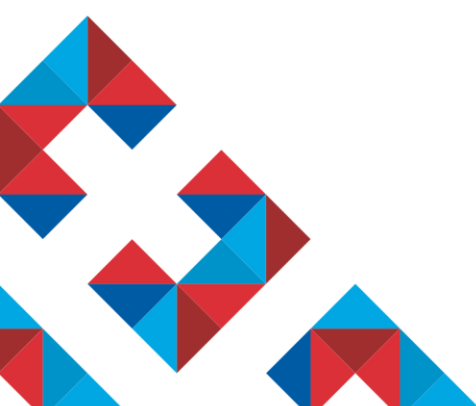


Tier 5 Government Authorised Exchange Scheme – Erasmus+ (Higher Education)

Application for a Certificate of Sponsorship

Guidance for Coordinators Key Action 103

Version 2.0: 16 January 2017



Overview of changes to the guide

This document is version 2 of the Tier 5 Government Authorised Exchange Scheme – Erasmus+ (Higher Education), Application for a Certificate of Sponsorship, Guidance for Coordinators Key Action 103. The table below gives an overview of changes made compared to previous versions of the guide:

Page number in version 1 of the guide	Change	Page number in version 2 of the guide
Page 2	Updated information about what is required in the Tier 5 CoS Application form – added information on allowances and dependants	Page 3
Page 3	Updated information about the acceptance letter, and the transcript of record	Page 4-5
Page 3-4	Removed information about the DBS check	
Page 3-4	Updated information on regarding a Criminal Records check and what is required	Page 5
Page 4	Added further information regarding how to submit the application documents	Page 5

Overview

Participants from non-European Economic Area (EEA) countries who have been awarded a traineeship mobility in the United Kingdom (UK) through the Erasmus+ programme will require a Tier 5 visa through the UK [Government and Authorised Exchange Category](#) (GAE).

The GAE Category is for those participants coming to the UK through approved schemes that aim to share knowledge, experience and best practice through work placements, whilst experiencing the wider social and cultural setting of the UK. This category cannot be used to fill job vacancies or provide a way to bring unskilled labour to the UK.

Before the participant can apply for a Tier 5 visa they will need to obtain a Certificate of Sponsorship number from the British Council that is classified by the UK Home Office as a licensed Category A sponsor.

What is a 'Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS)'?

The CoS is a unique reference number which holds information about the work placement and the participant's personal details. The participant will need to use this number when applying for a visa. The CoS number is issued by the sponsoring institution which for Erasmus+ in the UK is the British Council.

Eligibility – Will my application be successful?

The British Council issues CoS numbers where applications meet the eligibility criteria set out below:

- The job role offered must be a minimum skill level of NVQ Level 3 or above. For further information please click [here](#).
- The work experience placement must not replace a genuine job vacancy in the UK work force and must be in addition to normal staffing requirements.
- The work experience placement must be linked to the participants' course of study at their sending university.
- The work experience placement must be a minimum of 2 months and a maximum of 12 months.

How to apply for a Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS)

Please read these instructions carefully as they detail how to apply for a CoS. The Erasmus+ Coordinator from the sending organisation needs to email complete applications to the [Tier 5 team](#). **All communication with the British Council in respect of the issuing of a CoS will be via the university coordinator who is responsible for updating participants on progress.**

In order for the Tier 5 team to process applications we require the following documentation:

- 1) **A fully completed Tier 5 CoS Application Form available [here](#)**

Important points to note:

- **Passport information** must match exactly how it appears on the participants' passport.
- **Home address** needs to be the participants' current home address. Please include full address details and postcode as this is where a hard copy of the CoS form will be posted to.
- **Multiple Entry Visa** for participants travelling in and out of the UK on a regular basis in connection with their work placement. Please note if the participant's placement is 6 months or less if they leave the common travel area for leisure/domestic purposes they would not be allowed back into the UK on that visa.
- **Total weekly hours of work** needs to be equivalent to full-time working hours (a minimum of 25hrs and a maximum of 48hrs per week).
- **Main work placement address** needs to be completed in full including the host company/institution name.
- **Contact (mentor)** details need to be completed in full and it is important that these details are correct for reporting duties as stipulated by the Home Office.
- **Job title** of the participant at the work placement. This must be the job title detailed in your invitation letter from the host – **not** Erasmus+ student/intern.
- **Job type** must be selected from the drop down field. Details on the relevant SOC code can be obtained [here](#). The job description attached to the SOC code must match the job role to be undertaken at the work placement.
- **Project Reference Number (as per the Grant Agreement)** e.g. 2016-1---01-KA103-0123456.
- **Is the work placement supernumerary – not part of normal staffing requirements – not filling a job vacancy.**
- **Detailed summary of the tasks** the participant will undertake at the work placement. Please provide detailed information in this section.
- **Demonstrate how the work experience placement and the job role relate** to the participants **degree programme**. Please provide detailed information in this section.
- **Total monthly additional allowances if applicable – some allowances from the host organisation need to be included in the CoS application. For further information please contact the Tier 5 team.**
- **Will you be bringing dependants (family members) with you to the UK – further information can be found [here](#)**



Please complete ALL fields of the CoS application form accurately and in full. This information is entered onto the Home Office Sponsorship Management System (SMS). Irregularities with the information may cause delays in issuing the CoS number.

