



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

A Guide to Identifying a Global Talent Route and Requesting a Statement of Guarantee

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Introduction

This guidance has been written to support the processes relating to the request for a statement of guarantee (SoG) letter to support the Global Talent academic and research appointment route and the Global Talent endorsed funder route and includes the Global Talent end to end business process.

It has been written by stage in the process and with the key roles involved in the process in mind. The responsibilities of a Line Manager, Hiring Manager and School or Department Administrator may vary in this process between Colleges and Schools. For example, a School or Department Administrator (SDA) could be performing some tasks in the process of a Line Manager or Hiring Manager and where there is overlap, this is shown. Hiring/Line Managers must work in collaboration with their SDA/local support team to understand the process and responsibilities within their own area, particularly with respect to gathering information/supporting documents for the Statement of Guarantee request. The Hiring/Line Manager will ultimately be responsible for information provided.

Glossary

<u>Appointment Route</u>	Individuals are eligible for this (fast tracked) route if they have an eligible job offer as an academic or researcher and their job offer involves either being responsible for academic, research or innovation leadership and development or be performing research or innovation as a primary function of their role.
Endorsed Funder Route	Individuals are eligible for this (fast tracked) route if they're working on a research grant or award from a funder approved by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

<u>Endorsement</u>	The individual needs to apply for endorsement to prove they are a leader or potential leader in their field before they apply for their visa. The Home Office will send their application to be reviewed by a UK organisation ('endorsing body') with expertise in their field. (in cases where their current permission is expiring and they need to make an in-time visa application, the endorsement application and the visa application can be submitted at the same time).
Endorsing body	The organisation/experts who approve the endorsement applications. There are four organisations each dealing with different fields of research. • The British Academy • The Royal Academy of Engineering • The Royal Society • UK Research and Innovation (UKRI)
Fast track endorsement	Applies to all routes except the Peer Review route. The endorsement application is fast tracked through the system e.g., for the Appointment Route and the UKRI Endorsed Funder route, the University assess the individual's eligibility against the criteria and issue a statement of guarantee letter. When submitting their endorsement application, the individual uses the letter to fast track their application. For the Fellowship route the individual uses their Fellowship award/document to fast-track endorsement. Individuals usually get a decision on their application within 2 weeks.
<u>Individual Fellowship Route</u>	If the individual holds or has held an eligible fellowship in the last 5 years they can apply for endorsement (fast track) using their fellowship. A List of Fellowships can be found on the web pages <u>Route 2: Individual fellowships Royal Society</u>
ILR	Indefinite leave to remain – an individual can apply for ILR when they've been resident in the UK for 3 years or 5 years.
Onboarding	Processes and activities arranged by the line manager/SDA for the employee's first day of employment.
<u>Peer Review Route</u>	If the individual is not eligible for one of the other fast track routes, they may be eligible for endorsement by having their application peer reviewed. They must prove to the endorsing body that they have exceptional talent or promise in their field. Peer review endorsement applications usually take 5 weeks.
People & Money (P&M)	The University's HR and Finance services online system.
Right to Work (RTW)	<u>Right to Work Checks The University of Edinburgh</u>
Right to Work Checklist	<u>How to undertake the check The University of Edinburgh</u>
Service Request (SR)	The term Service Request is used to describe a help ticket which is opened within People and Money. The ticket is then sent to the HR Helpline for review and response or sent on to HR Operations or Immigration to process as needed. Wherever feasible, we urge all users to submit their Service Requests through the People and Money Helpdesk App, as this route allows you to type the relevant category name into the category box and attach attachments to the Service Request.

Statement of Guarantee (SoG) Letter	A letter from the Director of Human Resources (or equivalent) at the University which supports the fast-track application for the Appointment Route and the UKRI Endorsed funder route.
Staff Immigration service	A team within Edinburgh Global accredited to give immigration advice to individuals on immigration routes and how to make applications.
UKVI	This is the UK Visas and Immigration department, which is part of the Home Office of the UK Government. UK Visas and Immigration is responsible for making millions of decisions every year about who has the right to visit, stay, or work in the country. The University must comply with the legislation and processes outlined by the UKVI.
Verified	Signed off as checked and is true/accurate.
Visa Fee assistance	The University offers assistance for fees incurred in relation to Global Talent, Skilled Worker or UK Residency applications and associated UK legal fees. These are the Visa Loan or Visa Fee reimbursement. Further information is available at the Immigration Fee Assistance webpages .

