



## Tier 2 Employee: Information on Sponsorship

Any non-European national typically requires a visa in order to legally work in the UK. If you require a Tier 2 visa, this means you will need to be sponsored by your employer in order to undertake a specific job role. Your employer will apply for a certificate of sponsorship for you; this can then be used in order to apply for a Tier 2 visa. This guidance document contains important information for you.

### CERTIFICATES OF SPONSORSHIP

A CoS is a virtual document – similar to a database record. Each CoS has a unique reference number which contains information regarding the role you are being sponsored for, how the requirements for sponsorship are met etc. There are two types of CoS, unrestricted and restricted.

#### Unrestricted Certificates of Sponsorship

Every sponsor has an annual allocation of certificates of sponsorship; these can be assigned at any time throughout the year. Unrestricted CoS are assigned to *migrant workers who are in the UK* and able to switch visas into the Tier 2 category, or current Tier 2 employees who require an extension.

#### Restricted Certificates of Sponsorship

These are for individuals who will apply for their Tier 2 visa from *outside of the UK*, and those who are switching visa from a Tier 4 dependant visa and are within the UK. This type of CoS is granted in addition to an employer's annual allocation, and an application needs to be made to the monthly UKVI panel. Timings surrounding restricted certificates of sponsorship are therefore affected by the dates of these monthly panels.

Your sponsor will require information from you to enable them to assign a CoS. Once a CoS has been assigned to you, your Tier 2 visa application can be submitted, including the CoS reference number.

Important points regarding CoS:

1. The CoS reference number can only be used once
2. You must start work within four weeks of the CoS start date.
3. The job details contained within the CoS are specific for the job for which you are sponsored. If any details change, such as your working hours/salary/job requirements, then UKVI must be informed by your employer.

Correct as of 25 April 2020.

Please note the publication date of this article; changes may have occurred.  
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## TIER 2 VISA REQUIREMENTS

A Tier 2 visa is a points based visa; in order to obtain visa a from the points based system, an applicant must accrue sufficient points in the following three categories:

1. **Evidence of Sponsorship:** This will be provided by your CoS reference number.
2. **Evidence of Maintenance (Finances):**  
There are two ways of evidencing maintenance:
  - Your employer can certify on the certificate of sponsorship that they will maintain and accommodate you up to the end of your first month in the UK if required. The amount can be limited but it must be at least £945; or
  - You can show personal savings of at least £945 which has been held for 90 consecutive days (this period must end no more than 31 days before the date of visa application).N.B. any dependants applying at the same time as you must also provide evidence of sufficient funds.
3. **Evidence of English language:** The UKVI has specific requirements an applicant must meet; these are published here <https://www.gov.uk/tier-2-general/knowledge-of-english>. If you wish to use an overseas qualification to demonstrate you meet the English language requirement, you should obtain a letter from UK NARIC: <https://www.naric.org.uk/visas%20and%20nationality/>.

### Visa Fees

The cost of your visa will depend on whether or not you are currently in the UK, the job you are doing and the length of visa. More information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/tier-2-general>.

### NHS Surcharge

You will be required to pay an NHS surcharge at the time of submitting your visa application. The surcharge is £400 per person, per year of stay (i.e. £2000 for a 5-year visa). It is applicable to all applicants (i.e. if you have dependants, they will be liable for the surcharge too). More information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/healthcare-immigration-application>.

## TIER 2 CONSIDERATIONS

### Process

- Visa applications are made online.
- When you apply you will be asked to make an appointment at a UK Visa and Citizenship Application Services (UKVCAS) service point in order to provide your biometric information (fingerprints and photograph).
- You will also need to submit your supporting documents. You can either upload them via the online service, or you can choose to have them scanned at your UKVCAS appointment.

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- You must commence work within four weeks of the start date which is stated on your certificate sponsorship.
- If you are outside of the UK, you will receive a vignette (sticker within your passport) to enable you to enter the UK. You will then need to report to a Post Office within 28 days, in order to obtain your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP).
- You must present evidence of your right to work in the UK (with your vignette or BRP) to your employer *before* you start your employment. They will need to take a copy of the document in order to be compliant with UKVI. If you only have your vignette at this point, you must provide evidence of your BRP to your employer as soon as you obtain it.
- Once your employment starts, you will have responsibilities as a Tier 2 sponsored worker. You should discuss any changes to your circumstances with your HR team.

### Extensions

If you wish to extend your visa, it is advisable to do so within the 28 days prior to your visa expiry date. If you submit an application before this time (without good reason), you run the risk of losing time at the end of your current visa. This creates a risk of being short of residency time within the UK should you wish to apply for indefinite leave to remain. To put this into context, if you have a 2.5 year visa, and apply for an extension after 2 years 3 months, you could be granted another 2.5 years which will make your total residency 4 years 8 months. An individual is only eligible to apply for indefinite leave to remain once they reach 5 years, so in this scenario you would need to apply for another visa extension before eligibility.

### National Insurance Number

You may need to apply for an NI number if you do not already have one. You may have one on the back of your biometric residence permit. An NI number will ensure you pay the correct tax and national insurance contributions; it will also enable you to register with a local doctor. You will need to inform your payroll department of your NI number. For more information: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-national-insurance-number>.

Whilst in the UK on a Tier 2 visa, you will not have recourse to public funds, i.e. benefits paid for by the state. However, public funds do not include benefits which are based on National Insurance contributions (such as statutory maternity pay). Further information on public funds can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-funds--2/public-funds>

### TIER 2 SPONSORED WORKER RESPONSIBILITIES

As a Tier 2 migrant you are required to keep your employer informed and updated with information:

- You must inform your employer of any changes to your personal details e.g. name/address/telephone number.
- You are required to inform your employer of any changes to personal circumstances e.g. change of core duties/salary/hours/work location/absence etc.
- If you are unable to attend work at any time you must inform your line manager. Your employer is required by law to inform the UKVI of any unauthorised periods of absence.
- You must inform your employer if you leave your sponsored employment before the end date stated on the certificate of sponsorship, so that they can inform UKVI.

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