



Home Office

Workers and Temporary Workers: guidance for sponsors

Part 2: Sponsor a worker – general information

Version 11/20

This document forms part of the collection 'Workers and Temporary Workers: guidance for sponsors' and provides information on how to sponsor a worker on the Worker (formerly Tier 2) and Temporary Worker (formerly Tier 5) immigration routes from 1 December 2020.

Contents

- Contents..... 2
- About this guidance 5
 - What are the Worker and Temporary Worker routes? 5
 - Employing EEA nationals and Irish citizens 6
 - EEA nationals who arrive by 31 December 2020 6
 - EEA nationals who arrive after 31 December 6
 - Irish citizens..... 6
 - Other guidance you must read 6
- Glossary..... 7
- Contacts..... 7
- Version number and publication..... 7
- Changes from last version of this guidance 7
- A note on hyperlinks in this guidance 7
- S1. Sponsoring a worker: overview 8
 - Who needs to be sponsored? 8
 - Who can sponsor workers?..... 9
 - How do you sponsor a worker? 9
 - Check the role is eligible..... 9
 - Pay and conditions 10
 - Check the worker is eligible 10
 - Sponsoring workers to work on a contract basis 10
 - Right to work checks 11
 - Understand your sponsorship duties..... 12
- S2. Certificates of Sponsorship..... 13
 - What is a Certificate of Sponsorship? 13
 - Types of CoS 13
 - CoS fees 14
 - Your CoS allocation 14
 - Deciding your allocation 14
 - Your CoS year 15
 - Reducing your allocation 15
 - Increasing your allocation during the CoS year 15
 - Renewing your annual CoS allocation..... 16
- S3. Assigning a CoS..... 17
 - Technical guidance 17
 - Your sponsor rating..... 17

Information you must include on the CoS	17
Start date on the CoS	18
Occupation code	18
'Multiple-entry' CoS	19
Group CoS for creative workers	19
S4. Salary requirements	20
Minimum salary thresholds	20
Salary information you must include on a CoS	20
Period the salary must cover	21
Payment of salary	21
Unpaid leave	21
Exceptions: permissible absences	22
Reduction in salary	22
Salary reductions: exceptions.....	22
S5. Immigration Skills Charge.....	23
About the charge.....	23
When you must pay	24
When you don't have to pay.....	24
Consequences of non-payment	25
Refunds and 'top-up' charges	25
Partial refund	25
Full refund	26
How soon decisions on refunds are made.....	26
Circumstances in which no refund will be made.....	26
Top-up charges	27
S6. After you have assigned a CoS	28
Using the CoS in an immigration application.....	28
How to make an immigration application	28
Cancelling or withdrawing a CoS	29
S7. Immigration requirements.....	31
Immigration Rules	31
Applying from outside the UK: entry clearance	31
Workers already in the UK: permission to stay	32
Switching immigration route while in the UK.....	32
Former government-sponsored students	33
Financial requirement	33
Leaving and returning to the UK	34

Further information on immigration requirements	35
S8. Conditions of stay	36
General conditions	36
No access to public funds	36
Registration with the police	36
Employment restrictions.....	36
Working out a contractual notice period	37
Supplementary employment.....	37
Secondary employment (employment with a second CoS)	38
Employment as a sportsperson or sports broadcaster	38
Voluntary work.....	39
Study.....	39
ATAS condition.....	39
S9. Extensions, change of employment and settlement	40
Overview	40
Extension of permission to stay	40
Different role in the same occupation code	41
Change of employment applications	41
Exceptions: change of employment application not required.....	42
Settlement.....	42

About this guidance

This document provides information for licensed sponsors on how to sponsor a person on the Worker and Temporary Worker immigration routes from 1 December 2020.

What are the Worker and Temporary Worker routes?

These are the main immigration routes for overseas nationals who wish to work in the UK.

The Worker routes replace the Tier 2 routes from 1 December 2020, as described in the table below:

Tier 2 routes before 1 December 2020	Worker routes from 1 December 2020
Tier 2 (General)	Skilled Worker
Tier 2 (Intra-Company Transfer): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Long-term Staff• Graduate Trainee	Intra-Company routes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intra-Company Transfer• Intra-Company Graduate Trainee
Tier 2 (Minister of Religion)	T2 Minister of Religion
Tier 2 (Sportsperson)	T2 Sportsperson

The T5 (Temporary Worker) routes (referred to as the 'Temporary Worker' routes in this guidance) replace the Tier 5 (Temporary Worker) routes from 1 December 2020, as described in the table below:

Tier 5 (Temporary Worker) routes before 1 December 2020	Temporary Worker routes from 1 December 2020
Charity Workers	Charity Worker
Creative and Sporting	Creative or Sporting Worker
Government Authorised Exchange	Government Authorised Exchange Worker
International Agreement	International Agreement Worker
Religious Workers	Religious Worker
Seasonal Worker	Seasonal Worker

For details of these changes to the Immigration Rules, see [Statement of Changes HC 813](#) on GOV.UK.

The Worker and Temporary Worker routes apply to both:

- European Economic Area (EEA) nationals who arrive in the UK after 11 pm on 31 December 2020 (see below); and
- non-EEA nationals who apply for entry clearance or permission on or after 1 December 2020

If you wish to sponsor a non-EEA national who will make an application to enter or stay in the UK before 1 December 2020, you must do so under the existing Tier 2 and 5 arrangements. For guidance, see:

- [Tier 2 and 5 sponsor guidance](#)
- [Tier 2 migrant guidance](#)
- [Tier 5 migrant guidance](#)

Employing EEA nationals and Irish citizens

In this guidance, reference to EEA nationals includes nationals of Switzerland but not of Ireland. You do not need to sponsor Irish nationals (see below).

EEA nationals who arrive by 31 December 2020

You are not required to sponsor an [EEA national](#) who will arrive in the UK before the end of the implementation period (11 pm on 31 December 2020). EEA nationals (and their eligible family members) are entitled to exercise their right to enter the UK under freedom of movement rules until that date and time.

You can therefore continue to employ EEA nationals who arrive in the UK before the end of the implementation period (and their eligible family members) without needing to sponsor them, provided they apply for status on the [EU Settlement Scheme \(EUSS\)](#) no later than 30 June 2021, and that application is granted. People with settled or pre-settled status under the EUSS do not need to be sponsored.

For further information, see '[Continue to live in the UK if you're an EU, EEA or Swiss citizen](#)' on GOV.UK.

EEA nationals who arrive after 31 December

EEA nationals who arrive in the UK after the end of the implementation period (11 pm on 31 December 2020) will need to be sponsored on the appropriate Worker or Temporary Worker route if they wish to work in the UK, unless they have another type of immigration permission that allows them to work.

Irish citizens

Irish citizens do not need permission to live and work in the UK – you can therefore continue to employ Irish citizens as now without needing to sponsor them. This includes Irish citizens who arrive after 31 December 2020. With limited exceptions, Irish citizens cannot apply for permission on the Worker or Temporary Worker routes.

Other guidance you must read

To make sure you meet all of the relevant requirements and fulfil your sponsorship duties, you must read the following parts of the sponsor guidance, in addition to this document:

- Part 1: Apply for a licence – if you do not already have a licence

- Part 3: Sponsor duties and compliance
- any relevant annexes or appendices referred to in the above documents
- the relevant route-specific guidance for the route, or routes, on which you intend to sponsor workers

You can access all of these documents, and other information on sponsorship, on the [Sponsorship: guidance for employers and educators](#) page on GOV.UK.

This guidance is subject to change. If you have printed or downloaded a copy of this guidance, check the version number and date on GOV.UK to ensure you are using the most up-to-date version.

Glossary

There is a glossary of terms used throughout the sponsor guidance in Part 1: Apply for a licence.

Contacts

If you think the guidance has factual errors or broken links, you can email the [Business Helpdesk](#).

If you have read this guidance, and the relevant route-specific guidance, and you still have any queries, you can call us on 0300 123 4699 or email the [Business Helpdesk](#).

Version number and publication

Below is information on the version number of this guidance and when it was cleared for publication:

- Version **11/20**
- cleared for publication on 18 November 2020

Changes from last version of this guidance

This is the first time this document has been published.

A note on hyperlinks in this guidance

Links to some parts of the Immigration Rules and sponsor guidance are not available at the time of publishing this version. These will be provided in the next update.

You can find details of changes to the Immigration Rules in [Statement of Changes HC 813](#) on GOV.UK.

All of the sponsor guidance documents can be accessed via '[Guidance for employers and educators](#)' page on GOV.UK.