End to End Process Map

Please see this link for the [end-to-end process map](#).

Key Roles

Role	Description
Candidate	Individual applying for an advertised or non-advertised post
Hiring Manager	Hiring Managers will have overall accountability for a set of job requisition actions and the associated job applications. The Hiring Manager is often the Line Manager but does not have to be.
HR Partner	A member of the HR Partnering team who can provide advice and guidance throughout the recruitment process and supporting HR Operations if any issues found at the 'Before Offer Check' stage
HR Advisor	Specific responsibility for grading Job Descriptions.
HR Services Team	Members of the central HR team that own key transactional elements of the recruitment cycle, e.g., approving/rejecting job requisitions and job offers. Has visibility of job requisitions without being a member of the hiring team.
Global Mobility	Part of the HR function, they provide specialist advice on right to work and immigration aspects of employing international staff. They liaise with UKVI and would manage any UKVI audits on behalf of the University.
Line Manager	All members of staff that have or will have direct or matrix style management responsibilities for the role being recruited. Line Managers may also be Hiring Managers. Line managers would be expected to review and approve the requisition as appropriate.
Pending worker	A successful candidate who has been offered a post within the university. They remain a pending worker until their first day of employment
School/Department Administrator (SDA)	Staff that provide local administrative/operational support for the end-end recruitment process, including offline activity and practical arrangements.
Student Immigration service	Provides support to students for visas related to study. Also, applicable if a student is moving to a Graduate visa. For more information, please refer to the Student Immigration webpages .
Staff Visa Help (Staff Immigration Service)	Provides support to prospective and current staff, visitors and their accompanying dependents. For more information, please refer to the Staff Immigration webpage .
UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI)	Part of the Home Office UK Visas and Immigration - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Before you start

Before commencing any recruitment Line Managers and School/Department Administrators (SDAs) should familiarise themselves with [Right to Work Checking procedures](#) and guidance on [Obtaining a Visa to Work](#) for anyone who does not have the right to work in the UK. There are a number of routes available including Global Talent visa and Skilled Worker.

Familiarise yourself with the information on the types of roles that the University can provide a statement of guarantee letter for and the criteria that needs to be met, please read the [Global Talent Visa](#) webpages. The University is also a UKVI licensed sponsor for the Skilled Worker and Temporary Work - Government Authorised Exchange (i.e. Sponsored Researcher) visa routes.

Familiarise yourself with the [Recruitment Guidance Webpages](#).

All our end-to-end guides and supporting system guides can be found on the [People and Money user guide webpage](#)

Where to go for help

UK Immigration Law regulates the provision of immigration advice in the UK.

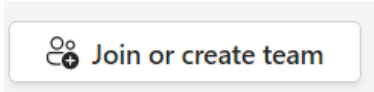
The accredited advisers at Staff Immigration Services at Edinburgh Global are the only staff members who are permitted to provide immigration advice at the University.

Other staff members within HR can provide information and signposting. See below for more information about how to tell the difference between 'information' and 'advice'.

What is the difference between 'information' and 'advice'?

Information can be given as general statements of fact. Normally, if it is possible to substitute the word 'you' with 'visa holders', then that is classified as information.

Advice is related to a particular individual and is given in connection to one or more relevant matters.

Topic	Who to contact
Staff Visa advice	New email address for Staff Immigration Service: New email: support@staff-immigration.ed.ac.uk Contact form: Submit a request – Staff-Immigration-Service-Edinburgh (zendesk.com)
Student Visa advice	Student Immigration Service - Student Immigration Service The University of Edinburgh Contact Information
Global Talent Specialist Guidance	Email hr.immigration@ed.ac.uk
Global Mobility Community of Practice (Teams Site)	To join this team: - Click the 'Teams' icon in the left-hand menu in your Teams app. - From the main menu of all your teams, click  on the top right-hand side. - Search 'Global Mobility Community of Practice' and then click 'Join team'.

