



Immigration Department

The Government of

the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

Guidebook for
Entry for Employment as
Professionals in Hong Kong

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I. Introduction

This guidebook sets out the entry arrangements for persons who wish to enter/stay in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) for employment as professionals.

2. Applicants who have obtained a degree or higher qualification in a full-time and locally-accredited programme **in Hong Kong** (hereafter “non-local graduates”) may apply to stay/return and work in the HKSAR under the “Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates” (hereafter “IANG”).

3. Applicants who are not non-local graduates but possess special skills, knowledge or experience of value to and not readily available in the HKSAR may apply to come to work under the General Employment Policy (hereafter “GEP”). The GEP does not apply to Chinese residents of the Mainland.

4. Chinese residents of the Mainland who are not non-local graduates but possess special skills, knowledge or experience of value to and not readily available in the HKSAR may apply to come to work under the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals (hereafter “ASMTP”).

5. The IANG, GEP and ASMTP are all quota-free and non-sector specific. Apart from professionals in the commercial and financial fields, they are also applicable to talent and professionals in the arts, culture and sport sectors as well as those in the culinary profession with a view to enhancing Hong Kong’s status as an Asian world city.

6. The above entry arrangements do not apply to nationals of Afghanistan, Albania, Cambodia, Cuba, Laos, Korea (Democratic People’s Republic of), Nepal and Vietnam.

II. Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates (IANG)

Eligibility Criteria

7. Non-local graduates here refer to persons from outside the HKSAR who have obtained a degree or higher qualification in a full-time and locally accredited programme in Hong Kong.

8. Non-local graduates who submit applications to the Immigration Department **within six months after the date of their graduation** (i.e. the date shown on their graduation certificates) are classified as non-local **fresh** graduates.

9. Non-local graduates who submit applications **beyond six months of the date of their graduation** are classified as **returning** non-local graduates.

10. Non-local fresh graduates who wish to apply to stay and work in the HKSAR are not required to secure an offer of employment upon application. They may be granted 12 months’ stay on time limitation without other conditions of stay provided that normal immigration requirements are met. Those who intend to apply to stay and work in the HKSAR but have not yet secured the graduation result may apply for extension of stay to wait for the promulgation of results. Non-local fresh graduates who have not yet obtained their graduation certificate could apply to stay and work by producing a proof from the institution confirming that he/she has graduated.

11. Returning non-local graduates who wish to return to work in the HKSAR are required to secure an offer of employment upon application. The applications will be favourably considered so long as the job is at a level commonly taken up by degree holders and the remuneration package is set at market level. They may be granted 12 months' stay on time limitation without other conditions of stay provided that normal immigration requirements are met.

Application Procedures

Application forms

12. All non-local graduates should complete application form (ID 990A). The employing company of those returning non-local graduates should complete application form (ID 990B). The application forms (ID 990A and ID 990B) can be obtained free of charge from the following offices:

- (a) Immigration Department Headquarters.
- (b) Immigration Branch Offices.
- (c) District Offices.
- (d) Overseas Chinese Diplomatic and Consular Missions.
- (e) Hong Kong's network of offices in the Mainland of China and overseas.

The forms can also be downloaded from the Immigration Department's website at www.immd.gov.hk.

Supporting Documents

13. Please refer to the checklist at Part VII.

Submission of Application

14. All the forms must be duly completed and signed. Where there are accompanying dependants (please refer to information at Part V below), each dependant must complete and sign Part B of application form ID990A. For an applicant or a child dependant under the age of 16, it must be signed by the parent or legal guardian of the child. Completed application forms, i.e. ID990A and ID990B, and all supporting documents should be submitted by the applicant or the sponsor/reference either in person or by post to:

Receipt and Despatch Unit
Hong Kong Immigration Department
2/F, Immigration Tower
7 Gloucester Road
Wan Chai, Hong Kong

