



Points-based system sponsor licensing – highly trusted sponsors (HTS)

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About this guidance

About this guidance Changes to Tier 4 and highly trusted sponsors Tier 4 legacy sponsors In-year or follow on and re-rate action during the intention period Highly trusted sponsor payments and workflow checks Highly trusted sponsors (HTS) HTS renewal applications HTS management checks – primary and secondary	<p>This guidance explains how to consider sponsor licence applications for highly trusted sponsor status under the points-based system (PBS).</p> <p>For information about the PBS sponsor requirements and policy see related link: PBS policy guidance.</p> <p>Changes to this guidance – This page tells you what has changed since the previous version of this guidance.</p> <p>Contacts – This page tells you who to contact for help if your senior caseworker or line manager can't answer your question.</p> <p>Information owner – This page tells you about this version of the guidance and who owns it.</p>	<p>In this section</p> <p>Changes to this guidance</p> <p>Contact</p> <p>Information owner</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
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Changes to this guidance

About this guidance Changes to Tier 4 and highly trusted sponsors Tier 4 legacy sponsors In-year or follow on and re-rate action during the intention period Highly trusted sponsor payments and workflow checks Highly trusted sponsors (HTS) HTS renewal applications HTS management checks – primary and secondary	This page lists changes to the points-based system sponsor licensing – highly trusted sponsors guidance, with the most recent at the top.		Related links See also Contact Information owner Links to staff intranet removed
	Date of the change	Details of the change	
	23 November 2012	Six month review by the modernised guidance team and change request: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Letters in this guidance have been updated.• Minor housekeeping changes.	
	21 September 2012	Change request: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Highly trusted sponsor payment and workflow checks:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ New version of download 'HTS decision notification reject'• HTS qualifying criteria:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ new version of download 'HTS decision notification refuse'• HTS mandatory requirements:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ New version of download 'HTS decision notification refuse'• HTS scoring and decision making<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ second table – row five, both cells – wording changed○ second table – new rows six and seven○ download 'HTS decision notification	

			<p>near miss' deleted, replaced by following three new downloads</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ new download 'HTS decision notification first near miss' ○ new download 'HTS decision notification second near miss' ○ new download 'HTS decision notification legacy first or second near miss' ○ new version of download 'HTS decision notification grant' ○ new version of download 'HTS decision notification refuse' ○ new version of 'HTS decision notification renewal grant' <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● HTS renewal applications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ sub-heading 'Renewal decision' new second and third paragraphs ○ new version of download 'HTS decision notification expired' ○ new version of download 'HTS decision notification renewal first near miss' ○ new version of download 'HTS decision notification renewal grant' ○ new download 'HTS decision notification renewal legacy first or second near miss' ○ new version of download 'HTS decision notification renewal refuse' ○ new version of download 'HTS decision notification renewal second near miss' ○ new version of download 'HTS 		
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			decision notification second near miss'.		
		30 May 2012	For the 30 May 2012 changes, you will need to access version 3.0 which is now archived. See related link: PBS sponsor licensing highly trusted sponsor – Archive.		
		19 January 2012	For the 19 January 2012 changes, you will need to access version 2.0 which is now archived. See related link: PBS sponsor licensing highly trusted sponsor – Archive.		
		24 November 2011	Complete revision of the guidance.		

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Changes to Tier 4 and highly trusted sponsors

About this guidance Changes to Tier 4 and highly trusted sponsors Tier 4 legacy sponsors In-year or follow on and re-rate action during the intention period Highly trusted sponsor payments and workflow checks Highly trusted sponsors (HTS) HTS renewal applications HTS management checks – primary and secondary	<p>This page explains the key changes to Tier 4 and highly trusted sponsorship (HTS) that you must be aware of before you consider an HTS application.</p> <p>From 21 April 2011 it became a mandatory requirement that all new and renewal applications for Tier 4 have the appropriate educational oversight with a UK Border Agency approved accreditation body. For a definition of educational oversight, see related link: Tier 4 sponsor guidance.</p> <p>Sponsors with an existing Tier 4 sponsor licence who want to remain on the Tier 4 register of sponsors must already have educational oversight or have submitted an application for educational oversight by an agreed deadline.</p> <p>Sponsors who have held a Tier 4 sponsor licence for over 12 months must submit an application for HTS by 9 October 2011.</p> <p>Sponsors will have their licence revoked if they fail to submit an HTS application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• by 9 October 2011• within 12 months of holding a Tier 4 licence, or• if they already have HTS status by their renewal date. <p>Legacy status</p> <p>Sponsors who have obtained HTS, but do not have and have not applied for educational oversight, will be granted legacy status.</p> <p>Legacy sponsors must continue to report on their existing migrant students, but will be unable to assign confirmations of acceptance for studies (CAS) for new students either entering the UK for study or switching from a UK education institution.</p> <p>Legacy sponsors may apply for CAS to assign to existing students already studying at the time the sponsor becomes legacy, in order for the students to complete their course.</p>	<p>Related links</p> <p>Tier 4 legacy sponsors</p> <p>HTS caseworker checks</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
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	<p>Successful new applications for a Tier 4 licence made after 21 April 2011 have 12 months from the granting of their licence to obtain highly trusted sponsor status.</p> <p>After this date, any sponsor failing to obtain highly trusted sponsor status will have their Tier 4 licence suspended on the day of the decision and have their licence revoked. For further information, see related links:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tier 4 sponsor licences • Tier 4 legacy sponsors • HTS caseworker checks. 	
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Tier 4 legacy sponsors

