

Visa Loan Scheme

Introduction

The Visa Loan Scheme forms part of an enhanced relocation provision under the University's People Strategy, and is designed to assist recruitment and retention by helping current and prospective non-EEA staff and their dependants with the costs of Tier 2 (General) visa and specific associated costs.

Employees will be able to apply for an interest free loan to help fund the costs associated with making these types of visa applications. The loan will be paid back by the employee through either 10 or 20 equal monthly deductions from their pay (dependant on the amount of the loan, as outlined below).

Eligibility

The Scheme is open to all non-EEA University employees who:

- Are making an application for a Tier 2 (General) visa sponsored by the University of Cambridge, and/or a points-based dependant visa/visas for their relatives, subject to their eligibility within the Immigration Rules¹ **and either**
- Have received a written offer of a University role and have confirmed such acceptance in writing, **or**
- Have an existing contract of employment with the University.

However, employees will be unable to take out a 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, Indefinite Leave to Remain, Citizenship, EEA application or a visa for another country);
- If the employee has a contract of less than 12 months at the point that the loan is applied for.

¹ As defined by paragraphs 319C and 319H of the Immigration Rules:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules/immigration-rules-part-8-family-members>. See also, paragraph 5 of the Points-Based System (Dependant) Policy Guidance:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-dependants-of-uk-visa-applicants-tiers-1-2-4-5>

- If they have served their notice of resignation to the University;
- If they have received notice of dismissal;
- If they are subject to disciplinary proceedings which may result in dismissal;
- If they have previously been declared bankrupt.

Conditions

Eligible employees may apply to receive a loan of up to £8,000 for costs associated with making a Tier 2 (General) visa application and/or a points-based dependant visa applications. Costs are limited to the following:

- Visa application fees
- Immigration Health Surcharge fees
- Priority/Premium processing fees
- Fees associated with meeting the English language requirements for the Tier 2 visa (including the UK NARIC service or approved English language tests²)
- Biometric Enrolment fees

The loan cannot be used for any other means, including for any other cost associated with making the visa application, such as legal fees.

Employees cannot hold loans from the University which exceed a total of £10,000 across any and all loan schemes, such as the Rental Deposit Loan Scheme³, operated by the University.

For a loan totalling £3,000 or less, the repayment schedule will take place over **10 months**. For a loan totalling more than £3,000, up to £8,000, the repayment schedule will take place over **20 months**.

The University will decide at its absolute discretion whether or not to grant a loan to an employee and whether or not the full amount of the loan requested will be provided. Each application will undergo a credit worthiness assessment to determine affordability. In exceptional circumstances, this may include a credit check.

The University has a loan calculator that allows the employee to check whether their net monthly pay will cover the monthly repayments for the loan amount they have

² The full list of approved English language tests for Tier 2 visa purposes can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-applying-for-uk-visa-approved-english-language-tests>

³ <https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/pay-benefits/cambens-employee-benefits/relocation-housing/rental-deposit-loan-scheme>

requested. A copy of the loan calculator is available at:

https://www.hr.admin.cam.ac.uk/files/visa_loan_scheme_calculator.xlsx

The full terms and conditions of the loan scheme are set out within the Loan Agreement and the associated documentation. A draft copy of the Loan Agreement and the Adequate Explanation Document are available upon request.

Process

A loan application form will be sent by the HR Compliance Team to the employee via email at the same time that they are assigned their Certificate of Sponsorship.

Where the employee has already commenced employment and wishes to take out a loan (subject to eligibility, as above), the loan application form can be obtained from the HR Compliance Team upon request (visaloans@admin.cam.ac.uk)

The HR Compliance Team will review the application, carry out relevant checks and process the application within 5 working days. The team will endeavour to inform the employee of the decision within this timeframe.

If the application is successful, the HR Compliance Team will send the loan documentation to the employee. Once the employee has read the documentation and they have decided that they wish to proceed, they must return the signed documents to the HR Compliance Team. Upon receipt, the HR Compliance Team will notify the Finance Division who will endeavour to make payment of the loan into the employee's bank account within the next 5 working days.

The employee must provide copies of UKVI receipts for payments as part of their visa application(s) to the HR Compliance team within 10 working days of payment being made to UKVI.

Review

The operation of this scheme will be reviewed after the first six months of operation by the HR Compliance Team and Finance Division. For any clarification of the scheme, please contact the HR Compliance Team on 01223 (3)32321 or by email visaloans@admin.cam.ac.uk.