THE TWO ACADEMY

Student Sponsorship Portfolio: Processes and Procedures

Course Workbook

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Introduction

Welcome!

This is the course companion workbook for our course: Student Sponsorship Processes and Procedures.

Download and save this workbook before filling in your answers. It is editable – all you need to do is click inside the boxes or above the solid lines to type your answers. You can also print the workbook and complete it by hand if you prefer.

In this course we will teach you about the process of sponsoring a student and their subsequent visa application. After learning everything we have to share with you, you will need to take action in order to ensure your processes and procedures support sponsor compliance. This workbook can then become your reference point; once downloaded and saved, it is yours to keep, print or save on your computer. Forever. Well, perhaps not forever, but for a while …

The workbook is designed for you to use side by side with the learning. It follows the same structure as the course and has space for your notes; it contains useful tips and links to external websites and other useful reference material.

Don't Be Stuck

If you have difficulty with any element of the course, or in sponsor compliance, please do let us know. You can contact us by via email: info@twolimited.co.uk or telephone: 01293 889691.

Disclaimer

Immigration rules and regulations do change. We make every effort to keep our material up to date but cannot guarantee this. Please always double check before acting based on the information in this workbook and associated course.

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Record Keeping Checklist

As a licensed student sponsor, you must keep the following on record either as paper or electronic copy:

Sponsor Licence	
All documents submitted as part of your application to become a sponsor.	
For Each Sponsored Student	
A copy of current passport pages showing personal identity details, leave stamps or immigration status document including their period of leave to remain in UK. Must show entitlement to study with you if entry clearance to UK.	
A copy of biometric residence permit card OR digital status.	
Evidence of student's date of entry into UK. *See notes below	
Consent letter (for children under age of 18) for arrangements for application, travel, reception and care in UK. *Details (name & address) of foster carer must be provided to local authority.*	
History of contact details (UK residential address, telephone no., mobile no. personal email). N.B. This must be kept up to date.	
Record of attendance/absence(s); kept either electronically or manually.	
Copies (or originals where possible) of any evidence assessed as part of the process of offering the student a place to study (e.g. references, exam certificates, interview notes).	
A copy of ATAS (Academic Technology Approval Scheme) certificate, if required for course of study.	
Any other document specified in the sponsor guidance and relevant code of practice.	

*You now must check the student entered the UK during the validity period of their visa. This is not applicable to those already within the UK with a valid visa - it is for entry into UK only. Points to note:

- If they entered before the 'valid from' date on their visa, they do not have permission to study.
- In most cases, the date of entry will be evidenced via an ink stamp on the visa within the passport. You must therefore make & retain a copy of the stamp. In most cases, EU students will not have a physical stamp in their visa, so their boarding pass should be requested.
- Re. nationals of AUS, CAN, JPN, NZ, SNG, SKR, USA, as well as EEA countries & Switzerland. Nationals of these countries are eligible to use automated e-passport gates to enter the UK. In such cases you must check the date of entry coincides with the entry clearance validity date via other evidence. e.g., ticket, boarding pass.
- In these circumstances, you must make a record of the date the student entered the UK, but you do not need to retain the evidence. N.B. Consider your system requirements in order to keep a record of this date.

Student Visa Application Process

We have created three checklists to support the visa application process; the first is a checklist of the documentation required to show evidence of meeting the visa requirements, the other two summarise the steps involved during the application process.

The process differs depending on whether the applicant is already based in the UK, and therefore applying 'in country', or if they are currently based outside of the UK, and therefore require an entry clearance visa into the UK. We have process lists for both scenarios.

There are 3 levels of service when making a visa application:
- Standard service – the cheapest option with a processing time of 8-12 weeks
- Priority service – decision 5 working days after the biometric appointment
- Super priority – decision next working day after the biometric appointment.

The application decision is emailed to the applicant (or their agent) and if successful, the new BRP will be sent to the UK home address on the application form within 5 to 10 working days.

PBS Student Visa Application Supporting Documentation	
CAS reference	
Parental consent letter	
Proof of relationship	
Documents on checklist generated during application process - likely include: • Passport • Qualifications • Certificates • References • Evidence of maintenance • Copies of receipts for tuition fees and/or accommodation costs already paid – if information not already included on the CAS) • English language.	
Translations of any supporting evidence not in English or Welsh. Must contain confirmation that it is accurate translation of original; date of translation; full name & signature of translator.	
Tuberculosis certificate (if required).	

