

# **Temporary Postings Overseas**

## **Postings and Transfers**

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## Introduction Temporary Postings Overseas

### Overview

This section describes the policies, guidelines and procedures for obtaining and undertaking a temporary posting overseas.

A **temporary** posting is an overseas assignment which lasts between one month and one year. Any assignment lasting less than one month is deemed to be a business visit, rather than a temporary posting. Visits up to eight weeks which are for the purpose of pursuing UK work or familiarisation are also excluded from this policy. Any assignment lasting one complete year or more is a substantive overseas posting (see Overseas Postings).

This section covers:

- applying for and undertaking a temporary posting overseas (see Applying for and Undertaking a Temporary Posting Overseas)
- terms and conditions associated with a temporary posting overseas (see Terms and Conditions for a Temporary Posting Overseas)
- allowances and expenses associated with a temporary posting overseas (see Allowances and Expenses for a Temporary Posting Overseas)
- things you need to think about before you move overseas

### Audience

This section applies to staff undertaking a temporary UK-appointed or harmonised manager posting overseas. It does not apply to any other kind of temporary posting.

### Policy

A temporary posting is a British Council overseas assignment which lasts between one month and one year. The purpose of a temporary posting may be to cover the absence of a substantive member of staff (for example, on maternity leave), to fill a gap between substantive post-holders or to carry out a specific project or activity.

Temporary postings can be undertaken either from a UK base or from an overseas base. The same terms and conditions apply to both cases, unless the posting is from an overseas base to which the person will not return, that is, their posting there is already complete. In this case any accompanying family members will be entitled to flights and Unaccompanied Air Freight (UAF) to the UK, not to the temporary posting location. Heavy baggage will be shipped back to the UK. The member of staff will travel direct to the temporary posting location and is not entitled to travel via the UK.

## Applying for and Undertaking a Temporary Posting Overseas

### Overview

This section describes the procedures for obtaining and undertaking a temporary posting overseas. It covers:

- applying for a temporary posting overseas
- getting the best from your posting, with a briefing programme and job plan.
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### Audience

This section applies to UK-appointed staff undertaking a temporary posting overseas.

## Responsibilities

The procedures are carried out by:

- staff applying for and undertaking a temporary posting overseas
- temporary line manager
- HR International Assignments Team (HR IAT).

## Procedures

### Applying for a temporary posting overseas

Temporary postings are normally advertised in the Bulletin in line with standard recruitment and selection policy. See Exceptions to the Standard Recruitment Procedures in the Recruitment section.

1. Apply for the posting in the usual way. See Applying for a Position in the Recruitment section.
2. When your posting has been confirmed, the Executive Officer in the HR Overseas Team sends notification to HR IAT. This initiates the transfer process.
3. Your HR IAT Desk Officer will send you a letter giving details of your salary and overseas allowances.

### Notifying IAT of your move

You need to ensure that a Movement Return in respect of your temporary posting is sent to HR IAT at the beginning and at the end of the posting.

### Getting the best from your posting

#### Briefing programme

1. Before you leave, you must consult the Country Director about what should be covered in your briefing programme and make appropriate arrangements for the briefing when you arrive at post.
2. When your posting is completed, ensure that you have a debrief with the Country Director.

#### Job plan

1. You must agree a job plan at the start of your posting. Arrange a meeting with your temporary line manager to agree a job plan as early as possible.
2. At the end of your posting, ensure that a job review with your temporary line manager is carried out and recorded, and pass the job review report to your permanent line manager

## Terms and Conditions for a Temporary Posting Overseas

### Overview

This section describes the guidelines and procedures associated with the terms and conditions for a temporary posting overseas. It covers:

- leave and TOIL
- healthcare issues, including obtaining medical and dental clearance.

### Audience

This section applies to staff undertaking a temporary UK-appointed or harmonised manager posting overseas.

### Responsibilities

The procedures are carried out by:

- staff accepting a temporary posting overseas
- HR International Assignments Team (HR IAT).

