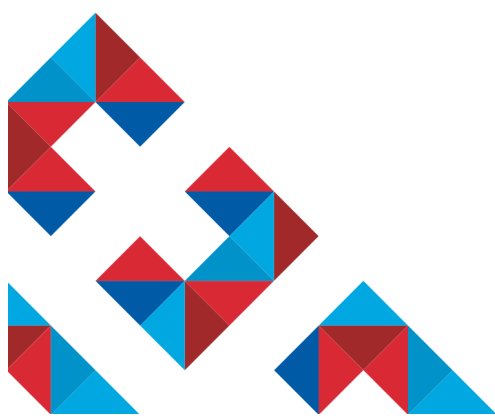


# T5 Government Authorised Exchange Scheme – Erasmus+ (Higher Education)

## Guidance for Coordinators

### How to apply for a Certificate of Sponsorship

Version 5.3: 18 October 2021



## Overview of changes to the guide

This document is version 5.3 of the T5 Government Authorised Exchange Scheme – Erasmus+ (Higher Education) Guidance for Coordinators – How to apply for a Certificate of Sponsorship. The table below gives an overview of changes made compared to previous versions of the guide:

Page number in version 5.2 of the guide	Change	Page number in current version of the guide
2	Added UK Government statement on Erasmus+ 2014-2020 and our sponsorship of mobilities	
Page number in version 5.1 of the guide	Change	Page number in current version of the guide
2	Removed statement about EEA/EU students who come for research for under 6 months.	2
n/a	Changed deadline for application submission to “no later than 10 weeks before the placement start date”	4
Page number in version 4 of the guide	Change	Page number in current version of the guide
n/a	Added clarification about start date in relation to virtual/ blended mobilities.	3
n/a	Added sentence about the job being supernumerary to the host letter.	5
n/a	Added clarification re: agencies that carry out UK Criminal Record checks	
n/a	Added information about the hard copy of the CoS being sent by email	3
n/a	Added clarification about the project number	3
n/a	Added clarification about job tasks on the application form needing to match the one on the Invitation letter from the host	3
n/a	Added clarification about the passport copy needing to include covers and all pages	4
n/a	Added graduation date to the confirmation letter from the university	5
n/a	Added clarification about traineeship title vs job title	5

n/a	Added requirement for the mobility to end before the last day of the 18 months for recent graduates	6
n/a	Added clarification about criminal check validity	6
n/a	Added requirement that the job title, tasks, working hours and work address on the contract must match the application form	7
8	Deleted paragraph about sending the hard copy of the Certificate of Maintenance by post	n/a

## **Overview**

UK Government continue to support work-based mobilities to take place in the UK supporting participants of the residual 2014-2020 Erasmus+ and ESC programmes. However, any programme where the UK is deemed a Partner Organisation, the UK Government has no obligation to support incoming visas which are outside the remit of the 2014-2020 Erasmus+ and ESC programmes.

Participants who have been awarded a traineeship mobility in the United Kingdom (UK) through the Erasmus+ 2014-20 programme will require a T5 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 T5 visa they will need to obtain a T5 Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) number from the British Council who are classified by the UK Home Office as a licensed Category A sponsor.

The UK is a Partner Country in Erasmus+ 2021-2027. The British Council cannot sponsor students funded by 2021-2027 funds. If there are any queries, applicants should contact their sponsor institutions. For those organisations wishing to sponsor applicants, there are elements under the [Erasmus+ programme guide](#), where participating organisations can utilise funding for higher education mobility projects.

## **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 sending institution is funding the mobility with an eligible 2014-2020 Erasmus+ grant
- The job role offered must be a minimum skill level of NVQ Level 3 or above. For further information about qualification levels please visit the [Government website](#).
- The work experience placement **must not** replace a genuine job vacancy in the UK work force. This means that the role must be over and above a hosts normal staffing requirements; if the person filling the role were not there, it wouldn't be filled by anyone else
- The work experience placement must be linked to the participant's course of study at their sending university.
- The work experience placement must be a minimum of two 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 university needs to email a complete application to the [T5 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 the progress of their applications.

In order for the T5 team to process applications we require the following documentation:

### 1) A fully completed [T5 CoS Application Form](#)

#### Important points to note:

- **Passport information** must match exactly the participant's passport.
- **Home address** needs to be the participants' current address. Please include full address details and postcode. Due to Covid-19 we are no longer sending the hard copy of the CoS by post to the participant. The CoS number will be included as a PDF in the Letter of Maintenance email we will send you after we assess the application.
- **Start date** needs to be the date the participant will come to the UK. In case of a blended/ virtual mobility that starts before the participant travels to UK, please fill in the actual start date when the participant will be in the UK **in person**.
- **Multiple Entry Visa** for participants travelling in and out of the UK on a regular basis, either for personal reason or 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 30hrs 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 the invitation letter from the host – **not** just Erasmus+ student/intern.
- **Job type** must be selected from the drop-down list. Details on the relevant SOC code can be obtained on the [Office for National Statistics Occupation Coding Tool](#). 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) This is the contract between your sending organisation and the National Agency from its country e.g. 2019-1-IT01-KA103-012345.
- **Is the work placement supernumerary?** This placement **must not** be part of normal staffing requirements and 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, focusing on the exact tasks, not the overall project. These should match the tasks detailed in the invitation letter from the host.
- **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) If the participant receives any additional funding on top of their Erasmus+ grant, for example if the host organisation covers accommodation costs. Any additional allowances from the host organisation must also be detailed in the appropriate section in the Learning Agreement for Traineeships.
- If the participant receives **additional allowances**, they should detail each allowance separately on the application form.
- If they receive a **monthly salary** from the host organisation, please submit a **copy of the contract of employment** with the supporting documentation.
- **UK National Insurance number.** If the participant is only receiving an Erasmus+ grant then they do not need one. However, they receive a **monthly salary** from the host organisation then they will need to provide us with a copy of their NI number if they have one already or submit a copy of their NI number after they've received one, once they've arrived.
- Will the participant be undertaking [regulated activity](#) in relation to children and/or adults within their job role? Please **check with the host organisation** if they will be. If they are, then we will require [overseas criminal record check](#) certificates from the participants' **country of origin** and **most recent country of residence**. We will also require a copy of the **UK Criminal Records Check** certificate. Participants will be unable to undertake regulated activity until a satisfactory disclosure has been obtained.
- Will the participants **bring dependants (family members)** with them 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

