

An introduction to your visa and conditions

March 2025



Microsoft Teams Presentation

Microphone:

- Due to the number attending this presentation, please mute or turn off your mic.

Questions:

- The training will be broken into sections, with a 'pause' at certain points for questions
- You can type questions in the chat panel or turn on your mic to ask
- Contact details will be provided at the end of the session for personal questions.

Structure of Talk

- General Introduction
- Visa Obligations
- Future visa applications & Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR)
- Questions

These slides are available to download on SIT website at:

<https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/visa-holders-briefing-session-presentation>

Welcome to Oxford

The University values global talent

The University's Strategic Plan:

- To develop the University's position as a global forum for intellectual engagement
- To recruit and retain high calibre staff from across the world
- To work towards an increasingly diverse staffing profile.

Source: <http://www.ox.ac.uk/about/organisation/strategic-plan>

University Sponsor Licence

Our Sponsor Licence:

- Premium Sponsor status with UK Government (Home Office)

Allows us to:

- Welcome international talent from all over the world
- Sponsor visa holders (approx. 1,000 current sponsored visa holders – more visas than any other UK University)
- Seek advice & assistance from specific contacts within the Home Office in complex cases.

How can the Staff Immigration Team (SIT) help you?

Specialist team dedicated to handling applications & queries from sponsored visa holders and their families <https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/>

- At **recruitment** – we arrange your visa sponsorship (Certificate of Sponsorship)
- **Overseas** – we advise you how to apply & can check your visa application
- **In the UK** – we advise you how to apply & can check your visa application
- Remind your department to remind you when your visa is close to expiring
- Update the Home Office if your circumstances change – more information later
- Advise you of your visa conditions & help when problems arise
- Help to ensure University compliance with its responsibilities to the Home Office to ensure that we keep our licences to sponsor visas
- Work within the sector & with the Home Office to lobby for improvements.

Who do I contact?

- For any visa related queries or issues please contact the HR team/person in your department/college
- HR will contact the Staff Immigration Team (SIT) for specialist advice where necessary
- Urgent enquiries (such as a lost visa or if you are detained at an airport) contact SIT directly.

Our contact details are found at:

<https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/contact-us>

There is a very scary amount of incorrect & incomplete information online about UK immigration – don't try to research yourself or ask friends – always ask your HR team and/or SIT

Other support

The Welcome Service Website

Practical information on and settling down in Oxford for academics, graduate students and their families

<https://welcome.ox.ac.uk>

University Newcomer's Club

Also open to spouses and partners

Meet other Newcomers from over 100 countries

www.newcomers.ox.ac.uk

Visa Types

- Global Talent visa
- Skilled Worker visa
- Student Visa
- ‘Sponsored Researchers’ (*also other GAE, Youth Mobility, Charity workers, Religious Workers, International Agreement*).

Student Immigration Team holds student licence

www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa

SIT holds licences for Skilled Worker and ‘Sponsored Researcher’ and assists with Global Talent visa applications.

Questions?

Visa Obligations

Who does what?

- **Home Office (UK Visas & Immigration)** – decides which employers can hold sponsor licences and monitors the operation of those licences. Decides which applicants are granted leave to enter/remain & on what terms.
- **Your Sponsor (University of Oxford)** issues Certificates of Sponsorship (CoS) according to Home Office rules. Has *ongoing* responsibilities to monitor its employees/ sponsored visa holders, look after the integrity of its licence and report any issues to the Home Office.
- **You** are the holder of either ‘permission to enter’ or ‘permission to stay’ in the form of an e-Visa. You have *ongoing* responsibilities as a ‘sponsored migrant’ and as the holder of an e-Visa.

Skilled Worker and Tier 5 visa holders

Skilled Worker [Skilled Worker Visas | Staff Immigration \(ox.ac.uk\)](#)

Tier 5 [Tier 5 Sponsored Researcher visas | Staff Immigration \(ox.ac.uk\)](#)

What you must report to your employer/sponsor

- Any change of address or phone number (mobile & landline)

University employees can update their own contact details through HR Self-Service, but this is not available to college employees.

<https://staff.admin.ox.ac.uk/working-at-oxford/you-and-work/hr-self-service>

- Any change in job details (title, salary, hours, work location, duties or even leaving your employment/ project) – don't assume your PI/ line manager has discussed/ reported to HR
- If you switch into a different immigration category
- You must follow University absence reporting procedures for sickness, holidays and other absences.

These changes must be reported to your departmental/college administrator or HR contact

Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) / eVisa

The Home Office stopped issuing BRPs at the end of October 2024

1. If you have a BRP (plastic card), with an expiry date of 31 December 2024 you must create a UKVI account so you can access your eVisa (digital record), if you haven't already done this.

