



Policy on

**UK Visa and Immigration Compliance – Student
Recruitment**

Approved

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Approved by

Senior Leadership Team

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New College Durham is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, as well as vulnerable adults, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

If you require this document in an alternative format and/or language, please contact records@newdur.ac.uk

We review our policies regularly to update them and to ensure that they are accessible and fair to all. All policies are subject to equality impact assessments which are carried out to determine whether the policy has, or is likely to have, a different impact on those with protected characteristics. We are always keen to hear from anyone who wants to contribute to these impact assessments and we welcome suggestions for improving the accessibility of fairness of this and all College policies.

To make suggestions or to see further information please contact:

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Equality Impact Assessed: 12/12/25

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy has been written to ensure New College Durham comply with UK Visa and Immigration requirements in respect of international student recruitment and the processes we follow during the student's application journey and study period at New College Durham.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

- 2.1 New College Durham holds Student Sponsor status approved by UK Visa & Immigration (UKVI). This status allows New College Durham to sponsor non-UK students to study at the college. To maintain this status, the college needs to maintain full compliance to the recruitment, monitoring and reporting of non-UK students in line with published UK Visa and Immigration compliance procedures.
- 2.2 The Deputy Chief Executive is the Student Sponsor Authorising Officer and has overall responsibility for ensuring the college is compliant with UK Visa and Immigration policies, including oversight to the actions of staff who use the Home Office's Sponsorship Management System (SMS). All applications to renew the College's licence are made under the Authorising Officer's name.
- 2.3 The International Business Development Manager is the Student Sponsor's key contact and is responsible for overseeing the recruitment process of non-UK students to the college. They are responsible for ensuring the college's processes and procedures reflect the details set out in the Student Sponsor Guidance issued by the Home Office. They must review these documents on a regular basis for any changes made to immigration rules and procedures for education providers and act accordingly. [Student sponsor guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)
- 2.4 The International Department, consisting of the International Business Development Manager & International Student Support and Homestay Accommodation Officer can issue a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) to applicants who meet all published entry requirements and immigration requirements.
- 2.5 The International Department are responsible for ensuring all records are kept for students who are issued a CAS and are granted a student route visa to study at New College Durham. This includes copies of relevant passport pages, eVisa, up to date contact details, absence and attendance records (completed by course

leaders), previous qualifications, English Language test certificates (if applicable) and any other key documents needed to support a student's application. A full list of what documents a student sponsor is expected to hold a record of is listed in the Sponsor Guidance document. The International Department has a checklist that includes all required documents, plus additional documents that the college wishes to check. UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) have developed a digital immigration system. This means they have replaced physical documents with an online record of student's immigration status. This is known as an eVisa. The documents being replaced are biometric residence permits (BRP), biometric residence cards (BRC), passport endorsements, such as indefinite leave to enter wet ink stamps, vignette stickers in passports, such as entry clearance or visa vignettes.

3. Recruitment and Admissions Process

3.1 Please see appendix 1 for Recruitment and Admissions Process Flowchart.

4. Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS)

- 4.1 A Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) is an electronic record that the college produces from the UK Visa and Immigration online Sponsorship Management System (SMS) that is issued to a student for them to use in support of their student visa application.
- 4.2 A CAS checklist is completed by the International Department ensuring the requirements of the Student Sponsor Guidance are met before a CAS is issued.
- 4.3 A CAS will be assigned in line with UKVI guidance, by an appointed level 1 user of the SMS.
- 4.4 A CAS will be sent securely and directly to the student personally.

5. English Language Requirements

- 5.1 When students are applying for a student route visa, they will need to take a test that assesses their level of English language ability including reading, writing, speaking and listening abilities.

- 5.2 Students must complete a test that is included on the UKVI list of approved English Language tests - [Prove your English language abilities with a secure English language test \(SELT\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- 5.3 Some students do not need to prove their knowledge of English if they have completed a qualification equivalent to a UK degree in a certain country or are a national of certain countries. A full list of exemptions can be found on the UKVI website and needs to be consulted as part of the student's application process.

6. Enrolment Procedures

- 6.1 The International Department will ensure a list of students, and their CAS numbers are sent to the college admissions department before college enrolment commences.
- 6.2 Students are asked to inform the International Department when their visa has been granted and give an estimated date of arrival. They will then be given a date to attend college to complete their enrolment.
- 6.3 Upon enrolment, the college will ask to see the student's passport and proof of entry to the UK via their eVisa. The details will be entered against the student's electronic record and a copy taken. The college will also request to see the student's original qualification documents and if applicable English Language test certificate. The student's enrolment checklist and document checklist will be updated.
- 6.4 Students are required to inform the college of their current contact details including address, email, and telephone number. The student will be required to keep the college updated with any changes in their contact details. Students will be required to comply fully with the college's Student Engagement and Attendance Procedure.
- 6.5 Students are required to pay their remaining course fee within three weeks of the programme starting in line with the International Student Payment Policy - [New College Durham | International Student Payment Information](#)
- 6.6 Students will be given a date for an international student induction at least eight weeks before their course starts which will cover information such as registering with a doctor, police registration, bank letters and other important information regarding the college and living in the UK.

- 6.7 Students will be given their timetable at least four weeks before their induction date.

7. Visa Refusals

- 7.1 Any visa refusal under the student sponsor route needs to be reported against the student's CAS number. The College's International Department will report this via the SMS.
- 7.2 If a student's visa application is unsuccessful, a deposit refund will be considered on a case by-case basis subject to evidence being provided as outlined in the International Student Payment Policy.