Global Talent Overview

This visa is not sponsored by the University of Edinburgh and allows the most highly skilled to come to the UK (without a job offer). It's for recognised leaders (talent) and potential leaders (promising) in the fields of science, humanities, engineering, the arts and digital technology, to work in the UK in their field of expertise. Successful applicants can be granted permission to live in the UK for up to five years.

The application is a two-stage process. The applicant must apply for endorsement first and once approved they can then apply for their visa. In exceptional circumstances where an individual needs to make an in-time visa application before their current visa expires, they can apply for endorsement and the visa at the same time.

There are four routes to obtaining endorsement:

Route 1: Academic and research appointment ('fast track')

Route 2: Holder of an individual fellowship ('fast track')

Route 3: Endorsed Funder route – UKRI ('fast track')

Route 4: Peer Review ('standard' endorsement determined by the endorsing body)

If an individual qualifies for route numbers 1 and 3, they will be able to apply for 'fast track' endorsement. This is facilitated by the University providing a statement of guarantee (a letter) which confirms that certain criteria have been met and reduces the timescale for consideration of the endorsement by the Endorsing Body, e.g., UKRI, Royal Society etc.

The HR Operations Immigration Team provide a statement of guarantee letter to support two fast track routes; Route 1: The Academic Appointment Route and Route 3: The Endorsed Funder route.

For a complete guide to the Global Talent visa please see the following web pages:

[UK Visas and Immigration \(UKVI\) Global Talent](#)

[Global Talent – Staff Immigration Service](#)

[Global Talent – Obtaining a visa](#)

The Academic Appointment route (Appointment Route) - Job description and Assessing Criteria

Job Description

Hiring/line managers, being familiar with the role are best placed, supported by the SDAs, to ensure the job description accurately summarises the role.

When developing/reviewing the job description, it is also advisable for managers to consider the criteria for the Global Talent visa, e.g., clearly identifying if the role has leadership responsibilities. Forward planning in this way will ensure the criteria is met at the point of submitting a request for a statement of guarantee for an international worker. Please note, the job description will form part of the evidence when applying for a statement of guarantee.

- the 'academic, research or innovation leadership and development' category is for individuals in **senior leadership roles** at a departmental, faculty or institutional level. Typical duties may include strategy development and delivery and overseeing the management of staff and resources. The Job title is key to the assessment. Example roles (not exhaustive) include **Vice-Chancellor/Principal, Pro Vice-Chancellor/Vice-Principal, Dean/Associate Dean, Head of School and Research Institute Director**.

- The ‘a primary function’ category is for individuals appointed to perform research or innovation activity at an eligible employer organisation. To be considered eligible for endorsement, research or innovation must be a primary function of the role, meaning it is one of the main responsibilities that defines the appointment. For example, if the role involves teaching, postgraduate/PhD supervision or curriculum development, the endorsement application must demonstrate that research or innovation is one of the main responsibilities alongside teaching, supervision, or curricula. If research or innovation is not a primary function of the role, the role will not be considered eligible.

Please note that “Research or innovation” describes a spectrum of practice around the creation and use of knowledge in the fields of science, engineering, humanities, social science and medicine. Examples of research or innovation activity include curiosity-driven research and discovery, applied research, and technological or methodological development. To be considered eligible under the ‘a primary function’ category, the individual must be appointed to perform research or innovation by the above definition. If the individual is employed in an academic support role, or other professional services function that supports researchers within the employing organisation, they will not be considered eligible for the academic and research appointments route of the Global Talent visa.

For both Categories the job descriptions must confirm that the job requires as essential a PhD or equivalent research experience to PhD (academic, industrial or clinical).

Interview Criteria

- The interview panel must comprise of at least 3 academic, research or innovation professionals from the UOE with knowledge of the field or discipline in which the applicant is seeking endorsement. An interview panel comprising human resources and/or other professional services representatives would not meet this criterion.

Note: If the interview panel **did not** include a relevant expert in the field from the UoE, there must be confirmation that at least one external expert, who is not employed by the UoE, was consulted during the recruitment process prior to the job offer being made.

