

INFORMATION FOR OVERSEAS TEACHERS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The aim of this document is to answer specific questions you may have relating to sponsorship, travelling with children, funds required to make a successful relocation to the UK and support you can expect from Hourglass Education.

We hope this FAQ document provides you with a further understanding of these topics but please feel free to contact your consultant at Hourglass Education should you have any other specific questions.

QUESTIONS FEATURED IN THIS DOCUMENT

Page 2 Sponsorship

- I am based overseas, what is the process for sponsorship?
- My spouse is also registered with Hourglass Education, do we both need sponsorship?
- What are Maintenance Funds?
- I have a child who will join me in England but at a later date, when do I apply for their visa?
- I have a partner but we are not married; can they be a dependant on my visa?
- I require a certificate of sponsorship. Can I work via Hourglass on a long term supply basis?
- Can I extend my visa to remain in the UK longer than my initial certificate of sponsorship and visa permits?

Page 4 How much money will I need?

- What is the cost of a sponsorship visa?
- What other costs do I need to consider?
- What is the cost of accommodation?
- Am I required to pay a fee to Hourglass Education?

Page 5 Support from Hourglass Education

- Who will arrange living accommodation?
- What support can I expect from Hourglass when it comes to relocating?

Page 6 Qualified Teacher Status

- If I don't hold the QTS accreditation, will I be deemed an 'unqualified' teacher?
- What is the 'four year rule'; does this affect my ability to obtain QTS?
- I must obtain QTS via an Assessment Only Route; is there anything I can do to prepare for this prior to relocating to the UK?

Page 7 Pre-School Children

- What child care provision is available? How much will it cost?
- How can I judge which is the right childcare provider for my child?

Page 8 Children Requiring a School Place

- What child care provision is available? How much will it cost?
- How can I judge which is the right childcare provider for my child?

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

SPONSORSHIP

I AM BASED OVERSEAS, WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR SPONSORSHIP?

You will require a 'restricted' certificate of sponsorship and the process is as follows:

1. The licence holder (school or Local Authority) makes an application to UK Visa & Immigration for permission to grant a 'restricted' certificate of sponsorship'.
(The board at UKVI only meet on the 11th of every month. The deadline for applications is the 5th of every month.)
2. UKVI notify the licence holder that the permission to issue a restricted certificate of sponsorship is granted.
3. The licence holder issues the certificate of sponsorship and informs you.
(A certificate of sponsorship is simply a reference number)
4. You apply online for the sponsorship visa and include all dependants in this application.
5. You make an appointment at a local visa application centre so that biometric information can be taken (fingerprints & photograph).
6. The sponsorship visa is granted and your passport returned to you.

MY SPOUSE IS ALSO REGISTERED WITH HOURGLASS EDUCATION, DO WE BOTH NEED SPONSORSHIP?

No. We advise that only one of you is the sponsored worker and the other is a dependant on their certificate of sponsorship. That way we only need one school with a sponsor licence as a dependant can work at any school regardless of whether or not they hold a sponsor licence. There are also tax benefits available to some dependants as they can work on a long term supply basis as opposed to a direct contract with a school.

If one of you offers a shortage subject (maths, chemistry or physics) then we advise that they are the sponsored worker as the sponsorship application would be treated as a priority and the visa fee is cheaper.

WHAT ARE MAINTENANCE FUNDS?

Maintenance funds are a requirement of the sponsorship visa which you apply for when the certificate of sponsorship is issued. The maintenance requirement is in place because UK Visa & Immigration want to ensure that new entrants to the UK have enough money to support themselves and any dependants until a first salary is paid.

The maintenance fund requirement is as follows:

For the sponsored worker	= £945	} These amounts must be held in a bank account for a minimum of 90 consecutive days up to the day of and during your visa application
For dependants	= £630 per person	

Hourglass endeavors to persuade schools to 'certify' maintenance when issuing a certificate of sponsorship. This then eliminates the maintenance requirement when it comes to the visa application. We do this to avoid any possible or unexpected issues relating to the maintenance funds and the requirement to maintain the money in your account for the required 90 days. We have had situations in the past where a rogue direct debit has jeopardized a candidate's visa application.

If a school does certify maintenance for you then this cannot be taken as them being willing to support you financially until your first payment is received.

However, you have to be prepared for the fact that a school may refuse to certify maintenance, hence why we ask you at registration if you can meet and maintain the funds in your account for the specified time.

I HAVE A CHILD WHO WILL JOIN ME IN ENGLAND BUT AT A LATER DATE, WHEN DO I APPLY FOR THEIR VISA?

It is entirely your decision when you choose to apply for visas for your dependents. First you need to decide whether your dependents will travel with you to England or if they will join you at a later date. Unfortunately, due to a recent change in the way visas are issued, it is no longer possible to apply for dependant visas at the same time as your own, unless they are travelling with you.

