



Home Office

Workers, Temporary Workers and Students: guidance for sponsors

Appendix D: keeping documents – guidance for sponsors

Version **12/20 (2.0)**

This guidance covers:

- documents that must be retained by Worker (including Tier 2), Temporary Worker (including Tier 5) and Student (including Tier 4) sponsors
- how long documents must be retained

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Version number and publication

Below is information on the version number of this guidance and when it was cleared for publication:

- Version **12/20 (2.0)**
- cleared for publication on 18 December 2020

Changes from the last version of this guidance

This version replaces version 12/20 (published on 1 December 2020). The following changes have been made:

- Introduction: clarification of definition of “worker” added
- Part 1, sub-paragraph (e): note added advising sponsors to encourage their workers to apply for a National Insurance number if this is not printed on their biometric residence permit
- Part 2: clarification that this section applies to any recruitment activity undertaken, regardless of whether a formal resident labour market test was required
- Part 4: former sub-paragraphs (b) and (c) combined into new sub-paragraph (b); reference to resident labour market test removed; subsequent sub-paragraphs renumbered
- Links updated throughout
- Other minor housekeeping changes

Introduction

This document is for Worker (including Tier 2), Temporary Worker (including Tier 5) and Student (including Tier 4) sponsors. It is an appendix to the full policy guidance on [sponsoring a Worker or Temporary Worker](#) or [sponsoring a Student](#). It lists the documents you must keep to fulfil your sponsorship duties.

In this document, unless otherwise stated, references to “worker” include people sponsored:

- on the Worker routes (Skilled Worker, Intra-Company Routes, T2 Minister of Religion, T2 Sports person)
- on the T5 (Temporary Worker) routes (Charity Worker, Creative or Sporting Worker, Government Authorised Exchange Worker, International Agreement Worker, Religious Worker, Seasonal Worker); or
- under the Tier 2 and Tier 5 (Temporary Worker) routes in place before 1 December 2020

Documents can be kept either as paper copies or in an electronic format. There is no prescribed method for storing the documents but you must be able to make them available to us on request.

All documents relating to a worker or student whom you sponsor must be kept throughout the period that you sponsor them and until:

- one year has passed from the date on which you end your sponsorship of the worker or student, or
- the date on which a compliance officer has examined and approved them, if this is less than one year after you ended your sponsorship of the worker or student

You may need to retain some documents specified in this appendix for other purposes (for example, to comply with legislation on [preventing illegal working](#)) and for longer periods of time. You must ensure that you meet any other legal requirements for record keeping, such as ones set either by us or another government department.

All documents provided as part of your application to become a licensed sponsor must be kept throughout the duration of your licence.

Part 1: for each worker sponsored on the Worker (including Tier 2) or Temporary Worker (including Tier 5) routes

- a. A copy of each sponsored worker's current passport. You must copy pages showing the worker's personal identity details and any relevant entry clearances (visas) or permission (leave) to enter stamps showing that the person has permission to work for you as a licensed sponsor. The only exception to the requirement to make a copy of the worker's passport is where the worker is employed for one day or less and it is not practicable to obtain this evidence. For detailed guidance on checking a person's right to work in the UK, see [Right to work checks: an employer's guide](#) on GOV.UK.
- b. Where relevant, evidence of the worker's date of entry to the UK. If you sponsored the worker's most recent application for entry clearance (a visa to enter the UK) on the Worker (including Tier 2) or Temporary Worker (including Tier 5) routes, you must check that they entered the UK during the validity period of their visa. If they entered before the 'valid from' date on their visa, they will **not** have permission to work for you. If this happens, you should advise the worker to leave the Common Travel Area (UK, Guernsey, Jersey, Isle of Man and Ireland) and re-enter the UK once their visa becomes valid.