## Guidance / Procedures

### Leave and TOIL

- When you are undertaking a temporary posting overseas, you earn leave pro rata at the rate of 35 days per year (40 if you are in one of the countries in the two highest categories of location ranking - see the British Council location grouping of countries document).

#### Notes:

- If you take leave during the course of your posting, you will continue to receive overseas allowances.
- If you take leave after your posting is finished, even if the leave is taken in the country of posting, your overseas allowances will cease.
- You can expect your working hours to be longer at post than in the UK, but if you work an exceptional amount of extra time you may be able to take Time Off In Lieu (TOIL) by agreement with your temporary line manager. Any TOIL earned during your temporary posting has to be taken before you return to your substantive job, otherwise it is lost.
- You are entitled to two days special postings leave for personal preparations, one before you leave for the temporary posting and one after you return.
- Ensure that you take any TOIL that you earn while you are in post and ensure you ask your line manager to sign your leave and TOIL records.

### Healthcare

Staff on temporary UK-appointed postings overseas, or on overseas visits from the UK are covered by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Healthcare Contract for the following:

- the journey to and from post
- periods of duty
- any leave taken in country.

To obtain this cover, staff must apply for medical clearance through Capita Health Services, the FCO's Occupational Health provider before taking up the posting..

Staff on temporary harmonised manager postings overseas are covered by the Expacare contract; to obtain this cover they must register with Expacare.

The cost of any medical treatment is charged to the local medical budget OMOC246140. In exceptional circumstances the claim may be settled on return to the UK but prior approval should be obtained from the Head of HR IAT.

For more information about the cover provided by the FCO Healthcare Scheme, see Health Benefits for Staff Working Overseas.

For more information about the cover provided by Expacare, see Expacare Medical Insurance Contract.

### Procedure

1. You must obtain medical clearance before travelling to post, so that you are covered by the FCO Healthcare Contract or the Expacare contract while you are on your temporary posting. HR IAT will give you details of how to apply for clearance on-line.

#### **Notes:**

- If you already have short-term traveller clearance you must send a copy of your clearance document to HR IAT.
  - If you are already working overseas in a UK-appointed post (and therefore already have medical clearance), you must inform FCO Healthline (020 8762 8585) at International SOS of your move. International SOS is the primary health care provider for the FCO Healthcare contract.
  - If you are already covered by the Expacare contract you must inform Expacare of your move.
  - You are not covered by the FCO Healthcare contract when you take leave outside the country of posting and you should take out additional personal insurance for any such periods. Staff covered by the Expacare contract should check with Expacare whether they will be covered on any particular trip. If not, they should take out additional personal insurance.
2. You can claim a portion of the costs of any emergency dental treatment while on your temporary assignment. Any treatment that is non-urgent and can await your return to the UK is not reimbursable. To enable you to make a claim if required, you must obtain a Dental Clearance Form from HR IAT, have it completed, signed and stamped by your dentist and return it to HR IAT. For more information about NHS / patient contributions, see Health Benefits for Staff Working Overseas.
  3. You must obtain advice on the appropriate vaccinations for the country to which you are going from FCO Healthline (tel: 020 8762 8585) and have them done as early as possible. Alternatively you can have the vaccinations done by your GP or, if you are overseas, at the local panel clinic, and obtain reimbursement of the costs.
  4. On your arrival at post, you must obtain a briefing from the Director or other senior member of staff on healthcare arrangements since these vary from country to country.

## **Allowances and Expenses for a Temporary Posting Overseas**

### **Overview**

This section describes the guidelines and procedures associated with allowances and expenses for a temporary posting overseas. It covers:

- dependants
- salary and allowances
- travel to and from post
- transporting your belongings
- insurance for your belongings
- accommodation.

### **Audience**

This section applies to UK-appointed staff undertaking a temporary posting overseas.

### **Responsibilities**

The procedures are carried out by:

- staff accepting a temporary posting overseas
- office managers
- HR International Assignments Team (HR IAT).

## Guidance / Procedures

### Dependants

The British Council does not pay for any dependants to accompany members of staff on temporary postings, though in the case of disability special consideration may be given.