Related content

[Contents](#)

S1. Sponsoring a worker: overview

This section provides an overview of the main requirements you must meet to sponsor a person on the Worker and Temporary Worker immigration routes.

Who needs to be sponsored?

S1.1 You will need to sponsor any worker you wish to employ if they are not a 'settled worker' or do not otherwise have the appropriate immigration permission to work in the UK.

S1.2 A 'settled worker' is any one of the following:

- a [British citizen](#)
- an Irish citizen – unless they are subject to a deportation order, an exclusion order, or an international travel ban
- a [European Economic Area \(EEA\) national](#) who arrives in the UK before 11 pm on 31 December 2020 (and their eligible family members), provided they apply for status under the [EU Settlement Scheme](#) by 30 June 2021 and that application is granted
- a person with leave to remain (settled or pre-settled status) under Appendix EU (the [EU Settlement Scheme](#))
- a [British overseas territories citizen](#), except for those from sovereign base areas in Cyprus
- a [Commonwealth citizen](#) (including a citizen of Zimbabwe) who has been granted permission on the UK Ancestry route on the basis they have a grandparent born in the UK and Islands
- a Commonwealth citizen (including a citizen of Zimbabwe) with the [right of abode](#) in the UK
- anyone who has indefinite leave to enter or remain (settlement) in the UK

S1.3 A settled worker can work in the UK without restrictions and you therefore do not need to sponsor them.

S1.4 You also do not need to sponsor a worker who either:

- has immigration permission to be in the UK which does not prevent them from doing the work in question – examples include, but are not limited to:
 - a person with permission under [Appendix FM](#) to the Immigration Rules as the partner of a British citizen or settled person can take any kind of employment
 - a person with permission as a [Student](#) may be allowed to work for 10 or 20 hours per week during term-time, depending on the type of course they are following
 - a person with leave to enter or remain under [Appendix Service Providers from Switzerland](#) can work in relation to an eligible contract between a Swiss employer or company and a UK employer or company, for a maximum of 90 days in any year

- is exempt from requiring permission – for example:
 - a diplomat, government official or senior official of an international organisation – see '[Exempt from immigration control](#)' on GOV.UK
 - an EEA national who qualifies as a [frontier worker](#)

S1.5 In all other cases, you must sponsor the worker on the appropriate Worker or Temporary Worker route.

Who can sponsor workers?

S1.6 To sponsor a worker, you must hold a valid sponsor licence for the route on which you intend to sponsor them. If you do not already hold the relevant licence, you must apply for, and be granted, one before you can sponsor the worker. See:

- [Part 1: Apply for a licence](#)
- [the relevant route-specific guidance](#)

How do you sponsor a worker?

S1.7 You must assign a valid Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) to the worker so they can make a successful immigration application. In most cases, you will have to pay a fee to assign a CoS and (in the case of Skilled Workers and Intra-Company Workers), pay the Immigration Skills Charge. See:

- sections S2, S3, S5 and S6 of this document
- [the relevant route-specific guidance](#)

S1.8 Before you assign a CoS, you must:

- [check the role is eligible](#)
- [ensure you will pay the worker appropriately](#)
- [check the worker is eligible](#)
- meet any other route-specific requirements

Check the role is eligible

S1.9 You must check the role in which you wish to sponsor the worker is eligible for the relevant route. For example, if you wish to sponsor a Skilled Worker or worker on the Intra-Company routes, you must check the role is listed as eligible in [Appendix Skilled Occupations](#).

S1.10 For some routes, you will need to take additional steps before you can sponsor a worker. For example:

- before you can sponsor a Religious Worker, you may have to carry out a 'resident labour market test' to give settled workers a chance to apply
- before you can sponsor a Creative Worker, you may have to follow a 'code of practice' for the specific sector in which you wish to sponsor the worker

- before you can sponsor a T2 Sportsperson or a Sporting Worker on the T5 Creative or Sporting Worker route, you will need to obtain an endorsement from the relevant sports governing body for the worker

S1.11 Refer to the relevant [route-specific guidance](#) for further information.

S1.12 There are additional rules you will need to follow if the person you wish to sponsor will be [working on a contract basis](#).

Pay and conditions

S1.13 If you are sponsoring a worker on the Skilled Worker or Intra-Company routes, you must pay them at least the minimum salary specified for that route, or the going rate (or, in some cases, a proportion of the going rate) for the occupation, whichever is the higher. For other routes, you must ensure you pay them in accordance with [National Minimum Wage legislation](#). We will check you are doing so through regular HMRC checks and, if appropriate, compliance visits. For further information, see:

- section S4 of this guidance
- [the relevant route-specific guidance](#)

Check the worker is eligible

S1.14 You must satisfy yourself that the worker you wish to sponsor will be able to make a successful immigration application under the Worker or Temporary Worker routes and, if granted, will comply with their conditions of stay. For further information, see:

- sections S7 to S9 of this document
- [the relevant route-specific guidance](#)

Sponsoring workers to work on a contract basis

S1.15 If the person you wish to sponsor will be working on a contract basis (being supplied as labour by you to another organisation or third party), you must have full responsibility for all the duties, functions and outcomes or outputs of the job the worker will be doing. Where the worker is employed by you to do work for a third party to fulfil a contractual obligation on your behalf, they must be contracted by you to provide a service or project within a certain period of time. This means a service or project which has a specific end date, after which it will have been completed or the service provided will no longer be operated by you or anyone else.

Example

Company A has a contractual obligation with a client Company Z to deliver an IT solution within an agreed period of time.

A worker who is sponsored by Company A to do a job on the IT project may be sent to work for the length of the contract at Company Z's premises, but

they remain employed by Company A throughout the whole period of the contract.

As Company A is fully responsible for all the worker's duties, functions, outputs or outcomes, Company A can be the worker's sponsor and therefore assign the CoS.

S1.16 You cannot sponsor a worker if you will not have full responsibility for all the duties, functions and outcomes or outputs of the job they will be doing, or if:

- the job amounts to the hiring out of the worker to another organisation (third party) who is not the sponsor to fill a position with them, whether temporary or permanent, regardless of any genuine contract between you and the third party
- the worker will be contracted to undertake an ongoing routine role or to provide an ongoing routine service for a third party who is not the sponsor, regardless of the nature or length of any arrangement between you and the third party

S1.17 If the worker is self-employed, there must be a genuine contract for employment or services between you and the worker. This contract must show:

- the names and signatures of all involved (which must include you and the worker)
- the start and end dates of the contract
- details of the job, or piece of work, the worker has been contracted to do
- how much the worker will be paid

S1.18 Where we think you are, or will be, hiring a worker to a third party as routine labour, we may ask for confirmation from the other organisation that the worker:

- works, or will work, independently from them and you, as the sponsor, have full control over all their duties, functions, outputs or outcomes
- is not being supplied to them to undertake a routine role

S1.19 If we find you are supplying the worker, or workers, as labour to another organisation to undertake a routine role or you do not have full responsibility for their duties, functions and outcomes or outputs, we will revoke your licence.

Right to work checks

S1.20 You must check that any worker you wish to employ has permission to enter or stay in the UK and can do the work in question before they start working for you. This applies even if the worker is, or appears to be, a British citizen or other settled worker. If you fail to carry out a right to work check, you may be liable for a civil penalty under illegal working legislation. If you are issued with a civil penalty, we will normally revoke your licence. For guidance on

how to carry out the relevant checks, and the evidence you must keep, see:

- [Right to work checks](#)
- [Appendix D](#) to the sponsor guidance

Understand your sponsorship duties

S1.21 You are responsible for checking that your sponsored workers carry out the role for which they are being sponsored and for monitoring their attendance. You must tell us if they don't turn up for work, are absent without permission, or there are significant changes to their employment or to your organisation. For further information on your reporting and other sponsorship duties, see Part 3: Sponsor duties and compliance.

S1.22 You must also keep records for each worker you sponsor – see [Appendix D](#).

S1.23 If you fail to comply with your reporting and record-keeping duties, we may take compliance action against you – this could include revoking your licence.

Related content

[Contents](#)

S2. Certificates of Sponsorship

This section tells you what a Certificate of Sponsorship is and how you apply for an annual allocation of Certificates of Sponsorship.

What is a Certificate of Sponsorship?

