

Questions relating to sponsored staff/researchers under Tiers 2 and 5

Q. Will my new sponsored staff member/researcher who is currently based outside of the UK be able to enter the country and start their role?

A. There are travel restrictions in place from some locations, and this list is changing rapidly and at short notice. Please ensure that you speak to your Resourcing Adviser regularly, who will update you on the current situation. You should also have regular conversations with your new starter around the possibility of commencing their duties remotely – either inside or outside of the UK.

Q. Will the University continue to sponsor new staff/researchers under Tiers 2 and 5?

A. We will continue to do so unless the Home Office advises otherwise.

Q. Is there any provision for my new sponsored staff member/researchers to start their duties remotely?

A. It is possible for a new sponsored staff member/researcher to start their duties remotely, either inside or outside of the UK. Practical arrangements (IT access, training etc) should be arranged by the Line Manager. Your Resourcing Adviser will deal with any immigration processes that need to be followed, and provide you and the new starter with any further information.

Once the individual is able to travel to the UK it is vital that the usual right to work checks are carried out as soon as possible. The individual will not be able to undertake any duties in the UK until this has been done.

The individual should retain evidence of why they could not travel to the UK such as press announcements, government advice, travel cancellations or medial advice.

Q. If a sponsored member of staff/researcher is working from home in the UK or overseas because the university has advised them to, there are travel restrictions in place OR because they are self-isolating, do People & Culture need to be made aware?

A. If they are home working from the address held on HR Organiser, then there is no need to contact People & Culture. However, if they have left the UK or are working from an address that is different to the one held on file, then HR Organiser should be updated with a secondary address for this period (do not tick the mailing address box) and email t2andt5@essex.ac.uk as soon as possible for guidance. People & Culture are required to keep in monthly contact (by email) with individuals who are at a different address until they can return to their usual residential address.

Q. What does People & Culture need to be informed of during this period in relation to sponsored individuals?

A. Please continue to inform t2andt5@essex.ac.uk of any of the following changes:

- Change of address or contact details
- Change of job title, department or core duties
- If the place of work changes on a permanent basis
- If there is a change of salary (outside of the annual pay review and incremental increases)
- If their passport expires
- If the immigration route changes (e.g they are granted settlement, or move to a dependant visa)
- If they are arrested or commit an offence
- If they are planning on undertaking any additional paid work (prior to commencing the work)
- If they plan on taking unpaid leave in excess of one month
- If they are considering leaving the university to move to a different employer

Q. Do sponsored individuals need to pay for NHS testing or treatment in relation to COVID-19?

A. Any testing or treatment in relation to COVID-19 is free of charge. You can find out more in the [NHS migrant health guide](#).

Q. If a sponsored individual's visa is due to expire, what action should they take?

A. People & Culture contact all visa holders 3 months prior to the expiry date on their visa to start discussions around next steps. If they are unable to return to their home country due to travel restrictions, they should contact the UKVI COVID-19 Helpline telephone 0800 678 1767 or email CIH@homeoffice.gov.uk. For guidance on an individual case, please email t2andt5@essex.ac.uk

Q. Where can individuals find further information?

A. For further guidance individuals can contact the Coronavirus Immigration Help Centre:

- Telephone: 0800 678 1767 (Monday to Friday, 9:00 to 17:00) - calls are free of charge.
- Email: CIH@homeoffice.gov.uk

or email the People & Culture Tier 2 and 5 mailbox t2andt5@essex.ac.uk

and by monitoring updates on the [Staff Directory](#).

Q. How will right to work checks be carried out during this period?

A. During this period, right to work checks for permanent and over 6 months contracts will be carried out by People & Culture. This will involve using the Home Office online checking service where possible. In some cases, where the online service is not applicable, scanned copies will be accepted until the individual is on campus and an in person check can be carried out. Please speak to a member of the [Resourcing Team](#) for further guidance. Checks still need to be completed before the staff start, if they are starting in the UK.

For any on demand on under 6 month contract staff the checks should be completed by the line manager, please contact Employee Relations for further guidance.