8. Attendance Monitoring and Academic Engagement

- 8.1 The College has an International Student Engagement and Attendance Procedure for students who are sponsored via the student route. This procedure can be found here: [file \(newcollegedurham.ac.uk\)](file(newcollegedurham.ac.uk))
- 8.2 Attendance is monitored by programme teams via registers, and any concerns are immediately reported to the International Department. The College also has an international student attendance report that the International Department checks on a weekly basis.
- 8.3 Where a student's attendance falls below the required standard, or they are not engaging with their studies to meet the requirements set by the college and the UKVI the International Student Engagement and Attendance Procedure is followed.
- 8.4 Any student the college withdraws due to poor attendance or academic engagement is reported to the UKVI by the College's International Department via the SMS.

9. Student Work Placement

- 9.1 Courses of study for students aged 16 years or above may include a work placement, provided it is an integral and assessed part of the course.
- 9.2 For course below degree level (level 3, 4 & 5) the work placement must not be more than 33 per cent of the total length of the course in the UK.

- 9.3 For courses at degree level (level 6 and above) the work placement must not be more than 50% of the total length of the course.
- 9.4 The Course team must inform the International Department the dates of a student's work placement and the contact details of the company.
- 9.5 The International Department will report the work placement information against the student's CAS number on the SMS.

10. Students under 18

- 10.1 If the college is sponsoring students under 18 then they must ensure suitable care arrangements are in place for them in the UK. This must include travel, reception when they arrive in the UK and care while they arrive in the UK.
- 10.2 If required, the college can arrange a suitable homestay for the student during their study period.
- 10.3 All international students applying to the college who are under 18 must have a consent form completed by their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) before the issue of CAS number. Evidence of the student's relationship between their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) will also be requested for example, birth certificate, adoption certificate or court letter.

11. Reporting duties

- 11.1 The college has a duty to notify the UKVI if it becomes aware that any of the students it is sponsoring have been granted leave with the incorrect conditions of stay included on their eVisa, for instance if they have mistakenly been granted permission to work.
- 11.2 The college will inform UKVI if anything they have reported through the SMS is incorrect and why it is incorrect.
- 11.3 The college has a duty to report all students that they are sponsoring that are completing a work placement as part of their course.
- 11.4 The college will inform the UKVI of any third party, in the UK or another country that helped the college recruit international students.
- 11.5 The college will inform the UKVI if there are any changes to student's circumstances such as a student does not enrol within the enrolment period. More examples can be found in the changes to student circumstances table in

document 2: Sponsorship Duties that is published by the UKVI. [Student sponsor guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/student-sponsor-guidance)

- 11.6 The college must report any changes which may affect their student sponsor status such as replacing your authorising officer of key contact. More examples can be found in the change to sponsor circumstances table in document 2: Sponsorship Duties that is published by the UKVI.
- 11.7 The college must report if they are withdrawing sponsorship of a student and the reason why, for example non-engagement and attendance.

12. Short-Term study Visa

- 12.1 Short-Term Study visas are used by students who are coming to the UK specifically to study English language.
- 12.2 The visa can be valid for a maximum of 11 months. After this time, the student must leave the UK.
- 12.3 A student cannot switch to any other visa whilst holding a Short-Term Study visa whilst in the UK.
- 12.4 The International Department will liaise with the English Language centre regarding potential students who will require this type of visa.
- 12.5 After the English Language centre has approved the student, the International Department will issue an offer letter that the student can use to apply for their visa.
- 12.6 Students who are studying using a Short-Term Study visa will not require a CAS number, and fewer checks are required.
- 12.7 Upon arrival, the International Department will ask to see and make a copy of the student's short-term study eVisa.

13. Remote Delivery

- 13.1 Remote delivery is permitted on courses at degree level and above at sponsors which are a HEP with a track record of compliance.
- 13.2 Face-to-face delivery must remain the predominant method of delivery, with remote delivery making up no more than 20% of the taught elements of the

course, unless the certain exemptions are met as stipulated in the Student Sponsor Guidance.

13.3 Sponsors should calculate the remote delivery percentage on the assumption that the student will elect to attend all possible remote elements online. Therefore, where the student has an option of online or in-person learning this should count as a remote element for this purpose.

13.4 If the sponsor becomes aware that the student has exceeded the permitted level of remote delivery for their course they must stop sponsoring the student and report the issue as set out in row h of the changes to student circumstances table in paragraph 7.5.

14. Educational Representatives (Agents)

14.1 Any applications from educational representatives to work with the College must go through the College's Educational Representatives approval process and be signed off by the College's Senior Leadership team.

14.2 The college is committed as an institution to the UK Agent Quality Framework and pledge to create and maintain the highest standards of agent management, ensuring the UK remains a leading study destination for international students.

15. Audit Procedure

15.1 The college recognises that all its practice in relation to UKVI and holding Student Sponsor Status are subject to an announced or unannounced audit. The college will fully cooperate with all audits.

15.2 In case of an unannounced audit the college should follow the process outlined in the UKVI Audit Briefing Document

16. Retaining Documentation

16.1 Documents can be kept either as paper copies or electronic format that can easily be made available to auditors upon request. The International Department holds electronic records of current sponsored students. All previous sponsored students' information is stored against their electronic college record, in line with GDPR requirements.

16.2 In line with UKVI guidance all documents relating to the worker or student whom the college sponsor must be kept throughout the period that the college sponsor them and until whichever is earliest, one year has passed from the date on which you end your sponsorship of the worker or student or the date on which a compliance officer has examined and approved them, if this is less than one year after the College ended their sponsorship of the student or worker.

17. Review and Evaluation

The performance of this Policy will be formally reviewed annually and monitored as necessary on an on-going basis to ensure it is compliant with relevant legislation and regulations.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Recruitment and Admissions Process Flowchart

