

VISA LOAN SCHEME

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 The University provides an interest free loan scheme to help reduce the financial burden on Global Talent, Skilled Worker, and Indefinite Leave to Remain visa applicants.

1.1.2 The University will also provide interest free loans for employees who wish to support their dependents with their visa costs.

1.1.3 The loan can be used to spread the costs associated with an employees' or an employees' dependent visa application, the health surcharge and legal fees. Further details can be found in 2.3.1.

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 This scheme aims to ensure that employees are supported financially with their/their dependents visa applications with an interest free loan of up to £9,999.

1.2.2 Employees can agree to a repayment plan of up to 24 months or the duration of their fixed-term contract of employment if that is a shorter period.

2. PROCEDURE

2.1 This procedure sets out steps required to successfully apply for a visa loan.

2.2 Eligibility

2.2.1 To be eligible to apply for an interest-free loan under this scheme the employee will:

- Be making an application for a Skilled Worker visa, Global Talent visa or Settlement application and/or an associated dependent application for the employees' family members and

- Be an employee on an indefinite or fixed-term contract of employment.

2.2.2 The loan will be payable to the employee by the University upon commencement of their employment. Payment of the loan will normally be made to the employee's chosen bank account within 7 working days of this information being received, although the University are not responsible for delays in payments that are outside of its control.

2.2.3 For the purposes of this scheme, 'dependents' refers to the following: spouse, civil partner and unmarried partner and dependent children aged 18 or under at time of application.

2.2.4 An employee would not be eligible for an interest-free visa loan in the following circumstances:

- Where the loan would be required for any other visa type or immigration application, such as Tier 5 (GAE) visa, Student visa, Ancestry visas, Citizenship, or a visa for another country.
- If notice of their resignation has been provided to the University.
- If they are subject to disciplinary proceedings that have or may result in dismissal.
- If they have previously been declared bankrupt or the equivalent of bankruptcy in any country.
- If the value of the monthly salary deductions would mean an employee would earn less than national minimum wage.

2.3 Conditions

2.3.1 Eligible employees may apply to receive a loan of up to a maximum of £9,999 for costs associated with making an eligible visa application. Costs are limited to the following:

- Visa/Settlement application fee
- Immigration Health Surcharge fees
- Priority/Super Priority processing fees
- Fees associated with meeting the English language requirements for the Skilled Worker visa (Including the UK Ecctis service or approved English language tests¹)
- Fees associated with the Life in the UK test
- Fees associated with approved TB testing, in relation to visa requirements
- Biometric Enrolment fees (where applicable)
- Legal fees

¹ The full list of approved English language tests for Skilled Worker visa purposes can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/prove-your-english-language-abilities-with-a-secure-english-language-test-selt>

2.3.2 The £9,999 maximum loan will be reduced by any loan already advanced to the colleague by the University (e.g Certified Maintenance, Cycle to Work) in the current tax year. If the aggregate value of all loans advanced to an employee by the University exceeds £9,999 within one tax year, the whole amount will be subject to tax.

2.3.3 Approval of any loan application will be entirely at the University's discretion.

2.4 Term of the Loan

2.4.1 The loan period may be up to a maximum of 24 months. At the University's discretion, the agreed loan period may be extended during periods leave where pay is reduced e.g. maternity, adoption, unpaid sabbatical leave or long-term sickness absence. Employees should discuss any changes to the term of the loan with the relevant HR Advisor in the Resourcing & Talent Management Team.

2.4.2 The loan period cannot exceed the duration of the employment contract.

2.4.3 The monthly loan repayment amount cannot normally be more than 20% of your monthly salary. For contracts shorter than 24 months this may impact the total amount you are able to loan. This can be discussed with the relevant HR Advisor in the Resourcing & Talent Management Team.

2.5 Payment and Repayment of the Loan

2.5.1 The loan will be transferred to the employee by bank transfer to their designated bank account.

2.5.2 The loan will be required to be repaid in equal instalments for the duration of the agreed loan term up to a maximum of 24 months by deductions from net pay (which means it will be deducted after applicable tax) and will normally commence the month following the month in which the employee commences their employment. The University will let the employee know if this will not be the case.

2.6 Termination of Employment

2.6.1 In the event the employee leaves the University's employment before the end of the agreed loan term (for whatever reason), the employee will be required to repay the balance in full before leaving. The University reserves the right to reclaim all or part of the monies from the employee's salary during

the notice period and any payments made on termination. The employee will be liable for any shortfall.

2.7 Application Process

2.7.1 To apply for a loan, please complete the application and payment request forms and submit via email to the relevant [HR Administration Team](#).

2.7.2 You will be notified of the outcome of your application with a letter via email.

2.7.3 The loan agreement will be subject to a separate contract between us, the terms of which are set out in a 'loan agreement' which will be shared with you as a part of your application. The loan agreement does not form part of your contract of employment.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Human Resources/Payroll

- a) To check the eligibility of each application.
- b) To provide support to employees of the affordability of the loan.
- c) To process applications in a timely manner.
- d) To ensure deductions are made in accordance with the agreed loan terms.

Employees

- a) To provide honest and accurate information.
- b) To comply with the process as advised.

Finance (Payments Office)

- a) To ensure payment requests are processed in a timely manner

4. RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Visa Reimbursement Scheme

5. REVIEW, APPROVAL & PUBLICATION

5.1 As a general principle, the Scheme will be reviewed by the HR Department, after three years or where operational and/or legislative requirements change. Any revisions will be approved in accordance with UEC procedures, where applicable.

5.2 This Scheme is not part of your contract of employment, and may be subject to review, amendment or withdrawal. This does not impact on any Loan Agreements you enter into with us, which will continue on their relevant terms.

5.3 This Scheme will be published on the University policy zone web page and will also be accessible via the Human Resources web pages.

5.4 Equality issues have been taken into account during the development of the Scheme and all protected characteristics have been considered as part of the Equality Analysis undertaken.

6. ANNEXES

N/A

7. DOCUMENT CONTROL INFORMATION

Document Name	Visa Loan Scheme
Owner	Chief People Officer
Version Number	1.2
Equality Analysis Form Submission Date	March 2023
Approval Date	March 2024
Approved By	Chief People Officer (minor edits)
Date of Commencement	September 2022
Date of Last Review	January 2024
Date for Next Review	January 2027
Related University Policy Documents	Visa Reimbursement Scheme
<i>For office use – Keywords for search function</i>	