About this guidance Changes to Tier 4 and highly trusted sponsors Tier 4 legacy sponsors In-year or follow on and re-rate action during the intention period Highly trusted sponsor payments and workflow checks Highly trusted sponsors (HTS) HTS renewal applications HTS management checks – primary and secondary	<p>This section explains the process for identifying when a sponsor must be awarded legacy status.</p> <p>To determine if a sponsor should be granted 'legacy' status, each educational oversight body will provide details of applications received by the deadline set for that body.</p> <p>The sponsorship analysis team use these details to produce a report identifying the sponsors who do not have an approved educational oversight body recorded against their sponsor licence. The sponsor compliance unit will use that report to determine which sponsors have not applied for educational oversight by the appropriate deadline.</p> <p>Once identified, the sponsor compliance unit will contact sponsors who have not applied for educational oversight and provide them with an opportunity to provide evidence they either have educational oversight or have applied by the required deadline. This is called the intention period. For more information, see related link: Applications for educational oversight.</p>	<p>In this section</p> <p>Applications for educational oversight</p> <p>Legacy sponsor CAS allocations</p> <p>Granting legacy status to a sponsor</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
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Applications for educational oversight

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[Tier 4 legacy sponsors](#)

[In-year or follow on and re-rate action during the intention period](#)

[Highly trusted sponsor payments and workflow checks](#)

[Highly trusted sponsors \(HTS\)](#)

[HTS renewal applications](#)

[HTS management checks – primary and secondary](#)

This page explains what to do when you consider a sponsor's educational oversight status.

Sponsors who have applied for educational oversight

If...	Then...
The sponsor has applied for educational oversight.	You must add a note of the educational oversight body details to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">the Tier 4 application on Metastorm, andthe 'legacy intention final' spreadsheet.

Sponsors who have not applied for educational oversight

If the sponsor does not hold or has not applied for educational oversight, you must:

- set the sponsor's confirmation of acceptance for studies (CAS) allocation to zero, and
- issue a letter to the sponsor that gives notice of the UK Border Agency's intention to grant them 'legacy' status.

It is not possible to grant the sponsor 'legacy' status using Metastorm so you must take the above action to confirm the sponsor has not submitted an application and to make sure that, if 'legacy' status is granted, it is reflected on the licence details and on-line sponsor register.

Checking if the sponsor has educational oversight or has applied for it

You must make a series of checks against the information held on the sponsor licence records to make sure the sponsor has not applied for, or does not already have, educational oversight.

If...	Then...
The educational oversight body does not	You must check the licence application

In this section

[Tier 4 legacy sponsors](#)

[Legacy sponsor CAS allocations](#)

[Granting legacy status to a sponsor](#)

	confirm that an application has been received by the deadline.	details and the managed sponsor details in Metastorm to determine if the sponsor already holds or has already applied for educational oversight. You must check: <ul style="list-style-type: none">the 'Tier 4' tabthe 'decision' tab, andthe 'notes' tab.
	The sponsor has notified us of an application to an educational oversight body.	You must add a note of the educational oversight body details to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">the Tier 4 application on Metastorm using 'add note' , andthe 'legacy intention final' spreadsheet.
	The licence application details or managed sponsor details show the sponsor is already inspected by an educational oversight body.	You must: <ul style="list-style-type: none">amend the 'Tier 4' details using the Metastorm 'maintain sponsor' function to make sure the educational oversight details are correctupdate the 'legacy intention final' spreadsheet with details of the educational oversight body.
	Checks on the sponsor licence details confirm the sponsor does not hold and has not applied for educational oversight.	You must update the 'legacy intention final' spreadsheet to confirm the sponsor has not applied for educational oversight.
	For information on legacy sponsors, see related links: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Legacy sponsor CAS allocationsGranting legacy status to a sponsor.	

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Legacy sponsor CAS allocations

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This page explains what to do when you have confirmed that the sponsor has not applied for educational oversight.

When you confirm that a sponsor has not applied for educational oversight you must follow the process below to reduce the confirmations of acceptance for studies (CAS) allocation and issue an intention letter to the sponsor.

If...	Then...
The spreadsheet or the 'allocation history' tab in Metastorm indicates the sponsor has an allocation of one or more CAS.	You must check 'cases linked to sponsor' in Metastorm to determine if there is an outstanding 'in-year' or 'follow on' request that relates to Tier 4.
The sponsor has an outstanding 'in-year' or 'follow on' request.	<p>You must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Assign the 'in-year' or 'follow on' allocation request from the workstack. If the request is currently being considered by another caseworker you must reassign the request.• Reduce the CAS allocation to zero and email the Legacy status intention notification letter to the sponsor. To download the letter, see related link.• Update Metastorm (using 'add note') and the legacy sponsor spreadsheet with details of the action taken. <p>To set the CAS allocation to zero, you must amend the CAS limit to the same number of CAS's that the sponsor has used. For example, if the sponsor has an allocation of</p>

In this section

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Links to staff intranet removed

		five CASs and has used two, the limit must be set at two. This means that the sponsor cannot assign any further CASs. You must set the review limit at the same number.	
	The sponsor does not have an outstanding 'in-year' or 'follow on' request outstanding or under consideration.	<p>You must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open an 'additional CoS allocation' action on Metastorm. • Reduce the CAS allocation to zero (see above for information). • Email a Legacy status intention notification letter to the sponsor. To download the letter, see related link. • Update Metastorm using 'add note', and update the legacy sponsor spreadsheet with the balance of CAS remaining from the current allocation. This will make sure the correct number of CAS is granted if the UK Border Agency reinstate the sponsor allocation. 	
	The balance of CAS is zero.	<p>You must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email a Legacy status intention notification letter to the sponsor using 'standalone letters' in Metastorm. You must add the letter to the Tier 4 sponsor application. • Update Metastorm (using 'add note') and the legacy sponsor spreadsheet with details of the action taken. 	