### Important points to note:

- We need to see a copy of the **entire passport**, including covers, ID details and leave stamps
- 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 indicate the (expected) **graduation** date.
- 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's **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.
- It must contain the sentence: **I, the undersigned, confirm that this work placement/ mobility is supernumerary, i.e. it is not part of normal staffing requirements and not filling a job vacancy.**

## 5) Erasmus+ Learning Agreement for Traineeships

### Important points to note:

- The Erasmus+ Higher Education [Learning Agreement for Traineeships](#) should be completed. (Please check the [Guidance](#) on how to complete the Learning Agreement).
- Under the **traineeship title** (also) include the job title as agreed with the host if it differs from the traineeship program.
- **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 18 months in order to be eligible to participate in a traineeship mobility. N.B. The mobility must end before the last day of the 18 months.
- 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 overseas criminal record check UK criminal record check certificate/s (if applicable)

### Important points to note:

- **Criminal record checks** for overseas participants are only required if participants are undertaking [regulated activity](#) in relation to children and/or adults. We advise participants to consult with the host organisation to clarify if checks are required.
- If required criminal record check certificates must be submitted from the participant's **country of origin and most recent country of residence**.
- The certificate/s **issue date** must be no longer than **six months** in advance of the application date.



- The certificate/s must be translated into **English or clearly state in English** that the participant hasn't had any criminal activity. Please check [Home Office guidance](#) for further details on certifying a translation.
- In addition to overseas criminal record checks we are also required to keep a copy of participants [UK criminal record check certificate](#). Host organisations may be able to apply for a UK criminal record prior to participants' arrival if they have all of the necessary documentation needed to process an application for a UK criminal record check. If a check prior to arrival is not possible then one must be carried out once participants are in the UK. A copy of the certificate must be submitted to the British Council. Please note that participants will not be able to undertake regulated activity until a satisfactory disclosure has been obtained.
  - In England and Wales, the [Disclosure and Barring Service \(DBS\)](#) undertake these checks.
  - In Scotland, these checks are carried out by Disclosure Scotland. Your host organisation will be able to advise on whether membership of the [Protecting Vulnerable Groups \(PVG\) scheme - mygov.scot](#) will be necessary.
  - In Northern Ireland, these checks are carried out by [AccessNI](#).

## 8) Copy of the contract of employment from the host organisation, (if applicable)

### Important points to note:

- The contract is only required if the participant receives a **salary**.
- The contract should clearly show the **names** and **signatures** of all parties involved, the **start and end dates** of the contract, **details of the job** and an indication of how much the participant will be **paid**.
- Any **allowances** that the participant receives as part of their salary package must be detailed in the contract.
- The **job title, tasks, working hours and work address** must match the ones from the Application Form
- The Contract must be **signed** and **dated** by all parties



***All documentation has to be consistent; we require the start and end dates of the work placement to match those on the Learning Agreement for Traineeships, confirmation letter from the sending university, acceptance letter from the host organisation and T5 CoS application form.***

***All of these documents must be completed in full and sent by the Erasmus+ Coordinator by email to [Tier5erasmus@britishcouncil.org](mailto:Tier5erasmus@britishcouncil.org) for the application to be considered. All communication will be via the university coordinator.***

***Do not send documents as web links or one drive attachments as these will be refused.***

***Please note that 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 [guide](#) 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)?**

Applications for CoS must be submitted no later than 10 weeks before the placement start date. We recommend that 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, the T5 team will make an application to the Home Office for a CoS for the applications which successfully meet the criteria. The T5 team will produce a Letter of Maintenance and email it to the Erasmus+ Coordinator and the participant along with Annex E – Participant T5 Guidelines and Sponsorship Duties, Safety First 2020-2021, T5 Online Visa Application Guidance and T5 UKVI Reporting Form.

To allow participants the opportunity of taking part in a traineeship mobility in the UK, the T5 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.

## **Next Steps - Applying for a visa**

Once the participant has been issued their CoS number they will be able to apply for their T5 Government and Authorised Exchange (GAE) visa through UK Visas and Immigration where they must complete an [online application](#).

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 [on the Government website](#).



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 HIS).

The T5 team have compiled a [guidance document](#) for visa applications which you can consult. Please note that the information and links contained within the document are correct at the time of its 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 T5 \(GAE\) Guidance](#)

[Guidance on application for UK visa under T5](#)

If you have any further questions in regards to submitting an application for a CoS please contact the [T5 team](#).

The T5 team will be happy to look into your enquiry and provide you with further information on the CoS application process.