

# Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) in the UK Immigration Context

In the context of UK immigration, a [Certificate of Sponsorship](#) (CoS) plays a pivotal role in enabling employers to sponsor non-EEA nationals for employment in the United Kingdom. This document is issued by licensed employers and serves as evidence that a job offer has been made to a prospective employee from outside the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland.

## Purpose and Issuance

The primary purpose of the Certificate of Sponsorship is to facilitate the recruitment of skilled workers from overseas when no suitable settled worker is available for the role. It signifies that the sponsoring employer has met specific legal obligations and is committed to offering a genuine job position that meets the required skill level and salary threshold.



## Types of Certificates of Sponsorship

There are two main types of Certificates of Sponsorship:

1. **Restricted CoS:** This type is required for skilled workers applying from outside the UK who will be earning below a certain salary threshold or applying for a position with a

limited number of available CoS allocations. These allocations are managed through a monthly quota system by the UK Home Office.

2. **Unrestricted CoS:** Reserved for roles that meet certain criteria, including jobs that are exempt from the Resident Labour Market Test (RLMT), positions that are on the shortage occupation list, or intra-company transfers.

## Application Process for a CoS

Employers must be licensed by the UK Home Office to sponsor foreign workers and issue CoS. The process generally involves the following steps:

- **Employer Sponsorship License:** Before issuing a CoS, employers must obtain a Sponsorship License from the UK Home Office.
- **Role Suitability:** Employers must ensure that the job role meets the required skill level and salary threshold for sponsorship.
- **Issuance:** Once approved, the employer generates and assigns a unique CoS reference number to the prospective employee.

## Conclusion

The Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) is instrumental in facilitating the employment of skilled workers from outside the EEA and Switzerland in the UK. By ensuring that job offers are genuine and meet specific criteria, the CoS system supports the UK's workforce needs while maintaining immigration controls. It serves as a vital link between employers seeking to fill skilled vacancies and overseas workers looking to contribute their skills to the UK economy. Understanding the role and significance of the CoS is crucial for both employers navigating the sponsorship process and prospective employees seeking to work in the UK under various visa categories.