



ARMY

ARMY BRIEFING NOTE

ARMY BRIEFING NOTES CONTAIN INFORMATION WHICH WILL BE RELEVANT TO ALL PERSONNEL, BOTH SERVICE AND CIVILIAN. THEY SHOULD BE DISSEMINATED AS WIDELY AND AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

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INCREASE IN MINIMUM AGE FOR SPONSORING MARRIAGE, FIANCE(E) & EXEMPT ARMED FORCES DEPENDANT VISAS

ISSUE

1. The Home Office increase in the minimum age from 18 to 21 at which someone can sponsor or be sponsored for entry into the UK as a husband, wife, civil partner, fiancé(e), prospective civil partner or same sex/unmarried partner from outside the European Economic Area (EEA).

TARGET AUDIENCE

2. The chain of command and all serving personnel and their families.

KEY POINTS

- The rule change took place and became effective on 27 Nov 08.
- Service personnel aged over 18 can continue to sponsor a visa to live in the UK for husbands, wives, civil partners, fiancé(e)s, prospective civil partners or unmarried/same-sex partners who are EEA citizens.
- Service personnel aged over 21 can also sponsor a visa to live in the UK for husbands, wives, civil partners, fiancé(e)s, prospective civil partners or unmarried/same sex partners who are not EEA citizens but are also over 21.
- This rule applies to personnel who are already married, engaged to be married, in a civil partnership or have a same sex/unmarried partner but where their spouse, fiancé(e), civil partner or unmarried/same sex partner has not already come to the UK on a marriage, fiancé(e) or Exempt Armed Forces Dependant visa.
- Husbands, wives, civil partners and fiancé(e)'s who are under 21, are non-EEA citizens and entered the UK on a marriage, fiancé(e) or Exempt Armed Forces Dependant visa **before** the rule change are not affected. However if the Service person was a Foreign or Commonwealth citizen at the time of application and intends to subsequently apply for British citizenship this may impact on their immigration status.

- Husbands, wives, civil partners, fiancé(e)s or unmarried/same sex partners who are under 21 can apply to enter the UK as a visitor for up to 6 months but will not be able to apply for a UK marriage or Exempt Armed Forces Dependant visa to remain in the UK. In these cases they would normally need to leave the UK after 6 months and then apply for a UK marriage, fiancé(e) or Exempt Armed Forces Dependant visa once they reach 21.

BACKGROUND

3. The Home Office have introduced legislation to reduce the number of forced marriage cases being dealt with each year. This has led to an increase in the minimum age from 18 to 21 at which someone resident in the UK, regardless of nationality or occupation, can sponsor or be sponsored for a visa to enter the UK as a husband, wife, civil partner, fiancé(e), prospective civil partner or same sex/unmarried partner from outside the EEA.

POINT OF CONTACT

4. Requests for further information should be directed to:
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5. Further information can be found at www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk.