



Residence, Real Estate and the Right to Remain: A White Paper on UK Immigration for US Nationals

WHITE PAPER

Prepared by The Luxury Collective Global Advisory and
Boodle Hatfield LLP

THE LUXURY
COLLECTIVE
GLOBAL ADVISORY

**Boodle
Hatfield.**



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Introduction

In the world of high value property and global mobility, decisions are rarely just about property. Every acquisition and every base established abroad carries broader meaning. Each choice signals presence, identity, and long-term intent. For Americans looking to the United Kingdom, those choices come with real legal and structural consequences. They touch on tax residence, succession planning, education pathways, and the increasingly complex realities of immigration control.

At The Luxury Collective Global Advisory, our work in property has always gone beyond the transaction. Our responsibility is to help clients make intelligent decisions that align lifestyle ambitions with institutional realities. Some Americans may wish simply to own a London home. Others aim over time to live, work, and eventually qualify for citizenship. In all cases, the

right approach begins with foresight and strategy. There is no automatic right to remain in the UK, and small missteps can create lasting limitations on future options.

Our collaboration with Boodle Hatfield LLP brings together two complementary perspectives. The Luxury Collective Global Advisory provides front line advisory insight into property, lifestyle, and cross border structuring. Boodle Hatfield adds deep legal precision and an understanding of how immigration frameworks interact with personal and family goals. Together we help clients design coherent strategies for UK living that stand the test of time.



John Eric

DIRECTOR,
THE LUXURY COLLECTIVE GLOBAL ADVISORY



John Eric is a Californian by birth, a Washingtonian by choice, and a Londoner at heart. With early roots in publishing and politics—including work on a presidential campaign and within an administration—he brings a diplomat’s discretion and a strategist’s insight to every client relationship. After a successful career in national media, he transitioned into real estate, where for more than two decades he has advised high-profile clients across Washington, DC, and internationally. A founding agent and Executive Vice President at Compass, John is known for white-glove service, confidentiality, and mastery of complex negotiations.

As Managing Director of The Luxury Collective Global Advisory, John bridges U.S. and U.K. property markets, guiding global buyers with a distinctly American fiduciary approach. He also publishes John Eric Home & Lifestyle magazine and hosts The Property Diplomat podcast, exploring real estate, politics, and culture. His expertise has been featured in The Washington Post, The New York Times, and The Financial Times. Active in global real estate networks, John speaks regularly at industry events and advises family offices and wealth managers on cross-border investment. Outside of work, he enjoys family time, tennis, travel, good food, and supporting pet adoption.



Anna-Louisa Yon

DIRECTOR,
THE LUXURY COLLECTIVE GLOBAL ADVISORY



Anna-Louisa Yon is a lifelong Washingtonian whose career bridges entrepreneurship, design, and real estate. She launched a design-focused business during the 2009 downturn, selling to leading galleries and boutiques across the United States and honing her strengths in negotiation and relationship-building. Transitioning into real estate, she quickly emerged as a trusted advisor, earning recognition among the top 1.5% of realtors in the United States by The Wall Street Journal and ranking as the 8th highest individual agent in the DMV region for Compass in 2020. A Capitol Hill resident, she brings deep local insight and a highly connected, client-first approach.

As a Director of The Luxury Collective Global Advisory, Anna-Louisa supports clients with international and transatlantic real estate needs. Working with the firm’s London-based team, she guides U.S. buyers through the UK market with cultural fluency and strategic perspective, delivering seamless cross-border representation on both sides of the Atlantic.



Zoe Jacob

PARTNER AND
HEAD OF IMMIGRATION



Zoe is a lifelong Londoner, with strong US connections, who heads Boodle Hatfield’s well-regarded UK immigration team. She has well over a decade of experience advising individuals and businesses on immigration, and nationality law. Known for her client-focused approach, she delivers practical, commercially minded solutions in complex and unconventional cases, particularly for UHNW and HNW clients. She has a reputation for achieving results that other immigration lawyers have advised her clients were “impossible”.

