



University of East London

International Student Advice Conditions of Service

uel.ac.uk/isa
thehub@uel.ac.uk



For further information

Contact the University

+44 (0)20 8223 3333
thehub@uel.ac.uk
uel.ac.uk/isa

Additional useful contacts

The UK Council for International Students Affairs (UKCISA)

ukicsa.org.uk
+44 20 7788 9214 (Monday to Friday 1-4pm).

The Council for International Education offers free confidential telephone advice on immigration matters and they provide information on a range of student related topics.

UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI)

gov.uk/visas-immigration

This is the branch of the Home Office responsible for borders and immigration. You can find visa applications forms, policy guidance and obtain information about visa eligibility and immigration rules for all types of visas applied for inside and outside of the UK.

The Immigration Law Practitioner's Association (ILPA)

ilpa.org.uk

Provides a Code of Ethics to which members have to sign up. You can find an immigration specialist in your local area through this website.

The Office of the Immigration Services (OISC)

oisc.gov.uk

OISC is an independent public body set up under the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, and is responsible for ensuring that all immigration advisers fulfil the requirements of good practice according to their Code of Standards.

Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants (JCWI)

jcwi.org.uk

JCWI is an independent national charity which exists to campaign for justice in immigration, nationality and refugee law and policy.

The International Students Advice team provides free and confidential advice on immigration issues relating to prospective and current students, recent graduates and their families. This includes entry clearance for students, renewal of your Tier 4 visa in the UK, working during and after studies, dependants, members of your family visiting you, travelling abroad/returning to the UK, implications for deferring, intermitting or withdrawing, change of course/sponsor and other types of visas.

International Students Advice Conditions of Service

International Students Advice (ISA) team

Head of Student Immigration and Compliance

Ayesha Awan

International Students Advisers

Andrei Mihai

Jennifer Haywood

Shelley Webster

Conditions of Service

The ISA team provides advice in good faith, based on information that you give us about your situation. We endeavour to ensure that our advice is accurate however, it is important to note that immigration legislation is subject to change, often at short notice. We cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions, for consequences arising from the use of our advice nor for decisions made by UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) or other agencies. It is your responsibility to check the visa requirements which apply to you before you take any action about your situation. Please note, that we are unable to provide immigration advice and services to you if you are already being advised or represented by another agency (this includes solicitors, immigration advisers and/or lay advisers), as this could present a conflict of interest which may not be in your best interest.

The regulation of Immigration Advice and Codes of Standards and Ethics

The provision of immigration advice is regulated by the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) which provides a Code of Standards (oisc.org.uk). This sets the principles and standards by which immigration professionals must comply. Please note, the ISA team are the only designated members of staff at UEL who are appropriately trained and regulated by the OISC to provide immigration advice and services.

UEL is a member of the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) and we operate in accordance with their Code of Ethics for those advising International Students (ukcisa.org.uk).

Data Protection and Confidentiality

The ISA team operate in accordance with the 1998 Data Protection Act. This Act aims to ensure that personal information is used in a way that is fair to individuals and protects their rights.

We will not pass on personal information about you to anyone outside UEL, subject to the following exceptions:

- Where we have your explicit verbal or signed consent to disclose the information;
- Where we believe you or others are in danger;
- Where we are required to do so by law, for example, breaches in visa conditions may need to be reported to UKVI if required, in line with our Tier 4 sponsor license responsibilities;
- Where we are required to do so by law i.e. to the Border Force, UKVI etc.

We would always encourage you to pass on the information yourself and would attempt to obtain your consent if at all possible.

Liaison and correspondence

It may be appropriate for the adviser to liaise with a third party, for example, your School, the Finance Office or UKVI. This is so that we can advise you accurately about your situation and the impact of this on visa issues.

In line with our professional requirements, the ISA team may discuss visa/immigration issues with other members of the team or with the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA). We do not identify you by name if we speak to UKCISA about your situation. The purpose of doing this is so that we can offer you clear, accurate and professional advice.

Record Keeping

It is professional practice for International Advisers to keep written case notes on students and their enquiries. All students who come to see an International Adviser will be asked to sign a 'Student Declaration' form

agreeing to notes being kept and a copy will be given to you. If you feel unable to give permission for us to keep case-notes as outlined in this leaflet, we regret that we cannot offer you advice. We can, however, meet with you to discuss your reservations and give information on possible referrals to another service.

If you use our e-mail advice service you will be sent an email link to our 'Conditions of Service'. Our telephone advice service is for general enquiries only. If you require more in-depth, specialist advice you will need to contact us via email or arrange an in person appointment.

Case notes from an advice session record a summary of the main points raised by you, and the advice or information given by the Adviser. Agreed action to be taken is recorded with details of any follow-up action and correspondence. It is not possible for us to record the whole discussion. A copy of the case notes will be emailed to you.

All case notes and documents are kept secure electronically within the Service, with access restricted to the Immigration and Compliance team. In line with the OISC code of standards, case notes are kept for a period of six years. After this time they are destroyed securely.

Statistics

We keep general statistics about students who use our service along with the nature of their enquiry. They are used to monitor and improve the effectiveness of our service for students and to report patterns and trends to senior management at UEL.

Comments, suggestions and complaints

We welcome your feedback and suggestions for how we might improve and develop the service we provide to our students.

We are happy to receive comments by email at: isa@uel.ac.uk

If you have a complaint regarding our service, please let us know or email isa@uel.ac.uk and we will do our best to resolve the matter swiftly and informally.

If you are still unhappy, please see the University's Student Complaint Procedure:

[uel.ac.uk/discover/governance/policies-regulations-corporate-documents/student-policies/student-complaint-procedure](https://www.uel.ac.uk/discover/governance/policies-regulations-corporate-documents/student-policies/student-complaint-procedure)

How to contact us

Check our website:

[uel.ac.uk/isa](https://www.uel.ac.uk/isa)

Attend our workshops on student visas, working in the UK during/after studies and other topics (see website for details).

If our website and workshops have not answered your questions in full, you can email us on isa@uel.ac.uk. Please provide your name, student number, type of visa you are holding or intending to apply for, visa expiry date along with your questions. We aim to respond within 3 working days (5 working days during busy periods) and often respond much sooner.

If you have checked our website, attended a workshop, emailed us and still need to visit us for face to face advice, you can attend a drop-in session or make an appointment where we can offer detailed advice for complex visa/immigration issues or to check through your fully completed student visa application. Please bring your passport/visa and all other relevant documents with you.

In order to allow each student sufficient time for detailed advice, we are only able to see a maximum of 4 students per drop-in session. It is therefore essential that you arrive early. Check our website, [uel.ac.uk/isa](https://www.uel.ac.uk/isa), for details of current drop-in times and information on how to make an appointment.

Our Student Charter Commitments

You can expect us to:

- Provide you and any members of your family accompanying you to a free, confidential and non-judgemental service
- Provide advice and information about your immigration status from experienced staff in accordance with the Code of Standards issued by the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner and the UKCISA/AISA Code of Ethics;
- Provide access to up to date information relating to the particular needs of international students and their families through our website [uel.ac.uk/isa](https://www.uel.ac.uk/isa)
- Run workshops on a range of issues affecting international students;
- Seek your views on how to meet your needs and how we might make improvements.

We expect you to:

- Seek advice at the earliest opportunity and particularly if problems arise;
- Comply with the UK Immigration Rules and the conditions of your visa;
- Provide us with accurate information when seeking advice;
- Show respect for our staff and other service users;
- Keep appointments or inform us as early as possible if you are unable to attend
- Give us feedback on the service you have received from us.