

Hong Kong QMAS Points System: Common Assessment Errors and Real Approval Standards

A data-driven report on real Hong Kong QMAS approval standards. Globevisa clarifies taxable income and job function rules for international professionals.

SG, SINGAPORE, August 19, 2026

/EINPresswire.com/ -- With the growth of global talent mobility and offshore asset allocation needs, the [Hong Kong Quality Migrant Admission Scheme \(QMAS\)](#) has become a primary channel for international professionals and corporate executives to obtain Hong Kong residency. The QMAS evaluates applicants through the "General Points Test," which uses 12 objective criteria across six major dimensions: age, academic qualifications, language proficiency, work experience, annual income, and business ownership. Under current regulations, applicants must meet at least six of these criteria to qualify for submission.



HongKong as a leading global financial center, the city continues to attract international professionals and corporate executives through strategic residency pathways.

However, during the initial preparation phase, information gaps regarding the specific definitions of these criteria often lead some applicants to overestimate their points in self-assessments. Based on operational data accumulated in the Hong Kong visa sector since 2003 and the processing of nearly 30,000 QMAS family cases, internal data from [Globevisa Group](#), an international consultancy for cross-border wealth and residency planning, indicates a clear trend: the core reason for the rejection of initial applications is the failure to strictly align with the substantive review standards of the Hong Kong Immigration Department (ImmD).

Assessment Errors: A "7 to 3" Points Drop Case

During Globevisa Group's recent front-end compliance and risk control screening, a typical case of score overestimation clearly illustrated the submission risks caused by cognitive bias. Based

on open-source information, the applicant self-assessed as meeting seven criteria (items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8). However, following a specialized legal and compliance verification by Globevisa, the applicant's actual qualifications were determined to meet only three compliant criteria (items 1, 6, and 8). Since the minimum threshold of six criteria was not met, the institutional risk control department did not initiate the project, thereby preventing unnecessary expenditure of time and financial resources for the applicant.

Aspects	Assessment Criteria (Must 6 out of 12!)
(A)Age	(1) Age 18-50 (Inclusive)
(B)Academic Qualifications	(2) The applicant has a master's or doctoral degree awarded by an eligible university. The eligible university has list
	(3) The applicant's master's or doctoral degree awarded by an eligible university Note 1 is pertinent to "STEM", i.e. science, technology, engineering or mathematics. The STEM subjects has reference list
(C)Language Proficiency	(4) The applicant is proficient in two languages, both written and spoken
	(5) English proficiency (written & spoken) – satisfy any one: native speaker, IELTS 7.0, TOEFL iBT 94 (0–120) / 5.0 (1–6 band), CET-6 ≥520, English major, English-taught degree holder
(D)Work Experience	(6) The applicant has no less than five years' graduate or specialist level work experience
	(7) The applicant has no less than three years' graduate or specialist level work experience in multi-national companies (MNCs) or reputable enterprises, such as listed companies or companies on the lists of The Global 2000 by Forbes, the Fortune Global 500 and the Hurun China 500
	(8) The applicant has no less than three years' graduate or specialist level work experience in one of the specific fields/industries, including "innovation and technology", "finance" and "international trade" (including cross-boundary marine and aviation transportation, and supply chain management)
	(9) The applicant has no less than two years' graduate or specialist level work experience with international exposure
(E)Annual Income	(10) The applicant has an annual income reaching HK\$1 million or above, or its equivalent in foreign currency, in the year immediately preceding the date of application. Annual income refers to taxable employment or business income including salary, allowances, stock options and profits from self-owned companies
(F)Business Ownership	(11) The applicant currently owns 50% or more of the ownership interests a non-listed business entity with an annual profit reaching HK\$5 million or above, or its equivalent in foreign currency, in the year immediately preceding the date of application
	(12) The applicant currently holds 10% or more of the ownership interests a listed company

An overview of the 12 assessment criteria under the Hong Kong QMAS General Points Test.

This four-point assessment gap

highlights the two most common blind spots in the QMAS scoring logic:

□Strict Lists for Academic Qualifications and Majors (Criteria 2 and 3): Applicants often mistakenly believe that providing a standard degree certificate is sufficient to earn points for their major. In reality, the Hong Kong Immigration Department maintains specific designated lists for "Eligible Universities" and "STEM Majors." In this case, neither the applicant's graduating institution nor their major appeared on the official lists, making it impossible to pass the system's verification.

