OSCE must provide:

A letter from the Nursing and Midwifery Council confirming either:

- a scheduled test date, or
- their eligibility to undertake the OSCE. |

<table>
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<th>Key facts</th>
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<tr>
<th>Entry or extension requirements</th>
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<th>Granting or refusing</th>
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<tr>
<th>Dependents</th>
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</table>

In this section

- PLAB testing process
- Objective Structured Clinical Examination process
- External links
- Paragraphs 75A to 75F of the Immigration Rules
### Granting or refusing

This section tells you how to grant or refuse applications for leave to take the Professional and Linguistic Assessment Board (PLAB) test in the UK.

For more information, see related links:

- Grant or refuse entry clearance
- Grant or refuse entry at UK port
- Grant or refuse extension of stay

#### About this guidance

#### Key facts

#### Entry or extension requirements

#### Granting or refusing

#### Dependants

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<td>Grant or refuse entry at UK port</td>
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<td>Grant or refuse extension of stay</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### External links

- Paragraphs 75A to 75F of the Immigration Rules
- PLAB guidance from GMC
**PLAB test and OSCE**

**Grant or refuse entry clearance**

| About this guidance | This page tells you how to grant or refuse applications made overseas for leave to take the Professional and Linguistic Assessment Board (PLAB) test or the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE).
For guidance on the requirements, see the link on the left: Entry or extension requirements.
Entry clearance is not mandatory, except for people whose nationality requires them to have a UK visa. For more information on which nationalities require a visa, see related link: Appendix 1 of the Immigration Rules.

**Grant entry clearance**
If a person meets all the requirements of paragraph 75A of the Immigration Rules, and paragraph 320 of the general grounds for refusal does not apply, you must grant entry.

You must grant entry clearance for six months. You must endorse their entry clearance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PLAB</th>
<th>C: PLAB test. LTE 6 months. Code 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OSCE</td>
<td>C: Business Visitor. LTE 6 months. Code 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Refuse entry clearance**
If the applicant does not provide the evidence that is required to show that they meet the requirements of paragraph 75A or if paragraph 320 of the general grounds for refusal does apply, you must refuse the application.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In this section</th>
<th>Grant or refuse entry at UK port</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Related links</td>
<td>Grant or refuse extension of stay</td>
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<tr>
<td>See also</td>
<td>Links to staff intranet removed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**External links**

- Appendix 1 of the Immigration Rules
- Paragraphs 76A to 75F of the Immigration Rules
- Paragraphs 320 to 324 of the Immigration Rules
- Paragraph 41 (iii) - (vii) of the Immigration Rules (General Visitor rules)
PLAB test and OSCE

Grant or refuse entry at UK port

| About this guidance | This page tells you how to grant or refuse entry at a UK port to a person seeking entry to take the Professional and Linguistic Assessment Board (PLAB) test or the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE).

For guidance on the requirements, see the link on the left: Entry or extension requirements.

Entry clearance is not mandatory, except for people whose nationality requires them to have a UK visa. For more information on which nationalities require a visa, see related link: Appendix 1 of the Immigration Rules.

Granting entry
If a person meets all the requirements of paragraph 75A of the Immigration Rules and none of the general grounds for refusal in paragraphs 320 or 321 apply, you must grant entry.

You must grant leave on code 3 conditions, for a maximum of six months.

Refusing entry
You must refuse leave to enter if the passenger does not meet all of the requirements of paragraph 75A of the Immigration Rules or if any of the general grounds for refusal in paragraphs 320 to 322 of the Immigration Rules applies.

For more information on refusing entry, see related link: Refusal of leave to enter. |

| In this section | Grant or refuse entry clearance

Grant or refuse extension of stay

Related links
See also
Links to staff intranet removed

External links
Appendix 1 of the Immigration Rules

Paragraphs 75A to 75F of the Immigration Rules

Paragraphs 320 to 324 of the Immigration Rules |
PLAB test and OSCE

Grant or refuse an extension of stay

This page tells you how to grant or refuse applications for leave to remain to take the Professional and Linguistic Assessment Board (PLAB) test.

For guidance on the requirements, see the link on the left: Entry or extension requirements.

Grant an extension
If the person meets all the requirements of paragraph 75D of the Immigration Rules, and none of the general grounds for refusal in paragraph 322 apply, you must grant leave to remain.

If the applicant meets the requirements on each occasion, you must grant up to six months leave to remain at a time on code 3 conditions.

The maximum amount of time a person can spend in the UK in this category is 18 months. You must not grant a person leave that would mean they would spend more than 18 months in total in the UK in this category.

Refuse an extension
If an applicant does not meet all the requirements in paragraph 75D of the Immigration Rules or if any of the general grounds for refusal in paragraph 322 apply, you must refuse an extension of leave.

Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)
There is no provision in the Immigration Rules for OSCE visitors to extend their leave. Where an application is received on this basis it will fall to be refused under paragraph 322 (1) of the Immigration Rules.
### PLAB test and OSCE

#### Dependants

| About this guidance | This page tells you which dependants can be granted leave to join a person with leave to take the Professional and Linguistic Assessment Board (PLAB) test or the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE).
| Key facts | Family members of people with leave to take the PLAB test and OSCE who wish to join them in the UK must apply and meet the requirements of the general visitors or child visitors rules.
| Entry or extension requirements | For more information, see related links:
| Granting or refusing Dependants | - General visitors
| | - Child visitors.
| Dependants | Related links
| | See also
| | Links to staff intranet removed
| | External links
| | Paragraphs 75A to 75F of the Immigration Rules
### PLAB test and OSCE

#### Contact

**About this guidance**  
This page explains who to contact for more help with a specific case in the Professional and Linguistic Assessment Board (PLAB) test and the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) category.

If you have read the relevant Immigration Rules and this guidance and still need more help with this category, you must first ask your senior caseworker or line manager.

If the question cannot be answered at that level, you may email the study and visit operational policy team for further guidance on the policy.

Changes to this guidance can only be made by the guidance rules and forms team (GRaFT). If you think the policy content needs amending you must contact the study and visit operational policy team, who will ask the GRaFT to update the guidance, if appropriate.

The GRaFT will accept direct feedback on broken links, missing information or the format, style and navigability of this guidance. You can send these using the link: Email: guidance rules and forms team.

### Related links

- [Changes to this guidance](#)
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  - [Paragraphs 75A to 75F of the Immigration Rules](#)
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# PLAB test and OSCE

## Information owner

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>About this guidance</th>
<th>This page tells you about this version of the ‘Professional and Linguistic Assessment Board (PLAB) test and the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)’ guidance and who owns it.</th>
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<td>Key facts</td>
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<td>Valid from date</td>
<td>6 November 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policy owner</td>
<td>Study and visit operational policy team</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cleared by director</td>
<td>Sonia Dower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director’s role</td>
<td>Director, operational policy and rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clearance date</td>
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<tr>
<td>This version approved for publication by</td>
<td>John Thompson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approver’s role</td>
<td>Head of migration policy</td>
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<td>Approval date</td>
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- Changes to this guidance
- Contact

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- Paragraphs 75A to 75F of the Immigration Rules
- Links to staff intranet removed