



## Frequently Asked Questions – Overseas applicants

Once you have received both a job offer and a valid Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) from Aston University, you can apply for permission to work in the UK. We are able to sponsor you to work in the UK because we have a sponsor licence from the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) which enables us to do so. Please see the following guidance regarding the visa application process.

### Do I need a visa to work at the University?

The following individuals do not need a visa for the UK, but do still have to prove their right to work before employment can commence:

- **British Citizens or Irish Nationals**
- **EU/EEA/Swiss nationals resident in the UK by or before 31 December 2020**
- **Non-EEA nationals with Indefinite Leave to Remain/Settlement in the UK**

If you or your close family member started living in the UK before 1 January 2021, you may be able to apply to the free EU Settlement Scheme. Otherwise you need a visa to work in the UK. Irish citizens do not need to apply for a visa or to the EU Settlement Scheme.

You can check if you need a UK VISA at the following [link](#).

### What is the Skilled Worker VISA

The Skilled Worker Visa (which replaced the Tier 2 VISA) is open to EU and none EU citizens\* who have an offer of an eligible skilled job in the UK. The route can lead to settlement. and applicants can be joined by dependents, [partners](#) [and children](#) if eligible.

In order to secure a Skilled Worker Visa, you will need to be sponsored to do a specific job, and there are certain skill and salary requirements in order to be eligible. Further guidance on the new Points-Based Immigration System and routes to work in the UK can be found on the [Government website](#).

\*except Irish citizens who retain their eligibility to work in the UK.

### How do I apply for the visa (Applying from outside the UK)?

You must apply online here: <https://www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa/apply-from-outside-the-uk>

### When should I apply for the visa?

You need to apply for your visa no later than 3 months from the date your CoS was assigned to you and in any case before your current visa expires.

As part of the visa application you will be asked for your intended travel date to the UK. The visa will then be valid from that travel date, which can be a maximum of 14 days before the employment start date as declared on the CoS.

You cannot enter the UK before the start date as recorded on your visa.

### How long will the application process take?

This will vary depending on the country in which you submit your visa application. For guidance on location specific timeframes, see here: <https://www.gov.uk/visa-processing-times>

Certain countries provide enhanced services which will expedite the visa application. For details on which services are available, including the processing times and the cost, see: <https://www.vfsglobal.co.uk/global/index.html>

### Do I require a criminal record check as part of the visa application?

In the majority of cases, no. However, if you are applying for a visa and being sponsored for a job in a certain SOC code (see your CoS for details of the occupation code), then as part of the visa application you must provide a criminal record certificate from the relevant authority in any country in which you have been present for 12 months or more (whether continuously or in total) in the past 10 years, while aged 18 or over:

Please see the [following link](#) For further information and details of relevant SOC codes.

### Can the University help with my visa costs?

Recognising the significant initial cost incurred by obtaining a UK visa, the University has introduced a loan scheme to assist new and existing international staff with spreading the costs of securing UK visas. Further details can be found on this web page.

### What is the University's Sponsor Rating?

Aston University is an A-rated Premium Sponsor.

### How do I meet the English language requirements?

You'll usually need to prove your knowledge of the English language when you apply, unless you did this in a previous successful visa application.

Unless you did this in a previous successful visa application, you will usually need to prove Candidates should check their eligibility to enter or remain in the UK in advance of making

any job application via the UKVI website <https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/work-visas>. Before applying you should ensure that you meet the requirements, including meeting the English Language requirements. If you do not meet the eligibility criteria, any application for a work visa would be unsuccessful.

Please see links for further information:

[Skilled Worker visa: Knowledge of English - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa/knowledge-of-english)

[Prove your English language abilities with a secure English language test \(SELT\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/secure-english-language-test)

### How do I meet the financial requirements?

Please check the final entry on your Certificate of Sponsorship which will confirm if HR Recruitment has agreed to certify the financial/maintenance for you. If they have, then no further action is required.

### How much will the visa cost?

Please see here for up-to-date guidance on visa fee costs:  
<https://www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa/how-much-it-costs>

### What is the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS)?

The Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) is an additional charge, over and above the visa fee and must be made up-front at the time of the visa application. Payment of the surcharge will ensure that you have **access to the NHS** on the same terms as a permanent UK resident. You usually need to pay the healthcare surcharge if you're applying for a visa or immigration application:

- for more than 6 months, if you're applying outside the UK
- for any length of time, if you're applying inside the UK

For further guidance, please see the UKVI webpages:

<https://www.gov.uk/healthcare-immigration-application>

### Can I bring my dependants (ie family members) with me to the UK

Your partner and children can apply to join you or to stay in the UK as your 'dependants' if they're eligible. If their application is successful, their visa will end on the same date as yours. For further information including the application process for dependants, please refer to [guidance](#).