- S2.1 Before a worker can make a successful immigration application, you must assign them a valid Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS).
- S2.2 A CoS is not a paper certificate or document, but a database record which confirms details of the worker you intend to sponsor and the job they will do. You assign one using your [sponsorship management system \(SMS\) account](#). This involves working through a short online form where you give us the relevant information. All of the information you enter will be stored and can be viewed by us.
- S2.3 A CoS is confirmation from you, as a licensed sponsor, that you:
- wish to sponsor the worker
 - are satisfied the worker can meet the relevant immigration requirements
 - are eligible to sponsor the worker on the relevant route
 - agree to abide by the terms and conditions as stated on the SMS
- S2.4 A CoS can only be assigned by a person who has access to the SMS as a Level 1 or Level 2 user – see the ‘Key personnel’ section of [Part 1: Apply for a licence](#) for information on Level 1 and Level 2 users.
- S2.5 Assigning a CoS does not guarantee the worker will be granted entry clearance or permission – they must meet all of the [immigration requirements](#) of the route on which they are applying.
- S2.6 Before you assign a CoS, you should talk to the worker about their current immigration status, as this may affect any application they make because of the rules on [‘switching’](#) (changing from one immigration route to another) or maximum time limits for the route on which they are applying.
- S2.7 You must follow the rules set out in the sponsor guidance when assigning or applying for a CoS. We can revoke, suspend or downgrade your licence, or reduce or remove the number of CoS you can assign, if you do not comply with these rules. See [Part 3: Sponsor duties and compliance](#) for further information on the action we can take.

Types of CoS

- S2.8 There are 2 types of CoS:
- ‘defined’ CoS: these are for Skilled Workers applying for entry clearance (a visa) from outside the UK

- ‘undefined’ CoS: these are:
 - CoS assigned to Skilled Workers applying for permission from within the UK
 - CoS assigned to workers on all other routes, whether applying for entry clearance, permission to enter or permission to stay

S2.9 You must assign undefined CoS from your [annual allocation](#).

S2.10 You cannot have an annual allocation of defined CoS – you must apply for one, using a separate process, each time you need one. For further information, see [Sponsor a Skilled Worker](#).

S2.11 If you are sponsoring Skilled Workers, you must ensure you understand the difference between defined and undefined CoS and assign the correct type. You must not assign:

- a defined CoS for a job other than the one described in the application for that CoS
- an undefined CoS where a defined one is required

If you do, we may revoke your licence.

CoS fees

S2.12 You must normally pay a fee for each CoS you assign. For information on current CoS fees, see the [UK visa fees](#) page on GOV.UK.

S2.13 There is no CoS fee if the worker is a citizen of a [country which has ratified the European Social Charter](#).

S2.14 If you are sponsoring a worker on the Skilled Worker or Intra-Company Transfer routes, you may also have to pay an [Immigration Skills Charge](#) each time you assign a CoS (regardless of the worker’s nationality).

Your CoS allocation

S2.15 When you apply for a licence, we ask you for an estimate of the number of undefined CoS you may wish to assign in your first year in each route in which you are applying to be licensed. You must justify your request and we may ask you for further information before we make a decision.

Deciding your allocation

S2.16 If we approve your licence application, we will notify you of your CoS allocation for the year. In setting your CoS allocation, we may consider relevant factors including, but not limited to, the following:

- any agents you will use to recruit workers and whether they have been linked to immigration abuse in the past

- your previous record in dealing with us, including under the current sponsorship arrangements, the previous Tier 2 and Tier 5 arrangements, or the work permit arrangements that were in place before the introduction of Tier 2 and Tier 5
- the number of workers employed at your organisation
- the kind of business you conduct
- the extent of the business you conduct
- the length of time you have been trading

S2.17 If we allocate fewer CoS than you requested, or set your allocation to zero, this could be for reasons including, but not limited to:

- you have a history of non-compliance
- you cannot justify your need for the number you have requested
- we do not consider your need to be credible, based on your current circumstances
- we are not satisfied you can offer genuine employment that meets the skill-level or salary requirements of the route (where relevant)
- you are unsure whether or when you may need to recruit any workers in the future

Your CoS year

S2.18 Once we have decided your CoS allocation, we will allocate them (if any) to your SMS account. You will then have up to 12 months to use them. This is known as your 'CoS year' (or 'allocation year'). Your CoS year runs as follows:

- for undefined CoS under Skilled Worker and all CoS under the Intra-Company routes: from 6 April in one year to 5 April in the following year
- for all other routes: 12 months from the date your licence was granted and, in subsequent years, 12 months from the date an allocation renewal request is granted

Reducing your allocation

S2.19 We may reduce your allocation (or set it to zero) if your circumstances change. This could be if you downsize, or if we believe you pose a threat to immigration control – for example, if, after your original CoS allocation has been decided, we take compliance action against you.

Increasing your allocation during the CoS year

S2.20 If, part way through your CoS year, you think you will not have enough CoS to last until the end of the year, or if your allocation was previously set to zero, you can apply to increase your allocation via your SMS account. You must give reasons for doing so and we may ask for evidence. For guidance on increasing your allocation, see guide 7 in [SMS Manual 2: managing your licence](#).

Renewing your annual CoS allocation

- S2.21 Any CoS that remain unused at the end of your [CoS year](#) will be removed from your SMS account. You cannot carry over any unused CoS to the next CoS year.
- S2.22 Towards the end of each CoS year, you can apply for a further allocation (known as a 'follow-on' allocation) for the next CoS year, using your SMS account. This is an annual process that occurs during the validity period of your licence.
- S2.23 Some sponsors are set up to receive automated annual allocations. You can check your SMS account 3 months before the expiry of your CoS year to see if your allocation will be automatically renewed. If your account displays 'automatic renewal', you will not be required to submit a request. We will simply give you a further year's allocation equal to the number of CoS you assigned in the previous CoS year.
- S2.24 If you are not set up to receive automatic renewals, you must submit a manual request via your SMS account. You can do so up to 3 months before the end of your CoS year.
- S2.25 For detailed guidance on renewing your annual CoS allocation, see guide 8 of [SMS Manual 2: managing your licence](#).

Related content

[Contents](#)

S3. Assigning a CoS

This section tells you about the general processes you must follow to assign a Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS), and the information you must include on a CoS.

Technical guidance

S3.1 Detailed information on how to assign a CoS, including how to complete an application for a defined CoS in the Skilled Worker route, can be found in the [Sponsorship management system \(SMS\) manuals](#) on GOV.UK – see, in particular, manuals 8, 8a and 12.

Your sponsor rating

S3.2 Sponsors are rated either A or B. We will not grant you a licence unless you are able to achieve an A-rating. In some cases, after your licence has been granted, we may downgrade you to a B rating if you are not fulfilling all of your sponsor duties or we have other concerns about you. For further information, see:

- section L8 of [Part 1: Apply for a licence](#)
- section C8 of [Part 3: Sponsor duties and compliance](#)

S3.3 In most cases, to be eligible to assign a CoS, you must be an A-rated sponsor. If you have been downgraded to a B rating, you can only assign a CoS if all of the following requirements are met:

- the worker is applying for permission to stay (from within the UK) in the same route as in their last grant of permission
- you assigned the CoS which led to the worker's last grant of permission; and
- you are continuing to sponsor the worker

S3.4 You cannot assign a CoS if your licence is suspended, made dormant, or revoked.

Information you must include on the CoS

S3.5 There is certain information you must include on a CoS for it to be valid. This includes:

- the route on which you are sponsoring the worker
- personal details of the worker, such as their name, nationality, date of birth, passport details, contact address
- usual work address or addresses
- details of the worker's job, including job title, job description, [start date](#), [salary](#), hours, and [occupation code](#)
- whether the worker was sourced through an agent

- whether you (the sponsor) will certify that the worker meets the [financial requirement](#)
- any other information required for the specific route in which you are sponsoring the worker – see the relevant [route-specific guidance](#) and [SMS Manual 8a](#) for details

Start date on the CoS

- S3.6 The start date you give on the CoS must be the date the worker is expected to start working for you at the time the CoS is assigned. You must let us know via the [sponsorship management system \(SMS\)](#) if this changes.
- S3.7 If, after the worker has been granted permission, the start date is delayed by more than 28 days, you must stop sponsoring the worker and inform us via your SMS account.
- S3.8 If the worker is applying for permission to continue working in the same job which led to their last grant of permission, the start date should be the day after their current permission ends. See [Extension of permission stay](#).
- S3.9 The worker cannot apply for permission more than 3 months in advance of their employment start date, as stated on their CoS, and they must use the CoS in an application for permission no more than 3 months after it was assigned to them. You must make sure the timing of your recruitment and the date you assign the CoS does not put the worker in a situation where they cannot make a successful application for entry clearance or permission.