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Granting legacy status to a sponsor

About this guidance Changes to Tier 4 and highly trusted sponsors Tier 4 legacy sponsors In-year or follow on and re-rate action during the intention period Highly trusted sponsor payments and workflow checks Highly trusted sponsors (HTS) HTS renewal applications HTS management checks – primary and secondary	This page explains what to do when the intention period has expired and the sponsor is to be granted legacy status.		In this section Tier 4 legacy sponsors Applications for educational oversight Legacy sponsor CAS allocations Links to staff intranet removed
	If...	Then...	
	The sponsor does not respond to the letter by the deadline.	<p>You must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• telephone the authorising officer (AO) named on the sponsor licence to remind them that the deadline for responses has passed and to give them two further working days to respond• update Metastorm (using 'add note') and the legacy sponsor spreadsheet with details of the action taken.	
	The AO indicates they have not applied for educational oversight.	<p>You must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update Metastorm (using 'add note') that the sponsor has been granted legacy status and the 'legacy intention final' spreadsheet with details of the action taken. If the sponsor has Tier 4 (General) and Tier 4 (Child) categories you must update the legacy status for both on the spreadsheet.• Check the sponsor's confirmations of acceptance for studies (CAS)	
	The sponsor does not respond to the letter		

	The sponsor does respond to the letter and indicates they have not applied for educational oversight.	allocation to make sure it is set to zero. If the allocation is not already set to zero you can do this by using the 'additional CoS allocation' function within Metastorm. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Email the Legacy status confirmation notification letter to the sponsor. If the sponsor already has a zero CAS allocation you must send the letter using 'standalone letters' in Metastorm. You must add the letter to the Tier 4 sponsor application.	
	The sponsor indicates they will apply to an educational oversight body (for example the Bridge Schools Inspectorate) with a later deadline.		
	The application was not made by the deadline.		
	The sponsor indicates they have applied for educational oversight.	You must check whether the application was made by the deadline set for the educational oversight body.	
	There is no evidence of an application.	You must contact the educational oversight body to confirm whether an application was made and if it was submitted by the required deadline. For the contact details of the relevant educational oversight body, see related links.	
	The application was made within the deadline.	You must: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Review the sponsors CAS allocation and, if the allocation was reduced to zero reinstate the allocation.Email a Legacy status confirmation notification letter to the sponsor. To download the letter, see related link.Update Metastorm (using 'add note') and the 'legacy intention final' spreadsheet with details of the educational oversight body and the CAS allocation granted.	

	<p>The sponsor wishes to surrender their sponsor licence.</p>	<p>You must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • pass the request to surrender the licence to the sponsor compliance unit • update Metastorm (using 'add note') and update the 'legacy intention final' spreadsheet with details of the action taken. 	
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‘In-year or ‘follow on’ and re-rate action during the intention period

About this guidance Changes to Tier 4 and highly trusted sponsors Tier 4 legacy sponsors In-year or follow on and re-rate action during the intention period Highly trusted sponsor payments and workflow checks Highly trusted sponsors (HTS) HTS renewal applications HTS management checks – primary and secondary	<p>This section explains what to consider when a sponsor requests to renew or increase their confirmation of acceptance for studies (CAS) allocation or a re-rate of their sponsor licence during the intention period.</p> <table><tr><th>If...</th><th>Then...</th></tr><tr><td>The sponsor submits a request to renew or increase their Tier 4 CAS allocation or a request is received to re-rate the licence during the intention period.</td><td>You must check the Tier 4 application ‘notes’ tab in Metastorm to determine if the sponsor has been issued with an intention letter.</td></tr><tr><td>The sponsor has been issued with an intention letter.</td><td>You must bring forward (BF) the request for seven days until the outcome is known.</td></tr><tr><td>The sponsor is to be granted legacy status.</td><td>You must refuse the ‘in-year’ or ‘follow on’ request. The CAS allocation will be reviewed as part of the action to grant the sponsor legacy status. If a re-rate case has been opened, you must arrange for this to be allocated to the caseworker dealing with the legacy action.</td></tr><tr><td>The BF date has been reached.</td><td>You must check the Tier 4 application ‘notes’ tab in Metastorm to determine if the sponsor has responded to the intention letter and if so, the outcome.</td></tr><tr><td>There is no outcome recorded.</td><td><p>You must:</p><ul style="list-style-type: none">• email the ‘legacy sponsors’ mailbox, see related link, to request an update• BF the case for two days.<p>If the outcome is that the sponsor is to be granted legacy status, you must take the action outlined above.</p></td></tr></table>	If...	Then...	The sponsor submits a request to renew or increase their Tier 4 CAS allocation or a request is received to re-rate the licence during the intention period.	You must check the Tier 4 application ‘notes’ tab in Metastorm to determine if the sponsor has been issued with an intention letter.	The sponsor has been issued with an intention letter.	You must bring forward (BF) the request for seven days until the outcome is known.	The sponsor is to be granted legacy status.	You must refuse the ‘in-year’ or ‘follow on’ request. The CAS allocation will be reviewed as part of the action to grant the sponsor legacy status. If a re-rate case has been opened, you must arrange for this to be allocated to the caseworker dealing with the legacy action.	The BF date has been reached.	You must check the Tier 4 application ‘notes’ tab in Metastorm to determine if the sponsor has responded to the intention letter and if so, the outcome.	There is no outcome recorded.	<p>You must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• email the ‘legacy sponsors’ mailbox, see related link, to request an update• BF the case for two days. <p>If the outcome is that the sponsor is to be granted legacy status, you must take the action outlined above.</p>	<p>In this section</p> <p>Considering 'in-year' and 'follow on' requests for legacy sponsors</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
If...	Then...													
The sponsor submits a request to renew or increase their Tier 4 CAS allocation or a request is received to re-rate the licence during the intention period.	You must check the Tier 4 application ‘notes’ tab in Metastorm to determine if the sponsor has been issued with an intention letter.													
The sponsor has been issued with an intention letter.	You must bring forward (BF) the request for seven days until the outcome is known.													
The sponsor is to be granted legacy status.	You must refuse the ‘in-year’ or ‘follow on’ request. The CAS allocation will be reviewed as part of the action to grant the sponsor legacy status. If a re-rate case has been opened, you must arrange for this to be allocated to the caseworker dealing with the legacy action.													
The BF date has been reached.	You must check the Tier 4 application ‘notes’ tab in Metastorm to determine if the sponsor has responded to the intention letter and if so, the outcome.													
There is no outcome recorded.	<p>You must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• email the ‘legacy sponsors’ mailbox, see related link, to request an update• BF the case for two days. <p>If the outcome is that the sponsor is to be granted legacy status, you must take the action outlined above.</p>													

	The sponsor is not to be granted legacy status.	You must consider the request as stated in the current guidance.	

