



## **Non-EEA Nationals**

Those outside the EEA will require entry clearance into the UK; in most instances this will be an academic visitors visa and occasionally it may be in the form of a Tier 5 Sponsored Researchers (Government Authorised Exchange) visa. Detail about these visas is listed below.

### **Who is an Academic Visitor?**

For many visitors at the University, an Academic Visitors visa will be required. Visitors should liaise with the British Embassy or Consulate in their country of residence to ascertain if this is the visa they will require and the application process. UKBA regulations specify that Academic Visitors can stay in the UK for up to 12 months. No remuneration is paid to academic visitors by the University of Sheffield. It is the responsibility of the individual visitor to obtain the relevant Academic Visitor visa to enter the UK.

The UKBA regulations specify to qualify as an Academic Visitor, the individual must meet all the requirements of the business visitor category and should be:

- An academic who is either:
  - On sabbatical leave from an overseas institution to carry out research.
  - Taking part in a formal exchange arrangements with UK counterparts (including doctors).
  - Coming to share knowledge or experience or to hold informal discussions with their UK counterparts.
  - Taking part in a single conference or seminar that is not commercial or is a non-profit venture.
- Eminent senior doctors and dentists (those considered to be top of their field of expertise) coming to take part in research, teaching or clinical practice.

The UKBA require the visitor to produce evidence that they have been working as an academic in an overseas HEI, or in the field of their academic expertise immediately prior to seeking entry to the UK.

The UKBA regulations specify that an Academic Visitor must:

- Not receive funding for their work from any UK source (payments of expenses or honoraria to cover their needs whilst in the UK may be disregarded, as may payments on an exchange basis)
- Not intend to take employment or engage in any work other than the academic activity for which they are being admitted
- Not be filling a normal post or a genuine vacancy
- Not stay in the UK for more than 12 months
- Intend to leave the UK at the end of their visit
- Be able to maintain themselves and any dependents without having recourse to public funds (or be adequately maintained and accommodated by relatives or friends)
- Be able to meet the cost of the return or onward journey from the UK.

The UKBA regulations specify unlikely to qualify:

- Recent graduates including those with UK degrees as their level of relevant expertise as an academic is likely to be insufficient.
- Individuals on sabbatical leave from private research companies.
- Named researchers undertaking research funded by a grant. They must apply under Tier 2 of the points-based-system.
- Postgraduate researchers who are undertaking studies leading to an accredited UK academic qualification.
- Sponsored Researchers – See below.

### **Who is a Sponsored Researcher?**

A sponsored researcher is a person who wishes to come to the UK to lead or to take part in any formal research project. Formal research projects are those hosted but not necessarily funded by a UK research institution including universities. The sponsored researcher will undertake work under the supervision of the institution. Sponsored researchers can be funded from sources in the UK or overseas and either paid directly by their sponsor or have their expenses administered by the University.

Sponsored Researchers should enter the UK under the Tier 5 – Government Authorised Exchange (Sponsored Researchers) of the Points Based System. This category is for applicants coming to the UK through work placements whilst experiencing the wider social and cultural setting of the UK. The UKBA specifies that this category is not to fill job vacancies. The UKBA regulations specify that Sponsored Researchers are allowed to stay up to 24 months under this category.

In order to obtain a Tier 5 Sponsored Researcher visa, they require the University of Sheffield to sponsor them and provide a Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS). The visitor will require this to apply for their visa. The Department of Human Resources

will apply for a CoS using the information provided by the host department on the SR1 form.

By sponsoring an individual under Tier 5, the University is guaranteeing to the UKBA that the individual:

- Is seeking entry to the UK to work temporarily through an approved exchange scheme.
- Does not intend to establish a business in the UK.
- Meets the requirements of the individual exchange scheme.

On the visitor's first day they will need to provide their passport and visa in their host department. Photocopies of the front and back cover of the passport, all pages containing the individual's personal details; e.g. photograph, signature etc. and pages containing their most recent visa should be taken and the Eligibility to Work Checklist B completed and forwarded with the copies to their customary HR Team.

Should a Sponsored Researcher not be able to arrive on the agreed start date as stated on their CoS, or have to leave prior to the end date of their CoS, the host department should notify HR immediately and no later than 5 working days after this date.

### **Further Information**

For further guidance on inviting Academic Visitors to the University, please consult your customary HR team.