She also advises businesses on sponsor licences and Skilled Worker visas, helping them navigate evolving compliance requirements, with a particular focus on owner managed businesses and those in the Tech space. Zoe’s previous role as independent counsel for the Home Office gives her valuable insight into decision-making processes and strengthens her ability to achieve positive outcomes for clients.

Zoe is a Top Recommended Immigration Lawyer, 2025 in the Spear’s 500 Directory, a member of the Law Society’s Immigration Law Committee and a member of the Immigration Lawyers’ Practitioners Association Editorial Board. She regularly provides expert commentary on the UK immigration system to various news outlets including the BBC.



Ailsa von Dobeneck

MANAGING DIRECTOR, UK DIVISION
THE LUXURY COLLECTIVE GLOBAL ADVISORY



Ailsa von Dobeneck is a dual American-British business professional whose career spans Westminster and Capitol Hill. Beginning in Singapore in communications for a global shipping company, she advanced into U.S. government relations, leading advocacy initiatives, securing infrastructure grants, and managing tax credit programs. Now Managing Director of The Luxury Collective Global Advisory, she draws on her cross-cultural expertise to guide clients through U.S. and U.K. property decisions. Ailsa holds degrees in International Affairs and German from the University of Georgia and a master’s in International Relations from King’s College London, and she’s also a passionate historic cook with a published recipe series in The Daily Beast and several television appearances.



Executive Summary

In recent years, there has been a marked rise in interest from Americans exploring both short and long-term relocation to the UK. This is driven by a combination of political uncertainty in the US, the enduring appeal of the UK's world-class cultural and educational institutions, and deep familial, linguistic and commercial ties between the two countries.

Home Office data puts some impressive numbers behind this trend. In the year 2025, 8,790 American nationals applied for British citizenship, with a striking 2,490 of those applications landing in just the last quarter of 2025. Making this the busiest period on record since nationality application statistics were first collected in 2004.

The message is clear, more Americans than ever are looking to put down roots in the UK, and the British passport is increasingly seen as a valuable asset in an uncertain global landscape. Furthermore, it's not just applications piling up, approvals are rising too.

A similar buzz can be seen among Americans eyeing up the UK property market. In 2025, Rightmove (the UK's largest property website) reported that enquiries from US based buyers had hit an eight year high. A significant proportion of that attention was focused on smaller one to two bedroom homes, hinting that some Americans are not necessarily packing everything up just yet, but are instead looking to purchase well placed boltholes for regular visits to the UK.

This trend certainly chimes with what Boodle Hatfield's property team is seeing on the ground, with US related work at the firm having doubled, if not tripled, in recent years. While not every buyer is planning a full scale relocation, many are clearly laying the groundwork for more time on this side of the Atlantic. Whether it's for long summers, or to dip their toes into the London lifestyle, the trend is unmistakable, Americans are spending more time in the UK.



With the highly anticipated release of HBO's television adaptation of the Harry Potter series later this year, interest in both the fantasy and reality of life in the UK could rise even further. For American audiences, the series offers more than magic, it presents an idyllic Britain, from rolling English countryside to the charm of quintessential market towns and the iconic spires of historic university cities. As these images return to screens, they may rekindle a sense of escapism, encouraging some to consider whether the fantasy could translate into the reality of a life in the UK.

Achieving long-term residency, and ultimately British citizenship, requires more than just wand waving. For high net worth Americans considering relocation, careful strategic immigration planning is essential to understand the available routes and their long-term implications.

Equally, for Americans looking to spend an increasing proportion of their time in the UK, having purchased their dream UK property (without necessarily relocating), giving early thought to their UK immigration position is critical. Strategic and well-placed immigration advice helps prevent plans unravelling at border control and ensures individuals are well placed should they later decide to commit to a full move.