You do not have to carry out this check if the worker has been granted, or is applying for, permission to stay (leave to remain) in the UK. This includes where the worker is applying for an extension of their Worker or Temporary Worker permission or is 'switching' (changing immigration route) to the Worker or Temporary Worker routes while they are in the UK. You must, however, carry out the right to work checks and retain the evidence described in paragraph 1a.

In most cases, you can check a worker's date of entry by looking for an entry stamp, in the form of a wet ink stamp, from an immigration officer. This will normally be endorsed on the worker's visa. You must make and retain a copy of the stamp.

There are, however, some circumstances in which the worker will not have an entry stamp, including:

- those who hold a valid visa and entered the UK through Ireland
- nationals of Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea and the United States of America – since 20 May 2019, nationals of these countries have been eligible to use automated e-Passport gates ('e-Gates') to enter the UK if they hold a valid visa

If the worker does not have an entry stamp in their passport, you must still check that they did not enter the UK before their visa became valid by asking to see other evidence, including, but not limited to, travel tickets or a boarding pass (in paper or electronic form). You must then make a record of the date that the worker entered the UK, but do not have to retain evidence of the date.

Important note – T5 Creative and Sporting visa concession

If the worker is eligible to enter the UK without a visa under the [T5 Creative and Sporting visa concession](#), they must have a 'leave to enter' stamp from an immigration officer clearly showing that they have permission to work for you. If the worker used the e-Gates to enter the UK, they will not have permission to work and must therefore leave the Common Travel Area and seek re-entry to the UK, making sure that they see an immigration officer on arrival.

If the worker will be entering the UK under the concession via Ireland, they must apply for, and have been granted, leave to enter before they arrive in the UK by using the '[remote clearance process](#)'.

For further information, see section CRW6 of [Sponsor a Creative Worker](#) or section SPO7 of [Sponsor a Sportsperson or Sporting Worker](#) on GOV.UK.

- c. A copy of the worker's biometric residence permit (BRP). If the worker entered the UK with a short-term biometric visa (valid for 30 days), they must collect their BRP before this visa expires, or within 10 days of their arrival, whichever is later. You must make a copy of the worker's BRP. For further information on BRPs, see: [Biometric residence permits: overseas applicant and sponsor information](#) on GOV.UK.
- d. If you employed a Croatian national who was subject to worker authorisation between 1 July 2013 and 30 June 2018 (inclusive), a copy of their worker authorisation ('purple') registration certificate showing that they were allowed to work for you, and do the work in question, during that period.
- e. A copy of the worker's National Insurance (NI) number, unless the worker is exempt from requiring one. This could be a copy of one of the following:
 - worker's NI card or NI number notification letter from HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) or the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
 - worker's BRP, if this shows their NI number
 - worker's wage slip
 - worker's P45
 - Real Time Information (RTI) starter checklist - formerly P46
 - P60
 - P11 free of tax pay (FOT): employer's declaration sent to HMRC
 - RTI Employment Payment Summary (EPS) sent online to HMRC - formerly P14: employers annual return sent to HMRC manually
 - RTI Full Payment Submission (FPS) sent online to HMRC - formerly P35: employer's annual return to HMRC

Note: some people will have their NI number recorded on their BRP. If this is not the case, you must encourage the worker to [apply for a NI Number](#) as soon as possible.

- f. A history of the worker's contact details (UK residential address, personal email address, telephone number (mobile and/or landline). This must always be kept up to date.
- g. In the case of the employment of a child aged under 18, you must make a copy of a letter from the child's parents or legal guardians, or just one parent if that parent has sole legal responsibility for the child, consenting to the arrangements that have been made with regard to the child's application, travel, reception and care arrangements in the UK.
- h. A copy of the worker's Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check where required for the role undertaken by the sponsored worker.
- i. A record of the worker's absences, which may be kept electronically or manually.
- j. Any other document set out in the [sponsor guidance for employers](#) and, where relevant, the [Appendix T5 Creative Workers codes of practice](#).
- k. If you are licensed under T5 (Temporary Worker) International Agreement Worker to sponsor contractual service suppliers or independent professionals, you must keep a copy of any contract you have awarded for the supply of service to you and either of the following:
 - the tender document for that contract
 - evidence of how the contract was awarded if it was not formally tendered