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Considering ‘in-year’ and ‘follow on’ requests for legacy sponsors

About this guidance Changes to Tier 4 and highly trusted sponsors Tier 4 legacy sponsors In-year or follow on and re-rate action during the intention period Highly trusted sponsor payments and workflow checks Highly trusted sponsors (HTS) HTS renewal applications HTS management checks – primary and secondary	<p>This page explains what you must do when considering an ‘in-year’ request (a request for additional confirmation of acceptance for studies’ (CAS) within the allocation year) and a ‘follow on’ request (a request to renew the annual CAS allocation) from a legacy sponsor.</p> <p>Legacy sponsors are not subject to the Tier 4 interim limit but can only request CAS to extend the leave of current students to complete their current course of studies. Legacy sponsors have their CAS allocation set to zero at the point that legacy status is granted and must only apply for CAS as and when the need to extend a student’s leave arises. Legacy sponsors must provide the following information in support of their request:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• student’s current CAS reference number• student’s full name, date of birth and passport number• date leave was granted and the date to which the leave is valid• name and duration of the course• duration of the extension of the course, and• reasons for the extension of the course. <p>Legacy sponsors must apply to renew their allocation even if they are granted zero CAS at this point. This makes sure the allocation remains active and that the sponsor can make a request for CAS if they require them in the future.</p> <p>You must take the following action when considering requests to renew or increase CAS allocations for legacy sponsors.</p> <table><tr><th>If...</th><th>Then...</th></tr><tr><td>The sponsor submits an ‘in-year’ request to increase their allocation of CASs.</td><td>You must check that the required information (see above) has been provided in support of the request.</td></tr><tr><td>The sponsor has not provided the required information in support of the request or has</td><td>You must refuse the request and issue the CAS allocation granted or refused letter to</td></tr></table>	If...	Then...	The sponsor submits an ‘in-year’ request to increase their allocation of CASs.	You must check that the required information (see above) has been provided in support of the request.	The sponsor has not provided the required information in support of the request or has	You must refuse the request and issue the CAS allocation granted or refused letter to	<p>In this section</p> <p>'In-year' or 'follow on' and re-rate action during the intention period</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
If...	Then...							
The sponsor submits an ‘in-year’ request to increase their allocation of CASs.	You must check that the required information (see above) has been provided in support of the request.							
The sponsor has not provided the required information in support of the request or has	You must refuse the request and issue the CAS allocation granted or refused letter to							

	only provided some of the information.	the sponsor (to download the letter, see related link). The sponsor can re-submit the request at any time.	
	The sponsor has provided the required information in support of the request.	<p>You must determine if the CAS requested is to allow a student to complete their current course of study. You must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use CAS checker to search for the current CAS and compare the student and course details provided by the sponsor in support of the request • use CRS and/or CID to compare the student's leave details with those provided by the sponsor in support of the request. 	
	<p>The details provided by the sponsor are inconsistent with the details recorded on the CAS checker and/or CRS or CID, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the migrant's personal details do not match or there is no trace of the migrant • the course details do not match • the leave dates do not match. 	<p>You must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refuse the request and issue the CAS allocation granted or refused letter to the sponsor (to download the letter, see related link). The sponsor can re-submit the request at any time. • Refer details of the discrepancy to the sponsor investigations team mailbox for further investigation. 	
	<p>The details provided by the sponsor are consistent with the details recorded on the CAS checker and/or CRS or CID, but the reason for the extension, or the length of the extension, are not acceptable.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the length of the extension is more 	<p>You must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refuse the request and issue the CAS allocation granted or refused letter to the sponsor (to download the letter, see related link). The sponsor can re-submit the request at any time. • Refer details of the discrepancy to the sponsor investigations team mailbox 	

	<p>than 90 days</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the sponsor has not fully justified the reason for the extension. 	for further investigation.	
	The details provided by the sponsor are consistent with the details recorded on the CAS checker and/or CRS or CID and the length of the extension is acceptable and reasons are fully justified.	You must grant the request and issue the CAS allocation granted or refused letter to the sponsor. To download the letter, see related link.	
	The sponsor submits a 'follow-on' request to renew their allocation of CASs.	You must check if the sponsor is requesting an allocation of CASs to extend leave.	
	The sponsor is requesting an allocation of CASs to extend leave.	You must follow the steps below to determine if you can grant the request.	
	If the allocation can be granted.	You must grant the request and issue the CAS allocation granted or refused letter to the sponsor. To download the letter, see related link.	
	If the allocation cannot be granted.	You must grant zero CASs and issue the CAS allocation granted or refused letter to the sponsor. To download the letter, see related link.	

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Highly trusted sponsor payment and workflow checks