Occupation code

- S3.10 When you assign a CoS to a worker, you must specify the 4-digit occupation code (also known as the 'standard occupational classification (SOC)' code) relevant to the job. The SOC is a common classification of occupations developed by the Office for National Statistics.
- S3.11 [Appendix Skilled Occupations](#) to the Immigration Rules contains information about each occupation code, including going salary rates, example job titles that fit within each code, whether the code is eligible for PhD points in the Skilled Worker route, or whether it is eligible for the Intra-Company routes.
- S3.12 You are responsible for choosing the correct occupation code – we cannot help you with this. If you need assistance, there is detailed guidance on the [Office for National Statistics](#) website.
- S3.13 It is essential that you select the correct occupation code. If you use the wrong occupation code when assigning a CoS or applying for a defined CoS, this could lead to an application being delayed or refused. If you have provided false or misleading information – for example, to enable the worker to score points in the Skilled Worker or Intra-Company routes – we will take compliance action against you. This could include revoking your sponsor licence. For further information, see [Part 3: Sponsor duties and compliance](#).

‘Multiple-entry’ CoS

S3.14 If a worker is likely to need to travel abroad regularly in connection with their job, you should consider assigning them a ‘multiple-entry’ CoS. For further information, see [Leaving and returning to the UK](#).

Group CoS for creative workers

S3.15 If you are sponsoring a group of creative workers (for example, all members of a musical group or dance troupe, or a creative worker and their entourage) on the Creative or Sporting Worker route, you can assign a ‘group CoS’ to all members of the group. See [Sponsor a Creative Worker](#) for information on this.

Related content

[Contents](#)

S4. Salary requirements

This section tells you what information you must include about the worker's salary on their Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) and what happens if the worker's salary is reduced or they take unpaid leave.

Minimum salary thresholds

- S4.1 Where the Immigration Rules and this guidance require it, you must ensure you pay any worker you wish to sponsor at least the amount specified in the Rules and guidance. If you do not propose to pay the worker the appropriate salary, where required, any application for entry clearance or permission to stay, or for a defined CoS, will be refused.
- S4.2 If the Rules and this guidance do not specify a minimum salary for a particular route, you must still ensure you pay the worker at least the National Living Wage (or National Minimum Wage, if they are under 25), unless an exemption applies.
- S4.3 You must tell us of any changes to the worker's salary via your [sponsorship management system \(SMS\)](#) account. We will undertake regular checks with HMRC (and, where necessary, through compliance visits) to ensure you are paying your sponsored workers the amount you said you would. Unless an exception applies, if we find you are paying them less, and the new amount would not be eligible for a grant of permission under the relevant route, we will cancel the worker's permission and take compliance action against you – this could include revoking your licence.
- S4.4 For more information on the salary requirements for the route in which you are sponsoring the worker, refer to the relevant [route-specific guidance](#).

Salary information you must include on a CoS

- S4.5 When you assign a CoS to a worker, you must give the following information about the salary package:
- the gross salary figure, which must:
 - represent the total amount paid to the worker, gross of any tax paid, whether paid in the UK or overseas
 - if the worker is being sponsored on the Skilled Worker route, not include allowances, unless an exception applies – see [Sponsor a Skilled Worker](#) for information
 - in all other cases, include any permitted allowances and guaranteed bonuses
 - a separate figure for the total of all allowances and guaranteed bonuses (where these are permitted under the route)
 - a detailed breakdown of each allowance and each guaranteed bonus showing their value (where these are permitted by the route)

- if you are sponsoring a worker on the Skilled Worker or Intra-Company routes, the PAYE scheme reference number through which the worker will be paid – if they are not paid through PAYE, you must explain why

S4.6 The figure you give for the gross salary must not be inflated in expectation of any tax relief, such as relief on expenditure related to the employment, or tax incurred by the employment of a settled worker, but not incurred for a migrant worker. For example, if the gross salary package is £21,000 per year, but the migrant worker will have the same net package after tax as a settled worker who is paid £25,000 per year before tax, the CoS must show that the salary package is £21,000, not £25,000.

Period the salary must cover

S4.7 When you assign a CoS to a worker, or apply for a defined CoS for them, the gross salary figure you enter can cover any of the following time periods:

- hour
- day
- week
- month
- year (this option is not available for Seasonal Workers)
- contract (this option is not available for Skilled Workers)
- performance (T2 Sportsperson and T5 Creative or Sporting Worker only)

Payment of salary

S4.8 Salary may be paid in the UK or abroad. Where the worker will be paid from abroad in currency other than pounds sterling, the salary entered on the CoS must be based on the exchange rate for the relevant currency on the day the CoS is assigned, taken from the rates published on [OANDA](#).

S4.9 All payments you make to sponsored workers must be made into their own bank account in the UK or overseas. You must not pay them in cash. Pre-paid cards such as FOREX are acceptable, but you must be able to give evidence that you have made payments onto the worker's card. If you pay the worker by cheque, this must be paid into the worker's own bank account.

Unpaid leave

S4.10 Sponsored workers can take short periods of unpaid leave but, unless an [exception](#) applies, you must stop sponsoring a worker who is absent from work without pay for more than 4 weeks in total in any calendar year (1 January to 31 December).

S4.11 Where you are required to stop sponsoring a worker who has been absent from work without pay for more than 4 weeks, you must report this using your sponsorship management system (SMS) account. This applies whether the worker is absent from work for a single period of more than 4 weeks, or if they have a number of unpaid absences which cumulatively total more than 4

weeks during any calendar year.

S4.12 The 4 weeks is worked out according to the sponsored worker's normal working pattern. For example, if the worker normally works 5 days per week, this would be 20 working days (5 (days) x 4 (weeks)). If they normally work 3 days per week, this would be 12 working days (3 (days) x 4 (weeks)).

Exceptions: permissible absences

S4.13 When calculating whether the worker has been absent without pay for more than 4 weeks, the following types of absence are disregarded and do not count towards the 4 weeks:

- [statutory maternity leave](#)
- [statutory paternity leave](#)
- [statutory parental leave](#)
- [statutory shared parental leave](#)
- [statutory adoption leave](#)
- [sick leave](#)
- assisting with a national or international humanitarian or environmental crisis, provided you agreed to the absence for that purpose
- [taking part in legally organised industrial action](#)

Reduction in salary

S4.14 You must tell us via your SMS account if you reduce a worker's salary after you have assigned a CoS (including after they have been granted permission).

S4.15 You must stop sponsoring the worker if their revised salary no longer meets the salary or going rate requirement for the job or the route in which they are being sponsored. You must tell us you have stopped sponsoring them via your SMS account.

Salary reductions: exceptions

S4.16 You do not have to stop sponsoring a worker if you reduce their salary and any of the following exceptions apply:

- the reduction is temporary and coincides with a period of absence for a [permissible reason](#) given in 'Unpaid leave' section above
- the worker is on an Intra-Company route and a temporary reduction in salary coincides with working for the sponsor group while the worker is not physically present in the UK – see [Sponsor an Intra-Company worker](#) for a definition of "sponsor group"
- the person is a Skilled Worker and would score at least 70 points on the Skilled Worker route after the change in salary

Related content

[Contents](#)

S5. Immigration Skills Charge

This section tells you about the Immigration Skills Charge you may have to pay to sponsor a Skilled Worker or an Intra-Company Transfer worker.

About the charge

- S5.1 You may have to pay the [Immigration Skills Charge](#) each time you assign a Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) to a worker on the Skilled Worker route or the Intra-Company Transfer (ICT) route.
- S5.2 The amount you have to pay is specified in the Schedule to the [Immigration Skills Charge Regulations 2017](#) and depends on:
- the size and type of your organisation on the date you assign the worker's CoS, and
 - the length of employment stated on the CoS
- S5.3 If you are a small or charitable sponsor, as defined in [regulation 2](#) of the Immigration Skills Charge Regulations, you will pay the 'small' charge:
- £364 for any stated period of employment up to 12 months, **plus**
 - £182 for each subsequent 6-month period stated on the CoS
- S5.4 In all other cases, you must pay the 'large' charge:
- £1,000 for any stated period of employment up to 12 months, **plus**
 - £500 for each subsequent 6-month period stated on the CoS
- S5.5 When you apply for a licence, or apply to renew your licence, it is essential that you select the correct size or type for your organisation, as this will determine not only the licence fee you will pay, but also the level of Immigration Skills Charge you will pay throughout the life of your licence, or until you tell us of a change of circumstances through the sponsorship management system (SMS) and this has been processed and accepted by UKVI.
- S5.6 To comply with your reporting duties, you must tell us as soon as possible – and in any case within 10 working days – if the size or type of your organisation changes. This will ensure you pay the correct Immigration Skills Charge for each CoS you assign. If you fail to inform us within 10 working days, we may take compliance action against you. This could include downgrading, suspending or revoking your licence. For further information on your reporting duties, see section C1 of [Part 3: Sponsor duties and compliance](#).
- S5.7 You must not pass any of the charge on to the sponsored worker. If we find out that you have done so, we may revoke your licence.

