

## Visa Types

Main Purpose of visit		Visa type required	Maximum period	Key visa conditions
Undertake a lecture/series of lectures (with payment)		Permitted Paid Engagement (PPE)	1 month	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>must be highly qualified in field</li> <li>visit must be arranged before they arrive in the UK and evidenced by a formal invitation letter [insert link]</li> <li>engagement must relate to their area of expertise.</li> </ul>
Examine students/chair a selection panel (with payment)				
Attend a meeting, conference, training or interview		Standard Visitor visa	6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>cannot do paid or unpaid work or provide goods and services</li> <li>must not receive payment from a UK sources for activities (except for reasonable expenses to cover travel and subsistence)</li> </ul>
Undertake a lecture/series of lectures (without payment)				
Research	Share knowledge/ experience	Standard Visitor visa (Academic Visitor category)	12 months	Academic visitors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>must be highly qualified in field (which would normally require a PhD) and currently working in that field at an HEI overseas</li> <li>cannot be retired</li> <li>cannot be a named researcher on grant</li> </ul>
	Independent research			
	Taking part in a formal exchange programme			
	Collaborative research (i.e. under the direction of a supervisor)	Tier 5 (Temporary Worker - Government Authorised Exchange)	2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>need Certificate of Sponsorship from UKVI issued by HR Services</li> <li>must be paid UK National Minimum Wage.</li> </ul>

Please read on for further information on each of the visitor visa types.

You may also refer to the UK government's [Immigration Rules for visitors](#)

**Standard Visitor Visa (Business subcategory): up to 6 months**

A visitor coming to the UK under the Standard Visitor route may:

- attend meetings, conferences, seminars and interviews;
- give a one-off or short series of talks and speeches provided these are not organised as commercial events;
- undertake training in work practices or techniques that are not available in their home country (which would normally be for less than one month);
- accompany students as part of a study abroad programme and, if a Professor, carry out a small amount of teaching to the students at the University;
- negotiate and sign contracts;
- gather information for employment overseas;
- take part in recreational study for a maximum period of 30 days, but this must not be the main purpose of their visit; and
- receive reasonable expenses to cover the cost of their travel and subsistence.

They cannot:

- make frequent visits on this visa;
- take employment, or do paid or unpaid work; or
- provide goods and services.

**Standard Visitor Visa (Academic subcategory): up to 12 months**

Academic Visitors must be able to show that they are highly qualified in their field of expertise and are currently working in that field at an academic institution or institution of higher education overseas.

To be “highly qualified”, the visitor would normally be expected to have a PhD.

They **can**:

- carry out independent research (such as for a book or their employment overseas), if they are on sabbatical leave from their home institution;
- gather information and facts for a specific project which directly relates to their employment overseas;
- take part in formal exchange arrangements with UK counterparts (e.g. where University is collaborating with an overseas HEI on research and exchanges staff for some or all of the duration of the project);
- share knowledge or advice on an international project that is being led from the UK, provided that the visitor is not carrying out research in the UK;
- take part in collaborative research, teaching or clinical practice **only if** they are an eminent senior medical doctor or dentist;
- receive reasonable expenses to cover the cost of their travel and subsistence.

Academic visitors **cannot**:

- engage in collaborative research on a University-hosted project while in the UK (unless an eminent senior medical doctor or dentist); or
- take employment, or do paid or unpaid work.

**Permitted Paid Engagement (PPE) Visitor: up to 1 month**

This is a visa for short-term **paid** work. A PPE visitor may:

- examine students and/or participate in selection panels, if they are an academic and highly qualified in their field and have been invited by a UK HEI; and
- give lectures in their subject area, as an expert, if they have been invited by a UK HEI.

The visit must:

- be arranged before the applicant travels to UK;
- be declared as part of the application for visa/leave to enter;
- be evidence by a formal invitation;
- relate to the applicant's area of expertise and occupation;
- not amount to filling a part- or full-time teaching position;.

A PPE visitor cannot:

- be fully retired and be visiting to deliver a one-off lecture (but can be semi-retired, i.e. carrying out regular lectures and earning an income from this).

**Temporary Worker: Government Authorised Exchange (T5) scheme (Sponsored Researchers)**

Where a visitor visa is not appropriate because, for example, it does not permit collaborative research, a T5 visa may be more appropriate.

This scheme enables researchers (which includes academics, researchers, scientists, research engineers or other skilled research technology specialists) to come to the UK on a temporary basis, where they are hosted at a UK HEI. The HEI is able to assign a Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) for a maximum duration of 2 years to undertake the following activities:

- a formal research project or collaboration
- a period of work-based training/work experience/internship/placement
- skill development/knowledge transfer
- a series of lectures, which doesn't amount to a formal teaching post
- external examinations

The researcher:

- may be funded by their host, their overseas employer, or an independent UK or non-UK funding body
- must be in receipt of funding in line with, or above, the National Minimum Wage
- must apply for a visa from outside the UK

They **cannot**:

- be self-funded
- fill a genuine vacancy i.e. in accordance with the Home Office rules, the role must be over and above the organisation's normal staffing requirements, and which would not be automatically refilled once the post holder leaves

You can find more information about Tier 5 visas and who the University can sponsor [here](#)