Part 2: evidence of recruitment activity for Workers (including Tier 2) and Temporary Workers (including Tier 5)

You must retain evidence of any recruitment activity you have undertaken for the job, or jobs, in which you are sponsoring workers. This applies even if you were not required to undertake a formal resident labour market test before recruiting a migrant worker. If you did not advertise the role, you must be able to explain:

- why you did not advertise it (for example, if you are sponsoring a Religious Worker in a supernumerary role, or the individual was previously legally working for you on a different type of visa)
- how you identified the individual was suitable for the role

Where you have advertised the role, you must retain any relevant evidence listed in (a) to (k) below.

- a. Where you have used a rolling recruitment programme, all the documents set out in this section must clearly show that it is a rolling programme and must indicate the period of the recruitment exercise.
- b. Where the vacancy was advertised in a national newspaper or professional journal, you must keep a copy of the job advertisement as it appeared in the given medium. The copy must clearly show the title and date of the publication and the closing date for applications.

Where the advertisement does not show your name, a copy of a letter or invoice from the newspaper and/or journal will be required, to prove an advertisement was placed.

- c. For milk rounds, you must keep a letter from each university, on their headed paper, confirming the milk round, the dates it was conducted, and method used, for example, presentation and/or interview method.

- d. A copy of the job advert, which must include all of the following:

- the job title
- the location of the job
- the main duties and responsibilities of the job
- the skills, qualifications and experience needed for the job
- an indication of the salary package or salary range
- the closing date for applications

- e. Where the vacancy was advertised on the internet, including where it is advertised on your own website (where this is allowed in the sponsor guidance), you must keep a screen shot from the website hosting the advertisement, on the day the vacancy is first advertised, which clearly shows **all** of the following:

- name of the website
- contents of the advert
- the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) (website address)
- date the vacancy was first advertised (if stated)
- closing date for applications

Note: if the website clearly shows the date the vacancy was first advertised, the screen shot can be taken at any point during the period the vacancy is advertised.

- f. Where the advertisement is not on your own website and does not show your name, a copy of a letter or invoice from the website will be required, to prove that an advertisement was placed.
- g. Where the vacancy has been advertised online through the Jobcentre Plus 'Find a Job' service (or its predecessor, Universal Jobmatch), JobCentre Online (for jobs in Northern Ireland), or the GOV.UK 'Teaching Vacancies' service (for teaching jobs in England), you must keep a screen shot from the relevant

government website on the day the vacancy is first advertised which clearly shows **all** of the following:

- logo of the relevant government website hosting the job advertisement
- URL
- contents of the advert
- date the vacancy was first advertised (if stated)
- closing date for applications
- any job reference number (if stated)

Note: if the website clearly shows the date the vacancy was first advertised, the screen shot can be taken at any point during the period the vacancy is advertised.

- h. If the job was not advertised through Find a job (or its predecessor, Universal Jobmatch), JobCentre Online, or the GOV.UK 'Teaching Vacancies' services, because of Stock Exchange disclosure requirements, you must keep a copy of the formal announcement, such as a screen shot of the published announcement, made via a regulated information service approved by the [Financial Conduct Authority \(FCA\)](#).
- i. If you recruit under the T2 Sports person route and/or the sports sector of the T5 (Temporary Worker) Creative or Sporting Worker route, you must keep a copy of the endorsement from the relevant sports governing body as evidence of the resident labour market test and any other document set out in the relevant code of practice.
- j. If you recruited a sponsored researcher under the Tier 2 (General) rules in place before 1 December 2020, you must keep evidence of the competitive process that took place. This could be an advertisement for the grant, a programme for the selection process, the judging criteria or any other evidence.
- k. You must retain the following documents from any recruitment process:
 - all applications shortlisted for final interview, in the medium they were received, for example: emails, CVs, application forms – this should include the applicant's details, such as name, address, and date of birth
 - the names and total number of applicants shortlisted for final interview
 - for each settled worker who was rejected or did not take up the offer of employment, interview notes or other documentation which show the reasons why they have not been employed – for a definition of 'settled worker', see the Glossary in [Part 1: Apply for a licence](#).