When you must pay

S5.8 Unless an exception applies, you must pay the charge each time you assign a CoS to a worker on the Skilled Worker or ICT route and the worker is either.

- applying from outside the UK for entry clearance (a visa) to work in the UK for 6 months or more, or
- applying from within the UK for permission to stay of any duration, including for less than 6 months

When you don't have to pay

S5.9 You do not have to pay the charge if you are sponsoring any of the following:

- a worker who is applying for entry clearance from outside the UK for a period of less than 6 months
- a worker who is being sponsored to do any of the following occupations:
 - 2111 (chemical scientists)
 - 2112 (biological scientists and biochemists)
 - 2113 (physical scientists)
 - 2114 (social and humanities scientists)
 - 2119 (natural and social science professionals not elsewhere classified)
 - 2150 (research and development managers)
 - 2311 (higher education teaching professionals)
 - 2444 (clergy)
 - 3441 (sports players)
 - 3442 (sports coaches, instructors or officials)
- a worker on the Intra-Company Graduate Trainee route
- a worker to whom you have previously assigned a CoS where:
 - you assign them a new CoS to work for you, and
 - the new period of permission they are seeking will not exceed their current period of permission – if the application would result in a longer grant of permission, you must pay the charge, unless another exemption applies
- a worker who has valid permission for the purpose of study and is applying to 'switch' to the Skilled Worker or ICT route – note that this exemption continues to apply if you later assign a further CoS to the same worker to continue in the same role
- a worker who was assigned a CoS under Tier 2 (General) or Tier 2 (ICT) Long-term Staff before 6 April 2017 and:
 - that CoS resulted in a grant of entry clearance or permission to stay
 - the worker undertook the role for which that CoS was assigned; and
 - the worker has not since ceased to have permission under Skilled Worker (or its predecessor route, Tier 2 (General)) or ICT (or its predecessor route, Tier 2 (ICT) Long-term Staff)

S5.10 You do not have to pay the charge in respect of any of the worker's family members (dependants) who are not themselves sponsored workers in the Skilled Worker or ICT routes. The charge does not apply to any other Worker

or Temporary Worker route.

S5.11 There is an [Immigration Skills Charge calculator](#) on GOV.UK to help you work out if you are liable for the charge.

Consequences of non-payment

S5.12 Any CoS you have assigned which requires the charge to be paid will become and remain invalid until the outstanding charge is paid in full. This means any application for entry clearance or permission to stay made on the basis of that CoS will be delayed until the charge is paid in full.

S5.13 You will be contacted by UKVI if you have not paid the charge or have not paid the full amount when you assigned the CoS.

S5.14 The worker's entry clearance or permission to stay application will be refused if you fail to pay the full amount within 10 working days of the first formal reminder to make the payment.

Refunds and 'top-up' charges

S5.15 The Secretary of State may refund all or part of the charge. A refund will be paid to the debit or credit card the charge was paid with, unless you advise us of different payment arrangements. In some cases, we may need to request a 'top-up' charge (an additional amount from you) if you have not paid the full amount you owe.

Partial refund

S5.16 A partial refund will be made in respect of all whole unused 6-month periods of permission after the first year of employment where the worker:

- is granted permission for less than the period requested on the CoS – for example, if a 5-year visa was applied for, but a 3-year visa is granted, the difference between the period requested and the period granted will be refunded (in this example, £2,000 for a large sponsor or £728 for a small sponsor or charity),
- starts work for one sponsor, but then voluntarily changes to another sponsor – the first sponsor will be paid the difference between the charge paid and the charge payable for the length of time the individual has worked for the first sponsor, or
- leaves their post early – for example, if they return home due to ill health, are made redundant or dismissed, fail their probation, or fail to secure a necessary professional qualification

Partial refund due to change in size or charitable status

S5.17 A partial refund will also be made if:

- you assign a CoS to a worker and pay the large fee, and

- before you assigned that CoS, you had notified us that your company had changed from large to small, or gained charitable status, and we have verified this information

S5.18 In these circumstances, we will refund the difference between the large fee and the small fee once we have verified the information you have provided. We will only issue refunds in respect of CoS issued on or after the date you notified us of your change in status. It is therefore important you tell us of any change in status as soon as possible.

Full refund

S5.19 A full refund will be paid where the worker's application for entry clearance or permission to stay is:

- refused,
- withdrawn, or
- granted but the worker does not travel to the UK or start work for the sponsor

S5.20 A full refund will also be made if the relevant CoS is not used to make a valid application for entry clearance or permission to stay.

How soon decisions on refunds are made

S5.21 Decisions on refunds are made within 90 days of the relevant event:

- the date you notified UKVI via the SMS that the individual didn't come to the UK to start work or has left the relevant employment early
- the CoS expiry date, if no valid visa application is made by the individual
- the date you notified UKVI that you had withdrawn the CoS
- the deadline date for making an administrative review application, if the individual's visa application has been refused and they have not applied for an administrative review, or
- the individual's administrative review being dismissed
- the date you notified us of the change in your organisation's size or charitable status

[Contact UKVI](#) if your refund hasn't been paid within 90 days of the relevant date.

Circumstances in which no refund will be made

S5.22 We will not refund any of the Immigration Skills Charge in the following circumstances:

- the worker changes job but remains working for the same employer
- the worker changes ('switches') from the Skilled Worker or ICT route to another immigration route but remains employed in the same job

- your licence is made ‘dormant’ (for example, following a takeover of your company)
- your licence is revoked, or
- the worker’s permission is curtailed (unless the reason for curtailment is because the worker failed to commence the relevant employment or finished the employment early – a [full](#) or [partial](#) refund may be paid in these circumstances)

Top-up charges

S5.23 We will request additional funds (a top-up charge) if:

- you assign a CoS to a worker and pay the small fee, and
- before you assigned that CoS, you had notified us that you no longer qualify as a small or charitable sponsor, and we have verified this information

S5.24 In these circumstances, we will request a top-up charge (the difference between the small fee and the large fee) in respect of any CoS you have assigned on or after the date you notified us of your change in status.

S5.25 We will also request a top-up charge in any case where you do not pay the full charge (or any charge) for any other reason. See ‘[Consequences of non-payment](#)’ above for what happens if you fail to pay the charge in full.

Related content

[Contents](#)

S6. After you have assigned a CoS

This section tells you how a worker can use their Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) to apply for entry clearance or permission to stay, how you can withdraw a CoS, and the circumstances in which we can cancel a CoS.

Using the CoS in an immigration application

- S6.1 Once you have assigned a valid CoS to a worker, and you have paid any [Immigration Skills Charge](#), if required, they can use it to make an application for entry clearance or permission.
- S6.2 When you assign a CoS, a reference number is generated and you must give this number to the worker you wish to sponsor. They must then include the reference number in their application for entry clearance, permission to enter or permission to stay. When you give the CoS reference number to the worker, you should treat it as secure and confidential information.
- S6.3 You can give the worker a copy of their CoS if they ask for it (although they do not need it to make an immigration application). There is a function within your SMS account to print any CoS you have assigned. You can do this by using the 'View CoS' function, where you can open the CoS and choose 'Print'. The [SMS user guide](#) has more information on how to use this function.
- S6.4 When a CoS you have assigned has been used to support an application, it will show in your SMS account as 'used' and it cannot then be used again. The only exception is where the CoS has been assigned to and used by a worker who is a non-visa national and is entering the UK under the Creative and Sporting visa concession. See [Sponsor a Sportsperson](#) and [Sponsor a Creative Worker](#) for more information on this. If the worker's application is refused and they wish to re-apply, you must assign a new CoS to them.
- S6.5 If the worker's application was rejected or withdrawn (but not refused), the CoS will still show in your SMS account as 'assigned'. It can then be used again to support a further application by the same individual, provided it has not expired (see paragraph below).
- S6.6 Once you have assigned a CoS, the worker must use it in an application for entry clearance or permission no later than 3 months after the date you assigned it. If the worker does not use the CoS within this 3-month period to make an application, it will expire and will show as 'expired' in your SMS account. If the worker still wishes to make an application, you will need to assign them a new CoS.