Full details: [Online immigration status \(eVisa\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/online-immigration-status)

OR

2. If your visa was granted after October 2024 you will not have a BRP, you will have a UKVI Account and eVisa.

The UKVI account allows you to:

- View your immigration status
- prove your status – obtaining a share code for right to work, rent and for things such as studying, driving, access to the NHS

Keeping your UKVI Account up to date

You must ensure you keep your personal information on your UKVI account up to date, including:

- mobile phone number
- email address
- name
- identity document, such as your passport or national identity card
- home address
- postal address

Important: Your eVisa is linked to your passport.

Renew your passport = update your UKVI account

Otherwise you may encounter issues when returning to the UK.

<https://www.gov.uk/update-uk-visas-immigration-account-details>

eVisa or UKVI account problems

If you have any problems accessing your eVisa or UKVI account or if there are any errors in your visa details you will need to report this to the Home Office. SIT can't resolve these issues.

<https://www.gov.uk/report-error-evisa>

<https://update-your-details.homeoffice.gov.uk/account-recovery/help>

If you cannot access your UKVI account, there is a web chat available:

[eVisa Webchat \(homeoffice.gov.uk\)](https://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/evisa-webchat)

HR teams can request verification from the Home Office of your right to work while any problem with your eVisa or UKVI account is being resolved by the Home Office. When the issue is fixed you will then provide a sharecode to your HR team so they can carry out an online right to work check.

There are 3 different types of sharecodes (right to work starts with **W**, right to rent starts with **R**, show your status starts with **S**) provide the right one !

ATAS Certificate

Security clearance issued by the Foreign Office

Only applicable to researchers and students working in particular sensitive subjects

Some nationalities are exempt (EU/EEA, Swiss, Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea, USA.)

A new ATAS certificate (security clearance) will be needed to

- change the research project
- extend a Skilled Worker or Tier 5 visa
- change Higher Educational Institute

Questions?

Losing Contact...

“I had a family emergency back home and had to rush back. I only meant to be away for a week or so, but ended up being away for 3 weeks. I forgot to get permission from my employer. Just turned up at Heathrow and they told me my leave had been cancelled”

If contact with your department/ college has been lost for 10 working days SIT must report this to the Home Office which will result in your visa being curtailed. **So:**

- Always update your department/ college HR team of any changes in contact details (including mobile number)
- Tell your department/ college HR team if you will be away and when you expect to return
- Tell your department/ college HR team about any change of plans.

What am I able to do while I am here?

- Work for your sponsor and undertake activities as described in your Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS)
- Undertake 'supplementary employment' in the same sector and at the same level, for up to 20 hours per week
- Do voluntary work e.g. charitable work – not unpaid work. (Skilled Worker only)
- Study (so long as it does not interfere with your employment)

<https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/supplementary-employment-and-studying>

- Bring family (spouse/partner & children under 18)
- Use the NHS without further charge (unless visa for 6 months or less)
- Send your dependents to state schools.

Supplementary Employment - Skilled Workers

The supplementary employment must be:

- a type of work that could be sponsorable under the Skilled Worker visa *route* (*salary thresholds don't apply it's just about the type of work*)
- no more than 20 hours per week
- outside the working hours covered by the CoS

Supplementary employment can include self employment.

Undertaking employment which is not a Skilled Worker sponsorable type of work or over 20 hrs/ week limit would constitute working illegally in the UK.

More information:

<https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/supplementary-employment-and-studying>

Before 4 April 2024 rules change supplementary employment for Skilled Worker visa holders had to be same type of work as their main role.

Supplementary Employment – Tier 5

The supplementary employment must be:

- a job which is the same type of work as the purpose of your visit as detailed in your CoS (i.e. research)
- teaching and research are not the same type of work (*check if your CoS includes giving lectures/teaching & discuss with SIT*)
- no more than 20 hours per week
- outside the working hours covered by the CoS

Supplementary employment can include self employment.

Undertaking employment which is not the same type of work or in excess of the 20 hours per week would constitute working illegally in the UK.

More information:

<https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/supplementary-activities-and-studying>

4 April 2024 rules change only expanded supplementary employment for Skilled Worker visa holders – Tier 5 visa holders are still restricted to the same type of work

What am I not able to do?

- Work other than allowed in the CoS or under supplementary employment rules
- Take unpaid leave in excess of four weeks per year (January to December) – *unless as part of maternity, paternity, parental, shared parental, adoption, or sick leave, official strike action, or assisting with a national or international humanitarian or environmental crisis*
- Claim ‘public funds’
(Some nationalities can claim some public funds but this is a very complex area so advice should always be sought from SIT)
More information: <https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/public-funds>
- Bring dependants over the age of 18
- Commit a criminal offence...