□Quantitative Thresholds for Language Proficiency (Criteria 4 and 5): Non-native English applicants seeking to prove proficient English reading and writing skills cannot rely on subjective declarations. The authorities explicitly require standardized language test scores from specified institutions (e.g., IELTS, TOEFL). Although the applicant held a language certificate from a designated institution, the score verification revealed that the results did not meet the official minimum threshold requirement.

Work Experience: Corporate Entity and Core Functions

Beyond academic and language metrics, the QMAS evaluation of work experience also emphasizes the legal identification of corporate qualifications and the substantive functions of the role. This is primarily evident in the verification of Criterion 7 (experience in reputable enterprises) and Criterion 8 (experience in specific fields):

□Defining Multinational and Reputable Enterprises (Criterion 7): Work experience in companies listed on the Forbes Global 2000, the Fortune Global 500, or publicly traded companies qualifies for points. A common potential risk is that some applicants are employed by subordinate branches or affiliated companies rather than the main corporate entity. In official reviews, subsidiary entities are not automatically equated with the main reputable enterprise. Applicants

must provide legally binding audit reports or equity penetration documents to prove the hierarchical relationship between the subsidiary and the main entity.

□Substantive Functions in Specific Industries (Criterion 8): For professionals in the fields of innovation and technology, finance, and international trade, the core of the review is "job responsibilities" rather than "industry labels." For example, employees engaged in basic administrative or back-office management within a traditional commercial bank are typically deemed ineligible for this criterion because their core work does not involve the foundational infrastructure or front-office operations of the financial system. The applicant's daily duties must have a direct professional correlation with technological research and development, financial asset management, or cross-border supply chain management.

Income Metrics: Legal Verification of Taxable Income

Regarding the assessment item of "an annual income reaching HK\$1 million or above in the preceding year" (Criterion 10), some market information has previously provided incorrect guidance, suggesting the use of combined household income or short-term bank deposit records to meet the threshold.

In fact, the QMAS program's definition of this metric is based on a strict taxation logic: this income must be "taxable income" acquired by the applicant individually through legal commercial channels, including salary, allowances, stock options, and operating profits from businesses owned by the applicant. Fund transfers without tax clearance certificates, parental gifts, spousal income, or temporary financial borrowing hold no assessment validity. This standard objectively measures the applicant's real commercial revenue-generating capacity and market value in the workplace.

Risk Control and QMAS Full-Cycle Support

Facing complex regulations and hidden review thresholds, submitting an application blindly with a trial-and-error mindset can easily result in a rejection record with the Hong Kong Immigration Department. Upfront professional risk control diagnosis and long-term localized support are particularly critical.

Based on continuous tracking of Hong Kong policy documents, Globevisa Group implements institutional-grade compliance standards for the QMAS program. The organization utilizes a full-time, in-house team to process cases, without introducing third-party outsourcing mechanisms. Prior to project initiation, the assessment team conducts a substantive background check on the applicant based on historical case data and the Hong Kong Talent List. If an applicant does not meet official standards, the institution will not initiate the project.

QMAS policy is not limited to initial visa approval; it also involves a seven-year residency qualification assessment period. Internal public data indicates that the approval rate for initial QMAS applications processed by Globevisa Group exceeds 95%. Relying on its local office

established in Tsim Sha Tsui, Hong Kong, the organization directly handles communications with the Hong Kong Immigration Department, provides accompaniment for permanent residency transition interviews, and offers guidance on local corporate operations and taxation. Past records show no rejected cases for residency renewals or dependent applications processed by the firm.

Under the current policy evaluation framework, selecting a professional institution equipped with cross-border digital infrastructure and a compliance review architecture for objective comprehensive assessment and fulfillment planning is a standard pathway for global professionals to achieve [residency and asset transitions](#).

About Globevisa Group

Headquartered in Singapore since 2002, Globevisa Group is a global HNWI wealth management and cross-border identity advisory firm. Backed by institutional-grade risk control, the firm operates 50+ direct branches globally with over 800 in-house professionals. Having processed 120,000+ cases for clients across 120+ countries, Globevisa specializes in citizenship planning, wealth management, and family relocation, empowering international families to achieve barrier-free global settlement.

Disclaimer: "Hong Kong" herein refers to the Hong Kong SAR of the PRC. This article is for informational purposes only and does not constitute legal, financial, or tax advice. For definitive policy interpretations, please refer to official HKSAR government publications.

Globevisa Group Team

Globevisa Group

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