In-Country Visa Application Process Checklist	
1. Receive and accept offer of study at education institution.	
2. Obtain Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) from school. Do check all the information is correct. A CAS is valid 6 months and must be used to support a student visa application. It is only valid for one application.	
3. Ensure you have all supporting documentation for evidence. *N.B. ensure all supporting evidence – particularly financial – shows the applicant meets the requirements* **on the day** *that the application is finally submitted/payment is made.*	
4. Complete online application form. You can start as early as you wish & save as you go along; the application is not finally submitted until you pay the application fee.	
5. Complete application & pay application fee & immigration health surcharge.	
6. You will be redirected to UKVCAS to book an appointment to attend a UKVCAS service centre. This is where the visa applicant provides their biometric information.	
7. Scan & upload supporting evidence either in advance of biometric appointment, or at the appointment itself (there is a charge for this service).	
8. Attend biometric appointment. If supporting evidence has already been uploaded, applicant will need to bring their original passport for identity purposes only. Should you wish to scan all supporting evidence at the appointment, bring all original documentation to the appointment. You are able to take them away with you, but you may be charged an additional fee.	
9. The Home Office will process the application & the decision is emailed. If the application is refused, seek help from your sponsor and an immigration adviser as soon as possible. If the application is approved, your biometric residence permit (BRP) will be sent by courier to the home address on the application form within 5-10 working days	
10. Upon receipt of the BRP, check all details are correct (including conditions and length of leave).	
11. Update your police registration (if applicable) within 7 days of receipt of BRP.	
12. Show the BRP to the relevant member of staff at your education institution so they can update their records.	

Out of Country Visa Application Process Checklist	
1. Receive and accept offer of study at education institution.	
2. Obtain CAS from school. Do check all the information is correct. A CAS is valid 6 months and must be used to support a student visa application. It is only valid for one application.	
3. Processes vary from country to country, but generally there will be an online application through the UKVI portal, followed by an appointment at a Visa Application Centre (VAC). These centres can be a long distance to travel to; we advise checking before the application. The full list of locations is kept up to date here: https://www.gov.uk/find-a-visa-application-centre.	
4. In some countries you will also need a certificate showing you are free from Tuberculosis. The list of countries and acceptable test centres can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/tb-test-visa/countries-where-you-need-a-tb-test-to-enter-the-uk.	
5. Ensure you have all supporting documentation for evidence. *N.B. ensure all supporting evidence – particularly financial – shows the applicant meets the requirements* **on the day** *that the application is finally submitted/payment is made.* 6. Once application is complete, pay application fee & immigration health surcharge.	
7. Book an appointment to attend a VAC. This is where the visa applicant provides their biometric information.	
8. Scan & upload supporting evidence either in advance of biometric appointment, or at the appointment itself (there is a charge for this service).	
9. Attend biometric appointment. If supporting evidence has already been uploaded, applicant will need to bring their original passport for identity purposes only. Should you wish to scan all supporting evidence at the appointment, bring all original documentation to the appointment. You will be able to take them away with you, but you may be charged an additional fee.	
10. The Home Office will process the application & the decision is emailed. If the application is refused, seek help from your sponsor and an immigration adviser as soon as possible. Your passport and supporting documents will be returned to you by post (if these were retained at your VAC appointment).	
11. Your passport will have an entry clearance vignette within the document. This allows you to enter the UK.	

12. Upon arrival in the UK, retain evidence of your date of travel (e.g., ticket/ boarding pass), as your sponsor is required to make a note of the date you entered the UK.	
13. Your entry clearance visa will only be valid for 30 days. You will need to collect your biometric residence permit (BRP) within 10 days of arriving in the UK, or before the end of the 30-day entry clearance visa – **whichever is later.** BRP's are collected from a local Post Office; you will be informed where to collect it from.	
14. Update your police registration (if applicable) within 7 days of receipt of BRP.	
15. Show the BRP to the relevant member of staff at your education institution so they can update their records.	

Lost Documents

It is important to know what steps should be taken if a student loses an immigration document, as in this event it is likely that they will contact you for help, as their sponsor.

Incident Outside the UK

If the student's vignette (this is the visa sticker within a passport) has been lost/damaged or stolen outside of the UK, they should get it replaced online. The category of visa application they will need to select is 'transfer or replace your visa'.

Note: The student does not need to provide a CAS, or evidence of funds or qualifications etc. (unless requested by UKVI to show there has been no change in circumstances). However, they should submit a letter from you as their sponsor, confirming that they are studying with you in the UK. In addition to a photocopy of their evidence of leave, and a police report.

