



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 can sponsor you to work in the UK because we have a sponsor licence from 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 dependent partners and children if eligible.

To secure a Skilled Worker Visa, you will need to be sponsored for a job that meets certain skill and salary requirements. Further guidance on the UK Points-Based Immigration System and routes to work in the UK can be found on the Government [website](#).

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

You must apply online [here](#).

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.

As part of the visa application, you will be asked for your intended travel date to the UK. The visa will usually then be valid from that travel date.

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

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](#).

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 [VFS Global](#) or [TLS Contact](#) (depending on your country of application).

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

In most cases, no. However, certain occupation codes (see your CoS for details) require you to provide a criminal record certificate from any country in which you have been present for 12 months or more 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 a visa 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.

Candidates should check their eligibility to enter or remain in the UK in advance of making any job application via the UKVI [website](#).

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](#)

[Prove your English language abilities with a secure English language test \(SELT\) - GOV.UK](#)

How do I meet the financial requirements?

Please check your Certificate of Sponsorship, which will confirm if HR Recruitment has agreed to certify the financial/maintenance for you. If they have, then you do not need to provide evidence of your finances when you apply for your visa.

How much will the visa cost?

Please see [here](#) 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 paid at the time of the visa application.

Payment of the surcharge will allow you to 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.

For further guidance, please see the UKVI [website](#).

Can I bring my dependants (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 see [here](#).

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

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

You may also require an ATAS certificate. Please see UKVI [website](#) 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](#) for further guidance.

Do I need to register with the Police?

No – the requirement to register with the police has been removed for all applicants.

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 90 days. This is known as an 'entry vignette' and will allow you to enter the UK.

You must not enter the UK before the start date on your vignette or you will need to leave the UK and re-enter once it becomes valid.

You must enter the UK before the vignette expires or you will have to re-apply for your visa.

Once you arrive in the UK, you'll need to collect your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) from either Aston University or a UK Post Office within ten days. The BRP will state the full length of leave (permission) you have been granted and will supersede the entry vignette.

The HR Recruitment team will confirm how to collect your BRP card from Aston when they issue your CoS.

Full details of how to collect your BRP will be provided to you by UKVI when your application is approved. For further guidance, please see the UKVI [website](#).

You will need to collect your BRP card before you can generate a [share code](#) to complete your right to work check.

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.

When can I resign from my previous role?

It is important to carefully plan the timeframe for your resignation (considering 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 a [share code](#) or your passport and your vignette. 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).

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 based on your vignette provided it is still valid. You then must collect your BRP 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 UKVI within 10 days of the change happening.

Please ensure that you inform your [HR Administrator](#) **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.
3. 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.
4. If you are absent from work without permission for more than 10 days, HR must withdraw sponsorship of your visa. 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.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. 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 note that you must start work within 28 days of the latest of:

- the contract start date on your CoS (see above)
- the date your entry clearance visa becomes valid
- the date that you receive a decision on your visa application

If your start is delayed beyond 28 days, we may need to withdraw sponsorship of your visa.

If you think your start date may be delayed, please inform HR immediately.

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](#).