



# Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) Application Form– Guidance Notes

## General

This guidance note should be used to help you complete a [Certificate of Sponsorship \(CoS\) Application form](#) if you wish to employ an individual who requires a Skilled Worker Visa to work in the UK. **Please read this section before you start the application process.**

Please note do not use this form if you intend to extend an existing CoS. There are separate guidance and application forms

A Skilled Worker must apply for the visa within 3 months of the date the CoS is issued. In addition they cannot apply for the visa more than 3 months in advance of the start date stated on the CoS.

If the CoS application is received from the School/Department in HR Operations 3 months before the start date on the CoS, it will not be processed until it reaches the 3 month period.

For further information on the types of roles that the University can sponsor and the UKVI criteria that needs to be met, please read the [University HR Sponsorship webpages](#). The University is also a UKVI licensed sponsor for the Skilled Worker and Temporary Work - Government Authorised Exchange Sponsored Researcher visa routes.

**Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS).** Certain roles will require an (ATAS) certificate. For a Skilled Worker this should have been determined at the Job Requisition Business Case stage. **Please ensure the applicant has received the certificate before you complete the application form for a CoS.** Where an ATAS certificate is required, if a visa application is submitted without this the application will be refused. Further information is available on the [University HR Skilled Worker webpages](#) in the 'Skilled Worker' section.

## Personal Information

All fields are mandatory and should be completed in full with information taken from the individual's passport.

## Passport/Travel Document information

All fields are mandatory and should be completed in full with information taken from the individual's passport.

**Is the individual currently sponsored by another employer on a Tier 2/Skilled Worker Visa?** Please ensure that you answer this question as it informs the HR team whether or not the individual is already working in the UK and requires a 'change of employment' CoS as opposed to a 'new applicant' CoS.

## Home Address Information

All fields are mandatory and should be completed in full

Ensure this is the address they are currently living at e.g. A US national could be living in France

## Identification Numbers

**UK National Insurance number:** If the individual is already living/working in the UK and applying for a Skilled Worker visa from another visa route or changing their employment).

**Employee Number:** ensure you enter the employee number if the person is already working for the University of Edinburgh

### Work Information and Dates

This section requests information about the job and the dates of employment. It covers the use of 'tradeable points'. This is where 'points' can be traded against the appropriate salary threshold to allow a lower salary threshold to be applicable. For example, where the role is considered a shortage occupation, the individual holds a PhD in a STEM subject/subject relevant to the job or is considered a new entrant (early career).

#### **Mandatory:**

Check if the individual is being **offered a role that can be sponsored**, e.g. the job is at the appropriate skill level - UK A-level or above and meets the appropriate salary threshold.

Check if the individual meets **Home Office English Language criteria**. An individual can meet the English language requirement in **ONE** of the ways listed [here](#). These are the only ways in which they can meet the English language requirement.

If the criteria can be met, there is no need to provide evidence to HR.

**Salary Threshold:** The salary being offered must be above either £25,600 or the going rate for the profession (whichever is higher). Please see [Immigration Rules Appendix Skilled Occupations](#) on the government webpage about occupation (SOC) codes and going rates. (If 'no' is selected, please complete the Tradeable elements section). Please note the Home Office rules permit the **occupation going rate** to be calculated against a work pattern. For example, a SOC code going rate based on a 39 hour week could be calculated against a 35 hour University working week resulting in a lower threshold, eg £40,700 is £36,256 for a 35 hour week. This assessment is normally done at the point of advert and you should check your job advert to determine if the post can be sponsored. If the job was not advertised e.g. the individual is already in the role, check the salary being offered with the line manager.

**Tradeable elements:** (select one i.e PhD relevant to the role or STEM PhD relevant to the role) – only complete if using tradable points to meet the salary threshold.

If the PhD or STEM PhD is required for tradable points then we must have the description of how the PhD is relevant to the job.

If the PhD is from overseas, it will be necessary to provide an [ENIC code](#) to show that the PhD is comparable to a UK PhD. The individual may have this if they have requested information from ENIC with respect to meeting the English Language requirement.

**Shortage Occupation:** Is the role on the UKVI Shortage Occupation list, click yes or no.

Further Information on which roles are in a shortage occupation can be found on the [UKVI webpages](#)

**The individual is a new entrant:** The new entrant criteria is met, ie 70% of the salary 'going rate' is met, if the visa is for no more than 4 years\*, and the applicant is:

- Under 26 years old on the day they make their visa application or;
- The role is a postdoctoral position in any of the following occupation codes: 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2119 or 2311.
- The individual is applying from a Student visa (including Tier 4):
  - which was to study for a qualification of a Bachelors degree or higher
  - that is current/expired less than 2 years before the date of the visa application
  - and
  - The individual has completed their course/is applying less than 3 months before they are due to complete/has completed at least 12 months study in the UK for a PhD

\*less any time already spent as a new entrant on the Skilled Worker/Tier 2 or the Graduate route) whether or not that time is continuous.