About this guidance Changes to Tier 4 and highly trusted sponsors Tier 4 legacy sponsors In-year or follow on and re-rate action during the intention period Highly trusted sponsor payments and workflow checks Highly trusted sponsors (HTS) HTS renewal applications HTS management checks – primary and secondary	<p>This page gives information for the workflow sift officer about payment and workflow checks for highly trusted sponsor (HTS) applications.</p> <p>Payment checks</p> <p>The payment check is the first check on an application. It must be completed by the workflow team before the application goes to a caseworker.</p> <p>There is only a single fee for HTS applications as the size or charitable status of the sponsor is not considered. You must however check to make sure the sponsor has submitted the correct fee of £500:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• if they have paid too much, you must follow the guidance in the related link: Refunding an application fee• if they paid too little, you must reject the application• if the fee is correct, you must follow the guidance in the related link: Checking the application is accurate. <p>Additional workflow checks</p> <p>When a HTS application is received, before it is allocated to a caseworker, the workflow team must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• open a re-rate application on Metastorm, and• submit a request for confirmation of acceptance for studies (CAS) data. <p>For instructions on recording information on Metastorm and spreadsheets, and requesting CAS data as part of the HTS workflow process, see related link: HTS case preparation user guide.</p> <p>For information on mandatory workflow checks see related link: Workflow officer pre-sift checks.</p>	Links to staff intranet removed
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About this guidance Changes to Tier 4 and highly trusted sponsors Tier 4 legacy sponsors In-year or follow on and re-rate action during the intention period Highly trusted sponsor payments and workflow checks Highly trusted sponsors (HTS) HTS renewal applications HTS management checks – primary and secondary	<p>This section explains what to check and the actions to take when considering an application for a highly trusted sponsor licence.</p> <p>Highly trusted sponsor status (the term HTS is also used) is designed to make sure that all education providers are taking their obligations on immigration compliance seriously. It recognises sponsors who show a good history of compliance with their sponsor duties and whose students meet the standards of compliance with the terms of their visa or permission to stay in the UK (known as 'leave to remain').</p>	<p>In this section</p> <p>HTS qualifying criteria</p> <p>HTS mandatory requirements</p> <p>HTS requesting a compliance visit</p> <p>HTS scoring and decision making</p>
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Points-based system sponsor licensing – highly trusted sponsors (HTS)

HTS qualifying criteria

About this guidance Changes to Tier 4 and highly trusted sponsors Tier 4 legacy sponsors In-year or follow on and re-rate action during the intention period Highly trusted sponsor payments and workflow checks Highly trusted sponsors (HTS) HTS renewal applications HTS management checks – primary and secondary	<p>This section explains what checks you must do to establish that a sponsor meets the qualifying criteria for highly trusted sponsor (HTS) status.</p> <p>For a Tier 4 sponsor to be eligible for consideration for HTS they must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• have an active A-rated Tier 4 licence• have been A-rated in Tier 4, and any linked categories, for instance Tier 4 (Child) for a continuous six month period prior to submitting an HTS application. <p>You must check that there is no ongoing action to re-rate or suspend the sponsor licence and that the sponsor is not involved in any litigation action against the UK Border Agency.</p> <table><tr><th>If...</th><th>Then...</th></tr><tr><td>The sponsor:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• is A-rated in all Tier 4 categories, and• has held an A-rated Tier 4 licence for a continuous six month period.</td><td>Continue to casework the application.</td></tr><tr><td>The sponsor:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• currently holds a B-rated licence in any Tier 4 category, or• has not held an A-rated Tier 4 licence for a continuous six month period.</td><td>You must:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• refuse the application• set the Tier 4 allocation to zero• update the HTS database with the decision• draft and issue the HTS refusal letter (to download the letter, see related link: HTS decision notification refuse)• email details of the decision to the sponsor suspensions mailbox for</td></tr></table>	If...	Then...	The sponsor: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• is A-rated in all Tier 4 categories, and• has held an A-rated Tier 4 licence for a continuous six month period.	Continue to casework the application.	The sponsor: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• currently holds a B-rated licence in any Tier 4 category, or• has not held an A-rated Tier 4 licence for a continuous six month period.	You must: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• refuse the application• set the Tier 4 allocation to zero• update the HTS database with the decision• draft and issue the HTS refusal letter (to download the letter, see related link: HTS decision notification refuse)• email details of the decision to the sponsor suspensions mailbox for	<p>In this section</p> <p>HTS caseworker checks</p> <p>Reviewing the sponsor licence</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
If...	Then...							
The sponsor: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• is A-rated in all Tier 4 categories, and• has held an A-rated Tier 4 licence for a continuous six month period.	Continue to casework the application.							
The sponsor: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• currently holds a B-rated licence in any Tier 4 category, or• has not held an A-rated Tier 4 licence for a continuous six month period.	You must: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• refuse the application• set the Tier 4 allocation to zero• update the HTS database with the decision• draft and issue the HTS refusal letter (to download the letter, see related link: HTS decision notification refuse)• email details of the decision to the sponsor suspensions mailbox for							

		revocation action (see related link).	
	The sponsor is subject to consideration for re-rate or suspension action for any tier.	Contact the sponsor compliance unit (see related link) to establish the appropriate action to take.	
	Re-rate or suspension action has been concluded and the sponsor has been re-rated to a B or suspended.	<p>You must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • refuse the application • set the Tier 4 allocation to zero • update the HTS database with the decision • draft and issue the HTS refusal letter (to download the letter, see related link: HTS decision notification refuse) • email details of the decision to the sponsor suspensions mailbox (see related link). 	
	The sponsor is subject to consideration for re-rate or suspension action for any tier.	Continue to casework the application.	
	The sponsor is currently involved in litigation action.	Email the named contact of the litigation team (as listed on the notes tab in Metastorm) to establish appropriate action.	

Points-based system sponsor licensing – highly trusted sponsors (HTS)