If you wish to pay for your partner, spouse or children to accompany you, you must contact the Country Director immediately to find out what kind of accommodation is available and to check that there are no problems in your being accompanied. You must also ensure that you take out adequate medical insurance for your family members.

**Note:** that there is no entitlement to Boarding School Allowance on temporary postings.

### Salary and allowances

- You receive the same salary when you are on a temporary posting as you would if you remained in the UK, minus the London Market Allowance (LMA), if applicable.
- Overseas allowances are payable for the duration of your temporary posting. These are:
  - expatriate allowance of 30% of basic salary
  - where applicable, location allowance (between 0% and 25%)
  - where applicable, cost of living allowance (COLA)

*For more information about these allowances, see Pay and Overseas Allowances.*

- No other allowances such as subsistence, meals, personal incidental expenses (PIE) or travel allowance are payable in addition to these, unless you make official trips away from base in the country of posting. In this case, normal travel and subsistence regulations apply.
- No home-to-office transport allowance is payable.
- You do not receive a transfer grant or first postings grant, nor a heavy baggage allowance, because these are intended to cover the cost of moving an entire household from one country to another which is not the case with temporary postings. (See Benefits and Allowances for UK-Appointed Staff on an Overseas Posting for definitions of these overseas allowances.) You are entitled to an Unaccompanied Air Freight (UAF) allowance (see Procedure for travel to post below).

However, if a posting which is initially for less than one year is extended beyond one year, a transfer grant at the single/unaccompanied rate is payable on the return journey. This is the only exception; there is still no eligibility for other substantive posting entitlements such as fare-paid leave journeys or partner visits.

**Note:** A temporary posting can be extended only when operational requirements arise which could not have been foreseen when the posting was originally advertised; in no circumstances can a temporary posting be extended more than two months beyond one year.

### Travel to and from post

The British Council pays for your international travel to and from post at the beginning and end of your temporary overseas posting.

#### Procedure for travel to post

1. You must complete a Travel Arrangements on Transfer form requesting either a flight booking or cash in lieu and submit it to HR IAT.
2. HR IAT either arranges your flights for you or pays you the equivalent amount, if you wish to make your own travel arrangements.

#### **Notes:**

- No tickets or cash in lieu will be provided until medical clearance has been confirmed by Capita.
  - If you are travelling from the UK, the fare must be from the nearest international airport to the city where you are working for the British Council.
  - If the flying time of the journey to post (not including stopovers) exceeds five hours you are entitled to business class fares, otherwise the entitlement is to economy class.
  - If you choose to drive to post you receive the cash equivalent of the air fare only.
3. You can also claim reimbursement from the British Council for the cost of your journey between your home and your departure airport in the UK on both outward and return journeys, against receipts, unless your posting is extended beyond one year and you receive a transfer grant, in which case these costs are not reimbursed on the return journey.

#### Procedure for travel from post

Book your return flight or request cash in lieu in good time, if you do not have a return ticket, through the office manager or equivalent.

#### **Transporting your belongings**

You are entitled to send 10kg of Unaccompanied Air Freight (UAF) for each anticipated month or part of a month of the posting, up to a maximum of 120 kg. If your posting is extended you may send back more UAF than you took with you, in line with the increased number of months at post, within the overall ceiling of 120kg.

You are not entitled to any heavy baggage. See Transporting your Belongings Overseas for a definition of heavy baggage.

#### Procedure

The despatch of UAF from the UK to post, and clearance and delivery of UAF despatched from post to the UK, are handled for the British Council by:

Francine de Cort  
Allied Pickfords  
Heritage House  
345 Southbury Road  
Enfield  
Middlesex  
EN1 1UP

#### To send UAF from the UK to post:

1. Advise HR IAT that you will be sending UAF so that they can send a letter of authority to Allied Pickfords.
2. Pack your goods yourself in cases or boxes not weighing more than 35kg each. The British Council does not pay packing charges. Pack your goods as densely as possible to avoid incurring any volume surcharges, as you would also have to pay the cost of any such surcharges.
3. The British Council pays for your UAF to be collected within a 70-mile radius of Charing Cross or a 35-mile radius of Manchester Piccadilly.
4. Ring Francine de Cort at Allied Pickfords to book the time when your UAF should be collected.