¹ <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/691adb26493305b49ce6e844/citizenship-datasets-sep-2025.xlsx>

² <https://www.rightmove.co.uk/press-centre/increase-in-us-buyers-enquiring-about-homes-for-sale-in-uk/>

³ https://www.boodlehatfield.com/articles/from-california-to-the-cotswolds-why-americans-are-investing-in-uk-property#:~:text=US%20clients%20have%20been%20investing%20in%20UK,Feeling%20their%20children%20were%20safe%20*%20Schooling



Introduction to the UK Immigration System

The UK immigration framework has evolved significantly in recent years, affecting both short term visits and longer term pathways to residence. This overview highlights the key considerations for Americans travelling to the UK, as well as those exploring their long term immigration options.

'VISA FREE TRAVEL' FOR AMERICANS – THE ETA

Americans planning a visit to the UK should note one important travel companion, the Electronic Travel Authorisation, or 'ETA' (equivalent to the US ESTA). US nationals must now apply for an ETA before travelling, and since 25 February 2026, the Home Office have taken a stricter approach to the enforcement of the ETA requirement. In practical terms, for Americans visiting the UK, turning up to the airport without an ETA is likely to result in being stopped before you even board the plane, or even being refused entry at the UK border.

The good news is that, once granted, an ETA

is valid for two years (or until the linked passport expires, whichever is sooner), allows multiple trips to the UK, and permits stays of up to six months at a time. Entry on an ETA is as a visitor, and it comes with an important restriction: visitors are not permitted to make the UK their home through 'frequent or successive' visits. This is not defined by a specific number of days but is instead a subjective assessment in the context of the individual's overall travel history and their activities in the UK.

For Americans visiting with an ETA who are concerned their travel history might raise questions, Boodle Hatfield can review their travel record and advise on whether any potential flags that meant their ETA application may receive greater scrutiny.

It is also worth remembering that an ETA is not a rubber stamp. Applications are subject to suitability requirements, including criminality, and



an ETA must be refused where an applicant has received a custodial sentence of at least 12 months for a criminal conviction (in the UK or overseas), or where a criminal conviction occurred within the last 12 months.

The Home Office must also refuse an ETA where an individual's presence in the UK is deemed "not conducive to the public good because of their conduct, character, associations or other reasons (including convictions which do not fall within the criminality grounds)." A recent and high-profile illustration of this was the much-publicised refusal of Kanye West's ETA, ahead of a planned appearance at this summer's Wireless Festival, following a series of antisemitic remarks from the rapper.

The takeaway is that while applying for an ETA is relatively straightforward, it is not a mere box ticking exercise. It is also not a guarantee of admittance at the border, if the individual's circumstances have changed in the intervening period. Americans planning to visit the UK on an ETA would be well advised to understand the Rules before packing their bags (see Americans visiting the UK below for further detail on entering the UK as a visitor).

LONGER-TERM IMMIGRATION SOLUTIONS

The closure of the Tier 1 (Investor) route in February 2022 removed the option of securing immigration status based solely on capital investment for high net worth individuals. In its place, the alternative options prioritise contribution to the UK, whether through employment, entrepreneurship, innovation or recognised expertise.

The visa category an applicant chooses to enter will determine their entire immigration trajectory including eligibility for Settlement, ability to bring dependants and their permitted activities in the UK. Accordingly, clarity around long-term objectives is critical. Accordingly, when working with Boodle Hatfield, the first thing our Immigration Team will want to establish is what the individual plans to do in the UK.

Once granted Leave to Enter on their chosen visa route, individuals may, in many cases, switch categories from within the UK by applying for Leave to Remain. This flexibility enables a phased immigration strategy aligned with evolving business or personal objectives.

⁴ <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c4gxk3kxjr0o>

PROPOSED REFORMS: THE 'EARNED SETTLEMENT' MODEL

In May 2025, the Government published its Immigration White Paper, Restoring Control over the Immigration System, setting out a series of proposed reforms to the UK Immigration Rules. Among these proposals was a clear acknowledgement that the future of UK investment and economic growth lies in the AI and tech sectors. The White Paper emphasised "support for strategic industries" and signalled a renewed focus on high talent immigration routes in line with the AI Opportunities Action Plan, an independent report published on 13 January 2025.