HTS caseworker checks

<p>About this guidance</p> <p>Changes to Tier 4 and highly trusted sponsors</p> <p>Tier 4 legacy sponsors</p> <p>In-year or follow on and re-rate action during the intention period</p> <p>Highly trusted sponsor payments and workflow checks</p> <p>Highly trusted sponsors (HTS)</p> <p>HTS renewal applications</p> <p>HTS management checks – primary and secondary</p>	<p>This page explains what checks to do to make sure the sponsor is eligible to apply for highly trusted sponsor (HTS) status.</p> <p>You must make the checks below before making mandatory caseworking checks. For information on mandatory checks, see related links:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Key personnel checks• Criminality and immigration history checks• Legacy and current systems checks• Business rules checks• Q6 markers and referrals to the temporary migration intelligence hub• Insolvency checks• Civil penalty checks. <p>Accrediting and Inspecting body checks</p> <p>Tier 4 sponsors applying for HTS must have applied for educational oversight or already have educational oversight with one of the following accrediting bodies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education• Ofsted• Education Scotland• Estyn• Education and Training Inspectorate• Independent Schools Inspectorate• Bridge Schools Inspectorate, or• School Inspection Service. <p>Exceptions</p> <p>From 9 September 2011 all Tier 4 sponsors who wish to continue to sponsor migrant students must have, or have submitted an application for, educational oversight.</p>	<p>In this section</p> <p>HTS qualifying criteria</p> <p>Reviewing the sponsor licence</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
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	<p>Exceptions to this are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • private further education or English language colleges in Scotland who must have applied for educational oversight with Education Scotland by 11 November 2011 • private further education colleges in England or Wales with a clear religious purpose who must have applied for educational oversight with the Bridge Schools Inspectorate by 7 October 2011 • Montessori or Steiner further education colleges in England or Wales who must have applied for educational oversight with the Schools Inspection Service by 7 October 2011. <p>If you receive an application from one of the following organisations, you must in the first instance discuss the case with your line manager:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Montessori or Steiner further education colleges in Northern Ireland or Scotland • private further education or English language colleges in Northern Ireland. <p>Exempt organisations The following organisations are not subject to the educational oversight criteria, and can apply for HTS status without it:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Foundation Programme Office • The Yorkshire and Humber Strategic Health Authority • Overseas providers who offer short-term 'study abroad' programmes in their own premises in the UK. <p>Making the checks Sponsors with educational oversight with an approved body are detailed on the Tier 4 tab on Metastorm. As this information may be out of date you must also check the sponsor's educational oversight by contacting the inspection bodies. You can do this from the contact details provided on their website. For more information, see related links.</p> <p>Sponsors who have met the deadline for making an application for educational oversight will</p>	
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not be identifiable from Metastorm, so you must also use the HTS database to check whether an in-time application has been received.

If...	Then...
The sponsor: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• has the required educational oversight or is exempt, or• has applied for educational oversight by the deadline required.	Continue to casework the application.
The sponsor: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• cannot demonstrate the required educational oversight or exemption• has not applied for educational oversight by the required deadline and will be listed as a legacy sponsor on the 'Notes' tab in Metastorm.	

For further information on Tier 4 educational oversight requirements and exemptions, see related link: [Tier 4 sponsor guidance](#).

Points-based system sponsor licensing – highly trusted sponsors (HTS)

Reviewing the sponsor licence

About this guidance Changes to Tier 4 and highly trusted sponsors Tier 4 legacy sponsors In-year or follow on and re-rate action during the intention period Highly trusted sponsor payments and workflow checks Highly trusted sponsors (HTS) HTS renewal applications HTS management checks – primary and secondary	<p>This page explains what to do to make sure the information recorded on Metastorm is accurate and corresponds with the information submitted in the highly trusted sponsor (HTS) application.</p> <p>Some Tier 4 sponsors may have incorrect information recorded on Metastorm. The requirement for all Tier 4 sponsors to apply for HTS (to retain the ability to sponsor migrants) provides an opportunity for you to check the sponsor licence and the sponsor history to make sure all the information recorded is accurate.</p> <p>Checks made on the sponsor licence on Metastorm must include:</p> <p>Tier 4 tab:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ‘Inspected/Audited’ field – if the sponsor is a publically funded organisation, check that this field has been completed with the details of the inspection body.• ‘Accreditation body’ field – if the sponsor is a private education provider, check that this field has been completed and if required updated with the sponsors accrediting and/or educational oversight body.• ‘Charity registration’ field is completed where the sponsor is registered as a charitable organisation, check that the field has been completed with the details of the sponsors charitable registration (if applicable). <p>‘Allocation History’ tab:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tier 4 (General)• Tier 4 (Child). <p>Sponsors may have an allocation of both Tier 4 (General) confirmations of acceptance for studies (CAS) and Tier 4 (Child). You must review the CAS usage by the sponsor to identify any unusual activity, for example:</p>	<p>In this section</p> <p>HTS qualifying criteria</p> <p>HTS caseworker checks</p> <p>Links to staff intranet removed</p>
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	<p>An independent school has an allocation of Tier 4 (General) CAS and Tier 4 (Child). You notice that they have assigned more Tier 4 (General) CAS than Tier 4 (Child) and there are no justifications submitted from the sponsor to explain this.</p> <p>Where you have concerns about this or any other information recorded on the sponsors licence, you must report this to your manager who will discuss the appropriate action to take.</p> <p>This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accessing the sponsors accreditation report to look for any cause • contacting the sponsor directly and requesting an explanation • a management information (MI) request, or • checking the CAS issued by using CAS checker. <p>You must also make mandatory checks to make sure the information supplied on the application is consistent with the existing sponsor licence details. For more information see related link: Checking the application is accurate.</p>	
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Points-based system sponsor licensing – highly trusted sponsors (HTS)

HTS mandatory requirements

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This section explains the mandatory requirements to be met for a highly trusted sponsor (HTS) licence.

When you are considering an HTS application you must make sure you have:

- the confirmations of acceptance for studies (CAS) information relating to the sponsor's previous 12 months activity, and
- the management information and data analysis (MIDA) report.

If the sponsor has no 'used' CAS in the previous 12 month period, they cannot be assessed against the criteria or core measurable requirements and their application must be refused.

The application must first be considered against the mandatory criteria (in the table below) which the sponsor must meet for the application to be considered further.

Mandatory criteria	Score	How to measure
Minimum qualifying period	12 months	Check Metastorm to establish the sponsor has held a valid sponsor licence for 12 months.
No civil penalties	Three years or more	See related link: Civil penalty checks.
Refusal rate	Less than 20%	MIDA information
Enrolment rate	More than 90%	MIDA information
Course completion rate	More than 85%	MIDA information
Declaration of progression	100%	This is on the HTS application form and the sponsor must have ticked the relevant box and signed and dated the application.

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	<p>If the sponsor fails to meet one or more of the mandatory requirements you must refuse the application and revoke the Tier 4 licence. For more information, see related link: HTS scoring and decision making.</p> <p>Independent schools submitting an HTS application are only required to meet the mandatory criteria and are not subject to consideration against the core measurable requirements. If an independent school meets the mandatory requirements for HTS, then you must continue to consider the HTS application against the sponsor criteria.</p> <p>If the sponsor meets the mandatory requirements, they must then be assessed against core measurable requirements to decide the outcome of their application. For more information, see related link: HTS Core measurable requirements.</p>	
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Points-based system sponsor licensing – highly trusted sponsors (HTS)

HTS core measurable requirements

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This page explains the core measurable requirements for highly trusted sponsor (HTS) status.

A sponsor will start the highly trusted sponsor (HTS) application process with 100 points and to be granted HTS they must score 70 points or above. Points are deducted depending on any difference from the required standard.

Independent schools submitting a HTS application are only required to meet the mandatory checks requirement. If they meet the mandatory requirements then they must not be scored against the core measurable requirements. For more information on HTS scoring and decision making, see related link.

The table below shows the variance and score you must apply.

Core measurable requirements	Variance	Score
Refusal rate %	Less than 5	- 0
	More than 5 less than 10	- 5
	More than 10 less than 15	- 10
	More than 15 less than 20	- 20
Enrolment rate %	More than 98	- 0
	Between 96 – 98	- 5
	Between 93 – 96	- 10
	Between 90 – 93	- 15
Course completion rate %	More than 98	- 0
	Between 95 – 98	- 5
	Between 90 – 95	- 10
	Between 85 – 90	- 15

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	<p>You must use the results of the confirmations of acceptance for studies (CAS) information for the sponsor to calculate their score from the table above. To calculate the score you must input the data into the student details template. To find out how to download the template, see related link: Guide to completing the HTS student details casework template.</p> <p>If there is any conflicting data between the CAS and management information and data analysis (MIDA) information (for example, there is a doubt as to whether a migrant student started a course with the sponsor or is still studying with the sponsor) you must make a referral for a compliance visit. For more information, see related link: HTS requesting a compliance visit.</p> <p>Once you have the sponsor's core measurable score then you can make a decision on the HTS application. For more information, see related link: HTS scoring and decision making.</p>	
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HTS requesting a compliance visit

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Points-based system sponsor licensing – highly trusted sponsors (HTS)

HTS scoring and decision making

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This page explains the point scoring and decision making requirements for highly trusted sponsor (HTS) status.

The table below can be used to make the correct decision on a highly trusted sponsor (HTS) application.

Educational oversight	HTS	Score	Decision
Attained	Deadline met	70 +	Grant HTS
In-time application	Deadline met	70 +	Grant HTS with limit applied
In-time application	Deadline met	Between 50-70	A-rate with interim limit
EO near miss	Deadline met	70 +	Grant HTS with interim limit applied
In-time application	Deadline met	Under 50	Refuse
Out of time application	Deadline met	70 +	Grant HTS Legacy
EO unsuccessful	Deadline met	70 +	Grant HTS Legacy
Out of time application	Deadline met	Between 50-70	Legacy
Out of time application	Deadline met	Under 50	Refuse
EO unsuccessful	Deadline met	Under 50	Refuse
In-time application	Deadline not met	Reject	Reject

If...	Then...
The sponsor is successful in their application and has the required educational oversight.	You must: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update Metastorm using the re-rate

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		<p>function to show the sponsor status as HTS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend the sponsor's allocation on Metastorm to the full amount they have requested. • Update the HTS database with the decision. • Draft and issue the HTS decision notification grant letter. To download the letter, see related link. 	
	The sponsor is successful in their application and has applied by the required deadline for educational oversight.	<p>You must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update Metastorm to show the sponsor status as HTS. • Do not amend the sponsors Tier 4 allocation as this will continue until a decision on education oversight is made. • Update the HTS database with the decision. • Draft and issue the HTS decision notification grant letter. To download the letter, see related link. 	
	<p>The sponsor is successful in their application but:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • failed to apply by the required deadline for educational oversight, or • has failed to attain educational oversight. 	<p>You must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update Metastorm to show the sponsor status as HTS. • The sponsor will become a legacy sponsor. • Update the HTS database with the decision. 	

	The sponsor scores between 50-70 on the first application.	<p>The sponsor will continue at their current rating and confirmations of acceptance of studies (CAS) allocation. You must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update Metastorm with the decision but do not re-rate the sponsor. Select the option 're-rate not required'. • Update the HTS database with the decision. • Draft and issue the HTS decision notification first near miss letter. To download the letter, see related link. 	
	The sponsor scores between 50-70 on the second application.	<p>The sponsor will become a legacy sponsor and their confirmation of acceptance of studies (CAS) allocation will be reduced to zero. You must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update Metastorm with the decision and re-rate the sponsor. • Update the HTS database with the decision. • Set the Tier 4 allocation to zero • Draft and issue the HTS decision notification second near miss letter. To download the letter, see related link. 	
	The sponsor is a legacy sponsor and scores between 50-70 on the first and second application.	<p>The sponsor will continue at their current rating and confirmations of acceptance of studies (CAS) allocation. You must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update Metastorm with the decision but do not re-rate the sponsor. Select the option 're-rate not required'. • Update the HTS database with the 	

		<p>decision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft and issue the 'HTS decision notification Legacy first or second near miss' letter. To download the letter, see related link. 	
	The sponsor is unsuccessful in their application.	<p>You must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set the Tier 4 allocation to zero. • Update Metastorm with the decision but do not re-rate the sponsor. Select the option 're-rate not required'. • Draft and issue the HTS decision notification refuse letter. To download the letter, see related link. • Email details of the decision to the sponsor suspensions mailbox for revocation action (see related link: Email sponsor suspensions). 	

