

An introduction to your Skilled Worker/Tier 5 visa

Welcome to Oxford

The University is delighted to be able to recruit and sponsor the very best international talent and are pleased to sponsor your Skilled Worker or Tier 5 visa. You are among approximately one thousand employees and collaborators currently sponsored by the University. Useful information for staff relocating to Oxford from overseas can be found at: <https://welcome.ox.ac.uk/>

As a Premium Sponsor with the Home Office, the University has certain benefits in being able to sponsor visa holders. However, the University must comply with extremely strict Home Office requirements in order to retain our Premium Sponsor licences and to be able to continue to sponsor international talent.

Your visa also carries some conditions in relation to work and access to benefits. Failure to comply with the Home Office's conditions set out in this guide may affect your visa status. The University is grateful for your cooperation and understanding of the need to comply with Home Office requirements.

Changes to your personal and job details

The University must record and in most cases report a number of circumstances to the Home Office.

Please notify your HR administrator immediately of any of the following as the University must record/ report these strictly within ten working days of the date of the change:

- A change to your start date/ that you did not arrive on your start date on your Certificate of Sponsorship
- Any change in job details (e.g. job title/ duties/ salary/ hours/ work location)
- Unauthorised absences of more than ten consecutive working days
- Authorised unpaid leave of up to four weeks in any calendar year (Jan-Dec)
- Change in salary due to leave (maternity, paternity, shared parental, adoption, sick)
- If you leave early (e.g. finish early/ resign/ funding withdrawn/ are dismissed)
- If you change your immigration status (e.g. granted ILR/ other visa/ other nationality)
- If you leave as expected in line with your visa expiry date
- Changes in residential address/contact details

You should also inform the Home Office of a change in residential address by completing the form found at:

www.gov.uk/change-circumstances-visa-brp



Conditions of work

Your visa only allows you to do the work detailed on your Certificate of Sponsorship, supplementary employment under strict conditions (see below) and voluntary work.

Supplementary employment is permitted where the additional employment is:

- for no more than 20 hours per week
- outside the working hours covered by your Certificate of Sponsorship
- For **Skilled Worker** – a type of work which could be sponsored under the Skilled Worker route (but the salary thresholds do not have to be met for this additional work)
- For **Tier 5** – in the same profession as the activities specified on your Certificate of Sponsorship

The Home Office views University research and teaching as different professions. If you are a Tier 5 researcher you are only permitted to take up teaching as supplementary employment if giving lectures/ teaching is noted as part of your activities on your Certificate of Sponsorship. If teaching is not noted on your Certificate of Sponsorship, contact your HR department who can discuss with the Staff Immigration Team whether teaching could be added allowing you to take supplementary teaching work.

Voluntary work, such as work for a charitable organisation, is permitted for Skilled Worker visa holders or if this is listed on your Tier 5 Certificate of Sponsorship. Please note that unpaid work within the University would not be considered to be Voluntary work. If you are unsure please check with the Staff Immigration Team before undertaking the work in question.

Your visa also allows you to study. There is no limit on the number of hours you may study but it must not interfere with the job you have been sponsored to do.

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Absences from work

The Home Office requires the University to keep a record of your absences from work. This includes annual leave and sick absence. Please ensure that you notify your HR administrator of any periods of annual leave or sick absence immediately. You do not need to report work-related travel.

The University is also required to record unauthorised absences, and to report unauthorised absences of more than ten consecutive working days to the Home Office (which would result in your visa being cancelled and you having to leave the UK). Please notify your manager or HR administrator immediately if you are unable to attend work for any reason. If you are absent from work without explanation, it will be recorded as an unauthorised absence. Please ensure that your HR administrator has your up to date contact details at all times so that you can be contacted if an unauthorised absence is thought to have occurred.

Your visa does not permit you to take unpaid leave (e.g. unpaid sabbatical) for more than a total of four weeks in any calendar year (Jan-Dec) (unless the unpaid leave is due to maternity, paternity, adoption or sick leave). Unpaid leave in excess of four weeks in a calendar year (Jan-Dec) will result in the University having to withdraw sponsorship for your visa. This will result in your visa being cancelled and you having to leave the UK. Please note that these are Home Office regulations, not University policy.

If you intend to apply for Indefinite Leave to Remain in the future you will be required as part of the application to declare all of your overseas travel, the dates and the reason for travel (e.g. attending conference, holiday) for the previous five years so it is important to ensure that your leave and overseas travel records are up to date.

Other visa conditions

Your Skilled Worker or Tier 5 visa also carries the following restrictions:

- You must not access public funds (benefits) Nationals of some countries may access limited benefits see: www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-funds (pages 19-22)
- You must not start up or run a business
- All payments (including salary) must be made into your own bank account – payments in cash are not permitted.

Extending your visa

You will require a new Skilled Worker/Tier 5 Certificate of Sponsorship before you are able to extend your visa. Your department/college will apply to the Staff Immigration Team for a Certificate of Sponsorship on your behalf around three months before your visa expires, where possible.

Once you have a new Certificate of Sponsorship you will be advised to complete a visa application as soon as possible. The Staff Immigration Team will provide advice and guidance and can check draft applications (including those for dependants) before they are submitted to the Home Office.

The Home Office's normal processing time for postal applications is 8 weeks. If you require your documents back urgently there are options to apply in person (where you will receive your documents back the same day) or via a priority postal service (where your documents should be returned within around three weeks).

Once your new visa is granted, you will be required to take your new visa and passport to your HR administrator so that they may complete a new right to work check for your continued employment/collaboration.

Staff Immigration Team

University of Oxford
<https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk>