



## **UK assurances to EEA nationals on Science, Innovation and Higher Education**

This note sets out what the UK Government is doing to provide certainty to EEA students and researchers living here as we exit the EU. Science, research and innovation are vital to the UK's prosperity, security and wellbeing, and are at the heart of our Industrial Strategy. The UK Government hugely values the contribution that scientists, researchers and students from across Europe make to the UK, and understands the desire for clarity that exists among those who have chosen to study and work here.

### **Students**

On May 28 2019, the UK Government [announced](#) that EU nationals (and their family members) who start a course in England in the 2020/21 academic year or before will continue to be eligible for 'home fee' status and student finance support from Student Finance England for the duration of their course provided they meet the residency requirement. These guarantees are not altered if the UK leaves the EU without a deal. Applications for courses starting in Academic Year 2021/22 do not open until September 2020. We will provide sufficient notice for prospective students on fee arrangements ahead of the 2021/22 academic year and subsequent years in future.

On 4<sup>th</sup> July, we announced that EU nationals will also remain eligible for UKRI studentships for courses beginning in academic year 2020/21. They will remain eligible for the duration of their courses.

Under the terms of the Withdrawal Agreement UK institutions' right to participate in EU programmes during the current Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF), such as Erasmus+, will be unaffected by the UK's withdrawal from the EU for the lifetime of projects financed by the current MFF.

The UK Government has repeatedly made clear that it values international exchange and collaboration in education and training as part of its vision for a global Britain, and we believe that the UK and European countries should continue to give young people and students the chance to benefit from each other's world leading universities post-exit. The Government will need to reach agreement with the EU for UK organisations to continue participating in Erasmus+ and is seeking to hold these discussions with the EU.

In the event that the UK leaves the EU with no agreement in place, the government's guarantee will cover the payment of awards to UK applicants for all successful Erasmus+ bids submitted before the end of 2020. Successful bids are those that are approved directly by the European Commission or by the UK National Agency and ratified by the European Commission.

The Commission also recently wrote to all National Agencies in the programme, clearly reinforcing that while the UK is a Member State we are still a full participant of Erasmus+,

and that the Commission's Contingency Regulation means that even in a 'no deal' exit scenario Key Action 1 mobilities will not be interrupted.

The terms of the Withdrawal Agreement would provide for continued UK participation in Horizon 2020 projects for the lifetime of these projects.

In a no deal scenario, UK Government has guaranteed funding to UK participants in ongoing Horizon 2020 projects and successful UK bids submitted before EU Exit, even if participants are notified of success after exit. This has subsequently been extended to guarantee funding to the UK portion of all successful collaborative bids to Horizon 2020 who apply after exit day until the end of 2020 as a third country entity. Third country participation is a well-established part of Horizon 2020 – entities from third countries currently participate in, and lead consortia, in a wide range of collaborative programmes. Both the original guarantee and extension will cover the lifetime of the projects, even if the projects themselves last beyond 2020. More information on this can be found [here](#).

Looking beyond 2020, the UK remains committed to ongoing collaboration in research and innovation with international partners. The UK and EU have a long track record of jointly tackling global challenges, with strong existing links already in place between our research and innovation communities and regardless of EU exit, we look forward to continuing our relationship in research and innovation with the EU. To this end, the UK wants the option to associate to the next framework programme, Horizon Europe. As a responsible government, we are also exploring in parallel options to preserve the benefits of collaboration through domestic programmes to continue to enable world class research.

### **Mobility and residence**

Securing the rights of citizens was a priority during the negotiations of the Withdrawal Agreement, and it is important for the UK Government that we remain open to EEA citizens after we leave the EU. If a Withdrawal Agreement is approved, all EEA citizens, including students and researchers, who are resident in the UK by 31st December 2020 will be able to apply to the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS). This opened fully on 30th March 2019 and will run until 30th June 2021. There is no charge for applying to the EUSS and those who paid a fee during the pilot phase will be reimbursed.

In a no deal scenario, EEA citizens resident in the UK by 29th March 2019 would still be eligible to apply for the Settlement Scheme under the same qualifying criteria, however the deadline for applying will be 31st December 2020. For those arriving after free movement, for holidays or short visits of less than three months, arrangements will not look any different. To stay for longer than three months, EEA nationals who have just arrived would need to apply for 'European Temporary Leave to Remain', which would last for a further 36 months. Information about this scheme can be found [here](#). EEA students wanting to stay in the UK beyond 36 months will need to apply and qualify for a student visa under the new skills-based immigration system, which will begin from 2021. More information on how to apply can be found [here](#).

The new skills-based immigration system (referenced above), will implement proposals set out in the Immigration White Paper. The White Paper emphasises the importance of science, research and innovation talent, and confirms that there will continue to be no limit on the number of international students who can come to study in the UK.