2) Copy of the participant's passport, including all ID details e.g. biometric page and leave stamps

Important points to note:

- Each page must be **easily readable**.
- The passport **expiry date** must be **valid for 6 months** after the **intended departure date** from the UK.

3) Confirmation Letter from Sending University

Important points to note:

- The letter from the **sending** university needs to be on **letter headed** paper with an **official stamp, signed** and **dated** by the appropriate signatory.
- It must detail what **faculty** the participant belongs to and the **degree** being **studied**.
- It must contain the name of the **host** organisation.
- It must contain the **start** and **end dates** of the placement.
- It must contain the grant amount in **euros** allocated **per month** to the participant.

4) Acceptance Letter from Host Organisation

Important points to note:

- The letter from the host organisation needs to be on **letter headed paper** with an **official stamp, signed** and **dated** by the appropriate signatory. **Please note: if the organisation does not have a stamp we require an email from the host organisation confirming this.**
- It must contain the **participant job title** during the placement.
- It must contain a **description of duties** the participant will undertake during the work placement.
- It must contain the **start and end dates** of the placement.

5) Erasmus+ Learning Agreement for Traineeships

Important points to note:

- The Erasmus+ Higher Education [Learning Agreement for Traineeships](#) should be completed. **Guidance** on how to complete this document can be found [here](#).
- All fields **prior** to the mobility need to be completed in full.
- The Learning Agreement needs to be signed and dated by the **participant**, the **sending** institution and the **host** organisation.

6) Transcript of Records

Important points to note:

- Participants must be **currently studying** or have **completed a degree programme within the last 12 months** in order to be eligible to participate in a traineeship mobility.
- The **transcript** must be **translated** into **English**. Please check Home Office guidance [here](#) for further details on certifying a translation.
- The transcript must be on **letter headed paper**.
- It must **detail** the **participants' degree programme/subjects**

7) Copy of the participant's criminal record check (if applicable)

Important points to note:

- **Criminal records checks** for overseas participants are **only required for certain jobs or voluntary work**, e.g. working with children or in healthcare. We would urge you to read home office guidance and consult with the host organisation to clarify if one is required. Examples of job roles which would require evidence of a police check would be a teacher, unsupervised volunteer.
- Criminal record check certificates are **usually required from the participant's country of residence**. However in some cases a criminal record check certificate may be required from their country of origin. Applications are assessed on a case by case basis.
- The certificate must be **translated** into **English**. Please check [Home Office guidance](#) for further details on certifying a translation.



All documentation has to be consistent; we require the start and end dates of the work placement to match those in the Learning Agreement for Traineeships, confirmation letter from the sending university, acceptance letter from the host organisation and Tier 5 CoS application form. Dates will not be amended once the Certificate of Sponsorship has been issued.

All of these documents must be completed in full and sent from the Erasmus+ Coordinator by email to Tier5erasmus@britishcouncil.org for the application to be considered. All communication will be via the university coordinator.

Do not send documents as web links like google, RAR or one drive attachments as these will be refused.

Please note due to size constraints within our systems we can only accept one email per CoS application. If you have trouble with the file size of your email, this [link](#) might be useful in advising you how to reduce the size or please consult your IT department for help.

How long does it take to issue a Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS)?

Please note it can take up to **four weeks** to issue a CoS once we receive all **fully completed and correct documentation**. **We recommend no travel plans are made or costs incurred until a decision has been made regarding the participant's CoS and a visa has been approved by the Home Office.**

Upon assessing the documentation and the application successfully meeting the eligibility criteria, the Tier 5 team will make an application to the Home Office for a CoS. The Tier 5 team will produce a Letter of Maintenance and email this to the Erasmus+ Coordinator and the participant along with [Annex E – Participant Tier 5 Guidelines and Sponsorship Duties](#).

A hard copy of the Letter of Maintenance will be sent to the postal address specified on the Tier 5 Cos Application Form. Please note it can take up to two weeks for the letter to arrive. A hard copy of the letter may be needed at a later stage in the visa application.

To allow participants the opportunity of taking part in a traineeship mobility in the UK, the Tier 5 team would advise Erasmus+ Coordinators to submit applications in sufficient time. Please note that March through to September is the peak period when the majority of applications are submitted. To avoid disappointment please submit applications early but no more than **3 months** before the placement start date.

Next Steps - Applying for a visa

Once the participant has been issued their CoS number they will be able to apply for their Tier 5 Government and Authorised Exchange (GAE) visa through UK Visas and Immigration where they must complete an online Entry Clearance Visa online form available [here](#).

The participant can apply for a visa up to three months before their intended travel to the UK.

Processing times differ from country to country. You can check visa processing times [here](#).



As part of the visa application process participants staying in the UK for longer than 6 months will have to pay a health surcharge (called the 'immigration health surcharge' or IHS). Further details on this can be found [here](#).

The Tier 5 team have compiled a guidance document for visa applications which you can access [here](#). Please note that the information and links contained within the document are correct at the time of writing and may change. We would advise you to consult the [Home Office website](#) for the most up to date information regarding the visa application process.

Useful Links

[UKVI Tier 5 \(GAE\) Guidance](#)

[Guidance on application for UK visa under Tier 5](#)

If you have any further questions in regards to submitting an application for a CoS please contact the [Tier 5 team](#).

The Tier 5 team will be happy to look into your enquiry and provide you with further information on the application process.