Visas are now issued in two stages; an initial 30 day vignette which gives you 30 days to enter the UK from the date you gave as your intended travel date, followed by a Biometric Residence Permit issued to you upon arrival in the UK.

Hourglass do not want to influence you in any way, it is your decision as a family. Especially with regards to children, we can completely understand that you may wish your child to remain at home with family while you establish a new home for them in the UK so that they can travel at a later date, once you have accommodation set up and schooling/childcare arrangements in place. However we want to make you aware that UKVI may interpret the situation differently and we have no influence on the decisions they make; if you do not request a dependent visa at the start of the process, it could be deemed that you have made adequate arrangements in your home country for the provision of childcare and subsequently a later application may not be favourably assessed and may be refused.

I HAVE A PARTNER BUT WE ARE NOT MARRIED; CAN THEY ACCOMPANY ME TO THE UK AS A DEPENDANT ON MY SPONSORSHIP VISA?

UK Visa and Immigration advise that "there is no definition of "partner" in the Immigration Rules. It is generally used as a catch-all term including spouses, civil partners and unmarried partners. On some applications an unmarried partner can apply as a dependant if certain criteria are met (e.g. they must be in a durable relationship with the main applicant, usually demonstrated with evidence that they have lived together for at least two years)."

Essentially a partner can be a dependant on your visa as long as you can provide evidence that you have lived with your partner for at least 2 years.

I REQUIRE A CERTIFICATE OF SPONSORSHIP. CAN I WORK VIA HOURGLASS ON A LONG TERM SUPPLY BASIS?

No. Unfortunately, Hourglass Education and other recruitment agencies are not permitted by UKVI to be holders of a sponsorship licence. As sponsorship must come from the school (or the local authority/academy trust they belong to) you have to be directly employed by them. The school will issue you a contract and maintain responsibility for paying your salary on a monthly basis.

CAN I EXTEND MY VISA TO REMAIN IN THE UK LONGER THAN MY INITIAL CERTIFICATE OF SPONSORSHIP AND VISA PERMITS?

Yes. If you remain at your existing school or decide to move on to another school, then a new Certificate of Sponsorship can be issued and you can update your visa in country. Visas for dependants will also need to be updated at the same time as yours in order for them to remain in the UK legally.

If you decide to move schools before the end of your visa then you need a new Certificate of Sponsorship from your new school and you must update your visa accordingly. This can be done in country and again this too applies to all dependants.

Certificates of Sponsorship issued to you only apply to the job at the school which issued it. A change in your employment will require a new Certificate of Sponsorship and an updated visa.

After 5 years of teaching in the UK under a sponsorship visa then you may be eligible for Indefinite Leave to Remain (permanent residency).

HOW MUCH MONEY WILL I NEED?

WHAT IS THE COST OF A SPONSORSHIP VISA?

A charge is made for each visa applied for, including dependants. Visa fees are as follows:

- The visa fee for a certificate of sponsorship which is for up to 3 years = £575 per person
- If the certificate of sponsorship is for a shortage occupation and for up to 3 years = £437 per person
- The visa fee for a certificate of sponsorship which is for more than 3 years = £1151 per person
- If the certificate of sponsorship is for a shortage occupation and for more than 3 years = £873 per person

The UK Government has very recently introduced new legislation relating to the National Health Service, which impacts on non UK Nationals already in the UK or migrating to the UK. On 6th April 2015 they introduced the 'Immigration Health Surcharge' (IHS) and this is a mandatory up-front cost and pre-requisite to a visa application.

Visa applicants must pay the Immigration Healthcare Surcharge as part of their visa application. The online application form prompts applicants to pay the fee. The IHS cost is £200 per person per year (including dependants). If a Certificate of Sponsorship is issued for 2 years therefore a 2 year visa is being applied for, the IHS charge is £400 per person.

WHAT OTHER COSTS DO I NEED TO CONSIDER?

The cost of the visa, the Immigration Healthcare Surcharge and the maintenance funds are not the only costs to consider. You need to ensure that in addition to the aforementioned you also have enough saved funds to pay for flights, accommodation, groceries and transportation etc in England until you receive your first month salary. Your salary will be paid to you one month in arrears. If you are to secure a rental property you will need to pay up to two month's rent plus the same amount again as a deposit up front.

Approximate relocation costs (per person):

IHS Card	= £200 per person per year
Visa Fee	= £437 / £575
Flights (one way)	= £700

Hourglass advises that you have available the very minimum of **£3500** (approximately \$629,480.00 JMD) after paying out for the IHS card, visa fees and flights, purely to fund your first month in England until your first month salary is paid. If you are relocating with dependants then we advise you make available a larger amount as you will require a larger house which will incur a higher rent and deposit, and elevated living costs (groceries etc).

