



# UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH

## Student Responsibilities (Student Visa) Policy

<b>Version number</b> 1.0		<b>Status (draft/final)</b> final		<b>Owning Directorate / Faculty</b> Academic Registry	
<b>Summary of any amendments:</b> Formulation of a formal policy document based on existing online guidance document					
<b>Document objectives:</b> This policy outlines the conditions of a Student Visa that a sponsored student must comply with. The policy sets out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The specific compliance responsibilities for the student</li><li>• The requirement to hold an Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) certificate for certain fields / programmes of study</li><li>• The circumstances, under which the University may cease sponsorship of a Student Visa, report this to the Home Office and withdraw or interrupt the student from study at the University of Plymouth / University of Plymouth International College (UPIC).</li></ul>					
<b>Intended Recipients:</b> This policy applies to all students, regardless of programme, who apply for and obtain University sponsorship on a Student Visa. Other responsibilities that apply to international students subject to non-Student Visa immigration control are clearly identified.					
<b>Approving Body and Date Approved</b>				Quality & Standards Sub-Committee	
<b>Date of Issue</b>				01/08/2023	
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<b>Contact for review:</b>				UKVI Compliance Manager / Associate Director (Student Administration and UKVI Authorising Officer)	
<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Replaces</b>	<b>Comment</b>	
1.0	August 2023	Anna Want / Terry Vallance	2021/22 Version		

## Student Responsibilities (Student Visa) Policy

As a Student Visa holder<sup>1</sup>, students ('you') must comply with the conditions of your visa. As a licensed Student sponsor, the University ('we'/'us') also has responsibilities to monitor and report on your compliance with the conditions of your visa. These responsibilities are set out in the Student sponsor guidance. The requirement to keep records for sponsorship, including copies of passport and visa / immigration status documents, ATAS certificates, contact details, records of attendance and absence and admission documents, is set out in [Appendix D](#).

This policy sets out all your responsibilities if we issue you with a CAS and your Student Visa is granted. If your visa is refused, there are some specific requirements set out in paragraph 19. If you have any questions or concerns about complying with any of the conditions below, then please contact [us](#) for further information.

Responsibilities:

1. We are required to conduct a [right to study check](#) to demonstrate that you have the right to study in the UK and at the University. We must retain copies of passport pages showing all personal details and visa stamps or documents to evidence your entitlement to study in the UK and at the University of Plymouth. This can also include a Biometric Residence Permit. If your visa was issued digitally, you can obtain a share code from the "[View and Prove your immigration status](#)" Government website, which you can in turn share with us to prove your right to study.

You must upload the necessary documents to our online system and provide us with your share code (where applicable) before you can complete your course enrolment. You will be required to do this before you can enrol at the next stage(s) of your course in future years.

2. You must [keep your contact details](#) up to date so that we can contact you when required. This is a requirement of your Student Visa. This includes your home address, local Plymouth address, mobile phone number and personal email address. You must check your University of Plymouth email account regularly.
3. You must also inform the UKVI (Home Office) of any change to your circumstances, for example changes to your personal details and contact details, any criminal convictions, and changes to your dependant's details. To report a change, you must use the [Migrant Change of Circumstances](#) (MCC) application form. You must inform us prior to submitting the MCC form to the UKVI.
4. You must live in Plymouth or the surrounding area. If you fail to do this, or you do not provide your address details when requested, we may withdraw sponsorship and your Student Visa will be cancelled. You must research the accommodation available in Plymouth before your arrival in the UK and be aware of the campus location.

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<sup>1</sup> Formerly a Tier 4 General visa

