

Skilled Workers employed under a Visa Sponsorship Scheme

Guidance for University staff and the sponsored individual

As a licensed sponsor the University must comply with Home Office requirements and guidelines outlined in the Skilled Worker guidance documentation. There are expectations and requirements set out in the UKVI guidance for:

- The University's responsibilities
- Individual responsibilities and obligations

The responsibilities outlined below are to ensure we comply with Home Office rules and requirements.

To ensure individuals, Schools / Department and Line Managers are aware of their responsibilities, please find a brief guide below on Skilled Worker sponsorship responsibilities.

Contact details

University obligation: The University is required to ensure that we have individuals current contact details, and that these are recorded on the People Services database. This includes changes to; home address, home telephone and mobile phone numbers.

Sponsored individual's obligation: Individuals must ensure that they inform the People Services department, in writing, of any changes as soon as possible and no later than five working days after the details change so that accurate and current details are recorded and maintained by the University at all times. Individuals under a Skilled Worker Visa also have an obligation to communicate this change to the Home Office and must confirm to the University in writing that the Home Office have been notified of all changes.

Absence recording and reporting

UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) requires that the University records all absences through the CIPHR system. It is the responsibility of the individual to ensure all absence are communicated to the School / Department who will record them on CIPHR. We are also required to report any period of unauthorised absence in excess of ten consecutive working days to the Home Office. Sponsored members of staff are not permitted to take sabbaticals lasting more than 4 weeks. In this case, the University must stop sponsoring the member of staff and report it to the UKVI.

If a sponsored worker is absent from work for more than 10 consecutive working days without permission, we (the University) must report this within 10 working days of the tenth day of absence.

Sponsored visa holders are not permitted to take unpaid leave in excess of 4 weeks in any calendar year (January to December) unless an exception applies (outlined below). We (the University) must inform UKVI and stop sponsoring individuals who are absent from work, without pay, for more than 4 weeks in total, in any calendar year, who do not meet the exceptions below.

- Statutory maternity, paternity, parental, shared parental or adoption leave
- Sick leave
- Assisting with a national or international humanitarian or environmental crisis, with the employer's agreement
- Taking part in legally organised industrial action

Therefore, it is crucial that individuals and departments ensure that all leave is recorded on the People Services IT system (CIPHR) and agreed with their line manager. Staff and Managers must also ensure that they inform the People Services department of any periods of leave (i.e. maternity, paternity, shared parental, adoption, sick leave and any periods of unpaid leave) as soon as these have been agreed with their line manager and before they are due to take effect.

Changes to circumstances

UKVI requires that the University must report the following changes:

1. A promotion or change in job title, or core duties
2. A change in salary from the level stated on the Certificate of Sponsorship, other than changes due to annual increments, cost of living or bonuses
3. A change in salary from that stated on the Certificate of Sponsorship due to maternity, paternity, shared parental leave or adoption leave, or a period of long term sick leave lasting one month or longer
4. A change in work location
5. Unauthorised absences, within 10 days of the first recorded day of absence
6. If we cease sponsorship, for example as the individual transfers to another visa route during employment
7. If we cease sponsorship as the individual has resigned or was terminated

It is vital that the People Services department is informed of any changes to the information recorded on the Certificate of Sponsorship immediately and before the date when the changes have been agreed or take effect. Actions 1,2,3,4,6,7 which involve an employment status or pay change will be facilitated by People Services, upon notification the

relevant People Services member will inform UKVI. Action 5 will be monitored through the Absence and Monitoring policy, unauthorised absences should be report to People Services as soon as possible by the relevant Line Manager.

Immigration Status

The University is required to report to the UKVI if staff move into another immigration route, which results in the individual no longer requiring a sponsor. Therefore, if an individual's immigration status changes and they no longer require sponsorship they must inform People Services immediately.

Further Information

People Services will contact individuals whose Skilled Worker visa is close to expiry to discuss future arrangements and options.

For any further information or clarity on this guidance please contact the Recruitment Manager who can advise.