

Score
your eligibility.



Asomerit

Work Permit Eligibility Self-Check.

2026 edition · Aligned with China's foreign work permit classification system.

How to use this self-check.

Every foreign national working in mainland China needs a Foreigner's Work Permit. Applicants are classified under China's foreign work permit system as Category A, B, or C, either by direct qualification criteria or through a points-based assessment. The category affects permit duration, review scrutiny, and in some cities the ease of subsequent residence and dependent visas.

This document follows the main scoring framework used in practice. Work through each of the nine sections, tick the criteria that apply, and add up the points. The total provides an indicative category and a recommended next step.

CATEGORY A

High-end talent

86 pts +

Top-tier professionals. Five-year permits, multiple entry, fast-track processing. Often qualify for the R Visa.

CATEGORY B

Foreign professionals

60 – 85 pts

Standard skilled professionals. One- to three-year permits. Most foreign hires sit here.

CATEGORY C

Other foreign workers

59 pts or below

Entry-level or seasonal. Subject to quota and stricter local approval. Often denied in tier-1 cities.

BEFORE YOU START

Indicative only. This scoring tool is for self-assessment. Final classification rests with the local foreign work administration authority and may differ based on local incentives, sector priorities, quota and discretion.

Direct eligibility. Some candidates qualify as Category A directly without scoring — see page 4.

Salary route. Some cities apply salary-based routes or salary reasonableness checks, especially for market-oriented Category A/B cases. Confirm the local wage multiple if salary is used as the main eligibility basis.

STEP 1

Candidate details.

Capture the basic information before scoring. This data is also what the local work-permit authority and the sponsoring entity will need to check before submission.

FULL NAME

DATE OF BIRTH

NATIONALITY / PASSPORT COUNTRY

HIGHEST QUALIFICATION

SPONSORING ENTITY IN CHINA

PROPOSED ROLE / JOB TITLE

WORK LOCATION (CITY)

PROPOSED ANNUAL SALARY (RMB)

DATE OF ASSESSMENT

ASSESSOR'S NAME (IF ANY)

PASSPORT NUMBER / EXPIRY DATE

PROPOSED START DATE

DEGREE ISSUING COUNTRY

CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK COUNTRY

NOTES / DOCUMENT TIMING

Direct eligibility check.

If any of the four criteria below applies, the candidate may qualify directly as Category A without relying on the points score. Tick the applicable box and proceed to Step 5 for next-step guidance.

Selected for a national or provincial talent programme

Includes national/provincial talent plans and equivalent schemes recognised by local authorities.

Meets internationally recognised achievement standards

International awards, senior professional roles, leading academic/technical achievements, or equivalent recognised credentials.

Meets market-oriented standards for encouraged posts

Strategic industries or encouraged positions designated by the competent authority, including salary-based routes where applicable.

Innovative entrepreneurial talent or outstanding young talent

Founders of recognised innovation-stage businesses or exceptional young researchers/professionals

ANY BOX TICKED? Candidate may qualify as Category A directly. Proceed to Step 5; local authority confirmation is still required.

Score each section (1 of 3).

Tick the single criterion that best matches the candidate in each section. Use exact formulas where shown. Carry the section totals to Step 4.

01 Annual salary paid by domestic employer

Max 20 pts

Unit: RMB 10,000 per year — i.e. the candidate's gross annual salary in China.

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|----|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 450K+ RMB | 20 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 350K — 450K RMB | 17 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 250K — 350K RMB | 14 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 150K — 250K RMB | 11 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 70K — 150K RMB | 8 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 50K — 70K RMB | 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Below 50K RMB | 0 |

02 Education or vocational skill certificate

Max 20 pts

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--|----|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Doctorate, OR senior technician / equivalent vocational cert | 20 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Master's degree, OR technician / equivalent vocational cert | 15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Bachelor's degree, OR senior-level worker certificate | 10 |

03 Years of relevant work experience

Max 20 pts

Formula: 2 years = 5 pts; add 1 point for each additional full year; capped at 20 pts.

- | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 17+ years experience | 20 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 11 — 16 years experience | 14–19 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 — 10 years experience | 6–13 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Exactly 2 years experience | 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Less than 2 years experience | 0 |

Score each section (2 of 3).

04 Annual working time in China

Max 15 pts

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|----|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 9 months or more per year | 15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 – 9 months per year | 10 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 3 – 6 months per year | 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Less than 3 months | 0 |

05 Chinese language proficiency

Max 5 pts

Tick the single highest-scoring qualification.