5. You must engage fully with your course of study, attend everything required and engage honestly with systems put in place to monitor your engagement. Your acceptance of a CAS signifies your understanding and agreement with the following:
  - i. If you are on an undergraduate or postgraduate taught course, including where repeating, you should attend all timetabled face-to-face sessions and meet with your dissertation supervisor at least monthly during the dissertation period and as scheduled in your module outline. You should also engage with your course through other means including, for example, the submission of coursework and through the attendance at examinations, tutorials, and presentations. The expectation is that you will have regular engagement points. This may include attending a “check in” point if instructed to do so.
  - ii. If you are a postgraduate research student, you must complete your interactions on GradBook monthly and engage regularly with your supervisory team. This includes during periods of mobility when monthly GradBook interactions must still be completed. It is your responsibility to ensure that information relating to your engagement in the relevant month is entered onto each of your UKVI interactions, and that the interaction is signed off each month by your supervisor.
  - iii. If you fail to engage with your studies fully, we may stop sponsoring you so please ensure you are clear about timetabled and other course commitments. If you are unsure about these or cannot access your timetable, it is your responsibility to resolve this as quickly as possible by speaking to your faculty office, programme lead or personal tutor.
  - iv. It is your responsibility to ensure that you can access the Plymouth app and/or your Student card which are used to record your attendance. You must resolve any problems associated with these or replace your card, if lost, as quickly as possible.
  - v. The Student Visa route does not permit distance learning. Therefore, if it becomes clear that you are based away from the UK or the University, without authorisation, or for unacceptably long periods of time where mobility has been authorised (postgraduate research degrees only), we may stop sponsoring you under the Student Visa.
  - vi. If you are found to have attempted to defraud University systems, put in place to monitor your attendance, have done so, or have assisted other Student Visa holders in doing so, you may be subject to student disciplinary procedures. If you are found to have done this repeatedly (on more than one occasion), the University may stop sponsoring your Student Visa.
  - vii. We reserve the right to check your location as part of our engagement monitoring processes, and act on this data accordingly. We do not track student’s locations and only capture your location if Geolocation Validation is

enabled if relevant permissions are enabled on your device and only at the point of check-in to a taught session.

6. You must tell [us](#) about any planned or unplanned absences that mean you cannot attend classes or will be away from the University during study time. Please complete the [absence/mobility form](#) if your absence is known about in advance or as soon as possible otherwise<sup>2</sup>.
7. You must tell [us](#) about any changes to your study location by completing the [absence/mobility form](#). Postgraduate research students must request mobility through their GradBook record and ensure this is approved before leaving the UK.
8. You must not withdraw from, suspend, or defer your course unless you intend to return home or make a visa application for a new institution.
9. There are several reasons why we and/or UPIC may stop sponsoring you under a Student Visa. Reasons may include your own decision to withdraw or suspend studies, an academic decision, or because of sanctions applied to you by other policies such as the Study and Wellbeing Policy, the Student Disciplinary Policy, or the Fitness to Practise Policy. If we stop sponsoring you, you must follow our instructions regarding your immigration status and departure from the UK. Failure to do this may mean we decide not to sponsor you under a Student Visa in the future. You must also supply details of your travel plans to leave the UK i.e., copy of flight ticket, when requested.
10. We also reserve the right to withdraw or interrupt you from your studies for the following compliance-related reasons:
  - (i) If you have no valid immigration permission,
  - (ii) If you are an over-stayer,
  - (iii) If, in our reasonable opinion, you cannot submit a valid Student Visa application or other visa application within required deadlines, and
  - (iv) If we have no evidence to show that you have left the UK
11. Failure to follow the above responsibilities may result in us reporting your situation to the UKVI and may also result in your withdrawal or interruption / suspension from your studies with us. You would then be required to leave the University and the UK as per our instructions sent to you following reporting<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> Please note that an absence of more than one calendar month will not usually be permitted. Please discuss with [us](#) if your absence may be longer than this.

<sup>3</sup> You should be aware that UKVI reserve the right to remove you from the UK at any point following our reporting. If removing you from the UK involves recourse to public funds, you should be aware that this may result in a period of ban from the UK. Therefore, it is important that you follow our instructions concerning your arrangements to leave the UK promptly.

12. Following our reporting to UKVI to stop sponsoring your Student Visa, and prior to UKVI giving you notice of cancellation of your visa, you are still permitted to access the NHS and to work but are still bound by the working restrictions on your visa and the maximum number of hours permitted to work during term time.
13. You must only work as per the conditions associated with your visa. Working more hours could have very serious negative consequences for future visa applications and for your studies with us or elsewhere in the UK. You must also abide by any other terms of your visa and UKVI regulations. If we have concerns or knowledge / evidence that students are working illegally in the UK or otherwise breaching the conditions of their Student Visa, it is one of our duties as a sponsor to report this to UKVI. Your Student Visa may then be cancelled, and you may also be removed from your course. You may be removed from the UK and receive a period of ban from the UK.
14. You should not remain in the UK after the expiry of your visa or if you cease studying with us / UPIC, unless you are granted alternative leave to remain by UKVI or have other immigration status which allows you to remain in the UK.
15. Please check your [semester dates](#) – they will not be the same for all students, so please be aware of the dates that apply to you. Some programmes have non-standard semester / teaching dates and therefore non-standard vacation periods, please check with your faculty or programme lead.
16. You cannot be self-employed or engage in business activity, take a full-time permanent position, be employed as a doctor in training (except on a recognised foundation programme), be employed as a professional sportsperson or sports coach, or be employed as an entertainer.