Following the May 2025 Immigration White Paper and as part of their proposed changes the Government opened their public consultation on reforms to the qualification period for Settlement in the UK. The consultation was open from 20 November 2025 to 12 February 2026. The policy statement, A Fairer Pathway to Settlement, outlines the proposed 'Earned Settlement' model which would replace the current rules on Settlement. This is the Government's flagship immigration proposal.

The proposed 'Earned Settlement' model would replace the current five-year qualifying period on most routes with a 10-year baseline period for all migrants which can be either reduced or increased based on an applicant's individual contributions to the UK.

The proposed model is good news for many US nationals looking to relocate to the UK as it would benefit high earners who could qualify for a seven-year reduction to the baseline (i.e. can obtain Settlement after three years) if they earned a taxable income of £125,140 for three years immediately prior to applying for Settlement. This is a faster route to Settlement than on most routes under the current Rules. Those who have had a taxable income of £50,270 could qualify for a five-year reduction (i.e. Settlement after five years).

These reforms are only proposals at this stage, meaning they could shift in either direction; towards generosity or restriction but, when considered in conjunction with the statements in the May White Paper referenced above, they are an indication that the UK is ready to embrace highly skilled migrants from America with open arms.



Americans Visiting the UK

BUSINESS VISITORS TO THE UK

Americans visiting the UK on business will be required to show that their planned activities in the UK fall within those specifically permitted in the Immigration Rules for business visitors or those travelling to the UK on intra-corporate business. The Home Office expect business visitors to travel to the UK for a period that aligns with the purpose of their visit. For example, an employee travelling to the UK to attend a conference would be expected to stay for the number of days aligning with the duration of the conference.

Business visitors can undertake remote work for their employer in the US, whilst they are in the UK, if this "is not the primary purpose of their visit". There are also specific rules on the payment that a visitor can receive for any activities undertaken in the UK.





REAL WORLD EXAMPLE:

A senior US executive based in New York travels to their company's London office several times a year to attend board meetings, advise on specific internal projects, and to sign deals.

Each visit lasts between four and seven days and is clearly linked to defined business objectives. Outside scheduled meetings, the executive continues to respond to emails and manage their New York team remotely. In this scenario, the visits fall within the scope of permitted business visitor activities, provided the travel pattern remains proportionate and any remote working the executive undertakes is secondary to the primary purpose of their visit (e.g. the scheduled business meetings). Boodle Hatfield would advise the executive to keep a careful record of their time spent in the UK, and the reasons for each trip.

HOME OWNERSHIP IN THE UK

Compliance with the Visit Visa Rules is particularly important for individuals who have purchased a second home in the UK. As set out above, the Visit Visa Rules explicitly prevent visitors from "making

the UK their main home...through frequent or successive visits".

Where a Border Officer is concerned that an individual may be breaching the conditions of their status as a visitor, they would typically stop and question them at the border.

Where there is potential that travel patterns or personal circumstances may prompt questions at the UK border, Boodle Hatfield can assist by providing a tailored "comfort letter". This is designed as a back pocket document (i.e. it is not intended to be presented proactively), to be produced if an individual is stopped or questioned by a Border Officer. The letter sets out the individual's circumstances, the lawful basis of their entry to the UK, the purpose and duration of their visit, and clear confirmation of their intention to leave the UK at the end of that visit. For many clients, this offers reassurance when travelling and an additional layer of clarity should any concerns be raised at border control.





Medium-Term UK Immigration Routes For Highly Skilled US Nationals

GRADUATE VISA

The Graduate visa is for individuals who have successfully completed an eligible course in the UK on a Student visa. Applications must be submitted from within the UK and can be made once the UK university has notified the Home Office that the student has successfully completed their course, but before the Student visa expires.