Incident Inside the UK

If a student's visa has been lost, damaged or stolen whilst they are in the UK, they will need to make an online application for a BRP to replace the document. You, or the student, should seek advice if their immigration permission was near its end at the time the visa was lost/damaged/stolen.

New Passport

If a student gets a new passport, there is no need to apply for a new BRP. If a student's passport has expired since they were granted entry clearance, they can travel to the UK without needing to transfer their entry clearance vignette to the new passport – but they must usually present both passports when passing through immigration control.

There are some circumstances where the student might wish to transfer their visa to a new passport, however, even if their expired passport has not been lost/stolen.

- Students who want to enter into a tenancy with a private landlord in England require evidence of their 'right to rent'. Only a current BRP, or leave endorsed in a current passport is acceptable. The same requirement applies to employment; only a current BRP or leave endorsed in a current passport is acceptable evidence of right to work.
- Not all countries accept evidence of leave in an expired passport. Therefore, students who plan to travel outside the UK at some point after their passport expires, should plan to transfer conditions before they make travel plans.
- It is perhaps easier to remember to travel with a current passport and a BRP, rather than two passports.

Monitoring and Reporting Migrant Activity

Consider your processes surrounding sponsored students. Do your student records contain the following information, and is there a way of flagging if any of these events or changes to detail (which must be reported to UKVI) occur:

- ✓ Correct leave
- ✓ Missed deadline for enrolment
- ✓ Changes to student circumstances
- ✓ Student leaves before expected end date
- ✓ Student moves to different type of visa
- ✓ Course dates (there is no need to report change to subjects, as long as course completion date remains the same)
- ✓ Student been withdrawn from course due to missing expected contacts/attendance hours
- ✓ Student is deferring, postponing or taking a break from studies for more than 2 months
- ✓ Student is leaving the UK
- ✓ Student is changing institution
- ✓ Student is suspected of breaching conditions of their immigration permission.

Reporting Duties

A sponsor is required to report information to the Home Office. We categories this as general information, and changes to circumstances, for clarification.

A sponsor must report on all students that it is sponsoring, including when they are:
- On a course (including a pre-sessional course or a study abroad programme) at a partner institution or at another institution under an exceptional arrangement; or
- Doing a work placement that is part of their course.

General Information to Report

A sponsor has a duty to notify UKVI if:
- it becomes aware that any of the students it is sponsoring has been granted leave with the **incorrect conditions of stay**, for instance if they have mistakenly been granted permission to work
- **anything it has reported through the SMS is incorrect**, explaining why it is incorrect
- if there are any changes to a **student's circumstances** (see below)

- if there are any changes that affect its student sponsor licence (see below)

A sponsor must also provide details of any third party, in the UK or another country, **which has helped it to recruit students**. To do this, email EducatorsHelpdesk@homeoffice.gov.uk.

You must retain records about any appeal which a student makes against refusal decisions. If a **student's appeal is successful and permission is granted**, you must tell UKVI if their start date is delayed and provide UKVI with a new enrolment date. To do this, use the free text field on the sponsor management system.

Changes to Report

The list below sets out all of the changes sponsors must report. Unless stated otherwise, reporting is done using the SMS, and should include the last recorded residential address and contact telephone number that the sponsor holds for the migrant. Sponsors should also include any email address they hold for the student, if they have one.

Changes to Report to UKVI:

- If a **student withdraws from their course before they travel to the UK**, you must report this within 10 working days of you knowing about it. If they are joining another institution, you must provide the name and address of that institution if you know it.

- If a **student's start date is delayed before they enter the UK** but after they have been granted entry clearance. You will need to agree with the student whether they can still complete the course within the dates given on their visa. If they can, you need not report anything. If they can't, you must assign a new CAS and advise the student to apply to vary their leave to include a later finish date

- If they **do not enrol within the enrolment period**, you must report this within 10 working days of the enrolment period ending. You must include the reason the migrant gives for non-enrolment (e.g., a missed flight/changed decision to study in UK/changed sponsor/visa refused).

- If a student **misses 10 consecutive expected contact points**. Examples of contact points include attending formal or pastoral care activities e.g., lesson; test; meeting with tutor; appointment with welfare adviser. You can either report the tenth missed contact (or the date the student stopped academically engaging if you are a higher education provider); OR set two checkpoints during any 12-month rolling period and report any students who

stopped missed 10 consecutive contacts/academically engaging without permission. You will be withdrawing sponsorship of the student.