**Does the ATAS requirement apply?** Certain roles will require an Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) certificate. The following web pages <https://www.ed.ac.uk/human-resources/international-staff-work-uk/additional-permission-work/university-sponsorship/skilled-worker> provide details/guidance for allocating a subject code to the research (CAH code) and the process for the individual to make an application. The drop down yes/no is mandatory.

**Proposed Employment Start Date:** Please note a minimum period of approximately 9 weeks is required for the process of assigning a CoS and the individual attaining their visa.

The fixed term period of the role on the CoS should match the advertised role.

A start date cannot be delayed for more than 28 days from the start date on the CoS or the date their visa becomes valid (whichever date is later) otherwise the CoS will need to be withdrawn. An exception to this is if the applicant is required to work their contractual notice period. This must be factored into agreeing start dates with the individual.

If it is necessary to change a start date, please raise a Service Request through People and Money to notify HR Operations, using *Sponsorship* as the category name under *Enquiry*, as this must be reported to the UKVI. Name the Title of the SR using this format:

*Applicant Name – change of Start Date*

**Proposed Employment End Date:** CoS end date should be in line with the fixed term contract end date. ie. If the role in the advert is for 3 years, the CoS should be for 3 years. For open ended appointments a CoS would normally be obtained for 5 years.

Please note, if additional funding is found and the cos application is longer than the advertised vacancy, evidence is needed to support this e.g. confirmation email from the PI/SDA.

If there is a change in the end date (including if this is due to a change in start date) please raise a Service Request through People and Money to notify HR Operations, using *Sponsorship* as the category name under *Enquiry* as this will need to be reported to the UKVI before the visa is issued.

**Is a multiple-entry visa required? – this field is mandatory**  
Answer 'Yes' if the employee will be based outside the UK for work for extended periods of time or will need to travel in and out of the UK for business on a regular basis. Answer 'No' if the employee will live and work in the UK & occasionally travel out of the UK for leisure, domestic or work purposes.

**Total weekly hours of work: this field is mandatory**

**Main Work Location Address**

Please note if the worker does not start work in the location on their CoS, HR Operations **must** be informed so that it can be reported to UKVI. Please raise a service request using Sponsorship as the category name under Enquiry through People and Money ensuring the new location is provided. Name the Title of the SR using this format:  
  
*Work Location Change – Applicant Name – Application Type (abbreviation)*

**Other regular work addresses**

Complete if the individual's work will be based in a number of different locations away from the University campuses in Edinburgh e.g. working in Edinburgh and a different institution in London i.e. The Alan Turing Institute

**Individual's employment details**

**Job title:** If a new hire, must match the Job Requisition Business Case (JRBC),

**Soc Code:** Is the allocated SOC code detailed on the JRBC? If not, check with the recruiter/line manager.

**Line Manager:** Enter name of Line Manager.

**Summary of Job description:** A concise summary of the role must be provided (up to a maximum of 1000 character limit), which helps UKVI staff understand what the sponsored member of staff will be undertaking during employment in the role. For example, where the sponsorship is for a researcher, provide a brief overview of the research being undertaken, as opposed to simply stating that the individual will be working as a researcher in Professor X's research team. It must reflect the content of the job advert (where the role is advertised) and the job description held on file. If clear information is not provided the UKVI may request further detail, which will result in a delay in the individual receiving the outcome to their application.

**Gross pay per annum:** Enter salary which must meet the appropriate salary threshold for the role

**Details of any allowances:** Allowance details must be provided but cannot be taken into account when meeting the appropriate salary threshold.

**Is the individual changing from Tier 4/Student route (including those on Tier 4 Doctorate extension Scheme/Graduate) to Skilled Worker?**  
  
If the individual changing from a Tier 4/Student/Graduate/DES visa, please supply a copy of the visa.  
  
Are they claiming tradeable points as a new entrant in order to meet the salary threshold?  
  
If yes, have we received documentation confirming that they have:  

- Completed a UK recognised Bachelor or Postgraduate degree, or
- Completed a UK Postgraduate Certificate in Education, or

Are within 3 months of completion of their UK PhD.

- is studying a PhD and has completed at least 12 months' study in the UK towards that PhD

Please note that any previous T4DES/Graduate/SW/T2 plus length of new visa cannot exceed 4 years, even if not continuous

**Has the student received any sponsorship for their studies in the last 12 months, which has conditions restricting their stay in the UK after completing their studies?**

If the answer is yes as part of their visa application they must provide the UKVI with unconditional consent in writing from their sponsor, giving them permission to remain in the UK. There are some sponsoring bodies who will not provide this consent and therefore the visa application will be refused

**Is the Individual Named on a Grant:**

If the individual is not specifically named on the grant and was appointed through a competitive process, evidence of this must be retained.

A copy of the grant paperwork is required, it should be the final award document, not the proposal document.

**Advertising Requirements:** The role must be advertised unless there is a reason for not doing this, ie the individual is named on a grant or the individual is already working in the role and changing immigration route.

Where the role was advertised the vacancy reference number is mandatory.

Where the role was not advertised give the reason why.