Supporting Documents

- 2 References
- Completed Academic Appointment route request form
- Job Description
- Copy of PhD

The UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Endorsed Funder Route (Endorsed Funder Route) Assessing Criteria

Individuals may be eligible for endorsement if they're working on a research grant or award from a funder approved by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and your grant must have been awarded by an organisation on the list of endorsed funders.

Employment

The individual must have one year left on their contract from either:

- the start date of their contract (new employees)
- the date of issue of the statement of guarantee letter (current employees).

Funding/Grant

The grant funder must be on the [list of UKRI endorsed funders](#) or one of the [UKRI's Councils](#). The grant must be for a period of 2 years or more and be worth £30,000 or more. The grant can be awarded in the past, as long as it is still current and covers the first year of the individual's employment, or the next year of employment (from the date of issue of the statement of guarantee (SoG)) if the individual is a current member of staff. See some examples below:

Grant start date	Grant end date	Employee Start Date	First year of employment runs from:	Covers the first year of employment?
1 October 2024 for 3 years	30 September 2027	1 October 2025	1 October 2025 to 30 September 2026	Yes
1 February 2024 for 2 years	31 January 2026	1 October 2025	1 October 2025 to 30 September 2026	No
1 November 2024 for 2 years	31 October 2026	Current employee	1 October 2025 (date issued SoG) to 13 October 2026	Yes
1 August 2024 for 2 years	31 July 2026	Current employee	14 August 2025 (date issued SoG) to 13 August 2026	No

Supporting Documents

- Completed Endorsed funder route request form
- Grant/Award document
- Qualification

Step 1 – Advertising the role

For the Appointment Route

The statement of guarantee from the Director of Human Resources, or equivalent, must confirm:

- the job was advertised, and an open competition was held, or where it was not, an explanation as to why not.

In most cases roles that fit the appointment route criteria are advertised in line with the University's advertising policy.

For the Endorsed Funder Route

The statement of guarantee from the Director of Human Resources, or equivalent, must confirm if:

- the job was advertised, and an open competition was held
or
- the individual is named on the grant
or
- the individual was appointed in line with the award criteria of the funder

Advertising is not applicable in the circumstances above where the individual is named on the grant or the individual is on a hosting agreement.

If advertising is a requirement best practice is to advertise the role for a minimum of 2 weeks.

Role	Hiring team (LM or SDA)	HR Operations	Global Mobility	UKVI
Tasks	1. For advertised posts create a job requisition in People and Money.	2. HR consider if the role could fit the Global Talent criteria or if it could be Skilled Worker, or both. 3. HR Operations enter sponsorship wording if applicable on job advert and post advert live.		
Supporting Information University sponsorship The University of Edinburgh Global Talent Visa				

Step 2 – Job Application

The process in which candidates apply for the role advertised.

Role	Candidate	Hiring team (LM or SDA)	HR Operations	Global Mobility	UKVI
Tasks	Answers the pre- screening question ‘Do you currently have the right to work in the UK’?	Hiring Manager reviews responses to pre-screening questions whether they have RTW during shortlisting process			

Step 3 - Interviewing

The process in which candidates are interviewed for the role. Right to Work Checks can be carried out at interview stage but must be completed before the successful candidate starts work. Completing the checks at this stage allows hiring managers to understand if a Statement of Guarantee letter is required to support the individual in making a Global Talent endorsement/visa application.

For the Appointment Route

- There must be at least 3 academic, research or innovation representatives from the University on the interview panel
- that an expert in their field was among the interviewers on the panel or an expert in the applicant’s field independent of the University was consulted about their appointment before the job offer was made

For the Endorsed Funder Route

We do not require any information or documentation on the interview process.

Role	Candidate	Hiring team (LM or SDA or RTW checker)	HR Operations	Global Mobility	UKVI
Tasks	May provide evidence of RTW at interview or notifies Hiring team if looking for support with	If applicable, conduct RTW checks following the RTW checklist			

	the Global Talent visa route.				
Supporting Information Right to Work Checks The University of Edinburgh					

Step 4 – Selecting a reasonable start date

Hiring teams must choose a start date which gives sufficient time for the two-part process of applying for their visa i.e. endorsement and the visa. A decision about endorsement usually takes around 2 weeks. Visa decisions usually take 3 weeks (when applied for outside the UK) or 8 weeks (when applied for inside the UK)

If a start date changes raise a service request to inform the contracts team if a change is required to the contract.

