

## UK Government's position on EU nationals: 10 points requiring greater clarity

Following the publication of the Government's policy paper 'Safeguarding the position of EU citizens living in the UK and UK nationals living in the EU' a significant degree of uncertainty remains concerning EU nationals' rights and the process for acquiring them after the UK leaves the EU. Whilst this is the UK Government's first position for the negotiations, this lack of clarity is causing considerable concern for EU nationals at our universities and impacting on our ability to recruit talented staff from the EU.

The contribution of EU nationals to the world-class research and teaching at our institutions is crucial. More broadly EU staff and students add to the diversity of our campuses and enrich the learning experience for all. We need to do everything we can to ensure these individuals feel valued and supported to stay in the UK.

We would welcome greater clarity and assurances at the earliest opportunity regarding the UK Government's offer. The following outlines specific areas where greater clarity is required:

1. Academics and students often spend periods of time abroad for study, training, career development and research collaborations. Government should continue to support such endeavours by:
  - Ensuring **continuous residence is not impacted by periods spent abroad for study or research** by applying the necessary exemptions to any rules (e.g. the 180 day rule).
  - Adopting a **broad interpretation of 'strong ties'** to ensure students and academics that spend two years or more abroad do not lose their settled status once gained.
2. Government should develop an effective and efficient system for processing applications that places **minimum burden on applicants**. If the Government does not have the systems it needs in place in time, the grace period must be extended accordingly.
3. We welcome that Government intends to use existing data it holds to **minimise the evidence that applicants will need to submit**. Where it is possible to identify those eligible for temporary leave or settled status from such data, the Home Office should automatically contact EU citizens to offer this status.
4. Those with **Permanent Residence should be transferred automatically** to settled status. There is no need to re-assess these individuals' right to be in the UK.
5. Government's intention for the cost of applications to be set at a reasonable level is welcome. It's important this **cost is minimal** and no more than the cost of Permanent Residency (£65).
6. Government needs to support business and universities by developing **clear employer guidance** in consultation with a range of sectors employing EU nationals.
7. The **cut-off date should be the date the UK leaves the EU**. This will allow organisations and individuals to plan accordingly.
8. **EU students starting courses in 2017/18 and 2018/19** are making a commitment to the UK. We urge Government to offer reassurance they will be able to stay and work here after their studies and be eligible for settled status after accruing five years residence.
9. Government should **minimise uncertainty about the rights of families** to stay together in the UK by providing clarity as soon as possible. We welcome that children born in the UK to EU nationals will be eligible to immediately acquire settled status or British citizenship, and ask Government to confirm such children will not need to accrue five years' residency.
10. Government should ensure that **professional qualifications** obtained in either the UK or the EU before the UK's withdrawal continue to be recognised across borders.