WHAT IS THE COST OF ACCOMMODATION IN ENGLAND?

When it comes to your living costs in the UK, your accommodation will be the most expensive. It is difficult to estimate how much it will cost you because rent can vary widely. Unsurprisingly, rental costs in urban locations will be significantly higher than in the country. In England you will also find that the cost of accommodation is more expensive in the South than it is in the Midlands or the North of England. London is by far the most expensive part of England to live.

Please find below recent examples of accommodation costs (September 2015) to give you an idea of what you can expect to pay:

<u>The North of England</u> (Huddersfield)	
Guesthouse/Hotel (single)	= £57 per night
Guesthouse/Hotel (family)	= £82 per night
Rental Accommodation (one bedroom)	= £500 p.m
Rental Accommodation (two bedroom)	= £750 p.m

<u>The South of England</u> (Hillingdon, NW Lon)	
Guesthouse/Hotel (single)	= £70 per night
Guesthouse/Hotel (family)	= £125 per night
Rental Accommodation (one bedroom)	= £950 p.m
Rental Accommodation (two bedroom)	= £1300 p.m

The cost to secure rental accommodation is generally one month rent up front plus 1.5 to 2 month's rent as deposit.

ARE WE REQUIRED TO PAY A FEE TO HOURGLASS EDUCATION?

There is no cost to you for our service.

SUPPORT FROM HOURGLASS EDUCATION

WHO WILL ARRANGE LIVING ACCOMMODATION?

It is your responsibility to organise living accommodation, both short term and rental accommodation. Hourglass will support you and provide you with information and contacts to enable you to make suitable arrangements but we cannot do it for you. You must take responsibility for your own relocation.

If there are other Hourglass teachers relocating to the same area or to work in the same school then we will put you in touch with them so that you can get to know each other and maybe look at the option of house sharing.

WHAT SUPPORT CAN I EXPECT FROM HOURGLASS WHEN IT COMES TO RELOCATING?

Hourglass Education will maintain close contact with you throughout this process; from you securing a position, to arriving in the UK and settling in to school. You can expect an information handbook when a position is secured, designed specifically for teachers relocating to the UK with Hourglass Education. This handbook includes the following and plenty more:

- Salary & Tax
- Accommodation Advice
- Transportation in the UK
- Setting up a Bank Account
- Applying for a National Insurance Number (required for payment of your salary)

When you registered with Hourglass Education you will also have been sent information relating to visas, how to obtain QTS and details of our compliance expectations. We will happily answer any questions you have regarding either of these topics and support you through the process.

We want to ensure that you are fully aware of what is involved in relocating and that you feel confident in doing so. However, Hourglass cannot arrange your relocation for you. You must approach your relocation proactively, independently and with a positive frame of mind. You must also ensure that you carefully read and understand all information sent to you.

QUALIFIED TEACHER STATUS

IF I DON'T HOLD THE QTS ACCREDITATION, WILL I BE DEEMED AN 'UNQUALIFIED' TEACHER?

The fact that you do not yet have QTS will not hinder your job prospects in England. The only time that an 'unqualified' status may be applied to you is when your salary is being determined as some schools will refer to the unqualified teacher payscale. The 'unqualified teacher' pay scale is essentially designed for individuals with no teaching qualification.

Hourglass Education will promote you as an 'Overseas Trained Teacher', not as an 'unqualified teacher', and as such, if a school offers you a salary from the unqualified scale we will insist that this is uplifted to an appropriate salary from the 'main teachers' payscale. Our aim is to secure you a salary reflective of your teaching experience.

Unqualified Teacher Pay Scale:

From	£16,136
To	£29,673

Main Teacher Pay Scale:

From	£22,023
To	£37,119

WHAT IS THE 'FOUR YEAR RULE'; CAN I OBTAIN QTS?

Overseas trained teachers who are not eligible for QTS prior to relocating to the UK have four years in which to gain the accreditation. This is the 'four year rule' and the countdown starts on your first day of teaching in England or Wales. The 'four year rule' only poses an issue; if you have previously taught in England and Wales, if your first day was over four years ago and you have not yet obtained the QTS accreditation.

If you have exceeded the four year rule and you want to return to England to teach then you must be deemed an 'instructor'. As an 'instructor' you can still obtain QTS via the Assessment Only Route.

I MUST OBTAIN QTS VIA AN ASSESSMENT ONLY ROUTE; IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO TO PREPARE FOR THIS PRIOR TO RELOCATING TO THE UK?

Yes. In order to enrol on an 'Assessment Only' program, you must ensure you can meet the entry criteria. This includes applying to UK NARIC for equivalent comparables of your qualifications. For specific details of the entry criteria then please refer to 'The Hourglass Education – Guide to QTS in England' (page 7) which was sent to you when you registered.

You will also be asked to provide UK NARIC certificates by Hourglass as they are required for your compliance file.