How to make an immigration application

- S6.7 Once the worker is ready to make an application for entry clearance or permission to stay, they must:

- complete the relevant online application form (or paper form if applying from North Korea) – the relevant forms can be found in the [Work visas](#) section of the GOV.UK website
- pay the application fee – see the [UK visa fees](#) page on GOV.UK
- pay the [immigration health charge](#), if required
- attend an appointment to give their biometric information (fingerprints and a digital facial image) – see the [Biometric residence permits](#) page on GOV.UK
- in some cases, [undergo a tuberculosis test](#)
- provide all relevant documents and information with their application, as specified in the application form or guidance notes

S6.8 With the exception of those applying from North Korea, all applications for entry clearance or permission to stay must now be made online. As the sponsor, you should be prepared to give the worker any assistance they need (without giving immigration advice, unless authorised to do so) to complete the online application. This could include allowing them to access a computer on your premises if the individual would not otherwise have access to a computer or the internet, or by offering technical support to those who do not have the ability or confidence to use online services on their own.

S6.9 Special procedures are in place for non-visa nationals to ask for permission to enter for up to 3 months when they arrive at the UK border under the Creative and Sporting visa concession. This is described in the relevant [route-specific guidance](#).

Cancelling or withdrawing a CoS

S6.10 We can cancel a CoS assigned by you if we find it should not have been assigned – for example, if it was assigned through misrepresentation or fraud.

S6.11 You can withdraw a CoS assigned to an individual which has not yet been used to support an application for entry clearance, permission to enter or permission to stay. This can be done through your SMS account.

S6.12 A worker can normally only have one CoS assigned to them for use in an application at any given time. The only exception to this is where the worker is undertaking 'consecutive engagements' with more than one sponsor in the Creative or Sporting Worker route – see [Sponsor a Creative Worker](#) or [Sponsor a Sportsperson](#) for further information on this.

S6.13 If you have assigned a CoS to a person who intended to start working for you, but they then decided to take up a job offer with a different sponsor, they must contact you to arrange the withdrawal of their CoS. This is because the sponsor with whom they want to start work will not be able to assign a CoS to them until you have withdrawn the one you assigned. They must request this in writing or by email, giving you 5 working days to withdraw the CoS. If you do not carry out their request, they must send a reminder, after which you will have a further 5 working days to withdraw it.

- S6.14 If you refuse or fail to withdraw the CoS within this time, the individual can ask us to cancel it. We will not cancel it until we have talked to you about why you have not withdrawn the CoS as requested by the individual. Failure to withdraw a CoS when requested, within the set time, may lead to us taking compliance action against you.
- S6.15 When a CoS is cancelled or withdrawn, we will not refund any fee you have paid for it and we will refuse any application that is supported by that CoS.
- S6.16 If a worker is in the UK with entry clearance or permission, we will cancel or curtail (shorten) their permission if we find the CoS which supported their application was improperly assigned. If this happens, their permission will be curtailed in one of the following ways:
- if they were not actively involved in the CoS being improperly assigned, permission will normally be curtailed to 60 days to give them a chance to find a new sponsor (unless they already have less than 60 days' permission remaining, in which case permission will not be curtailed); or
 - if they were actively involved in the CoS being improperly assigned, their permission will be curtailed completely so that they have no permission remaining and will be required to leave the UK immediately.

Related content

[Contents](#)

S7. Immigration requirements

This section tells you about the main immigration requirements a worker must meet to qualify for entry clearance or permission. It is not a complete statement of the requirements and you must refer to the relevant Immigration Rules and route-specific guidance for further details.

Immigration Rules

S7.1 You must be satisfied that any workers you wish to sponsor can meet the relevant Immigration Rules. The fact that you have assigned a valid Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) does not guarantee they will be granted permission – UKVI will make the final decision on this.

S7.2 The relevant requirements are contained in the following parts of the [Immigration Rules](#):

- Appendix Skilled Worker
- Appendix Intra-Company routes
- Appendix Skilled Occupations
- Appendix Shortage Occupation list
- Appendix T2 Minister of Religion
- Appendix T2 Sports person
- Appendix T5 (Temporary Worker) Seasonal Worker
- Appendix T5 (Temporary Worker) Creative or Sporting Worker
- Appendix T5 (Temporary Worker) Religious Worker
- Appendix T5 (Temporary Worker) Charity Worker
- Appendix T5 (Temporary Worker) International Agreement Worker
- Appendix T5 (Temporary Worker) Government Authorised Exchange Worker

S7.3 Even if the worker meets all of the relevant Rules and you have met all of your sponsorship duties, the worker can still be refused permission to enter or stay in the UK, or have their permission curtailed or cancelled, under the grounds for refusal in [Part 9 of the Immigration Rules](#). This could be, for example, if the worker has used deception in their application, has previously breached their [conditions of stay](#), or has a criminal record.

Applying from outside the UK: entry clearance

S7.4 If the worker you wish to sponsor is outside the UK, they must obtain entry clearance (a visa) in the relevant route before they come to the UK. The only exception to this is where the worker is a non-visa national and is applying for entry under the Creative and Sporting visa concession. For further information, see:

- [Sponsor a Sports person](#)
- [Sponsor a Creative Worker](#)

- S7.5 Other than the exception above, if a worker tries to enter the UK without the relevant entry clearance, they will be refused entry, even if they meet all of the other requirements of the Rules.
- S7.6 Workers applying for entry clearance may also need to undergo a test for pulmonary tuberculosis in order to get their visa – for further information, see [Tuberculosis test for visa applicants](#) on GOV.UK.

Workers already in the UK: permission to stay

- S7.7 If the worker you wish to sponsor is already in the UK, they must apply for 'permission to stay' (also known as 'leave to remain'). This could be to:
- extend their existing Worker or Temporary Worker permission, either to continue working in the same job or to change employment – see [Extensions, change of employment and settlement](#); or
 - 'switch' from a different immigration route where the Rules allow this – see below
- S7.8 Applicants applying from within the UK must not be:
- in the UK without permission (subject to limited exceptions in [paragraph 39E](#) of the Immigration Rules); or
 - on immigration bail

Switching immigration route while in the UK

- S7.9 Switching is the term we use when a person who is already legally in the UK changes from one immigration route to another, where the Rules allow this.
- S7.10 Individuals can switch to the Worker routes, provided they:
- were not last granted permission:
 - as a Visitor
 - as a Short-term Student
 - as a Parent of a Child Student
 - as a Seasonal Worker
 - as a Domestic Worker in a Private Household; or
 - outside the Immigration Rules; and
 - meet all of the requirements of the route they are applying to switch to
- S7.11 Switching to, or between, the Temporary Worker routes is not generally permitted – see the [Immigration Rules](#) and [route-specific guidance](#) for exceptions to this.
- S7.12 If you want to sponsor a worker who is already in the UK on another immigration route, you should check that their current immigration status allows them to switch. This is important because if the individual is in the UK on a route that does not allow them to switch, we will normally reject their application. If they are not in the UK in a route that allows them to switch,

they must leave the UK and apply for entry clearance.

Former government-sponsored students

S7.13 If you wish to sponsor a worker on any of the Worker routes, or on the Government Authorised Exchange Worker route, and they are currently being financially sponsored for the purpose of study by a government or international scholarship agency, or were so sponsored during the 12 months immediately before their application, they must obtain the written consent of that sponsor before applying for entry clearance or permission to stay. If they do not provide this consent, we will refuse their application.

Financial requirement

S7.14 Sponsored workers are not permitted to claim [public funds](#) (benefits and other assistance from the state). We must therefore be satisfied that any worker you sponsor has enough money to support themselves, and any family members (dependants) in the UK, until they start to receive an income. This is known as the 'financial requirement' (or 'maintenance requirement').

S7.15 An applicant on the Worker and Temporary Worker routes must meet the financial requirement if they are applying for:

- entry clearance
- permission to enter on the Creative or Sporting Worker route, or
- permission to stay, if they have been in the UK for less than one year at the date of application

S7.16 If your licence is rated A, A (Premium) or A (SME+), you can 'certify' this requirement is met by ticking the relevant 'maintenance' box on the worker's CoS. This is known as 'certifying maintenance'. If you certify maintenance, the applicant does not have to provide any further evidence of their finances.