Travel Documentation Requirement

Mainland residents

15. Entry permit labels will be collected by the sponsor/reference from the Immigration Department for onward transmission to the successful applicants. For successful non-local fresh graduate applicants without a local sponsor/reference, the entry permit labels will be sent to them by registered mail. The applicant should then obtain an Exit-entry Permit for Travelling to and from Hong Kong and Macao (EEP) and a relevant exit endorsement from the Public Security Bureau office where his/her household registration is kept. The entry permit label should be affixed onto a blank endorsement page of the applicant's EEP on which his/her relevant exit endorsement has been obtained. The applicant should present the EEP for immigration examination upon arrival in the HKSAR.

16. Successful Mainland applicant currently residing in Hong Kong, after being issued with an entry permit label, may apply for the relevant exit endorsement through China Travel Service (Hong Kong) Limited, as authorized by the Bureau of Exit-entry Administration of the Ministry of Public Security.

Non-Mainland residents

17. Visa/entry permit label will be collected by the sponsor/reference from the Immigration Department for onward transmission to the successful applicants. For successful non-local fresh graduate applicants without a local sponsor/reference, the visa/entry permit labels will be sent to them by registered mail. The visa/entry permit label should be affixed onto a blank visa page of the applicant's travel document for presentation to the immigration officer upon arrival in the HKSAR. Successful applicants other than those from the Mainland, whilst residing in the HKSAR, will be issued with a visa/entry permit label to be affixed onto their travel documents.

Extension of Stay

18. Persons admitted under the IANG may apply for extension of stay to work in the HKSAR within 4 weeks before their limit of stay expires. Upon application, the non-local graduates are required to secure an offer of employment which is at a level commonly taken up by degree holders and the remuneration package is set at market level. For those who have established or joined in business in the HKSAR, they are required to produce proof of their business. Successful applicants will normally be permitted to remain on time limitation on 2-2-3 years pattern without other conditions of stay.

Change of Employment

19. Persons admitted under the IANG are free to take up and change employment during their permitted stay without the need to seek prior approval from the Immigration Department.

III. General Employment Policy (GEP)

Eligibility Criteria

20. Applicants who are not non-local graduates but possess special skills, knowledge or experience of value to and not readily available in the HKSAR may apply to come to work under the GEP.

21. An application for a visa/entry permit to take up employment under the GEP may be favourably considered if:

- (a) there is no security objection and no known record of serious crime in respect of the applicant;
- (b) the applicant has a good education background, normally a first degree in the relevant field, but in special circumstances, good technical qualifications, proven professional abilities and/or relevant experience and achievements supported by documentary evidence may also be accepted;
- (c) there is a genuine job vacancy;
- (d) the applicant has a confirmed offer of employment and is employed in a job relevant to his academic qualifications or working experience that cannot be readily taken up by the local work force; and
- (e) the remuneration package including income, accommodation, medical and other fringe benefits is broadly commensurate with the prevailing market level for professionals in the HKSAR.

22. Overseas Chinese nationals holding People's Republic of China (PRC) passports who meet the criteria stipulated in paragraph 21 and normal immigration requirements may apply to enter the HKSAR for employment under the GEP if:

- (a) the applicant has permanent residence overseas; or
- (b) the applicant has been residing overseas for at least one year immediately before the submission of application ("overseas" means countries or territories outside the Mainland, the Macao SAR and the HKSAR) and that the application is submitted from overseas.

Application Procedures

Application forms

23. Applicant should complete application form (ID 990A). The employing company should complete application form (ID 990B). The application forms (ID 990A and ID 990B) can be obtained free of charge from the following offices:

- (a) Immigration Department Headquarters.
- (b) Immigration Branch Offices.
- (c) District Offices.
- (d) Overseas Chinese Diplomatic and Consular Missions.
- (e) Hong Kong's network of offices in the Mainland of China and overseas.

The forms can also be downloaded from the Immigration Department's website at www.immd.gov.hk.