### What Documents will I need to apply for a skilled worker visa.

When you apply you'll need to provide the [following documents](#) :

If you are applying for your VISA on or after the 21 May you may also require an [ATAS](#) certificate. Please see UKVI website for further information. You will not be able to apply for your VISA or VISA extension until this has been received. Please see our information on ATAS for further guidance.

### Do I need to register with the Police?

If you're a foreign national, you may need to register with the police shortly after you arrive. If this is the case, it should be written on your entry-visa vignette (an extra page stuck in your passport), biometric residence permit (BRP) or your Home Office letter approving your application for leave. Further information can be found [here](#).

### What happens after the application is granted?

If your application is granted, the visa you initially receive inside your passport will usually be valid for 30 days. This is known as an 'entry vignette' and will facilitate your entry into the UK. **You must enter the UK before the vignette expires or you will have to re-apply for your visa.**

Within ten days of your arrival in the UK, you are required to collect your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) from a UK Post Office. The BRP will state the full length of leave you have been granted and will supersede the entry vignette. Full details of how you arrange collection of your BRP will be provided to you by UKVI at the point your application is approved. For further guidance, please see the UKVI webpages: <https://www.gov.uk/biometric-residence-permits>. You will need to show this to a member of the admin or recruitment team to complete your right to work check. You will also be asked for your [share code](#).

### What happens if my application is refused?

**You must notify [HR Recruitment](#) immediately if your visa is refused.**

If you are refused, there is no separate appeal process, but you may be able to lodge what is known as an 'Administrative Review'. Please see any correspondence from the Home Office that accompanies your refusal letter.

### Where can I find information about relocating to the UK?

This Candidate Immigration page has further information regarding relocating to the UK, including accommodation, healthcare, banking, tax, travel and more. See tabs for further information.

The government website also offers useful information on [moving to the UK](#).

### When can I resign from my previous role?

It is important to carefully plan the timeframe for your resignation (taking into account any notice period), and your change of employment application, to provide your new employer with a realistic start date. Your new CoS can only be assigned 3 months before the start date of your new employment.

### What happens on my first day of work?

Your HR Administrator will contact you in advance of your arrival to make arrangements for your first day. Under UK legislation, as an employer we are required to check that you hold permission to live and work in the UK before you start work. You can evidence this with your passport and your vignette or your BRP. You will also need to provide confirmation of your date of entry to

the UK (a stamp in your passport and/or your boarding pass). In order to verify that you have permission to work in the UK, the date of entry to the UK should be after the 'valid from' date shown on your visa

If you have not yet collected your BRP before your first day, you can start work on the basis of your vignette provided it is still valid. You then **must** obtain your BRP from the Post Office **as soon as possible** and present this to your HR Administrator. You will also be asked for your [share code](#).

### What are the conditions of holding a Skilled Worker Visa?

We were able to sponsor you to work in the UK because we have a licence from the UKVI which enables us to do so. However, it is a condition of retaining this licence that we keep certain information about you up-to-date and that we report any changes to the UKBA within 10 days of the change happening.

Please ensure that you inform your [HR Business Partner](#) or [HR Admin](#) **immediately** if;

1. If you do not turn up for your first day of work, you must keep [HR Recruitment](#) and your line manager informed of your intended start date and the reason for the change in start date. You must also ensure you arrange to meet HR with all your documents on your first day of employment.
2. You must keep your address, home telephone number or mobile telephone number updated through the [Staff Portal](#) as soon as anything changes. If, for any reason you are unable to access portal once you have received your staff account details, you must let HR know immediately.
3. If you are absent from work without permission for more than 10 days, HR will inform UKVI of this. It is therefore essential that you keep your line manager informed of any circumstances (sickness, holidays, conferences etc) which could prevent you coming into the University to carry out your work.
4. If you intend to resign you must do so in writing and send a copy of this letter to your line manager with a copy to HR.
5. You must inform HR immediately of any changes to your personal circumstances which might affect this (for example, obtained indefinite leave to remain, acquired British Citizenship or moved to an immigration tier that does not require a Sponsor e.g. Global Talent Visa). HR must see documentary evidence (passport stamp and/or letter from the Home Office) of any change in immigration status.
6. We need to inform UKVI if your visa changes for any reason. To allow us to do this you must inform HR immediately if your visa is withdrawn, amended or renewed for any reason.

Please see the UKVI webpages here: <https://www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa>

### Can I extend my Skilled Worker Visa?

Yes. You can extend your skilled worker providing you are eligible to do so. There is no limit on the number of extensions for a skilled worker visa. On your initial application you can apply for a Skilled Worker Visa for up to 5 years. For further information about extending a skilled worker visa, please see the following [link](#).