



Information on working in the UK for new international employees

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This guidance will be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains relevant and reflects changing legislation and organisational requirements.

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1. Who can work in the UK?

You'll normally be eligible to work in the UK if you're in one of the following categories (see the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) web pages for more information):

- Rights-based:
 - You're a national of the UK
 - You're a national of a country in the European Economic Area (EEA) or a Swiss national
- Permission based:
 - You have Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) or Indefinite Leave to Enter the UK
 - You have a UK Ancestry visa
 - You have an unexpired Points Based System visa, under Tier 1, Tier 2 or Tier 5.
 - You're a dependant (spouse/partner, fiancé/fiancée/proposed civil partner, child, parent) of someone who had an existing right to work in the UK, and you have a Dependant visa
 - You're a dependant (spouse/civil partner, child or grandchild under 21 years old, or dependent child/grandchild, dependent parent/grandparent) of an EEA/Swiss national or their spouse/civil partner who has an existing right to work in the UK and you hold a Dependant visa
 - You have a valid student (Tier 4) visa which allows you to work on a part-time basis (normally limited to a maximum of 10 or 20 hours per week during term-time, and subject to the permission of your course supervisor)

2. If you need permission to work in the UK, how do you get it?

Sponsored visas

If you've indicated in your job application that you don't have an existing permission to work in the UK, the University can provide information on the options you have to apply for permission. This may involve the University requesting permission from UKVI to appoint you to a role (sponsorship).

If sponsorship is needed and is granted, you're responsible for applying for a visa. The University can't act on your behalf or offer any detailed, professional advice. Bear in mind that sponsorship doesn't automatically mean you (and any dependants) will be granted a visa. This decision is at the discretion of UKVI and the University has no influence.

Un-sponsored visas

Certain types of visa don't need to rely on sponsorship from the University, though you will need to meet the relevant criteria. Even though we're not sponsoring you, we'll still need to know that you have permission to work in the UK, so it'd be helpful if you keep us up to date on your application progress.

3. How long does a visa last?

If your visa application's approved, you'll be able to enter, live and work in the UK for the period stated on your visa, which may be attached to your passport or may be a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP).

Each visa type has different maximum residence timescales.

4. What types of permission are there?

There are several types of work visa. The most common at the University are Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent), Tier 2 (General) and Tier 5 (Temporary Worker – Government Authorised Exchange).

Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent)

This immigration route is for highly skilled individuals in the fields of science, humanities, engineering, the arts (including film, fashion design and architecture) and digital technology who'll enrich the UK's knowledge, economy and society.

There are 2 paths:

- Exceptional Talent, for those who are internationally recognised as having made significant contributions as a leader in their field, or
- Exceptional Promise, which is for those who've demonstrated the potential to contribute significantly as a future leader in their field

This is a work visa, but it isn't linked to a job offer and doesn't require sponsorship by the University.

This route will be succeeded by the Global Talent visa with effect from 20 February 2020.

Tier 2 (General)

This immigration route is for skilled workers coming to the UK to fill jobs at graduate level and above.

You'll need a job offer from the University, and we'll need to apply for sponsorship from UKVI. Both you and the University need to meet all of the criteria to be able to employ you.

In most cases, we can appoint the best candidate but, for some roles, we have to appoint a suitable settled worker (someone from the UK or EEA/Switzerland) if one's available before being able to consider someone who needs a visa to work in the UK.

Tier 5 (Temporary Worker – Government Authorised Exchange)

This visa type's primarily for sponsored researchers from outside the EEA/Switzerland, who want to come to the UK for up to 2 years and, during their time at the University:

- Will take part in financially sponsored research

- Won't be employed by the University
- Won't be self-funded
- Will receive funding from a UK/overseas funding body or from their overseas employer which is at least the equivalent of the UK National Minimum Wage
- Won't fill a genuine vacancy (one that's part of our normal staffing requirements)
- Will do skilled work at NVQ3 level ('A' level in the UK) or above
- Will be able to support themselves (and any dependants) without public funds
- Intend to leave the UK at the end of their visit.

You'll need the offer of a role, and sponsorship by the University, to be able to apply for this visa type.

5. Questions?

If you've got any questions about permission to work in the UK, you can check [UKVI's web pages](#), or contact us at InternationalHR@leeds.ac.uk.