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Former Chinese national, OR HSK 5+, OR Chinese-medium bachelor's degree | 5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | HSK Level 4 | 4 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | HSK Level 3 | 3 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | HSK Level 2 | 2 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | HSK Level 1 | 1 |

06 Work location (regional bonus)

Max 10 pts

Locations marked as priority for regional development. Tick one if applicable.

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|----|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Western China (Sichuan, Yunnan, Guizhou, Shaanxi, Gansu, etc.) | 10 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Northeast or old industrial bases (Liaoning, Jilin, Heilongjiang) | 10 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | National-level poverty-alleviation counties or special zones | 10 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Tier-1 cities / non-priority locations | 0 |

Score each section (3 of 3).

07 Age of candidate

Max 15 pts

- 26 – 45 years 15
- 18 – 25 years 10
- 46 – 55 years 10
- 56 – 60 years 5
- Above 60 years 0

08 Bonus qualifications

Max 5 pts

Tick all that apply. Each tick = 5 points, but the section total is capped at 5.

- Graduated from a high-level university or recognised institution 5
- Work experience at a Global 500 / Fortune 500 company 5
- Holds intellectual property rights such as patents 5
- Has worked continuously in China for 5+ years 5

09 Local incentive bonus

Max 10 pts

Award 0–10 points if the candidate is a specialist in a field that the provincial government has flagged as urgently needed. Specific criteria are set by the local Foreigner Work Administration Department; in practice this bonus is rare outside specific sector campaigns.

Estimated local-incentive bonus

_____ / 10 pts

Add up your total.

Enter the points from each section below, then sum the column. The total maps to a category in the band on the right.

01	Annual salary	<input type="text"/>	/ 20
02	Education	<input type="text"/>	/ 20
03	Work experience	<input type="text"/>	/ 20
04	Annual working time	<input type="text"/>	/ 15
05	Chinese language	<input type="text"/>	/ 5
06	Work location	<input type="text"/>	/ 10
07	Age	<input type="text"/>	/ 15
08	Bonus qualifications	<input type="text"/>	/ 5
09	Local incentive bonus	<input type="text"/>	/ 10
TOTAL		<input type="text"/>	/ 120

YOUR CATEGORY



High-end talent

86+ pts

Five-year multiple-entry permit. Fast-track. Often qualifies for the R Visa.



Foreign professional

60 – 85 pts

1–3 year permit. The default path for most foreign hires.



Other foreign worker

59 pts or below

Subject to quota. Often denied in tier-1 cities.

What happens next.

Once you have an indicative category, the next steps look slightly different. The process overview on the next page lays out the full sequence; this page focuses on category-specific considerations.

A

High-end talent — Category A

- Apply for the R Visa where qualifying; local criteria and supporting evidence must be confirmed.
- Permits may be issued for up to five years, subject to local review.
- Many tier-1 cities offer green-channel processing for qualified high-end talent.
- Spouse and minor children may apply for accompanying visas with simplified documentation in some cases.

B

Foreign professional — Category B

- Standard Z Visa path; permit duration is typically one year initially, with renewal options depending on city and employer record.
- Degree certificate and non-criminal record check should normally be prepared with apostille or legalisation as applicable.
- If relying on a salary-based route, confirm the current local average-wage multiple before submission.
- Physical examination requirements vary; some cities allow a health commitment before entry and verification after arrival.