S7.17 By ticking this box, you agree to certify maintenance for both the worker and any dependants of the worker. If you do not wish to certify maintenance for dependants, you must add a 'Sponsor note' confirming this after you have assigned the CoS.

S7.18 If you certify a worker's maintenance, you confirm that you will, if necessary, maintain and accommodate the worker up to the end of their first month of employment in the UK. You may limit the amount of the undertaking, but any limit must be no less than £1270.

S7.19 If you certify maintenance for dependants, you confirm that you will maintain and accommodate them for the first month of any permission that is granted to them. You may limit the amount, but it must be at least:

- £285 for a dependent partner
- £315 for the first dependent child
- £200 each for any other dependent child

- S7.20 If you certify maintenance, you must make sure the individuals are aware they must not claim public funds. If they claim public funds with your knowledge, we may take enforcement action against them and compliance action against you. See [Part 3: Sponsor duties and compliance](#) for further information on this.
- S7.21 If you do not wish to certify maintenance for either the worker or their dependants, they must provide evidence they have the necessary level of funds with their application for entry clearance, permission to enter or permission to stay. Acceptable evidence is set out in [Appendix Finance](#) to the Immigration Rules.
- S7.22 Applicants will automatically meet the financial requirement if, at the date of application, they have been in the UK with permission for 12 months or longer. This means you do not have to certify maintenance for such applicants, and they do not need to provide evidence of their finances with their application.

Leaving and returning to the UK

S7.23 If a worker:

- entered the UK with entry clearance (granted for any duration), or
- was granted permission to stay for more than 6 months

they can leave and re-enter the UK for business, holiday or personal reasons as often as they wish, provided their entry clearance or permission to stay has not expired and they otherwise continue to meet the requirements of the route in which they were granted.

S7.24 If you know or anticipate that the worker you wish to sponsor will need to travel in and out of the UK on a regular basis in connection with their job, you can choose to tick the 'Multiple entry' box when assigning their CoS. If you do this, it does not involve any extra benefits or restrictions on the worker's ability to travel but does help to show their intentions and likely travel plans to us.

S7.25 This type of CoS is not needed by a sponsored worker who simply wishes to travel overseas for leisure or domestic purposes during the period you sponsor them. If they take annual leave and return home during that period, they can still return to the UK to resume work if their permission is still valid.

S7.26 If, however, a worker:

- has been granted permission to stay in the UK for 6 months or less
- has had their permission curtailed so they have less than 6 months' permission remaining, or
- entered the UK without entry clearance under the Creative and Sporting visa concession

their permission to enter or stay will end (lapse) if they leave the Common Travel Area (CTA). The CTA is the UK, Ireland, the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands (Bailiwick of Guernsey and Bailiwick of Jersey).

- S7.27 If a worker's permission lapses, or expires, while they are outside the CTA, they will not be able to re-enter the UK unless they make a further successful application for entry clearance or permission to enter. In most cases, the application must be supported by a new CoS. The only exception to this is where the worker is a non-visa national seeking readmission under the Creative and Sporting visa concession. Such individuals can use their previous CoS to apply for a new period of permission to enter, provided that CoS is still valid. See the relevant [route-specific guidance](#) for further information on this concession.
- S7.28 Religious Workers and Charity Workers who seek readmission after having previous permission on either of these routes may be affected by the 'cooling-off period' – see the relevant [route-specific guidance](#).

Further information on immigration requirements

- S7.29 There is general information on all work routes on the GOV.UK website in the [Work visas](#) section.
- S7.30 Sections S8 to S9 of this document contain information on conditions of stay, extending permission to stay, change of employment applications, and settlement.
- S7.31 Detailed guidance for Home Office decision makers handling applications for entry clearance and permission to stay can be found on GOV.UK: [Working in the UK \(immigration staff guidance\)](#).

Related content

[Contents](#)

S8. Conditions of stay

This section tells you about the conditions of stay a sponsored worker will be subject to if they are granted permission under the Worker or Temporary Worker routes.

General conditions

S8.1 All Workers and Temporary Workers will be subject to the following conditions:

- [no access to public funds](#)
- [registration with the police](#) if they are a relevant national
- [restrictions on the employment](#) they can take
- [study](#) is permitted, subject to certain restrictions

S8.2 It is important that you and the worker understand these conditions. If the worker breaches his or her conditions of stay, we may take action against you and/or the worker, including:

- curtailing the worker's leave
- removing the worker from the UK
- downgrading, suspending or revoking your licence
- in serious cases, referring you or the worker to the police or other relevant authorities

No access to public funds

S8.3 All workers granted permission under the Worker and Temporary Worker routes will be subject to a 'no access to public funds' condition. This means they may not claim most state benefits or tax credits or access homelessness or housing assistance from the state. Read the [guidance on public funds](#) for further information.

Registration with the police

S8.4 If the worker is a national of a country specified in [Appendix 2 to the Immigration Rules](#) and they meet the conditions specified in [Part 10](#) of the Rules, they will be required to register with the police within 7 days of their arrival in the UK, and report any changes of address or further extensions of stay to the police.

S8.5 Guidance on this requirement can be found on the ['UK visas and registering with the police'](#) page on GOV.UK.

Employment restrictions

S8.6 Generally, workers granted permission on the Worker or Temporary Worker routes can only work for the sponsor, and in the employment, specified on their Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS). Minor changes to the details of that

employment are permitted, provided:

- you notify us of the change via the [sponsorship management system \(SMS\)](#);
- the worker continues to meet any salary requirement of the route on which they are being sponsored; and
- the change would not require a '[Change of employment](#)' application

S8.7 In addition, depending on the route on which they have been granted, sponsored workers may be allowed to:

- [work out a contractual notice period](#)
- take [supplementary employment](#)
- take [secondary employment](#) with a second CoS
- take limited [temporary employment as a sports person or as a sports broadcaster](#)
- do [voluntary work](#)

The subsections below give further information on these allowances.

Working out a contractual notice period

S8.8 A worker who is sponsored on a Worker route, and is making a '[change of employment](#)' application, is permitted to work out a contractual notice period for their existing employer, provided they were lawfully working for that employer on the date of application.

Supplementary employment

S8.9 Workers sponsored on the Worker and Temporary Worker routes (other than the [exceptions](#) mentioned below) can undertake additional work other than that for which their CoS was assigned if they meet certain conditions. We call this supplementary employment.

S8.10 Supplementary employment must be:

- in the same profession and at the same professional level as the work for which the worker's CoS was assigned or be a job which is in an occupation listed in [Appendix Shortage Occupation List](#) to the Immigration Rules – if the occupation is later removed from the list of shortage occupations, the worker must finish that employment
- for no more than 20 hours a week; and
- outside of the normal working hours for which the worker's CoS was assigned

S8.11 Where supplementary employment is permitted, it does not have to be with a licensed sponsor. Sponsored workers do not need to advise us of any supplementary employment they undertake as long as it meets these criteria.

S8.12 If the worker undertakes additional employment that does not meet the

supplementary employment criteria, and they have not been granted permission to allow them to take such employment, the worker will be in breach of their conditions of stay.

S8.13 A sponsored worker should advise their new employer that the employment is supplementary to the work they are being sponsored to do, so their supplementary employer can make the necessary checks recommended in our guidance for employers on illegal working. See '[Right to work checks: employer guidance](#)' on GOV.UK for information on this.

Exceptions: workers who cannot undertake supplementary employment

S8.14 The following Temporary Workers are not allowed to take supplementary employment:

- Charity Workers – although they can do additional [voluntary work](#) outside of the voluntary work for which they are being sponsored
- Seasonal Workers
- International Agreement Workers, if they have been granted as:
 - a private servant in a diplomatic household; however, private servants can take additional employment as a domestic worker in a different household, provided their main employment continues to be as a private servant in the household specified on their CoS
 - a contractual service supplier
 - an independent professional

Secondary employment (employment with a second CoS)

S8.15 A worker sponsored under any of the Worker routes may be allowed to take a second job which does not meet the supplementary employment criteria described above. We call this secondary employment. It is distinct from the supplementary employment and requires a second CoS to be assigned to the worker.

S8.16 The worker must have used their first CoS in a successful application for permission in a Worker route, and have started the employment for which that CoS was assigned, before they can be assigned a second CoS.

S8.17 Any secondary employment must be with a licensed sponsor and the worker must meet the criteria relevant to the route in which their secondary employment falls. The secondary employer must assign a new CoS to the worker, so that the worker can make an application for permission to stay that will allow them to undertake the secondary employment, in addition to their primary employment.