Supporting Information	Guide to Recruitment and Onboarding
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Step 5 – Job Offer

Offers of employment are typically made verbally in the first instance by the Line Manager or Hiring Manager and followed up with a written offer letter containing appropriate 'subject to' clauses. At this stage the Hiring team will ensure that a Right to Work check is undertaken for the successful candidate to establish their Right to Work status. If the individual you wish to make a job offer to is eligible to apply for a Global Talent visa, it may be possible for the University to support their endorsement application with a statement of guarantee letter if the criteria set by the endorsing bodies are met.

A job offer process needs to be fully completed - i.e. the candidate needs to 'Move to HR' to create the pending worker record in P&M - before the statement of guarantee letter can be issued.

Role	Hiring team (LM or SDA)	HR Operations	Candidate
Tasks	1a. Conduct a right to work check if possible. 1c. Establish if the GT route is either the Academic Appointment route or the Endorsed Funder route. If so, prepare the appropriate GT request form and supporting documents. (See table below Requesting a Global Talent statement of guarantee) 2. Create the job offer in People and Money and draft the offer letter using the appropriate template and include the clauses relating to RTW 4a. Extend Job Offer 4c. When the candidate accepts the offer ensure the record has been 'Moved to HR' to create the pending worker record in P&M. Further information on how to do this can be found on the webpage: People and Money user guides Staff The University of Edinburgh Under 'How to hire an external candidate'. Note: if the candidate has been offered via a non-advertised post the pending worker record should be created as soon as possible.	3. Review the offer and approve/reject	1b. Does not currently have the RTW in the UK but intends to apply for the Global Talent visa. 4b. Accepts job offer
Supporting Information Demonstrating your Right to Work The University of Edinburgh (for candidates and staff) Obtaining a visa to work The University of Edinburgh - for Managers and SDA's Securing your visa The University of Edinburgh - for staff Guide to recruitment and onboarding			

Step 6 – Requesting a Global Talent statement of guarantee letter

Hiring Managers or SDAs are responsible for starting the statement of guarantee application process. Please note there are guidance documents to help you complete the statement of guarantee request forms. These can be found on the A-Z of forms on our web pages [Global Talent Appointment Route Request Form Guidance](#) or the [Global Talent Endorsed Funder Request Form Guidance](#).

For the Academic Research Appointment route

Role	Hiring team (LM or SDA)	HR Operations	Global Mobility
Tasks	1. Review the Job Description, does it meet the criteria for the Academic Research Appointment route 3. Review the Interview process, does it meet the criteria? 4. Include 2 references 5. Complete the Global Talent Appointment Route Request Form A to Z List of HR Forms The University of Edinburgh 6. Raise a Service Request and upload the supporting documents	7. Action and upload the statement of guarantee letter to the SR and inform SDA.	2. Guidance on whether the Job Description meets the criteria.
Supporting Information Global Talent Appointment Route Request Form Guidance People and Money user guides			

For the Endorsed Funder Route

Role	Hiring team (LM or SDA)	HR Operations	Global Mobility
Tasks	1. Check the Grant/Award/Funding Document. 1a. Is the funder on the list of UKRI Endorsed Funders or one of its Councils? 1b. Is the grant for the duration of 2 years or more? 1c. Is the grant worth £30,000 or more? 1d. Does the grant cover the first year of employment for the individual, or the next year from the date of issue of the statement of guarantee? 1e. If the individual has a PhD, are they or their role named in the grant/award/funding document? If not, is the grant attributed to a large institutional renewable award, subject to period review and you have the autonomy to recruit? 1f. If 3.2 is selected provide the additional information on the request form. 3. Complete the Global Talent Endorsed Funder Route Request Form A to Z List of HR Forms The University of Edinburgh 4. Raise a Service Request and upload the supporting documents 6. Check the Statement of Guarantee Letter that's been uploaded to the SR and pass on to the individual.	5a. Action and upload the statement of guarantee letter to the SR and inform SDA. 5b. Send a copy of the statement of guarantee letter to UKRI	2. Help to identify if the role meets the criteria (if required).

