

ERASMUS 

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE UK ACROSS EUROPE

Tier 5 Government Authorised Exchange Scheme

Application for a Certificate of Sponsorship

Guidance for Coordinators

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Erasmus+ is the European Union programme for education, training, youth and sport.
The Erasmus+ UK National Agency is a partnership between the British Council and Ecorys UK.

Overview

Students 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 students 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 student 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 applicants' personal details. The applicant 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 students' course of study at their home 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](#).

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 students' passport.
- **Home address** needs to be the students' 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 students travelling in and out of the UK on a regular basis in connection with their work placement. Please note if the students 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 student at the work placement.
- **Job type** must be selected from the drop down field. Details on the relevant SOC code can be obtained [here](#).
- **Detailed summary of the tasks** the student will undertake at the work placement. Please provide comprehensive information in this section.
- **Demonstrate how the work experience placement and job role relate** to the students **degree programme**. Please provide comprehensive information in this section.

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

2) Copy of the students' passport including external cover and all personal ID details e.g. biometric page, 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 student 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 student.

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.
- It must contain the **student job title** during the placement.
- It must contain a **description of duties** the student 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 **student**, the **sending** institution and the **host** organisation.

6) Student Transcript

Important points to note:

- 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 students' degree programme/subjects.

7) Copy of the student's criminal record check from their country of origin where required

Important points to note:

- As of November 2015 the Home Office require us to keep evidence that the appropriate [Disclosure and Barring Service \(DBS\) checks](#) have been conducted where required.

- This means that **prior** to the issuing of the CoS we require evidence of a criminal record check for overseas students. Further information on what type of criminal records check is appropriate can be obtained [here](#). The certificate must be translated into English. Please check Home Office guidance [here](#) for further details on certifying a translation.
- **Once** the student has arrived in the UK the **host organisation** must provide us with evidence of the students [DBS check](#) . Please note that failure to provide this evidence will result in your sponsorship being withdrawn.

All of these documents must be completed in full and sent by email for the application to be considered.

Additional Requirements

- All documentation has to be consistent; we require all start and end dates of the work placement to match in the home university's letter, host organisation's letter and Tier 5 CoS application form.
- We do not accept web links like google, RAR or one drive attachments. All documents must be attached in Word or PDF format to your email. We only accept one to two emails per CoS application.

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 the university Coordinator has been advised of the decision regarding the student'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 student 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. You will need to present this letter at a later stage in your visa application.

To allow students 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 April through to August is a peak period when the majority of applications are submitted. To avoid disappointment please submit applications early.

Next Steps - Applying for a visa

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

Processing times differ from country to country but we estimate that the applicant should receive a decision on their visa within three weeks.

Further information on how to obtain a visa is outlined on the [Home Office website](#)

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 your application.