Supporting Documents

24. Please refer to the checklist at Part VII.

Submission of Application

25. All the forms must be duly completed and signed. Where there are accompanying dependants (please refer to information at Part V below), each dependant must complete and sign Part B of application form ID990A. For an applicant or a child dependant under the age of 16, it must be signed by the parent or legal guardian of the child. Completed application forms, i.e. ID990A and ID990B, and all supporting documents should be submitted by the applicant or the employing company in either one of the following ways:

- (a) By post directly or through a local sponsor/reference in the HKSAR to:
Receipt and Despatch Unit
Hong Kong Immigration Department
2/F, Immigration Tower
7 Gloucester Road
Wan Chai, Hong Kong
- (b) Applicants residing in overseas countries or territories may submit their application forms together with the relevant supporting documents and their travel documents in person to the nearest Chinese diplomatic and consular missions in their place of domicile.
- (c) Holders of foreign passports who are living in the Mainland of China may submit the application forms together with all supporting documents to the Immigration Division of the Office of the Government of the HKSAR in Beijing (Beijing Office). Applicants are required to produce their travel document to the Immigration Division of the Beijing Office so that a visa/entry permit could be issued if the application is approved. The address of the Beijing Office is:
No. 71, Di'anmen Xidajie, Xicheng District
Beijing 100009
People's Republic of China

Travel Documentation Requirement

26. Visa/Entry permit label will be issued upon successful application. It should be collected by the sponsor from the Immigration Department for onward transmission to the successful applicants. For application submitted to the Chinese diplomatic and consular mission or the Immigration Division of the Beijing Office, visa/entry permit will be issued through the relevant Chinese diplomatic and consular mission or the Immigration Division of the Beijing Office as appropriate. The visa/entry permit label should be affixed onto a blank visa page of the applicant's travel document for presentation to the immigration officer upon arrival in the HKSAR.

Extension of Stay

27. Persons admitted under the GEP may apply for extension of stay to work in the HKSAR within 4 weeks before their limit of stay expires. Such applications will be considered only when the applicants continue to meet the eligibility criteria under the GEP. Extension of stay, if approved, will normally follow the 2-2-3 years pattern, or be in accordance with the duration of the employment contract (whichever is shorter).

Change of Employment

28. Persons who have been admitted under the GEP may apply for change of employment provided that he/she continues to fulfil the eligibility criteria under the GEP and is employed in a job relevant to his/her qualification and expertise.

IV. Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals (ASMTP)

Eligibility Criteria

29. Chinese residents of the Mainland who are not non-local graduates but possess special skills, knowledge or experience of value to and not readily available in the HKSAR may apply to come to work under the ASMTP.

30. An application for an entry permit to take up employment under the ASMTP may be favourably considered if:

- (a) there is no security objection and no known record of serious crime in respect of the applicant;
- (b) the applicant has a good education background, normally a first degree in the relevant field, but in special circumstances, good technical qualifications, proven professional abilities and/or relevant experience and achievements supported by documentary evidence may also be accepted;
- (c) there is a genuine job vacancy;
- (d) the applicant has a confirmed offer of employment and is employed in a job relevant to his academic qualifications or working experience that cannot be readily taken up by the local work force; and
- (e) the remuneration package including income, accommodation, medical and other fringe benefits is broadly commensurate with the prevailing market level for professionals in the HKSAR.

Application Procedures

Application forms

31. Applicant should complete application form (ID 990A). The employing company should complete application form (ID 990B). The application forms (ID 990A and ID 990B) can be obtained free of charge from the following offices:

- (a) Immigration Department Headquarters.
- (b) Immigration Branch Offices.
- (c) District Offices.
- (d) Overseas Chinese Diplomatic and Consular Missions.
- (e) Hong Kong's network of offices in the Mainland of China and overseas.

The forms can also be downloaded from the Immigration Department's website at www.immd.gov.hk.