**Note:** If you choose not to take up your UAF entitlement you may opt to convert it to Excess Baggage. The amount that you can take by this method is only about 12% of the UAF entitlement. If you wish to convert your UAF entitlement to Excess Baggage, let HR IAT know and they will obtain an equivalence for your UAF and authorise you to purchase Excess Baggage up to that cash value.

To send UAF from post to the UK:

1. Ask your office manager (or equivalent) to make arrangements to despatch your UAF.
2. Before dispatching the goods to Heathrow, you may find it useful to consult HM Revenue and Customs Notice 3, dated September 2004, entitled Bringing your belongings and private motor vehicle to the UK from outside the EC. Copies are available at post or from IAT or from the HM Revenue and Customs website.
3. You must ensure that the local agent responsible for despatching the UAF to the UK prepares the air waybill as follows:

Employee Name  
The British Council  
c/o Allied Pickfords  
Heritage House  
345 Southbury Road  
Enfield  
Middlesex  
EN1 1UP  
United Kingdom

4. You must complete a C3 Declaration Form and fax it, together with a packing list and a copy of the air waybill, to Francine de Cort at Allied Pickfords.

**Important: The original signed C3 form, the packing list and any keys to suitcases should be sent with the original airway bill and NOT attached to or placed in the consignment as they are needed before going through customs clearance. The C3 form must contain the full delivery address and telephone number (and any contact name) so that Allied Pickfords can arrange for the delivery of goods. Failure to submit a completed C3 form can cause delays resulting in storage charges which you would have to pay.**

A stock of these forms should be kept at post. The form is also available on the *HM Revenue and Customs website*.

You must ensure that your UAF packages are addressed as follows:

Employee Name  
The British Council  
c/o Allied Pickfords  
Heritage House  
345 Southbury Road  
Enfield  
Middlesex  
EN1 1UP  
United Kingdom

5. The British Council pays delivery charges within a 70-mile radius of Charing Cross or a 35-mile radius of Manchester Piccadilly.

### **Insurance for your belongings**

- All staff are covered by the British Council's self-insurance scheme for loss of, or damage to, personal belongings while on short visits to another country on British Council business. For details of cover, see Insurance.
- Note that cover is provided during off-duty hours of working but not during any days of annual leave taken before, during or after your temporary overseas posting or any TOIL taken during or after the posting. You are expected to take out your own personal insurance in these cases.
- Household contents insurance policies often cover the loss of belongings while travelling. You may wish to check your own cover, especially as such policies often require you to inform the insurer of prolonged absence from home.
- If the cover is not adequate you may wish to take out an additional policy for the duration of your temporary posting. Note that you are responsible for the cost of any additional policy you decide to take out.

The choice of insurance company is yours, but note that the FCO and the British Council have special arrangements with:

Marsh Private Client Services Ltd  
The Nexus Building  
Broadway  
Letchworth Garden City  
Hertfordshire SG6 3TT

### **Accommodation**

- The British Council in country arranges for accommodation to be provided. This is normally in the residence of a member of staff who is absent or has left post or, if there is no such vacancy, in a rented flat or house. Only if neither of these is available should you stay in a hotel.
- If you have to stay in a hotel, room costs are paid by the office but you have to cover meals and other expenses from your salary and overseas allowances (see Salary and allowances above).
- If you are in a rented property or a staff residence the British Council pays any rent and utilities (not including telephone calls, though line rental may be covered).
- If you are in an empty staff residence or rented accommodation, you are provided with a household kit (or float) by the local office, which equips you with the basic necessities such as crockery, glassware, cutlery, kitchen utensils, cleaning

equipment, bed linen and towels.

- If domestic staff are normally provided for substantive post-holders, the office will pay for appropriate staffing if you are staying in empty staff accommodation or rented accommodation. No provision is made if you are accommodated in a hotel.
- If you are staying in a hotel your room can be retained for up to three nights if you go away on leave or at the weekend. For absences of more than three nights you are required to move out of the room and store your belongings until your return.