

**Frequently Asked Questions – In country applications**

Once you have received both a job offer and a valid Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) from

Aston University, you can apply for permission to stay 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 with Settled or Pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme**
	+ **Non-EEA nationals with Indefinite Leave to Remain/Settlement in the UK**

All other non-British/Irish citizens will need to apply for an appropriate visa before they can work in the UK.

**What is the Skilled Worker VISA?**

The Skilled Worker Visa is open to EU and

non-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.

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 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](https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/work-visas).

**I already hold a Tier 2 visa; can I extend my Tier 2 Visa?**

Yes, if you are eligible to do so. However, you will need to apply for an extension via the

Skilled Worker Visa route. From 1 December 2020, the Tier 2 visa was replaced by the

‘Skilled Worker Visa’ within the points-based immigration system (PBS). All current Tier 2

visa holders who are eligible can extend their leave under this new route and obtain a Skilled

Worker Visa.

**How do I apply for the visa?**

For Skilled Worker Visa applications, please see further information and how to apply online

[here](https://www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa/extend-your-visa).

For information getting a faster decision on your visa or settlement application please visit

the UKVI [website](https://www.gov.uk/faster-decision-visa-settlement) for further information.

**How long will the application process take?**

Once you’ve applied online, proved your identity and provided your documents, you’ll usually

get a decision on your visa within:

• 3 weeks, if you’re outside the UK

• 8 weeks, if you’re inside the UK

Please see [here](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/visa-decision-waiting-times-applications-inside-the-uk) for further information.

**How much does it cost?**

Please see [here](https://www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa/how-much-it-costs) for up-to-date guidance on visa fee 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, and who needs to pay, please see the UKVI

[webpages](https://www.gov.uk/healthcare-immigration-application).

**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](https://www.aston.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2022-08/visa-loan-scheme-for-international-staff-final.pdf).

**What documents do I need to submit for my Skilled worker visa?**

When you apply you’ll need to provide the following [documents](https://www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa/documents-you-must-provide).

You may also require an ATAS

certificate. Please see UKVI [website](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/guidance-on-how-to-apply-for-an-atas-certificate) for further information. You will not be able to apply for

or extend your visa until this has been received. Please see our information on [ATAS](https://www.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/jobs/candidate-immigration) for further guidance.

**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 UKVI within

10 days of the change happening.

Please ensure that you inform your [HR Business Partner](https://www2.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/hr-contacts#HRBusinessPartners) 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](https://my.corehr.com/pls/coreportal_astp/cp_por_public_main_page.display_login_page) 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.

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**What happens if my application is refused?**

You must notify recruitment@aston.ac.uk immediately if your visa is refused.

If your visa is 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.

You may wish to seek advice from an OISC registered [immigration adviser](https://www.gov.uk/find-an-immigration-adviser) before you submit any administrative review.

**Who can switch into the Skilled Worker visa route?**

You might be able to apply to change (‘switch’) to a Skilled Worker visa if you’re already in

the UK on a different type of visa. Please see further details and eligibility requirements

[here](https://www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa/switch-to-this-visa).

**Do I need to prove my knowledge of English before applying?**

Unless you did this in a previous successful visa application, you will usually need to prove

your knowledge of the English language when you apply.

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](https://www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa/knowledge-of-english)

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

**Who cannot apply to switch to this visa**

The following [link](https://www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa/switch-to-this-visa) provides details of those visas that are currently not eligible to switch from

within the UK.

**Do you have a mobile pop-up service to enrol my biometrics?**

No the University does not have access to this service.

**I’m already employed by Aston University. Can I continue working if my visa expires?**

Yes, but only if you made your new visa application before your current visa expires.

To ensure the University can legally continue to employ you whilst your Skilled Worker Visa

application is pending:

• We **must** see copies of evidence of your application

• You **must** grant permission for us to use the Employee Checking Service

(ECS). We are legally required to verify your ongoing visa application with

the Home Office, via the ECS. Please contact hr\_admin@aston.ac.uk for

further information.

**Can I apply for an extension to my current visa?**

You can usually apply to extend a Skilled Worker visa or a Tier 2 (General) work visa if all of

the following are true:

• you have the same job as when you were given your previous permission to enter or stay

in the UK

• your job is in the same [occupation code](https://www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa/your-job) as when you were given your previous

permission to enter or stay in the UK

• you’re still working for the employer who gave you your current certificate of sponsorship

For further information please see [Skilled Worker visa: Extend your visa - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/skilled-worker-visa/extend-your-visa)

**When can I apply for the visa?**

You cannot apply **more than 3 months** before your start date at Aston.

If you require an [ATAS](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/academic-technology-approval-scheme) certificate you will not be able to apply for, or extend your visa until this has been received. Please see our information on [ATAS](https://www.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/jobs/candidate-immigration) for further guidance.

**I’m extending my visa - do I need to meet the English language and maintenance requirements?**

No. As you already hold a Tier 2 or Skilled Worker Visa, you are exempt from meeting these

requirements for this application.

**Can I continue working for the University if my visa expires?**

Yes, but only if you made your new visa application before your current visa expires.

To ensure the University can legally continue to employ you whilst your Skilled Worker Visa

application is pending:

• We **must** see copies of evidence of your application

• You **must** grant permission for HR Admin. to use the Employee Checking

Service (ECS). We are legally required to verify you ongoing visa

application with the Home Office, via the ECS.

Please send all documentation to HR Admin.

Failure to provide the above documentation before your current visa expires may

result in the termination of your contract.

**I’m currently working for a different employer - when can I start work?**

You must have obtained your new Skilled Worker Visa BRP before you can start work in

your new role, and this has been seen and verified by HR.

It may be possible for you to continue working for your previous employer or, if you are

currently employed by Aston University working in your previous role, until the new Skilled

Worker Visa application is granted.

If you require an [ATAS](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/academic-technology-approval-scheme) certificate for your new role, you will need to apply as soon as

possible before your visa expires. You will not be able to apply for your new VISA until this

has been received. Please see our information on [ATAS](https://www.aston.ac.uk/staff-public/hr/jobs/candidate-immigration) for further guidance.