Supporting Documents

32. Please refer to the checklist at Part VII.

Submission of Application

33. All the forms must be duly completed and signed. Where there are accompanying dependants (please refer to information at Part V below), each dependant must complete and sign Part B of application form ID990A. For an applicant or a child dependant under the age of 16, it must be signed by the parent or legal guardian of the child. Completed application forms, i.e. ID990A and ID990B, and all supporting documents should be submitted by the employing company either in person or by post to:

Receipt and Despatch Unit
Hong Kong Immigration Department
2/F, Immigration Tower
7 Gloucester Road
Wan Chai, Hong Kong

34. Chinese residents of the Mainland visiting the HKSAR may not request for extending their limit of stay on the grounds of having submitted applications under the ASMTP.

Travel Documentation Requirement

35. Successful applicant will be issued with an entry permit label. The label should be collected from the Immigration Department by his/her employing company for onward transmission to him/her.

36. Successful applicant should apply for an Exit-entry Permit for Travelling to and from Hong Kong and Macao (EEP) and a relevant exit endorsement from the Public Security Bureau office where his/her household registration is kept. The entry permit label should be affixed onto a blank endorsement page of the applicant's EEP on which his/her relevant exit endorsement has been obtained. The applicant should present the EEP for immigration examination upon arrival in the HKSAR.

Extension of Stay

37. Persons admitted under the ASMTP may apply for extension of stay to work in the HKSAR within 4 weeks before their limit of stay expires. Such applications will be considered

only when the applicants continue to meet the eligibility criteria under the ASMTP. Extension of stay, if approved, will normally follow the 2-2-3 years pattern, or be in accordance with the duration of the employment contract (whichever is shorter).

Change of Employment

38. Chinese resident of the Mainland who have been admitted under the ASMTP may apply for change of employment provided that he/she continues to fulfil the eligibility criteria under the ASMTP and is employed in a job relevant to his/her qualification and expertise.

V. Entry of Dependants

39. Applicants admitted under the IANG, GEP and ASMTP may apply to bring in their spouse and unmarried dependent children under the age of 18 to the HKSAR under the prevailing dependant policy. Persons admitted or applying for admission under the respective arrangements will be the sponsors of his/her accompanying dependants to the HKSAR. An application for admission of a dependant may be favourably considered if:

- (a) there is reasonable proof of a genuine relationship between the dependant and the sponsor;
- (b) there is no known record to the detriment of the dependant; and
- (c) the sponsor is able to support the dependant's living at a standard well above the subsistence level and provide him/her with suitable accommodation in Hong Kong.

40. This entry arrangement does not apply to:

- (a) former Mainland Chinese residents residing in Macao who have acquired residence in Macao through channels other than the One-way Permit Scheme; and
- (b) nationals of Afghanistan, Albania, Cuba and Korea (Democratic People's Republic of).

41. The length of stay of such dependants will be linked to that of their sponsors. Dependants are required to leave the HKSAR when the sponsors leave the HKSAR. Dependants are not prohibited from taking up employment in the HKSAR under existing policy.

VI. Other Information

42. In general, unless a person has the right of abode or right to land in the HKSAR, he/she requires a visa/entry permit to work in the HKSAR. While each application is determined on its individual merits, an applicant should meet normal immigration requirements (such as holding a valid travel document with adequate returnability to his/her country of residence or citizenship; be of clear criminal record and raise no security or criminal concerns to the HKSAR; have no likelihood of becoming a burden on Hong Kong etc.) as well as the relevant specific eligibility criteria detailed above before he/she may be considered for the grant of a visa/entry permit. It should be noted that the eligibility criteria may be subject to change from time to time.

Re-entry into Hong Kong

43. Non-permanent residents of the HKSAR, irrespective of their nationality and type of travel document held, do not require a re-entry visa/entry permit to enter the HKSAR provided that they return within the validity of their permitted limit of stay and that the circumstances upon which they have acquired their residential status remain unchanged. Non-permanent residents, if returning after a long absence of, say, 12 months or more, may be required to approach the Immigration Department Headquarters to have their residential status verified.

