

## **Guidance on Sponsored Researchers and Academic Visitors**

### **Sponsored Researchers**

A sponsored researcher is a person who wishes to come to the UK to lead or to take part in any formal research project and is receiving sponsorship funds for this purpose. Formal research projects are those hosted but not necessarily funded by a UK research institution. The sponsored researcher fills a research post and works under the full or partial control of the institution, which will itself benefit from the research. Sponsored researchers can be funded from sources in the UK or overseas.

Sponsored researchers should enter the UK under the Tier 5, Government Authorised Exchange, of the Points Based System. However those academics who want to come to the UK simply to share knowledge or experience or to hold informal discussions with their UK counterparts may qualify as an academic under the Business Visitors route. This category may also be suitable for those who intend to conduct research for their own private purposes - such as to do research for a book - and are funded from a UK source (some fellowships exist to facilitate such research).

### **Business and Special Visitors (including Academic Visitors)**

An Academic Visitor must be:

- A person on sabbatical leave from an overseas academic institution who wishes to make use of their leave to carry out research here (to do research for a book for example); or
- Academics (including doctors) taking part in formal exchange arrangements with United Kingdom counterparts;

The College has a requirement to adhere to the regulations surrounding the entry of Academic Visitors to the UK. The entry requirements are very limited in scope and advice should be sought from HR before deciding whether this route is appropriate.

The Business Visitor (sub-group Academic Visitor) route allows well qualified academics to visit the UK for a maximum of 12 months to undertake certain activities. Please see the ['Permissible Activities'](#) list on the HR website to ascertain if this is the correct route for your visitor. They should be able to produce evidence that they have been working as an academic in an institution of higher education overseas, or in the field of their academic expertise immediately prior to seeking entry or entry clearance for entry in the category.

A person entering the UK with a general tourist visa is not allowed to act as an Academic Visitor.

Academic Visitors must;

- Not receive funding for their work from any United Kingdom source (payments of expenses or honoraria to cover their needs whilst in the UK may be disregarded, as may payments on an exchange basis)

- Not intend to take employment or engage in any work other than the academic activity for which they are being admitted
- Not be filling a normal post or a genuine vacancy
- Not stay in the UK for more than 12 months
- Intend to leave the UK at the end of their visit
- Be able to maintain themselves and any dependants without having recourse to public funds (or be adequately maintained and accommodated by relatives or friends)

An academic visitor is not permitted to switch into other employment once in the UK.

Entry clearance as an academic visitor may be issued for a maximum of 12-months. Academic visitors who would like to remain in the UK for the entire 12-months must apply for entry clearance to the UK under the 'Business and Special Visitor' category. Further information can be found on the UK Border Agency (UKBA) website at: [www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/visitingtheuk/businessandspecialvisitors](http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/visitingtheuk/businessandspecialvisitors).

Those who are not Visa Nationals may be granted permission to enter the UK as an Academic Visitor for a maximum of 6-months at the Port of Entry. [Click here to be directed to the Visa National List on the UKBA website](#).