For applications submitted on or before 31 December 2026, a Graduate visa is granted for two years. For applications submitted on or after 1 January 2027, the Graduate visa will last for 18 months. Applicants who have completed a PhD or other doctoral qualification are eligible for a Graduate visa lasting three years.

The Graduate visa cannot be extended. However, it is designed as a flexible medium term option that allows graduates to remain in the UK to work, gain experience, and explore longer term sponsored options. Graduates can work at any skill level, switch employers freely, be self-employed,

and are not tied to a sponsoring employer while on this route. This makes it particularly useful for building UK work experience and seeking sponsorship under routes such as Skilled Worker or Innovator Founder once an appropriate opportunity arises.

As such, the Graduate visa is often a strong bridging visa for recent US national graduates who wish to establish themselves in the UK labour market before committing to a longer term immigration route.

HIGH POTENTIAL INDIVIDUAL ('HPI') VISA

This route works for US nationals who have recently graduated from a prestigious university. Applicants must have been awarded a qualification at degree level or higher from an eligible university within the five years immediately prior to the date of application. There are a significant number of US universities on the regularly updated list of eligible institutions, and

most of the Ivy League are included here. The HPI visa is not a route to Settlement and the maximum amount of time that an individual can spend on the route is 24 months, unless they hold a PhD which increases the period to 36 months. An individual can however switch into any of the other routes listed below, before the expiry of their HPI leave.

REAL WORLD EXAMPLE:

A US national from a high net worth family graduates from Harvard University in 2024. Keen to spend time in London working in venture capital and exploring opportunities in the UK's tech ecosystem, they do not yet have employer sponsorship lined up, nor wish to commit to a long term immigration route at this stage.

The HPI visa offers an attractive solution, allowing them to live and work freely in the UK immediately after graduation, build professional networks, gain UK experience, then assess longer term options before committing to sponsorship with a UK employer.

PARENT OF A CHILD STUDENT VISA

The Parent of a Child Student route allows a parent to come to the UK to care for their child while the child attends school in the UK on a Child Student visa. Crucially, only one parent is eligible for this route. The other parent may only be present in the UK as a visitor. Eligibility is limited to the period during which the family's youngest child is under the age of 12.

It is a key requirement of this route that the Parent of a Child Student does not intend to make the UK their main home. Applicants must therefore demonstrate that they maintain a principal residence overseas and have sufficient financial resources to support themselves and the children in the UK.

This route does not lead to Settlement. While in the UK, the parent is not permitted to work or study. Permission is granted until the expiry of the child's Child Student visa or until the youngest child turns 12, whichever is sooner. The parent can renew their visa whilst they continue to meet the eligibility conditions of the route, i.e. their children aged under 12 are also extending their visas and remain sponsored by their school as Child Students.

If the family wishes for their children to continue their education in the UK once they

have turned 12, there are a number of options available. Children may switch to Child Student visas sponsored by a boarding school, or they may remain in the UK as dependants if a parent secures a visa under a different immigration route. The latter option is often significantly more complex, involving detailed eligibility and timing considerations, and is precisely where early, strategic planning is essential.

REAL WORLD EXAMPLE:

A high net worth, internationally mobile US family have received offers for their two daughters to attend a prestigious London day school on Child Student visas, each sponsored by the school. The youngest child is eight years old.

The children's mother, who is currently taking a career break, relocates to the UK during term time under the Parent of a Child Student route to care for the children, oversee schooling, and manage household staff in the UK. The family rents a substantial second home, close to the children's schools in Hampstead, for mother and daughters to stay in during term time.

The father, meanwhile, maintains substantial business interests in the US and continues to live primarily at the family's main residence there, visiting his wife and children regularly during the school term, travelling using his ETA. The family's principal home remains their US property, to which they return together during school holidays.

This structure enables the children's UK education, whilst the centre of life in the US is maintained.



