

Postdoctoral Scholars

A Postdoctoral Scholar is someone who has less than 5 years of post-Ph.D. research experience and has never held a tenure-track or tenured faculty appointment. Postdoc appointments are intended to provide a full-time program of advanced academic preparation and research training. Initial appointments are for a minimum of 2 years, except in certain exceptional circumstances. This title is limited to 5 years, including post-Ph.D. research experience gained outside of UC. Postdocs are required to receive a 3% increase annually or to be brought to their experience level minimum, whichever is greater. The date of this increase is dependent on their original hire date at UC.

See experience levels: https://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/_files/2024-25/oct-2024-scales/t23.pdf

Titles:

Postdoctoral Scholar-Employee (3252)

An appointment is made in the title "Postdoctoral Scholar-Employee" when (1) the agency funding the salary requires or permits the appointee to be an employee of the University, (2) whenever General funds, opportunity funds or other discretionary funds are used to support the position, or (3) when faculty want to pay additional compensation to a postdoc. This title can be used for Postdoc-Paid Directs or Postdoc-Fellows who have a fellowship that falls below the campus minimum or to maintain equity with other postdocs in the same lab/unit. A primary appointment as a Postdoc-Paid Direct or Postdoc Fellow is required for definition #3. Minimum appointment duration (at 100%) is 2 years.

Postdoctoral Scholar-Fellow (3253)

An appointment is made in the title "Postdoctoral Scholar-Fellow" when the Postdoctoral Scholar has been awarded a fellowship or traineeship for postdoctoral study by an extramural agency and the fellowship or traineeship is paid through a University account. Appointments in this title are made at a minimum duration equal to the duration of the fellowship or extramural funding.

Postdoctoral Scholar-Paid Direct (3254)

An appointment is made in the title "Postdoctoral Scholar-Paid Direct" when the postdoctoral scholar has been awarded a fellowship or traineeship by an extramural agency and the agency pays the fellowship directly to the Postdoctoral Scholar, rather than through the University. Such appointments have a "without salary" status. Appointments in this title are made at a minimum duration equal to the duration of the fellowship or extramural funding.

Postdoctoral Scholar Employee-Non Exempt (3255)

An appointment is made in the title "Postdoctoral Scholar-Employee NEX" when (1) the agency funding the salary requires or permits the appointee to be an employee of the University or (2) whenever General funds, opportunity funds or other discretionary funds are used to support the position and based on the percentage appointment of the Postdoctoral Scholar, the prorated salary per week does not meet the FLSA salary level test.

Interim Postdoctoral Scholar-Employee (3256)

An appointment is made in the title "Interim Postdoctoral Scholar-Employee" when UC graduate students who recently obtained their Ph.D. degree or equivalent need a short-term appointment to complete an existing project from their graduate education programs before moving on to other employment. This title is limited to a total of 12 months.

Timeline:

Once received by ERSO HR, expected processing time is as follows:

- 3-6 weeks to receive all campus approvals for the postdoc appointment
- For postdocs who need a J-1 visa, 10 business days for the Berkeley International Office to process the DS-2019 (Certificate of Eligibility for J-1 Exchange Visitor Status) and issue it to the postdoc electronically, via DocuSign
- 1-2 months for the postdoc to schedule a visa interview at their local US embassy, go to the interview, and receive their visa; processing time varies depending on country of citizenship and postdoc's current location

Please submit requests requiring a visa sponsored by UC Berkeley 4 months prior to the start date. For requests that do not require a visa, submit 2 months prior to the start date.

ERSO HR Process

Step	Owner	Process
1	Host Faculty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determines they would like to host a Postdoctoral Scholar and submits the case via the ERSO Intranet: https://www.erso.berkeley.edu/ersoapp/hr/postdocs/waivers/new - For any initial questions, extension cases, or merit cases, contact ersohrops@erso.berkeley.edu.
2	HR Generalist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gathers the necessary documents from the scholar and provides other required forms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - VSPA Gateway application - CV - Proof of PhD - Funding source and amount – requested from RA/fund manager* - Postdoc Request Form (if extension or merit case) - Passport and prior visa documents if UC Berkeley-sponsored visa is needed
3	HR Generalist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepares the application in Gateway - Submits the documents to HR Operations Manager digitally
4	HR Operations Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gives final review of case on behalf of Associate Dean for Research and approves it - The appointment is also approved in VSPA Gateway - Copy of approved form/memo is uploaded to shared drive
5	HR Generalist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sends offer letter to postdoc and stores signed copy in personnel file - Proceeds with visa request to Berkeley International Office if needed

*Must meet the established campus minimum.