

### **Departmental policy on financial assistance with visa renewal/continuation costs**

In cases where continuation of employment means renewal of a visa there are sometimes significant costs for the individual in renewing that visa. This policy covers the cost linked to an extension of Skilled Worker visas of departmental employees. Please note that, in line with the [University policy's recommendations](#), Indefinite Leave to Remain, and British Citizenship application costs are not subsidised by the department, neither are Immigration Health Surcharges.

1. If the employee needs assistance with the cost of their own visa, then their manager/PI may source funding for part or all of the cost (provided this does not conflict with the funder's rules). However, note point 2 below about the high tax costs involved.
2. Visa renewal costs are considered by HMRC to be not wholly for the University's purposes. Therefore, any portion that is paid through the University is treated as taxable, like a salary payment<sup>1</sup>, and is 'grossed-up' for tax and national insurance contributions. This makes the final cost significantly higher, though the exact increase will vary depending on the tax circumstances of the person concerned.
3. The department is able to make a modest contribution of up to 20% of the grossed-up cost of the visa. In order for the department to make such a contribution the individual must at least match this personally.
4. Costs for dependants shall not be funded by the department, manager or PI unless funding was awarded specifically for this purpose in a research agreement.
5. In cases of financial hardship caused by significant visa costs, the department may consider underwriting a university loan<sup>2</sup> but this would require additional approval by the central university and is expected to be in exceptional cases only.

A worked example is provided below for illustrative purposes only. Please talk to Shaka Obhiozele, Head of Administration, in the first instance about making a request for assistance in any of these cases.

**Example** - If an employee has visa costs of £2,000 but they are unable to pay the full amount, a request could be made to the department for support in covering 20% (= £400 plus tax and NI).

However, if the employee's PI were in a position to contribute £1,400 (plus tax and NI) of the total cost (£2,000), then the employee's contribution would be reduced accordingly. As a minimum, their contribution must match the department's. In this example, this would mean the remaining £600 are split by the employee and department equally.

<sup>1</sup> The reimbursement would normally be processed as an expense claim and so the relevant receipts should be retained to submit with the claim. Having been processed, the payment would be made as part of the employee's pay and appear on the monthly payslip.

<sup>2</sup> Further details about the University's visa loan scheme are available at the following link: <https://staffimmigration.admin.ox.ac.uk/visa-loan-scheme>. The visa loan scheme can also be used to cover the Immigration Health Surcharge fees or Indefinite Leave to Remain application cost.