Points-based system sponsor licensing – highly trusted sponsors (HTS)

HTS renewal applications

About this guidance Changes to Tier 4 and highly trusted sponsors Tier 4 legacy sponsors In-year or follow on and re-rate action during the intention period Highly trusted sponsor payments and workflow checks Highly trusted sponsors (HTS) HTS renewal applications HTS management checks – primary and secondary	<p>This page explains what to do when a highly trusted sponsor (HTS) licence is due for renewal.</p> <p>HTS status is for one year and runs for one calendar year from the date the last application was granted. For example, if a sponsor was granted HTS on 01/06/2010, the date of expiry would be 31/05/2011.</p> <p>Renewals, where granted, must run in line with the original grant date, even if the date of decision is later. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">the original application was granted on 01/06/2010 until 31/05/2011the renewal application was granted on 01/09/2011the period granted must be 01/06/2011 to 31/05/2012. <p>Application deadline</p> <p>For renewal applications to be considered they must be received before the HTS status ends, but must not be received more than a month before the expiry date. Applications received after the expiry date must be refused and revoked.</p> <p>Applications submitted up to a month before the expiry date must be considered but only after 12 months. For example, the renewal application is submitted after 11 months, the application cannot be rejected but cannot be considered until a full 12 month licensing period has been reached.</p> <table><tr><th>If...</th><th>Then...</th></tr><tr><td>The sponsor has submitted an application before their HTS licence expires.</td><td>Consider the application</td></tr><tr><td>The sponsor has submitted an application more than a month before their HTS licence expires.</td><td>You must:<ul style="list-style-type: none">Reject the application.</td></tr></table>	If...	Then...	The sponsor has submitted an application before their HTS licence expires.	Consider the application	The sponsor has submitted an application more than a month before their HTS licence expires.	You must: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Reject the application.	Links to staff intranet removed
If...	Then...							
The sponsor has submitted an application before their HTS licence expires.	Consider the application							
The sponsor has submitted an application more than a month before their HTS licence expires.	You must: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Reject the application.							

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Send a HTS decision notification renewal refuse letter explaining the cause for rejection. To download the letter, see related link.• Update Metastorm with the decision.• Refund the application fee.	
	The sponsor has submitted an application and their HTS licence has expired.	<p>You must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check Metastorm – if re-rate action is taking place take no further action. If no action has been taken send HTS decision notification expired letter. To download the letter, see related link.• Email details of the refusal to the sponsor suspension mailbox (see related link).	
<p>Renewal decision</p> <p>If the outcome of the renewal decision is that the sponsor scores between 50-70 for the core measurable requirements, this is considered a ‘near miss’ on their HTS application. The sponsor will be made subject to the interim limit for Tier 4 sponsors.</p> <p>If the outcome of the renewal decision is that the sponsor scores between 50-70 for the core measurable requirements, and this is considered a ‘second near miss’, the sponsor will become a legacy sponsor.</p> <p>For legacy sponsors, if the outcome of the renewal decision is that the sponsor scores 50-70 for the core measurable requirements, and this is considered a first or second near miss, the sponsor will remain a legacy sponsor.</p>			

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HTS management checks – primary and secondary

About this guidance Changes to Tier 4 and highly trusted sponsors Tier 4 legacy sponsors In-year or follow on and re-rate action during the intention period Highly trusted sponsor payments and workflow checks Highly trusted sponsors (HTS) HTS renewal applications HTS management checks – primary and secondary	<p>This page explains the primary management checks specific to highly trusted sponsors (HTS).</p> <p>EO managers must make the following management checks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the correct decision has been made against the amended criteria for Tier 4• the educational oversight criteria has been applied correctly• HTS applications have been made by the required deadline depending upon the sponsors previous rating• the HTS database has been completed correctly with the application details and decision• where applicable, has discretion been granted correctly (discretion may have been granted due to the limited number of confirmations of acceptance for studies (CAS) used). <p>For more information on management checks, see related links.</p>	Links to staff intranet removed
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Contact

About this guidance Changes to Tier 4 and highly trusted sponsors Tier 4 legacy sponsors In-year or follow on and re-rate action during the intention period Highly trusted sponsor payments and workflow checks Highly trusted sponsors (HTS) HTS renewal applications HTS management checks – primary and secondary	<p>This page explains who to contact for more help with points-based system highly trusted sponsor licence applications.</p> <p>If you have read this guidance and still need more help with this category, you must first ask your senior caseworker or line manager.</p> <p>If the question cannot be answered at that level, you may email the sponsor change management delivery team (see related link: Email sponsor licensing unit process amendments) for guidance on the policy.</p> <p>Changes to this guidance can only be made by the modernised guidance team (MGT). If you think the policy content needs amending you must contact the sponsor change management delivery team, (see related link: Email sponsor licensing unit process amendments), who will ask the MGT to update the guidance, if appropriate.</p> <p>The MGT will accept direct feedback on broken links, missing information or the format, style and navigability of this guidance. You can send these using the link: Email: Modernised guidance team.</p>	Related links Changes to this guidance Information owner Links to staff intranet removed
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This page tells you about this version of the points-based system sponsor licensing – highly trusted sponsors guidance and who owns it.

Version	5.0
Valid from date	23 November 2012
Policy owner	Sponsor change management delivery team
Cleared by director	Steve Lamb
Director's role	Regional operations director, North East, Yorkshire and Humber region
Clearance date	16 November 2011
This version approved for publication by	Richard Short
Approver's role	Assistant director, modernised guidance team
Approval date	20 November 2012

Changes to this guidance can only be made by the modernised guidance team (MGT). If you think the policy content needs amending you must contact the sponsor change management delivery team (see related link: Email sponsor licensing unit process amendments), who will ask the MGT to update the guidance, if appropriate.

The MGT will accept direct feedback on broken links, missing information or the format, style and navigability of this guidance. You can send these using the link: Email: Modernised guidance team.

Related links

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[Contact](#)

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