

# Your views about the MAC's latest commission

## About you

Q1. What is the name of your organisation?

The Geological Society of London

Q2. What is your email address?

megan.odonnell@geolsoc.org.uk

Q3. Which of the following options best describe your reason for completing this form?

I am providing evidence of recruitment and salaries in the sector, on behalf of other organisations/members or as a recruitment business

## About your sector(s)

Q27. Which of the following best describes your organisation?

Third sector

Q28. How many businesses /organisations do you represent?

50-499

## About the businesses/organisations you represent

Q29. How have you engaged the businesses/ organisations you represent to inform this consultation response?

**Other (please specify):**  
both

Q30. Thinking of the businesses/organisations you have engaged with, in general are their staff concentrated in specific UK countries/regions or are they nation-wide?

Nation-wide

## Continued

Q32. Thinking of the businesses/organisations you engage with, tick all the relevant sectors they cover from the list below: (Please select all that apply) For more information about the sectors please refer to the link below: <http://resources.companieshouse.gov.uk/sic/>

Mining and Quarrying

Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities

Construction

Professional, scientific and technical activities

Education

Q33. Thinking of the businesses/organisations you engage with and their number of employees, tick all size bands that they cover:

0-9 employees

10-49 employees

50-249 employees

250-499 employees

500+ employees

Q34. Thinking about the businesses/organisations you engage with, are the majority roughly of a similar size in terms of the number of employees (e.g most SMEs or most large organisations)?

No

## Employment of migrant workers

Q36. To your knowledge, have the organisations you have engaged with recruited any of the following workers in the past 5 years: (Please select all that apply) If you are unclear about the terms please hover over the question (workers from Switzerland are included in our definition of EEA countries).

UK and/or Irish workers

Workers from EEA countries outside of the UK and/or Ireland

Workers from non-EEA countries

Q37. In the next 12 months are they likely to recruit: (Please select all that apply) \*If you are unclear about the terms please hover over the question (workers from Switzerland for example are included in our definition of EEA countries).

UK and/or Irish workers

Workers from EEA countries outside of the UK and/or Ireland

Workers from non-EEA countries

## Experience of Tier 2 (General) visa

Q38. Following on from the previous question, were these non-EEA workers recruited under the Tier 2 (General) visa system: \*If you are unclear about the terms please hover over the question(workers from Switzerland for example are included in our definition of EEA countries).

Yes some

Q39. Are the salaries required by the immigration rules for the Tier 2 (General) visa generally:

Don't know

Q40. Have the organisations that you represent experienced any issues with Tier 2 (General) visa salary requirements? If so, what were they?(In 200 words)

Further to Q14, for some, graduate salaries meet the current Tier 2 salary requirements, however the threshold for visa renewal as per the outlined pay progression (prior to settled status) is higher than typically achievable within that timescale. The renewal salary threshold is typical for a Chartered Geologist, which takes a minimum of four years. Employers who cannot renew their employee's visas due to the threshold must re-recruit for these roles. Some employers highlighted the impact on employee wellbeing that not quite reaching this threshold has had during the renewal period. Organisations cited struggling to retain skilled employees due to uncertainty over the requirements. Some reported struggling to meet Tier 2 salary requirements due to regional disparities from the national average. These businesses also noted the administrative burden of the appeals process to allow exceptions to be made – which are disproportionately concentrated in regions where salaries are below the national average. This is particularly difficult for the recruitment of skilled technical staff, e.g. in Higher Education, where meeting the salary requirements for a Tier 2 visa is currently challenging as these positions are typically paid less than the rest of the sector (c. £21,000 - £23,000 in North East England).

Q41. Have any of the Tier 2 (General) visa employees employed by your members (or organisations you represent) applied or tried to apply for settlement?

Yes

## Experience of Tier 2 continued

Q42. In general, was the settlement income threshold (currently £35,800)?