Right of Abode

44. Persons admitted under the IANG, GEP and ASMTP and have ordinarily resided in the HKSAR for a continuous period of not less than 7 years may apply for the right of abode in the HKSAR in accordance with the law.

Payment of Fees

45. If the application is submitted to the Hong Kong Immigration Department direct, payment of fees should be made upon collection of the visa/entry permit either in cash, by EPS or by cheque. The cheque should be crossed, made payable to “The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region”, properly dated and signed.

46. If the application is submitted to an overseas Chinese diplomatic and consular mission or the Immigration Division of the Beijing Office, the visa fee should be paid direct to the Chinese diplomatic and consular mission or the Immigration Division of the Beijing Office as appropriate.

Processing Time

47. Applications submitted under the IANG by non-local fresh graduates will take about two weeks to process upon receipt of all the required documents. It will normally take four weeks to process other visa/entry permit applications for employment upon receipt of all the required documents. The Immigration Department would not be able to start processing the application unless all the required documents and information are received. Please refrain from making enquiries about the progress of the application unless it is absolutely necessary, as it may delay the processing of the application.

48. All applications are processed and determined by the Immigration Department. Approval of applications is entirely discretionary and is subject to changes in government policies. The Director of Immigration reserves absolute discretion to refuse any application even if the application meets all eligibility criteria.

Warning

49. It is an offence to make false statements or representations to an immigration officer. A person who knowingly and wilfully makes a statement or gives information which he/she knows to be false or does not believe to be true shall be guilty of an offence under the Laws of Hong Kong and any such visa/entry permit issued or permission to enter or remain in the HKSAR granted shall have no effect.

Disclaimer

50. The information in this guidebook serves as reference only. The Immigration Department of the HKSAR is not responsible for any loss or damage whatsoever arising out of or in connection with any information in this guidebook. The Immigration Department reserves the right to omit, suspend or edit all information in this guidebook at any time in its absolute discretion without giving any reason or prior notice. The Immigration Department further reserves the right to change the eligibility criteria and details of the arrangements set out above from time to time without notice.

Enquiries

51. For more information about the entry arrangement for employment as professionals, please contact the Immigration Enquiry Hotline at (852) 2824 6111 (phone) and (852) 2877 7711 (fax) or visit the Immigration Department's website at www.immd.gov.hk.

VII. Checklist of Forms and Documents to be Submitted

(A) Forms and Documents to be Submitted by the Applicants

✓	Forms/ Documents Required	Applicants admitted under the IANG		Applicants admitted under the GEP or ASMTP
		Fresh Graduates	Returning Graduates	
	Application for Entry for Employment as Professionals in Hong Kong (ID 990A)	✓	✓	✓
	The applicant's recent photograph (affixed on page 2 of ID 990A)	✓	✓	✓
	Photocopy of the applicant's travel document containing personal particulars, date of issue, date of expiry and/or details of any re-entry visa held (if applicable). For an applicant who is currently staying in Hong Kong, photocopy of his/her travel document page containing the latest arrival stamp/extension of stay label in the HKSAR. Chinese resident of the Mainland who has not been issued with a travel document may submit a photocopy of his/her People's Republic of China resident identity card.	✓	✓	✓
	Photocopy of the applicant's Hong Kong identity card (if any)	✓	✓	✓
	Photocopy of transcript of academic records, graduation certificate or supporting letter from the degree awarding institution showing applicant's attainment of degree or higher qualification in a full-time and locally-accredited programme in the HKSAR	✓	✓	
	Photocopy of proof of academic qualifications and relevant working experience			✓
	Letter of consent from applicant's present working unit or relevant Mainland authorities (page 8 of ID 990A) [<i>for Mainland residents only</i>]	✓	✓	✓
	Photocopy of the applicant's Macao identity card [<i>for Macao residents only</i>]	✓	✓	✓
	Photocopy of the applicant's household registration in Taiwan and Taiwan identity card [<i>for Taiwan residents only</i>]	✓	✓	✓
	Photocopy of proof of applicant's overseas residence, such as photocopy of official documents showing applicant's condition of stay and limit of stay endorsed by overseas authorities [<i>for overseas Chinese holding PRC passports only</i>]	✓	✓	✓