Upon receipt of your NARIC certificates, if you cannot meet the entry criteria for an Assessment Only programme then an AO provider will be able to provide you with advice regarding to how to 'top up' your qualifications.

The 'Assessment Only' route to QTS cannot be started until you are here in the UK, teaching in a long term or contracted position in a school. You have 4 years from your first day teaching in England to obtain QTS so we advise that you do not embark on this immediately. Your AO provider will observe you in class so it is important that you are settled in the UK, familiar with the UK curriculum and have established positive relationships with your students.

PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN

WHAT CHILDCARE PROVISION IS AVAILABLE? HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?

There are many different kinds of childcare providers in London and across the UK. Specific information, often grouped by neighbourhood is available on the internet. An example, detailing the care available in South London can be found at the following website: <http://www.familyspacecroydon.co.uk/landing/childcare>

Registered childminder

Someone who looks after up to six children under 8 in their own home, including up to three children under 5 and one under 12 months. Many will work flexible hours and pick up/drop off children at schools and playgroups. Childminders also care for older children but do not need to be registered for this.

From £35 - £45 per day, or £5 - £8 per hour

Private Day nursery

Care and education from 6 weeks old to 4 years (although some only start from 2). Typically, open weekdays from 7.30 am to 6.00 pm throughout the year.

Around £200 per week depending on where you live.

Nursery school

Care and education for 3-4 year olds. Open during regular school hours during term time.

Free if part of a state scheme, otherwise around £150 per week.

All 3 and 4 year olds are entitled to 15 hours of free early years education.

Typically, childcare costs in and around London are more expensive than in other parts of the country. Nurseries in South Croydon can charge from £200 per week for children 0-3 years old. Fees vary according to the age of the child and the time spent within the childcare setting – discounts can be offered for full time places.

HOW CAN I JUDGE WHICH IS THE RIGHT CHILDCARE PROVIDER FOR MY CHILD?

Childminders are encouraged to register with Ofsted. Whilst these may be more expensive than childminders offering informal/unregulated care, there are benefits associated with registration. Registered childminders are obliged to apply for a DBS Certificate and their premises are inspected by special Ofsted teams.

PACEY is a professional association for childcare workers. Members post their information on their website:

http://www.pacey.org.uk/parents/finding_local_childcare.aspx

All providers delivering funded early education places are inspected by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) (although some independent schools use a different inspectorate). Most providers are required to register with Ofsted on the Early Years Register which, along with the Early Years Foundation Stage, defines the standards providers must ensure that your child is safe and the quality of learning is high. Ofsted use these standards to judge the quality of providers, and make recommendations for improvement where appropriate. You can ask your provider for a recent copy of their inspection report or you can download it from the Ofsted website. Providers must display their Ofsted registration certificate and you can ask for a copy. More information about the Early Years Register is also available on the Ofsted website.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>

Nurseries and childminders may be well known in their neighbourhood. Do ask colleagues and friends for their experience and recommendations.

CHILDREN REQUIRING A SCHOOL PLACE

HOW DO I FIND OUT ABOUT LOCAL SCHOOLS?

It is very important that you make no assumptions regarding schooling for accompanying children. Unless the school you will be employed at has specifically said so, you cannot assume that they will have a place for your child or will arrange a school place at a neighbouring school on your behalf.

Your starting point should be your local council - they will have information about all the schools in your area (and those outside your local council area), and the admissions criteria for the schools you are interested in.

You can also get advice about choosing schools from your local council. All councils have teams to help parents get their children into schools.

HOW CAN I JUDGE WHICH IS THE RIGHT SCHOOL FOR MY CHILD?

You can find out more about specific schools by:

- visiting the school - most schools have open days
- reading the school's most recent Ofsted reports
- checking school league tables, which include exam results
- talking to other parents about what they think of the school

Important information is also available on a school's website. Each school's website must include:

- the amount of money they get from taking underprivileged children (the 'pupil premium'), what they do with it and the effect it's had
- details of the curriculum
- admission criteria
- behaviour policy
- special educational needs policy
- disability policy
- links to Ofsted reports
- links to performance data
- the school's latest key stage 2 and 4 attainment and progress measures

HOW DO I SECURE A PLACE AT THE RIGHT SCHOOL FOR MY CHILD?

You are likely to be making an 'in term' application for your child. In this case, you should contact the local council in the first instance.

You should be aware that all schools have admission criteria to decide which children get places.

Admission criteria are different for each school. For example, schools may give priority to children:

- who have a brother or sister at the school already
- who live close to the school
- from a particular religion (for faith schools)
- who do well in an entrance exam (for selective schools, e.g. grammar schools or stage schools)
- who went to a particular primary school (a 'feeder school')
- in care or being looked after (all schools must have this as a top priority)

Your local council can give you a booklet about schools' criteria and how to apply.