Above their current salary

Q43. Please provide any additional views of Tier 2 (General) visa settlement(in 200 words)

A number of regional organisations (located in the North East or East Midlands) reported struggling to compete with national average salaries, as the cost of living in these regions is typically lower. They cited struggling to recruit qualified UK candidates to fulfil their skills requirements, and therefore searching for talent outside the UK is imperative to the continued success of industries relying on geological expertise such as environmental, geotechnical or ground engineering and across the petroleum industries. Organisations reported typically recruiting for MSc or PhD qualified candidates from outside the UK with a minimum of 5-8 years of experience, however most reported finding it difficult to meet the salary requirements of the Tier 2 system despite easily attracting employees with this level of skill. SMEs are more susceptible to market fluctuations reported finding it hard to meet the thresholds set under the current visa system, and reported losing out on talent to larger, more financially resilient, companies who were able to offer better benefits packages to poach their employees. The smaller organisations who wrote to us believe their ability to attract the best talent are disproportionately threatened by the salary thresholds imposed.

## Salary Threshold questions

Q44. To what extent would the businesses/organisations you have engaged with agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
There should not be a minimum salary threshold above the legal requirement (the national minimum wage)			X		
If there is a salary threshold it should be applied universally across the economy and UK, with a few exceptions to keep the system simple					X
If there are salary thresholds, there need to be a variety to reflect employer needs	X				

**If you have an alternative model you wish to describe, please explain it here (in 200 words):**

The following factors were suggested for consideration in salary threshold setting: local cost of living (to account for regional disparity), size of the company, variety of roles within a sector, commodity price for the industry (to account for market fluctuations affecting salaries).

Q45. If there were tailored salary thresholds, to what extent would the businesses/organisations you have engaged with agree that they should be varied by:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Sector		X			
Region/country	X				
New entrants/young workers		X			
Occupation		X			

**If you consider that they should be varied by another characteristic, please explain more here (in 200 words)**

Respondents suggested: taking into account size and type of business activity, as well as profits, to account for the wide variety of professions within sectors.

Q46. Do the businesses/organisations you engage with most commonly think that jobs judged to be in shortage (such as those on the Shortage Occupation List) should have:

Lower salary thresholds compared to those not in shortage

Q47. Do the businesses/organisations you engage with most commonly think that having a salary threshold equivalent to the 25th percentile of the full-time pay distribution for employees in that occupation is: If you are unclear of the terms please hover over the question

Too high

Q48. Do the businesses you engage with most commonly think that having a minimum salary requirement of £30,000 for an experienced full-time employee is:

**Please explain your answer (in 200 words):**

Depending on the definition of experienced - some organisations that wrote to us said this is appropriate for around 5 years experience, but not for 10 -15 years. £30,000 is much more realistic for a pre-Chartered geoscientist, however this would still pose issues for staff at the level of technician (see Q15).

Q49. What do you think should be counted towards the salary for assessing whether an individual meets the threshold? (Please select all that apply)

Other cash/non-cash remuneration please specify (in 200 words):

Not enough organisations offered a sufficient response to this to enable us to offer a representative answer.

Q50. Following on from the previous question, please list your responses in order of importance with 1 being the most important and 6/7 being the least.

N/A

Q51. Are there any other issues we should consider? (In 200 words)

Smaller organisations commented that the cost of meeting salary thresholds in order to enable the recruitment and retention of the best available employees (if from outside the UK) is financially challenging. Their profit margins are more sensitive to market fluctuations than in larger organisations. They also noted a significant loss of skilled staff after they spend 2 – 7 years developing within a small company, which means that non-UK staff end up in companies who did not bear the majority of the cost of their visa and settlement administration.

Uncertainty around the future immigration system has caused 7 out of 9 non-UK employees of one organisation to leave their roles, with one citing Brexit specifically as their reason to return to their country of origin.

Q52. Please attach any additional evidence you would like us to consider

- File: GSL Background Info & Overview.pdf

## Australian Points Based System

Q53. The Government is considering adopting an Australian type Points Based System. In your opinion, please tell us the relative importance of the following characteristics typically used to award points to migrants by ranking them where 1 is the most important and 8/9 is the least important.

- Having a job offer** -
- Work experience** -
- Education attainment** -
- Language proficiency** -
- Age** -
- Having studied in the UK** -
- Salary** -
- Priority occupations** -

**Other please specify (in 200 words):**

Not enough organisations offered a sufficient response to this to enable us to offer a representative answer.

## MAC stakeholder database

Would you like to be added to our stakeholder database for future research purposes and updates on MAC work?

Yes

Q54. We may require follow-up to clarify or supplement your responses to the online form, or for follow-up research. Do you consent to be contacted to clarify or supplement your responses?

Yes