(B) Forms and Documents to be Submitted by Employing Companies

✓	Forms/ Documents Required
	Application for Employing Professionals in Hong Kong (ID990B)
	Photocopy of the company's employment contract or letter of appointment with the applicant containing information about post, salaries, other fringe benefits and employment periods
	Photocopy of the Business Registration Certificate [^]
	Photocopy of proof of financial standing (e.g. latest audited financial report, trading profit and loss account, or profit tax return) [^]
	Documents with details of company background such as business activities, mode of operation, background/ connection of company, product ranges, sources and markets, membership of chamber of commerce (if any), etc. (supported with catalogues, brochures, etc.) # [^]
	Detailed business plan (e.g. information on source of fund, estimated capital injection, nature/mode of business activities, expected turnover, sales volume, gross and net profit in the coming years, and proposed creation of local job posts, etc.) [<i>for companies newly set-up within 12 months only</i>] [^]

Submission of the documents is not required for the IANG applicant

[^] Submission of the documents is not required if the employing company had successfully obtained an employment or training visa/entry permit for a non-local staff in the past 18 months immediately before submission of the application

(C) Forms and Documents to be Submitted by each accompanying Dependant of an Applicant for entry under the IANG, GEP and ASMTP

✓	Forms/ Documents Required
	The applicant's application form, Application for Entry for Employment as Professionals in Hong Kong (ID990A) with Part B duly completed by the dependant
	The dependant's recent photograph (affixed on page two of the application form ID 990A)
	Photocopy of the dependant's travel document containing personal particulars, its date of issue, date of expiry and/or details of any re-entry visa held (if applicable). For a dependant who is currently staying in Hong Kong, photocopy of his/her travel document page containing the latest arrival stamp/extension of stay label in the HKSAR. Chinese resident of the Mainland who has not been issued with a travel document may submit a photocopy of his/her People's Republic of China resident identity card.
	Photocopy of evidence of the applicant's relationship with the dependant e.g. marriage certificates, birth certificates, family photographs, family letters (with envelopes), census record book and Privilege Card for Single child (if applicable)
	Photocopy of the dependant's Macao identity card [<i>for Macao residents only</i>]
	Photocopy of the dependant's household registration in Taiwan and Taiwan identity card [<i>for Taiwan residents only</i>]

Important Notice:

1. Notwithstanding that the documents and information required have been furnished, applicants, accompanying dependant(s) and employing companies may still be required to submit further supporting documents and information in connection with the application(s) when necessary.
2. Where a document is not in Chinese or English, it must be accompanied by a Chinese or English translation certified as a true translation by a sworn translator, court translator, authorised public translator, certified translator, expert translator or official translator.



Notice of Amendment to “Guidebook for Entry for Employment as Professionals in Hong Kong” ID(E) 991

Paragraph 6 is amended to read as:

6. The IANG and GEP do not apply to nationals of Afghanistan, Cambodia, Cuba, Laos, Korea (Democratic People's Republic of), Nepal and Vietnam. Only the IANG is not applicable to nationals of Albania.

Point (b) under paragraph 40 is amended to read as:

40. This entry arrangement does not apply to:
- (b) nationals of Afghanistan and Korea (Democratic People's Republic of).

Immigration Department
The Government of the Hong Kong
Special Administrative Region
January 2012

Amendment Notice to ID(E) 991 (04/2009)