Long-Term UK Immigration Routes For Highly Skilled US Nationals

SKILLED WORKER VISA

The Skilled Worker route works best for either senior executives of international companies with a UK presence, or businesspeople who have either already established a UK entity or will have done so before their proposed migration date. Senior executives will be sponsored as Skilled Workers by the UK subsidiary of their US employer, and businesspeople will be sponsored by their own UK entity, which will employ them in the UK.

To act as a sponsor, the UK entity must hold a Skilled Worker sponsor licence. To obtain a sponsor licence the UK entity must have a UK based employee who can take responsibility for the licence by taking on the role of 'Authorising Officer'. Once the entity has a sponsor licence, they can assign the prospective migrant with a Certificate of Sponsorship (a 'CoS') which can be used in a Skilled Worker application.

The visa applicant will need to meet the

minimum salary threshold applicable to their role. Repayments of loans or investments (made at any time) by the applicant, that link to the sponsoring employer, would be deducted from the applicant's salary for the purpose of determining whether they meet the minimum threshold. Calculating the minimum salary required can therefore be a complex assessment.

Under the current Rules this route offers a five-year route to Settlement in the UK, provided that the individual spends at least 180 days in any 12-month period in the UK, calculated on a rolling basis. Applicants can bring their spouse (or long-term partner) and any minor children, to the UK as their dependants.

REAL WORLD EXAMPLE:

A US founder establishes a UK branch of her early stage American tech company, with a UK based business partner, who is a Director of the UK entity.

The UK entity also employs two junior software engineers who are US nationals.

The US founder wishes to relocate to the UK as a Skilled Worker. Her business partner is able to act as Authorising Officer, taking responsibility for sponsor licence compliance. The UK entity applies for a Skilled Worker sponsor licence, explaining that the individual's presence in the UK is essential to the company's growth, investor engagement and strategic leadership. The application also makes clear that the licence will support the future recruitment of sponsored employees as the business scales.

Once the sponsor licence is granted, the company can sponsor the founder in a senior executive role for five years. The individual relocates to the UK to lead the business, accompanied by their husband (who can also work in the UK) and child (who will attend a UK private school), providing both long term immigration stability for the family and operational continuity for the company as it moves to its next phase of growth in the UK.

UK EXPANSION WORKER

This route works for highly skilled US nationals employed by a US entity that wishes to establish a UK branch or subsidiary of an overseas entity, but do not yet have an operational UK presence. Unlike the Skilled Worker route, the visa holder themselves can take on the role of the Authorising Officer. Eligibility requires that the individual has either worked for the linked overseas entity for a 12-month period or be paid over £73,900 per annum in the UK.

Under the current Rules this is not a route to Settlement and the maximum amount of time an individual can stay in the UK on this route is 24 months. The long-term trajectory is for the UK entity to apply for a Skilled Worker sponsor licence as soon as a UK employee or director is appointed, and for the Expansion Worker to switch into this route.

Where no UK entity has yet been established and there is no UK based employee who can act as Authorising Officer, the UK Expansion Worker route provides a practical starting point. The individual is deployed to the UK to set up the business, while simultaneously fulfilling the Authorising Officer role for the expansion licence. They can still bring their dependant partner and

children with them when they travel to the UK as an Expansion Worker migrant.

Once the UK operation is up and running and a suitable UK based employee or director is in place, the company can apply for a Skilled Worker sponsor licence. The individual and their dependants can then transition into the Skilled Worker route, allowing for a longer term presence in the UK and a route to Settlement, while supporting the continued growth of the UK business.

INNOVATOR FOUNDER

This route allows a US entrepreneur to come to the UK to establish an innovative, scalable and viable business. This route first requires an endorsement from a 'business endorsing body', confirming these criteria are met, based on a robust business plan. It is essential the business plan is drafted with the endorsement criteria in mind.