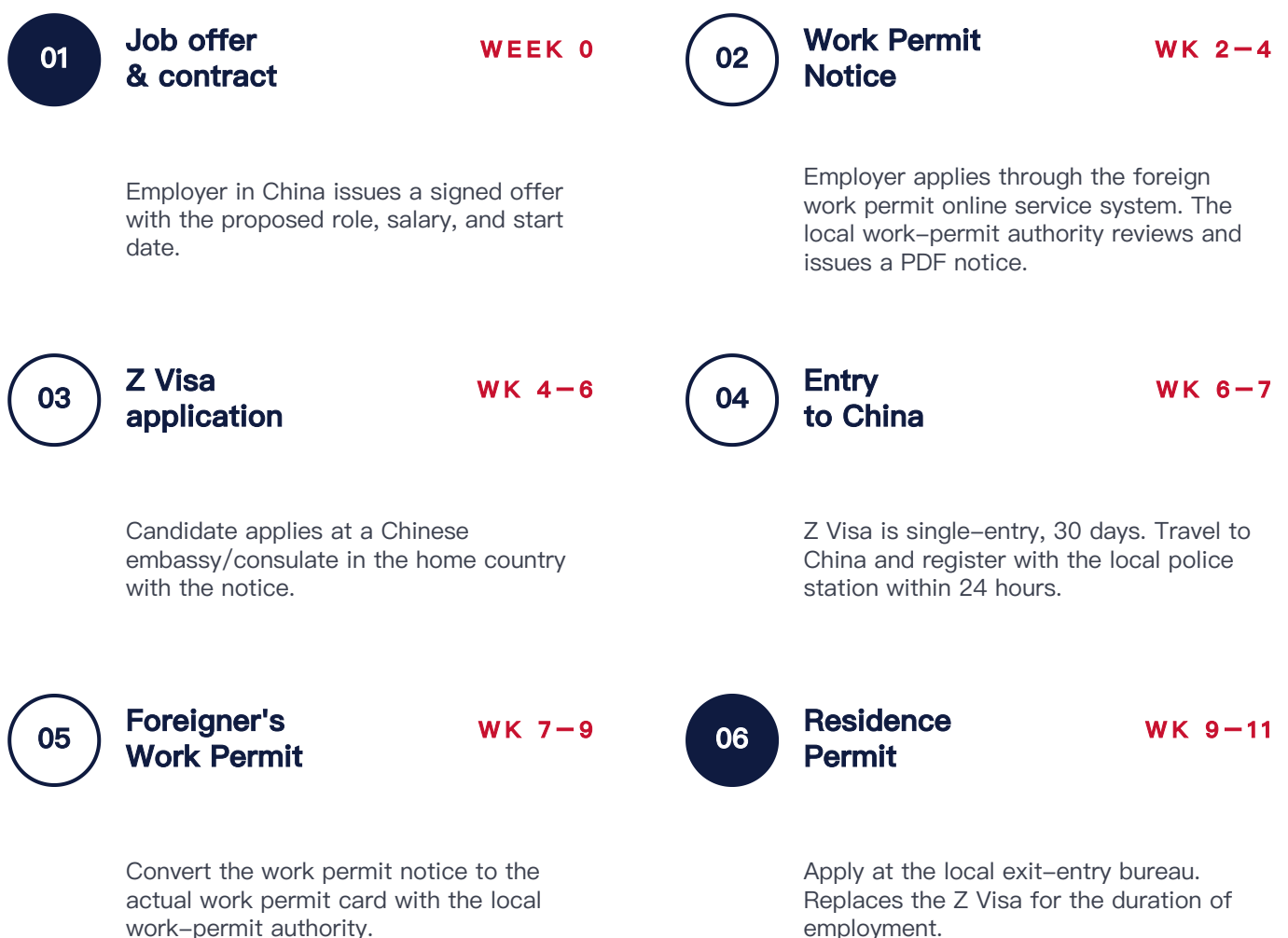
C

Other foreign worker — Category C

- Subject to provincial-level quota and case-by-case local review.
- Less predictable in Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen and Guangzhou unless there is a clear policy basis.
- Consider whether role, salary, degree, work location or document evidence can be strengthened to reach Category B.
- Alternative engagement models must be reviewed carefully to avoid unauthorised employment in China.

From offer to residence permit.

The China work-permit process has three sequential layers, administered by different authorities. The timeline below assumes documents are consistent and authenticated; add 2–4 weeks if documents require re-issuance or further authentication.



Five mistakes we see most often.

Drawn from real engagements over the past 36 months. Most rejections come from document inconsistencies, not insufficient scoring.

01 Mismatched names across documents

Passport says "Smith", degree says "Smith Jr.", offer says "John Smith". Even small inconsistencies trigger re-issuance. Standardise the candidate's legal name across all source documents before authentication.

02 Degree or criminal record check not properly authenticated

Degree and non-criminal record documents often require apostille or consular legalisation. The criminal record check is usually time-limited, so synchronise document timing.

03 Using an unconfirmed salary-route threshold

Salary-based Category A/B routes and salary reasonableness checks depend on city and application basis. Confirm the current local average-wage multiple before drafting the offer.

04 Proposed role not aligned with business scope

The proposed job title and duties should be consistent with the employer's registered business scope and actual operations. If the scope is too narrow, a scope amendment may be required before filing.

05 Treating the points score as the final answer

The score is indicative. Final classification is decided by the local authority and can vary by city, quota, sector priority and discretion. Build a buffer above the next threshold where possible.



Bring foreign talent into China, without surprises.

Asomerit handles the full work-permit and visa workflow for foreign-invested clients across China — from job-offer drafting that meets local eligibility checks, to apostille and authentication, to the on-the-ground filings with the work-permit authority and exit-entry bureau.

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