Driving in the UK

You can generally drive in Great Britain:

- On your EU licence (if you took your test in an EU country). You can exchange your license for a GB licence, but you are not required to do so
- On your licence issued in a 'designated country': Andorra, Australia, Barbados, British Virgin Islands, Canada, Falkland Islands, Faroe Islands, Hong Kong, Japan, Monaco, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Singapore, South Africa, Switzerland, and Zimbabwe. You can drive in Great Britain on your licence for 12 months from when you first arrived in the UK. You can exchange it for a GB license for up to five years
- Other countries: You can drive in Great Britain on your licence for 12 months from when you first arrived in the UK.
- NOTE: 12 months from when you first arrive – doesn't start again if you leave & return

Driving without a licence invalidates insurance. Driving without a license and/or without insurance is a criminal offence.

This is just a general guide and you should check your eligibility using the online tool:

<https://www.gov.uk/driving-nongb-licence>

Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS)

- All in-country applications, and overseas applications for residence of 6 months or more, require payment of IHS
- IHS is not required for Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) applications
- IHS paid as part of application process. £1,035 per year of leave granted for each applicant. Part year paid at 50% if less than 6 months, otherwise full year payable
- Will allow you to access NHS treatment without further charge
- Recommend take BRP/evidence of e-Visa when accessing NHS treatment.

Exemptions:

- European nationals and their family resident in the UK before 2021
- Babies born in UK, up to age of 3 months – ***over 3 months you will be charged for medical treatment (at 150% of costs) if you haven't applied for visa & paid IHS.***
- Accident and Emergency treatment always free at point of delivery

More info: <https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/immigration-health-nhs-surcharge>

Tier 5 Specific

- Tier 5 visa can only be issued for, or extended up to, a maximum of 24 months. You must then leave the UK.
- No limit on the number of Tier 5s you can hold so you may be able to apply for another Tier 5 visa from outside the UK for another later visit
- Unlike a Skilled Worker, cannot undertake voluntary work
- Tier 5 does not lead to Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR)
- Must report to University if you are not receiving funding or are no longer undertaking your research

More info: <https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/changes-in-tier-5-activities>

Questions?

Future Visa Applications & Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR)

SIT assists with extension applications and provides advice and assistance to those applying for ILR <https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/settling-in-the-uk>

Global Talent visa

- UK immigration category for talented and promising individuals in specific sectors wishing to work in the UK.
- Two stage process:
 - Stage 1** - Apply and obtain endorsement
 - Stage 2** - Submit visa application
- Advantages to Global Talent visa:
 - can move freely between roles, jobs, locations, organisations etc.
 - no concerns with unpaid leave, sabbatical, changes to role
 - can normally obtain Indefinite Leave to Remain after three years
- Staff Immigration Team can provide guidance on the Global Talent route where appropriate.
- If a Global Talent visa application was appropriate we would have suggested this instead. If your visa was issued recently it will normally be better to consider a Global Talent later before your visa expires not now.

Global Talent visa

1. Individual Fellowship

Example: Newton International Fellowship/Leverhulme Senior Research Fellowship

A complete list can be found here: <https://royalsociety.org/grants-schemes-awards/global-talent-visa/route-2-individual-fellowships/>

2. Academic and Research appointment

Academic leadership roles; Associate Professors, Professor or Research leadership; Group Leader. Criteria on the recruitment and selection process must also be met

3. Endorsed funder

For researchers or specialist whose name or job title is on a grant from a listed endorsed funder (including, Wellcome Trust, UKRI, CRUK, British Heart Foundation). Several criteria must also be met (including the grant being for at least two years in duration)

A complete list of endorsed funders can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ukri-endorsement-endorsed-funders-global-talent-visa/uk-research-and-innovation-endorsed-funders>

4. Full Peer Review

Assessment of applicants standing against a set of criteria. Applicants are either proven leaders within their field (Exceptional Talent), or early-career individuals who have demonstrated potential to become a world leader (Exceptional Promise) – normally having worked in research roles for 4-5 years after PhD

More information: <https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/gtv-endorsement>

Skilled Worker Extension

- Extension application can be undertaken up to 3 months in advance of current visa expiring, arranged via your local HR contact
- New Certificate of Sponsorship issued
- Application must be made from within the UK
- Cannot travel outside the UK Common Travel Area whilst the application is pending
- Once application is submitted decision received in 8 weeks

Skilled Worker salary threshold changes

- New higher salary thresholds only apply to new Skilled Worker applicants from 4 April 2024.
- Updated version of the existing salary thresholds apply to existing Skilled Worker visa holders from before 4 April 2024 when they extend, apply for a new visa for a new role (here or with a different employer/ sponsor), or ILR.