- If a student **defers their studies after they have arrived in the UK,** you must report this within 10 days of agreeing the deferral. You can continue to sponsor a student who has deferred their studies for a maximum of 60 days, providing you continue to adhere to your sponsor duties, and they will be able to complete the course within their existing visa dates. In exceptional circumstances, you can extend past 60 days, providing the course will be completed within the visa dates.

- **You withdraw a student from their course**, you must report this within 10 working days of you knowing about the issue. You must include the reasons (e.g., the student has not met your requirements/ course stops running).

- You **stop sponsoring a student** because they commence studying abroad; move to a different sponsor; move to an immigration category which does not require sponsorship; or complete the course sooner than expected. You must report this within 10 working days of knowing about the issue.

- You **suspect that a student is not a genuine student,** you must report this to the Home Office ASAP - https://www.gov.uk/report-immigration-crime.

- You must notify the Home Office of any **changes to your details**, e.g., changing (or amending the details of) your key contact or authorising officer, replacing or amending the details (or adding) a Level 1 user: or a change of address. The Home Office may ask for more details and may ask for documentary evidence to support the change you are requesting.

- If you **appoint/remove/change a representative**, you must use the SMS to give the details.

- If there are any **significant changes in your circumstances** (e.g., appoint a new principal or change owners, have a criminal prosecution pending, have sold all or part of the business or become insolvent), you must report this within 20 working days.

GLOSSARY

CAS (**Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies**) – this is an electronic document which details the sponsorship of a student. The CAS reference must be included on a student application form.

Visa Vignette – this is a visa sticker in a passport and is received after making an entry clearance visa application (from outside the UK). They are valid for 30 days to enable the holder to enter the UK.

BRP (**Biometric Residence Permit**) – this is a visa issued on a separate card. An applicant outside of the UK applies for entry clearance, they are granted a 30-day visa sticker in their passport to use to travel to the UK. They then collect the BRP (which contains the full length of their visa) after arriving in the UK. Applicants in the UK will get their new visa on a BRP.

IHS (**Immigration Health Surcharge**) – The IHS payment is to cover the cost of most of NHS healthcare for the duration the person is in the UK.

Maintenance – this is the money the UKVI require a visa applicant to have to cover their living costs. Maintenance must be held for at least 90 days before the date the visa application is submitted. The vast majority of visa refusals result from maintenance not being shown correctly (i.e., the bank account dipped below the required balance within the required period).

Main applicant– the person applying for a visa.

PBS dependant – main applicant's spouse, partner or children.

USEFUL RESOURCES

Student Sponsor Guidance 1: Apply for a Licence:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/939672/Student_Sponsor_Guidance_-_Doc_1_-_Applying_for_a_licence_2020.pdf

Student Sponsor Guidance 2: Sponsor Duties:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1022004/Student_Sponsor_Guidance_-_Doc_2_-_Sponsorship_Duties_2021-09-29_FINAL.pdf

Student Sponsor Guidance 3: Sponsor Compliance:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/939470/Student_Sponsor_Guidance_-_Doc_3_-_Compliance_2020-12.pdf

Student Sponsor Guidance 4: Higher Education Regulatory Reform

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/939469/Student_Sponsor_Guidance_-_Doc_4_-_HE_reform_2020-12_FINAL.pdf

Appendix D:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keep-records-for-sponsorship-appendix-d

The Sponsorship Management System Manuals:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1023419/6._Miscellaneous_CAS_functions_-_PBS840.pdf

Student Visa: Money you need:

https://www.gov.uk/student-visa/money

Financial Evidence for Student and Child Route Applicants:

https://www.gov.uk/guidance/financial-evidence-for-student-and-child-student-route-applicants

English Language:
https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-1-cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-global-scale

SELT - approved providers:
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/prove-your-english-language-abilities-with-a-secure-english-language-test-selt

UK ENIC (formerly known as NARIC):
https://enic.org.uk/Qualifications/SOC/Default.aspx

Tuberculosis test requirements:
https://www.gov.uk/tb-test-visa

Criminal Records Check for Overseas Applicants:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/criminal-records-checks-for-overseas-applicants

All arrangements for a child's care and accommodation in the UK must comply with relevant UK legislation and regulations. You can find information on the regulations and national minimum standards via the following sites:

Accommodation of students under 18 by further education colleges: national minimum standards, inspection regulations:
https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20071002081639/http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4005629

Boarding schools: national minimum standards, inspection regulations:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/boarding-schools-nationalminimum-standards

The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014:
http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283/contents/made

Residential special schools: national minimum standards, inspection regulations:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/residentialspecial-schools-national-minimum-standards