What evidence supports a UK spouse visa application?

Understanding the evidence required for a UK spouse visa

A UK spouse visa application requires you to prove a genuine and subsisting relationship, meet the financial requirement, demonstrate adequate accommodation, and pass the English language requirement. The Home Office expects clear documentary proof for each of these areas. Without the right evidence, your application may be refused, so it is essential to know exactly what to provide.

This article explains the key categories of evidence you need for a successful UK spouse visa application, and what the Home Office looks for in each one.

Relationship evidence: proving a genuine and subsisting relationship

The most important part of any spouse visa application is proving that you and your partner are in a genuine, ongoing relationship. The Home Office wants to see that you have met in person, that you intend to live together permanently in the UK, and that your relationship is not a marriage of convenience. You will need to provide evidence covering the entire period of your relationship, from when you first met to the present day.

Typical relationship evidence includes:

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- Marriage or civil partnership certificate (translated if not in English)
- Photos of you and your partner together at different times and locations, showing the relationship over time
- Correspondence such as emails, messages, call logs, or social media conversations that show ongoing contact
- Travel tickets, boarding passes, or hotel bookings that prove you have visited each other
- Evidence of shared financial responsibilities, such as joint bank accounts, utility bills, or rental agreements

The evidence should be dated and cover the full length of your relationship. If you have been living together, provide tenancy agreements, council tax bills, and letters addressed to both of you at the same address. If you have been apart, show that you have maintained regular contact and visited each other when possible.

Financial requirement: meeting the minimum income threshold

The financial requirement for a UK spouse visa is currently set at £18,600 per year for the sponsoring partner (the one who is a British citizen or has indefinite leave to remain). This rises if you have dependent children. You must prove that the sponsor earns at least this amount from a specified source, such as employment, self-employment, or certain benefits. Savings can also be used to meet the requirement, but the rules are specific.

Evidence for the financial requirement typically includes:



- Six months of payslips and corresponding bank statements showing the sponsor's salary being paid into their account
- A letter from the sponsor's employer confirming their job title, salary, and length of employment
- If self-employed, tax returns, accounts, and evidence of ongoing business activity
- If using savings, bank statements showing the funds have been held in an account for at least six months and meet the required amount (the formula is £16,000 plus 2.5 times the shortfall in income)

Make sure that the income is from a permissible source and that the documentation is complete. Missing a single payslip or bank statement can lead to a refusal. The Home Office checks that the income is sustainable, so it should be from ongoing employment or a stable self-employment.

Accommodation: proving suitable housing

You must show that there will be adequate accommodation in the UK for you and your dependants without overcrowding or recourse to public funds. The Home Office does not require you to own a home, but you need to prove that you have a place to live that meets the housing standards. This can be a rented property, a house owned by the sponsor, or a shared arrangement with family.

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Evidence includes a tenancy agreement, a mortgage statement, or a letter from a landlord or family member confirming that you can live at the property. If the accommodation is shared, you need a property inspection report or a housing authority letter confirming it is not overcrowded. The property must have enough rooms for the number of occupants, including any children.

English language requirement: proving your language skills

Unless you are from a majority English-speaking country, or have a degree taught in English, you must pass an approved English language test at CEFR level A1 or higher for the initial application, and A2 for the extension. The test must be taken at an approved test centre, and you need to provide the certificate with your application. If you have a degree from an English-taught course, you can use it as evidence, but it must be verified by the UK National Academic Recognition Information Centre (UK NARIC).

If you are exempt because of age or a medical condition, you must provide evidence, such as a doctor's letter. The Home Office is strict about this requirement, so do not assume you are exempt without checking the rules.

Genuine intention to live together permanently

Beyond the documentary evidence, the Home Office also considers your intentions. You should be able to explain your future plans, such as where you will live, what you will do for work or study, and how you will support yourselves. This is not a separate evidence category, but it is woven into your application and the supporting documents. A clear cover letter outlining your relationship history and future plans can help.

Getting guidance on your evidence

Compiling the right evidence can be complex, especially if your circumstances are unusual - for example, if you have been together for a long time but have little documentation, or if the sponsor's income is irregular. Professional advice can make a difference. Adamir Immigration Solicitors London can help you assess what evidence you need and prepare a strong application. They specialise in UK immigration matters, including family visas, and can guide you through the process.

Common pitfalls to avoid

One of the most common reasons for refusal is missing or incomplete evidence. A single missing payslip or a bank statement that does not cover the full six months can be fatal. Another issue is providing evidence that does not match the applicant's name - for instance, a bank statement in a maiden name without a marriage certificate linking the two names. Translations must be certified, and all documents should be in the correct format.



Another pitfall is failing to show that the relationship is genuine. If you provide only a few photos and no correspondence, the Home Office may doubt that you have a real connection.

Similarly, if you provide evidence that seems inconsistent - such as different addresses on different documents - you need to explain the discrepancy.

Finally, do not assume that the financial requirement can be met by combining the applicant's overseas income. Only the sponsor's income (or savings) counts, unless the applicant is already in the UK with permission to work. Make sure you understand the rules before applying.

Preparing your application

Start gathering evidence as early as possible. Organise your documents by category and check that each piece of evidence meets the Home Office's requirements. If you are unsure, seek advice. A well-prepared application is more likely to succeed, and the effort you put into collecting the right evidence can save you time and stress later.

For personalised guidance on your UK spouse visa application, you can contact Adamir Immigration Solicitors London at Unit-1, 5 Norman Rd, London N15 4ND, UK, or call +44 20 3302 0074.