The entrepreneur can bring their dependant on this route, and under the current Rules this route offers a three-year route to Settlement for the main applicant. The criteria for Settlement, can, however, be difficult for an individual to meet in the three-year timescale, particularly if commercial viability is prioritised. If the entrepreneur is unable to meet the requirements for Settlement, they can apply to extend their visa for a further three years, in perpetuity or until the Settlement criteria are met. They may also consider switching into the Skilled Worker route.

Under the 'Earned Settlement' model the Government proposes, the three-year route to Settlement for Innovator Founder migrants would be retained.

REAL WORLD EXAMPLE:

A young American start up founder arrives in the UK on a Student visa and completes a degree in product design. During their studies, they begin developing a concept focused on rethinking the design and functionality of e-scooters, with an emphasis on efficiency, materials, and adaptability for modern urban use. After graduating, they remain in the UK on a Graduate visa, using this time to refine the concept, test early design iterations, and engage with potential commercial partners.

The business is still in its formative stages but has attracted early stage investment from backers

who see potential in the approach and longer term scalability of the product. At this point, the founder works closely with Boodle Hatfield to shape a business plan that aligns with the Innovator Founder endorsement criteria, while an accountant develops detailed financial projections and funding milestones. From the outset, the founder is clear that the objective is to build the business in the UK over the long term and ultimately to qualify for Settlement, so each stage of the immigration strategy is mapped alongside the projected growth of their businesses.

Once the endorsement is secured, the founder applies to switch from their Graduate visa to the Innovator Founder route, enabling them to remain in the UK and focus full time on developing the business and positioning the company for future investment while remaining on a pathway to Settlement. They can expect to have regular 'check ins' with their Endorsing Body to monitor the development of their business and to receive feedback on their progress against the Settlement criteria.

GLOBAL TALENT VISA

Like the Innovator Founder route, the Global Talent visa has a two-stage application process, first requiring an endorsement from a specific endorsing body depending on the applicant's field of talent. The second stage is the visa application itself, using the endorsement.

This is an ideal route for Americans whose wealth has been generated through achievements in a particular sector, including internationally acclaimed actors and musicians or those working within digital tech.

Dependants can be included on the Global Talent route, and this is a three- or five-year route to Settlement for the main applicant, depending on the type of endorsement received.

As with the Innovator Founder route, under the 'Earned Settlement' model the Government proposes retaining a three-year Settlement route for Global Talent migrants. There is, however, some uncertainty as to whether the five-year route will be retained for migrants who would be on that pathway under the current Global Talent Rules.

REAL WORLD EXAMPLE I – EARLY-STAGE ARTIST:

A critically acclaimed opera singer trained at the

Juilliard School, now at the early stages of an international career, and with performances at the Metropolitan Opera behind them wishes to broaden their professional horizons by working with the UK's internationally renowned opera houses and cultural institutions, without being tied to a single employer. They therefore apply to Arts Council England, the relevant endorsing body, for a Global Talent endorsement.

Boodle Hatfield assist them in preparing detailed CV and gathering substantial evidence of recent professional achievements, including letters of support from eminent figures in the field, press reviews, programmes from performances, and other materials demonstrating recognition as a leader or emerging leader in their discipline. As they are at an early stage in their career, the singer is applying for endorsement as an individual with 'exceptional promise', this kind of endorsement will put them on a route to Settlement in five years (under the current Rules).

Once granted, the endorsement is used to support an application for a Global Talent visa, allowing the singer to live and work freely in the UK, take on performances with multiple institutions, and develop their career without sponsorship from a specific organisation.

REAL WORLD EXAMPLE II – INTERNATIONAL RENOWNED ACTOR:

A highly acclaimed American film actor, known for leading roles in major studio and independent productions, is looking to base themselves in the UK to work on multiple film projects. The actor has won a BAFTA, which qualifies as a "prestigious international award" under the Home Office's specified list for eligible prizes in the film and television route (this list includes an Academy Award, a BAFTA and the Golden Globes).