If you are studying a performance-related course (for example drama, music, dance), you can undertake work placements which involve a professional performance, but only where the performance has been arranged by us and where the performance is an integral and assessed part of your course.

17. You must pay your tuition fees to us and/or UPIC in a timely manner, as set out in your Student Contract or UPIC Terms & Conditions. If you become a tuition fee debtor and sanctions are applied to your student account, you will be unable to engage with your studies or the University (or UPIC) and therefore your Student Visa will be at risk. We will stop sponsoring your Student Visa if sanctions remain after the stated deadlines.
18. You must inform us promptly of any visa refusal you receive with a CAS issued by us or UPIC, and supply [us](#) with all the documents relating to your refusal. If you meet the grounds to submit an application for administrative review, you must also supply [us](#) with these details and documentation promptly. Failure to do so, or to inform us that you have received a visa refusal, may mean that we or UPIC will not issue you with a further CAS in future.

19. If you change immigration category, you must supply [us](#) with your new immigration documentation by uploading the necessary documents to our online system or provide [us](#) with your share code as soon as possible after receipt. If you receive further correspondence from the UKVI regarding an ongoing immigration application, this must also be shared with [us](#) promptly.
20. As a Student Visa holder, you must make yourself aware of your time limit that applies to undergraduate level studies. If you have any concerns you should ensure you discuss them with [us](#) at the earliest opportunity, so that your time limit can be checked.
21. If you are required to repeat a part of your course or are referred in some modules, you must contact [us](#) to discuss how this situation affects your visa<sup>4</sup>.
22. If you wish to undertake a work or study placement or exchange programme, you must contact [us](#) to discuss how this will affect your visa. You may be required to obtain new immigration permission before commencing the placement or exchange. Placements must be authorised and approved by us and must be an integral and assessed part of your course, to be permissible under the Student Visa route. You must submit any required assessments within published deadlines to meet the above UKVI requirement. If you commence a placement without authorisation or without informing us, your Student Visa may be affected. If we have not reported the placement to UKVI, you are at risk of an allegation of illegal working.
23. You must study only at the university that issued you with the Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) that you used to apply for your visa. To change institution, you will need to make a new Student Visa application with a CAS from the new institution.
24. You must be aware that changing course (transferring to another programme) may have implications for your visa and may not be possible in some situations. Please discuss this further with [us](#). Please note that a transfer may not be permitted if we deem your request as not credible or it does not represent academic progression, particularly if your request is made shortly after enrolling. Please discuss this with [us](#).
25. If you are required to hold an Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) certificate, your ATAS certificate may be sent directly to us, or we may require you to provide a copy of your certificate before you are permitted to enrol. Failure to obtain an ATAS certificate where it is required, or to obtain a new ATAS certificate where required, will mean that you are deregistered from your

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<sup>4</sup> If the repeat or referral work required results in a 60-day gap when no engagement is required from you and / or your repeats fall into one semester of the academic year only, we will be required to stop sponsoring your Student Visa. You will be required to leave the UK as instructed and return with a new visa. It is your responsibility to request a new CAS in good time to ensure you can return when required to resume your studies.

course. [UKVI Student Sponsor guidance](#) states that we must hold copies of ATAS certificates where applicable. Further information about the ATAS certificate and who is required to apply for it, is available from the [ATAS website](#).

26. You must abide by the laws of the UK. If you are subject to a police caution, investigation or are charged with a criminal offence, you must inform [us](#) as soon as possible, as per the Student Contract. You may be subject to a Student Conduct investigation if you fail to inform us or depending on the nature of the charges.
27. You should be aware that failure to comply with the responsibilities and requirements listed above may result in your enrolment and Student Visa being cancelled.