HR Operations will check:

- that the post has been advertised within the last 12 months, so if it hasn't then please provide a reason for not appointing within 12 months
- That the starting salary is the same as advertised
- If relevant, that the fixed term length/end date matches what was advertised

Does the Immigration Skills Charge apply? If so, is the budget holder aware?

**Skills charge note**

*A skills charge applies unless the role is exempt. Exemptions are:*

- Occupations skilled to PhD level (this will be identified by the SOC code assigned on the CoS)
- Individuals switching from Tier 4/Student visa to Skilled Worker

*Information is available at the UKVI website:*

<https://www.gov.uk/uk-visa-sponsorship-employers/immigration-skills-charge>.

*Skills charge calculator: <https://isc-fee-calc.visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/start>*

*The University is considered a small/charitable sponsor.*

**Registration with a Professional Body:** In some cases it is a legal requirement for the individual to have Professional Body Registration to be able to undertake the role. Where this is applicable, a copy of the Professional Accreditation Documentation must be provided.

**Financial maintenance criteria:** The individual will need to provide evidence to the UKVI that they meet the financial criteria when they make their visa application. The individual must show they have at least

£1,270 in personal savings. They must have held this in their bank account for a minimum of 28 days prior to the date of the visa application.

The balance cannot fall below the £1,270 amount for even one day during that 28 day period.

Please note the HR Ops team do not require evidence of this.

If someone is switching to a Skilled Worker visa from another employer, or if they are changing employment to a role in another occupation they do not need to meet the financial criteria.

Where the individual is unable to provide evidence to show they meet the criteria), the University can certify maintenance on behalf of the individual. This must be agreed from a financial perspective by the Head of HR/Head of School/Department. Evidence confirming the agreement must be provided e.g. email confirmation.

### **Supporting Documentation Required**

**Completed Right to Work Checklist** (section 3 onwards) with verified copies of all appropriate passport/identity documents.

If this is for an in country change of employment cos then provide a copy of their current BRP.

### **Highest qualification (with certified translation where required).**

Where the qualification is not in English, include a copy of the original certificate **AND** a certified translation on file.

### **Certifying a translation**

If you need to certify a translation of a document that's not written in English, ask the translation company to confirm in writing on the translation:

- that it's a 'true and accurate translation of the original document'
- the date of the translation
- the full name and contact details of the translator or a representative of the translation company

If a qualification is an essential criteria on the job advert, regardless of the SOC code or tradeable points, a copy must be included. If the essential criteria says 'OR NEAR COMPLETION' we require proof from the institution that the award is pending.

Where an individual is pending their award, include a letter on headed paper confirming the details of the award e.g. name of course, dates of course and expected end date. Please also include a copy of their current highest award e.g. post graduate certificate.

**2 original employment references:** This MUST be **2** references

**Job description for the post:** must be the full job description used in the advert further particulars, not just a summary.

**CV or application form:** Only require this for the successful candidate.

### **ATAS certificate/electronic approval notice from FCDO (if required)**

Check that the SOC code on the ATAS certificate matches the SOC code on the cos form. Check the expiry date of the ATAS certificate.

**MARIE CURIE POST:** If the post is a Marie Curie post (early stage researcher or experienced researcher) then further documents are required.

1. Email confirmation from the Edinburgh Research Office confirming the ARC grade, salary, and mobility and/or family allowance. This should match the salary on the CoS.
2. A completed Marie Curie H2020 checklist from the applicant stating that they wish to opt in or out of the pension scheme. Both of these documents are required before the CoS can go ahead, as the salary changes based on the pension choice.

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/research-office/winning-research-funding/manage-award/financial-management/start-project/marie-curie-fellows>

### **Evidence of Recruitment**

**A record of the number of people who applied for the job**, and the number of people shortlisted for interview or for other stages of the recruitment process. This could be any of the following: Applicant Tracking form, Extract from People and Money showing all the applicants who applied and all those that were shortlisted for interview, or it could just be a word document with the total number of applicants and total number shortlisted for interview.

**At least one other item of evidence or information which shows the process you used to identify the most suitable candidate** (as detailed on the form).

Please note: you do not have to retain application forms, CVs, interview notes or any other personal data relating to unsuccessful candidates

### **Cost Details**

Please complete all fields. The CoS application fee will be charged to these codes.

### **Originator Details**

Please complete in full.

### **Submitting the CoS Application form**

To submit the form to HR Operations, create a Service Request (SR) using **Request Certificate of Sponsorship (COS)** as the Category name under Forms. See [How to raise and maintain a service request enquiry](#). Please input any relevant messages for HR Operations into the SR details section.

Name the Title of the SR using this format:

*start date of COS – Applicant Name – Application Type (abbreviation)*  
e.g. 1 Sep 21 – John Smith –Skilled Worker out of country (or in-country).

Please attach the application and supporting documents to the SR as one **Zip File** (please use the SR functionality as described above and not an email to the Helpline team). This will reduce the risk of some documents not being uploaded due to file size restrictions. Please name each document with a clear description e.g. CoS application form, reference, interview notes etc (there's no need to use the HR SharePoint naming convention as the documents will be combined into one).