Employment as a sportsperson or sports broadcaster

S8.18 Workers granted permission as a T2 Sportsperson or as a Sporting Worker in the T5 Creative or Sporting Worker route can undertake:

- employment as a sports person for their national team while their national team is in the UK
- playing in British University and College Sport (BUCS) competitions
- temporary engagements as a sports broadcaster – this means providing guest expert commentary on a particular sporting event

S8.19 They do not need to be assigned an additional CoS to do this.

Voluntary work

S8.20 Those sponsored in the Worker routes are permitted to undertake voluntary work in addition to the work for which their CoS was assigned. This could include volunteering, without any contractual obligation, for a charitable organisation. Those undertaking voluntary work must receive no payment or other remuneration for this activity, other than reasonable expenses as outlined in [section 44 of the National Minimum Wage Act 1998](#) (as amended by from time to time).

S8.21 Temporary Workers are not permitted to do voluntary work, unless they are on the Charity Worker route, or on the Government Authorised Exchange Worker route and volunteering is recorded on their CoS, in which case they may undertake that voluntary work only.

Study

S8.22 Those sponsored on the Worker and Temporary Worker routes may undertake courses of study if they wish, provided their study does not affect their ability to carry out the job they have been sponsored to do, and, if relevant, they meet the [ATAS condition](#).

S8.23 Study may be undertaken anywhere the individual chooses and does not have to be with a licensed Student sponsor. There is no limit on the number of hours they can study or the level of course they undertake.

ATAS condition

S8.24 If a Worker or Temporary Worker intends to study a discipline listed in [Appendix ATAS](#) to the Immigration Rules, and they are 18 years of age or over, they must obtain an [Academic Technology Approval Scheme \(ATAS\) clearance certificate](#) from the Counter-Proliferation Department of the [Foreign and Commonwealth Office](#) before starting the relevant course or research.

S8.25 If they fail to do so, they will be in [breach of their conditions of stay](#).

Related content

[Contents](#)

S9. Extensions, change of employment and settlement

This section tells you how a worker who is already in the UK can extend their permission, either to continue working in the same employment or to change employer or employment. It also tells you how some workers can apply to settle permanently in the UK.

Overview

- S9.1 A person who is already in the UK with permission on the Worker or Temporary Worker routes can apply for further permission to stay in the UK if they meet the requirements of the route they are applying in. This could be to:
- continue working for the same employer in the same employment or occupation code – this is known as an [‘Extension of permission to stay’](#)
 - change employer or employment – this is known as a [‘Change of employment application’](#)
- S9.2 Applicants must apply before their existing permission expires. Guidance on how to apply is on [‘Work in the UK’](#) section of GOV.UK.
- S9.3 For routes other than Skilled Worker, we can only grant permission to stay up to the maximum time permitted under the relevant route – see the [route-specific guidance](#) for details.
- S9.4 Workers sponsored on the Seasonal Worker route cannot apply for an extension of stay.
- S9.5 Workers sponsored on the International Agreement Worker route are not permitted to change employer.
- S9.6 Workers on some routes can apply to [settle permanently in the UK](#).

Extension of permission to stay

- S9.7 If you are sponsoring a worker whose entry clearance or permission to stay is about to expire, and you wish to sponsor them to continue in the same role, or to do a [different job in the same occupation code](#), the worker must make an ‘extension of permission to stay’ application.
- S9.8 When you assign a Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) for an extension of permission to stay application, the start date on the CoS should be the day after their current permission expires. The worker must not apply for permission more than 3 months before the start date on the CoS.
- S9.9 Provided the worker applies before their permission expires, they can

continue working in the role (or occupation code) for which you last sponsored them while their application is under consideration.

Different role in the same occupation code

- S9.10 You can continue to sponsor a worker if they change to a different role within the same occupation code, provided all of the following conditions are met:
- you issued the CoS which led to their last grant of permission
 - the new role is within the same occupation code that was on the CoS which led to their last grant of permission
 - the new role is listed as eligible in [Appendix Skilled Occupations](#)
 - if the worker is being sponsored on the Skilled Worker or the Intra-Company routes, the new role meets the salary requirements of the relevant route
 - if the worker is being sponsored on the Skilled Worker route, and they were awarded points on the basis of a job in a shortage occupation, the new role is also listed in [Appendix Shortage Occupation List](#)
- S9.11 If the change of role occurs during a period of permission and before the worker needs to make an extension of permission application, you do not need to assign a new CoS at this stage, but you must inform us of the change via your [sponsorship management system \(SMS\) account](#).
- S9.12 If the worker needs to make an extension of permission application, you must assign them a new CoS, as described in paragraph S9.8.

Change of employment applications

- S9.13 Unless an exception applies, a worker must obtain a new CoS and make a new application for permission to stay (even if their existing permission is not due to expire for some time) if:
- you wish to sponsor the worker to do a job in a different occupation code
 - the worker was previously sponsored in a job listed in [Appendix Shortage Occupation List](#) (formerly [Appendix K](#)) to the Immigration Rules and is moving to job that is not listed in Appendix Shortage Occupation List (even if the job is in the same occupation code), or
 - the worker wishes to work for a different sponsor or employer and none of the [exceptions](#) below apply
- S9.14 This is known as a 'change of employment' application. The application must be approved before the worker can start work in their new job. This applies in all cases, even if the new job is with the same sponsor. Provided the worker applies before their current permission expires, they can continue working in the same job and for the same sponsor as in their last grant of permission until the change of employment application is granted.
- S9.15 For some routes, you may need to take additional steps before you can assign a CoS to the worker:

- you may have to carry out a resident labour market test before you can sponsor a Religious Worker
- you may have to follow specific codes of practice before you can sponsor a Creative Worker
- you will need to obtain an endorsement from the relevant sports governing body to sponsor T2 Sportsperson or a T5 Sporting Worker

S9.16 If you fail to comply with these requirements, we will revoke your licence.

Exceptions: change of employment application not required

S9.17 A worker will not be required to make a change of employment application if any of the following apply:

- there is a change of sponsor, but the worker will continue working for the same employer in the same occupation code – see Part 3: Sponsor duties and compliance for further information on this
- there is a change of employer or sponsor but the change is covered by [the Transfer of Undertakings \(Protection of Employment\) Regulations 2006 \('TUPE arrangements'\)](#) or similar protection, provided the worker will continue working in the same occupation code assigned by their previous employer or sponsor – see [Part 3: Sponsor duties and compliance](#) for further information on this
- the worker is sponsored in a graduate training programme covering multiple roles within your organisation and they change occupation during the programme or at the end of the programme when you appoint them permanently
- the worker is a T2 Sportsperson or T5 Sporting Worker, is being sponsored by a sports club, and is moving to another sports club on loan, where the sports governing body permits this – see Sponsor a Sportsperson for information on this
- the worker is being sponsored on the Government Authorised Exchange Worker route or the Seasonal Worker route, the change of employment is authorised by the sponsor and is otherwise permitted under that route

S9.18 In all of these cases, the sponsor must inform us of the change of details via the SMS, in accordance with their reporting duties. See [Part 3: Sponsor duties and compliance](#) for further information. If the worker's permission is about to expire, they must make an [extension of permission](#) application as described above.

Settlement

S9.19 Workers on the following routes can apply for settlement (also known as indefinite leave to remain or permanent residence) if they have been continuously and lawfully resident in the UK for 5 years on an eligible route:

- Skilled Worker
- T2 Minister of Religion

- T2 Sports person
- private servants in a diplomatic household if they were originally granted permission in the International Agreement Worker route under the Rules in place before 6 April 2012

S9.20 You must certify that the applicant is still working for you and will be required for the foreseeable future.

S9.21 Applicants on the Skilled Worker and T2 Sports person routes must also meet a minimum salary requirement. Where a minimum salary requirement applies, you must certify you will pay the worker at least that amount for the foreseeable future. We will check with HMRC that you are paying the appropriate salary and may also check this during a compliance visit. You must not artificially inflate a worker's salary just so they can qualify for settlement – if we are satisfied you have done so, we will revoke your sponsor licence.

S9.22 If your licence is suspended when the worker applies for settlement, we will not decide their application until the reason for the suspension has been resolved.

S9.23 If your licence is revoked before the worker's application for settlement is decided, we will refuse their application.

S9.24 You can employ workers who have been granted settlement without needing to sponsor them. If, however, you were previously sponsoring them, you must notify us via your SMS account that they have been granted settlement and that you are no longer sponsoring them.

S9.25 For further information is available in the '[Settle in the UK](#)' pages on GOV.UK.

Related content

[Contents](#)