Supporting Information

Global Talent Appointment Route Request Form Guidance

[A to Z List of HR Forms | The University of Edinburgh](#)

[People and Money user guides](#)

Step 7 – Visa Application

The process in which the applicant requiring statement of guarantee letter applies for Global Talent Endorsement.

	Candidate/Employee	Line Manager/SDA	UKRI	UKVI
Global Talent Endorsement and visa application	1. Receives the statement of guarantee letter. 2. Follows guidance online on how to apply for endorsement and makes their application. 3. Keeps manager/SDA up to date with progress of endorsement application 4b. When endorsement is approved, apply for their Global Talent visa. 4d. Informs Manager/SDA their visa has been approved and confirms their start date.		4a. Confirms outcome of endorsement application.	4c. Confirms outcome of visa application.

Step 8 - Immigration Fee Assistance

Anyone applying for a Global Talent Visa can apply for an Interest Free Visa Loan. Loans can be taken to assist with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) application fees, immigration healthcare surcharges, UK legal fees (associated to immigration queries) and the cost of using the UK ENIC/ECCTIS service.

An end-to-end Immigration Process Guide can be found at:

[A Guide to the Immigration Fee Assistance Interest Free Loan and Visa Reimbursement](#)

Further information about the Immigration Fee Financial Assistance can be found on the following web page:

[Immigration Fee Assistance | Human Resources | Human Resources](#)

Step 9 - Request for contract

Before the Request for Contract task can be completed, the SDA/Line Manager must ensure that verified copies of Right to Work documentation is uploaded to Document of Record (DoR) for the worker. Without this the contract cannot be processed, for all workers with a Global Talent visa please follow the guidance below as to the document types to be uploaded to DoR.

Global Talent	Line Manager/SDA	HR Operations	Candidate/Employee
All routes	2. Before requesting a contract the hiring team must upload copies to DoR of the following: • University Right to Work (RTW) checklist • Online check and evidence of permission type e.g. ○ confirmation letter from the UKVI confirming the visa has been approved ○ A screenshot from the status page of the individual's Home Office online account, showing their visa type 3. Complete the Request Contract task within the Journey assigned for the pending worker to notify HR Operations that the contract can be issued	4. RTW documentation approved/rejected 5. Input RTW information into the Additional Person Information screens. 6. Check that the Nationality has been entered for the worker. 7. Contract Issued	1. Meets Line Manager in person and presents a share code to enable them to carry out an online Right to work check. 8. Employee receives contract
Supporting Information How to Request Contract Generation – under heading Recruitment and Onboarding > Onboarding section Settling into the university - useful information for new starts Right to Work Checks The University of Edinburgh – for staff			

Step 10 - Visa expiry and extensions

This process starts about 4 months prior to a visa expiring with a discussion with the employee about continued right to work. Employees should have a discussion regarding the continuation of the contract and any aspects relating to the visa. The 4-month timescale allows sufficient time for the individual to extend their Global Talent visa or apply for ILR. Please note the grant funding must be in place before a statement of guarantee is requested.

When an individual renews their visa a repeat right to work check is required.

Role	HR Operations	Line Manager/SDA	Employee
Tasks	1. Run Permission expiry report and share with managers anyone with a visa due to expire in 4 months' time. 5. RTW documentation approved/rejected 6. HR Ops update P&M employee record with permission type and expiry date.	2. Discuss Right to work with employee. 4. Carry out repeat Right to Work check upload copies to DoR of the following: • University Right to Work (RTW) checklist • Online check and evidence of permission type e.g. ○ confirmation letter from the UKVI confirming the visa has been approved ○ A screenshot from the status page of the individual's Home Office online account, showing their visa type	3. Receive new GT visa and provide Share Code to Line Manager/SDA.
Supporting Information A to Z List of HR Forms The University of Edinburgh Information for Managers of Sponsored Staff The University of Edinburgh Visa Expiry and Extension The University of Edinburgh - for employees			