Because of this award, the process differs from the standard Global Talent application. Rather than first applying for an endorsement from Arts Council England, the actor can proceed directly to the visa stage, using the award as evidence that they are 'exceptionally talented', placing them on a route to Settlement in three years (under the current Rules).

Once granted, the Global Talent visa allows the actor to live and work in the UK without sponsorship, taking on film projects with multiple producers and studios.



INTERNATIONAL SPORTSPERSON VISA

The International Sportsperson Visa is a route for elite, internationally established sportspeople and qualified sports coaches. While it shares some features with the Global Talent and Innovator Founder routes, this visa is more procedurally complex, operating as a three-stage process: endorsement from the relevant sports governing body, sponsorship by the UK organisation with which the individual has a contract, and finally the visa application.

The sports governing body will need to confirm that the individual is elite, internationally established, and that they will make a significant contribution to the development of their sport at the highest level in the UK.

A particular advantage is the ability to switch directly into this route from within the UK when entering initially as a visitor to undertake a Permitted Paid Engagement (i.e. to take part in a sports event in the UK).

This route permits dependant partners and children to accompany the main applicant to the UK. Under the current Immigration Rules, it offers a route to Settlement after five years' continuous residence, making it an attractive long term option

for elite athletes who intend to base themselves in the UK for the duration of their professional careers.

REAL WORLD EXAMPLE:

A US professional basketball player has visited the UK on several occasions to participate in short term appearances and exhibition activities under the Permitted Paid Engagement Visit Visa Rules. Following continued success and visibility in the UK league, the player is offered a long term contract with a London based club and decides to relocate to the UK on a permanent basis.

The next step is for the player to obtain an endorsement from Basketball England, the relevant governing body, confirming their status as an elite international athlete and the value they will bring to the UK game. Once endorsed, the London club can sponsor the player under the International Sportsperson route. In the interim, the player may lawfully enter the UK again as a visitor to undertake a Permitted Paid Engagement and then submit an in country application, using their sponsorship, to switch into the International Sportsperson visa, allowing them to begin their long term role with the club.

The Role of an Immigration Lawyer

For high net worth Americans and their families exploring a move to the UK, working with an immigration lawyer can prevent costly false starts and enables a clear long-term strategic approach that maximises qualifying time in the UK toward eventual Settlement and, where desired, citizenship.

For US visitors, practical measures such as the comfort-letter approach outlined above can provide reassurance when travelling and help manage any potential questions at the UK border.

For highly skilled US nationals considering the UK, UK immigration planning should not occur in isolation and when immigration advice is coordinated with UK tax advisors, education consultants and The Luxury Collective Global Advisory the relocation process becomes materially more efficient.

This broader, integrated approach reflects the wider advisory work of The Luxury Collective Global Advisory. As explored in our accompanying white papers on UK education and cross-border wealth planning, successful relocation for American families is not driven by a single



decision, but by aligning immigration, education, investment, and lifestyle considerations from the outset. When approached in this coordinated way, the process becomes not only more efficient, but significantly more effective in delivering long-term outcomes across jurisdictions.

Conclusion

The choice of immigration route for Americans looking to the UK is not merely procedural, but highly strategic. It determines the timeline to Settlement and ultimately, eligibility for citizenship.

With the Government's proposed reforms potentially reshaping qualification periods for Settlement, early and informed planning is more important than ever.

Advisory work is not transactional; it is architectural. It is about shaping lives, not completing deals. At The Luxury Collective Global Advisory, each discussion about UK property is the beginning of a larger conversation about intent. How does this home integrate into your global plan? What opportunities does it create? What obligations follow?

By partnering with Boodle Hatfield LLP, we combine strategic intelligence and legal expertise

to give our clients a clearer path through an increasingly intricate environment. Residency, tax, and regulation now move together in ways that reward thoughtful preparation. Our joint mission is to help clients make confident, informed, and enduring decisions.

This White Paper reflects that philosophy. It is an invitation to approach every decision about living in the UK not simply as a lifestyle choice, but as part of a well-considered global strategy.



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COMPASS

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