Part 3: salary for Workers (including Tier 2) and Temporary Workers (including Tier 5)

- a. Copies of the worker's payslips, clearly showing the name, NI number, tax code, any allowances paid, and deductions made. For limited liability partnership (LLP)

members, you must keep copies of the worker's evidence of drawings and profit share.

- b. Evidence of the amount and frequency of all salary payments made to each worker, showing the transfer of each payment into the named worker's bank account or onto their pre-paid card, for example, a FOREX card.

Where you wish to rely on other account records, we must be able to clearly identify the specific worker's wage to assess whether the worker is being paid in line with what you originally stated on their Certificate of Sponsorship and with the rules set out in the [Sponsor guidance for employers](#). Accounts that show only 'wages for personnel' but not specifically the sponsored worker by name or other unique identifier are not considered acceptable.

This is not required for contractual service suppliers or independent professionals.

- c. A copy of any contract of employment or for services, or a written statement of employment particulars, between the sponsor and the worker, which clearly shows all the following:
- the names and signatures of all parties involved – normally, this will only be you and the worker
 - the start and end dates of the contract
 - details of the job, or piece of work that the worker has been contracted to do
 - the hours the worker will work
 - an indication of how much the worker will be paid

Note: if you are sponsoring a contractual service supplier or an independent professional on the T5 (Temporary Worker) International Agreement Worker route, the contract between you and the supplier of the service does not have to specify how much an individual worker will be paid.

- d. Where the worker receives any allowances as part of their salary package (where permitted on the route on which the worker is being sponsored), evidence of the value of those allowances must be kept, unless they are clearly shown in a contract of employment or contract for services, or on the worker's payslips.

Below are 2 examples

Example 1

If the worker receives help with accommodation by way of housing being provided, you must have evidence from the owner or letting agent for the property concerned which clearly states the value of the rent payable by you on the property.

Example 2

If the property is owned by you, there must be an independent assessment of the monthly rent achievable from the property concerned.

This is not an exhaustive list and you must be able to accurately document the value of any allowances you pay in cash or by way of goods and/or services so that we can be satisfied that they are being paid in accordance with the Immigration Rules and sponsor guidance.

This is not required for contractual service suppliers or independent professionals sponsored on the T5 (Temporary Worker) International Agreement Worker route.

Note: allowances do not count towards the salary threshold or going rate for workers sponsored on the Skilled Worker route, unless an exception applies. See [Sponsor a Skilled Worker](#) for further information.

- e. Any other document set out in the relevant code of practice.

Part 4: skill level for Workers (including Tier 2) and Temporary Workers (including Tier 5)

- a. A detailed and specific job description outlining the duties and responsibilities of the post which must include the skills, qualifications and experience required for the post, if not already provided at Part 2d.
- b. Copies of any relevant qualifications the worker holds to confirm skill level, such as degree certificate and/or documents that show the worker had the skills and experience to do the job. This could be references from a previous employer or other evidence of experience.

Note: if you stated in your job advertisement that a certain qualification is mandatory for the job, you must retain evidence that the worker you are sponsoring for the role has that qualification.