Skilled Worker and Indefinite Leave to Remain

- You must complete five years ‘continuous residence’ to qualify for ILR
- University must confirm that you are **still required for the foreseeable future for the employment** (at least another 6 months at point you are applying for ILR), and will continue to be paid at the appropriate rate for the job
- Absences limit: no more than 180 days outside UK in any rolling 12 month period during five year qualifying period
- 180 day absence applies to **all** absences except:
 - a. where you are working in a PhD level occupation and you have been absent from the UK because you are undertaking overseas research*
 - b. absences assisting with a national/ international economic/ humanitarian crisis*
 - c. stuck outside the UK due to Covid-19 (ill, self-isolating, impossible to return)*
- Salary must still meet the relevant thresholds (*higher thresholds only for new SW applicants after 4 April 2024*)
- Life in the UK test & English language requirements apply

More information: <https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/settling-in-the-uk>

PBS dependants

- Global Talent, Skilled Worker and Tier 5 sponsored visa-holders can have their partner and children under 18 years join them in the UK
- Only restrictions on PBS dependants employment is that they cannot undertake work as sportsperson or sports coach
- PBS dependant partners must have spent five years in UK with main applicant to qualify for ILR. Can't be granted ILR before main applicant
- PBS dependants are subject to the same absences limit – no more than 180 days outside the UK in any rolling 12 month period
- The overseas research exemption extends to your PBS dependent spouse or partner if they accompanied you during your research
- PBS dependent children are not subject to absence restrictions & no specific qualifying period, but can only be granted ILR when both parents have or are applying for ILR, so have to apply with PBS dependant partner

Ten Years ‘Long Residence’ ILR

- Ten years continuous lawful residence (most visas, but not Visitor visas)
- Must have spent 12 months under current visa (*new rule 11 April 2024*)
- Absences limit for time in the UK **before 11 April 2024** – must not exceed 548 days outside UK & no single absence more than 184 days
- Absences limit for time in the UK after **11 April 2024** – no more than 180 days outside UK in any rolling 12 months (same as standard ILR route)
- Life in the UK test & English language requirements apply
- When main visa holder granted ‘Long residence’ ILR family members can continue under & extend PBS Dependant visas, to get to ILR later.

If uncertain about travel history you can make a Subject Access Request for entry and exit records for the past 5 years held by Home Office, based on data received from carriers.

SIT can assist with queries on 10 year ‘Long residence’ ILR applications.

Children born in the UK

- No obligation to make any visa application for child (*but remember only eligible for free NHS treatment for the first three months & you will not be able to travel and re-enter the UK unless the child has a visa*)
- Children born in the UK is **automatically British** if either the mother or father has already ‘settled’ (*i.e. has ILR or British citizenship*) at the time of birth. Only need to apply for a British passport for the child.
- A child born in the UK whose parents were not ‘settled’ at the time of birth is not automatically British, but will become eligible for ‘**registration as a British citizen**’ as soon as either the mother or father is granted ILR
(so you could consider leaving any UK born children out of the ILR applications of the parent/s and then immediately register as British)
- Some countries do not permit **dual-nationality** so you should check with your embassy/ consulate whether your child would lose your citizenship if they become British.

British citizenship

- UK permits holding multiple citizenships. Check the position relating to your existing country of citizenship
- Normally eligible for ‘naturalisation’ after five years lawful residence and then holding Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) for one year
- No requirement to hold ILR for one year if married to/ civil partner of a British citizen
- Note difference between level of permitted absences for ILR and Naturalisation – 450 days outside UK over five years, no more than 90 days outside UK in final year & physically in UK on day one five years ago counted back from date of application
- Discretion re ‘excess absences’ if all other requirements met and home, family and ‘substantial part of estate’ in UK.

More information: <https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/british-citizenship>

Visa loan scheme

- Interest free loan facility to assist current or prospective employees and their dependants with payment of:
 - UK visa fees
 - Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) costs
 - fees for Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) applications
 - and/or fees for British citizenship applications
- All loans are subject to the approval of the employee's department or faculty
- Maximum loan allowed under this scheme is set at £8,500
- Scheme is not, unfortunately, available for 'College only' appointments as it is administered through University payroll system not used by Colleges.
- More information: <https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/visa-loan-scheme>

Further Contact

Normally contact your department/ faculty/ college HR team first.

Staff Immigration Team

<https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/>

James Baker: james.baker@admin.ox.ac.uk

Tim Currie: tim.currie@admin.ox.ac.uk

Lisa Crook: lisa.crook@admin.ox.ac.uk

Full contact details at: <https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/contact-us>

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