- c. Copies of any registration and/or professional accreditation documents and/or any confirmation letter the worker is required to have to do their job – for example, where the worker is a doctor, proof of registration with the General Medical Council.
- d. If sponsored on the T2 (Sportsperson) route or the sporting provisions of the T5 (Temporary Worker) Creative or Sporting Worker route, a copy of the sports governing body endorsement specific to the worker.
- e. For those coming to the UK under the entourage provisions of the T5 (Temporary Worker) Creative or Sporting Worker route, details of the worker's technical or specialist skills must be retained.

Part 5: for each migrant enrolled under the Student route or Child Student route (including migrants previously enrolled on Tier 4)

- a. Copy of each sponsored migrant's current passport. You must copy all pages showing any personal identity details including biometric details, stamps, or immigration status document including their period of permission to stay in the UK. This must show the migrant's entitlement to study with a licensed sponsor in the UK if the applicant is a non-EEA national or an EEA national who does not have a chipped passport.

EEA nationals (who have a chipped passport) applying under the Student or Child Student routes after the end of the transition period will receive a biometric immigration document in the form of an online immigration status rather than a vignette and a physical BRP, the validity of the Student or Child Student permission will be confirmed on the digital status. They will be subject to the requirements of the Immigration (Biometric Registration) Regulations 2008. An EEA national can prove their status by accessing the following link <https://www.gov.uk/view-prove-immigration-status>. EEA nationals can obtain a share code which can be used to prove an individual's immigration status. Sponsors should record information received from the share code in order to meet the record-keeping requirement.

You must always check the date on which the migrant entered the UK, to ensure they entered during the validity of their Student or Child Student permission and therefore have the ability to study¹. However, if the migrant is an EU national, EEA national or a national of Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea or the United States of America, they may enter the UK through an automated e-Passport gate ('e-Gate') if they hold valid permission confirmed by digital status or a vignette or BRP. In such cases, they will not have an entry stamp in their passport.

If the student does not have an entry stamp, you must still check the date of entry by asking to see other evidence such as, but not limited to, e-tickets or a paper or electronic boarding pass. You must then record that the date the student entered the UK, but do not have to retain evidence of the date of entry.

- b. Copy of the migrant's BRP or digital status. Where the Student or Child Student has digital status, you must keep an electronic copy of the status.
- c. Record of the migrant's absence/attendance, this may be kept either electronically or manually.

¹ If a student enters the UK before the start date stated on their Student or Child Student permission, they will not have entered on the basis of their Student or Child Student permission and will not be able to commence their studies. They will need to leave the common travel area and re-enter on or after the start date on their Student or Child Student permission to activate their Student or Child Student permission.

- d. A history of the migrant's contact details to include UK residential address, telephone number and mobile telephone number. This must be kept up to date with any changes to these details.
- e. Where the student's course of study requires them to hold an Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) clearance certificate, you must keep a copy of the certificate or the electronic approval notice received by you, from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. If the Student is exempt from providing an ATAS certificate due to their nationality, you do not need to request an ATAS certificate from the Student.
- f. If you are a Higher Education Provider (HEP) endorsing a migrant under the Tier 1 Start-up route, you must keep evidence of the selection process that resulted in that endorsement.
- g. For migrants in the Child Student category who are going to be cared for in the UK in a private foster care arrangement during their stay, you must, as soon as you become aware of the migrant's arrival, provide details of the name of the foster carer and of the address where the foster carer and the migrant will be living, to the local authority in whose area the child will be living. In addition, where a Child Student is already in the UK and a private foster care arrangement subsequently commences, you must provide details of the name of the foster carer and the address where the foster carer and the Child Student will be living, to the local authority in whose area the child will be living as soon as you become aware of the change in their care arrangements. This is to ensure that the local authority is made aware of the arrangement as soon as possible. You must keep a record of the notification to the local authority.
- h. Copies or originals where possible of any evidence assessed by you as part of the process of making an offer to the migrant; this could be copies of references, or examination certificates. Higher Education Providers with a track record of compliance must keep records of the documents used to obtain the offer for their students at degree level or above but these documents do not need to be submitted with the Student's visa application.