

# Protecting your student visa





As a Tier 4 (General) student, the University has chosen to sponsor you under our Sponsor Licence.

In order to remain in the UK for the duration of your course, you need to abide by the terms of your visa. You also need to comply with University requirements to ensure we are able to continue sponsoring you as a Tier 4 student. If you don't follow these conditions your visa may be cancelled and you may have to leave the UK and you could also have future visa applications refused. The University wants to support you in keeping these conditions and has therefore provided you with our 10 top tips to help you have a safe and problem-free stay at the University and here in the UK.

If you have any questions please contact the International Student Advisers: [batch@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:batch@bcu.ac.uk)

## 1. Attendance

Your student visa was issued on the basis that you would be studying a specific course at Birmingham City University. The UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) expects you to attend all teaching sessions and fully engage in your studies. If you have poor attendance or stop attending your course, the University will withdraw you from your course and report you to the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) and your visa will be curtailed (cut short).

If you need to be absent from your course it is essential you speak to your faculty immediately to request authorisation. As a Tier 4 student, you are not permitted to take unauthorised absences.

Even if you are absent due to illness you must still notify your faculty immediately.

### UKVI Contact Points

As well as attending and engaging in all of your lectures and tutorials, you must attend the University's monthly UKVI Contact Points to formally confirm your attendance on your course.

Your faculty will also use these Contact Points to update the student record system if any of your contact details (e.g. address, mobile number) have changed and to get updates on any outstanding visa queries.

If you miss any of your UKVI Contact Points without authorisation, you will risk being reported to the UKVI and subsequently have to return to your home country.

### The UKVI Contact Points for 2016/17 academic year are:

- |   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| - September Enrolment (new entrants)        | - 15 February 2017 |
| - 28 September 2016 (re-enrolling students) | - 22 March 2017    |
| - 19 October 2016                           | - 26 April 2017    |
| - 16 November 2016                          | - 17 May 2017      |
| - 7 December 2016                           | - 14 June 2017     |
| - 25 January 2017                           | - 19 July 2017     |
|   | - 16 August 2017   |

If you decide to take an interruption of studies (a break from your course), or to study at another university, you **MUST** get advice from the International Student Advisers as you may be legally required to leave the UK.



## 2. Regularly check your University email account

You must regularly check your University email account as the University will use this email account to communicate important information to you.

## 3. Police registration

Some students are legally required to register with the police within 7 days of arriving in the UK, or extending their visa. If you are required to register with the police the location of this requirement will depend on your visa. If your visa is a vignette (the sticker in your passport), it will be written next to your work conditions. If you have a Biometrics Residence Permit (BRP) you need to check the letter that was issued to you by UKVI as part of your visa application. Sometimes the Biometrics Residence Permit may also have this information.

If you have not registered yet you need to do this immediately. Once you have registered the police will give you a certificate which you must keep in a safe place. For details on how to register please see link below:

[www.gov.uk/register-with-the-police](http://www.gov.uk/register-with-the-police)

You must also update the police registration certificate within 7 days if you:

- Change address
- Change university or course
- Extend your visa
- Get a new passport
- Get married
- Lose your certificate or it is stolen

## 4. Working in the UK including placements and work experience

Some students are allowed to work, but there are limitations to the type of work and number of hours you can work. Check your current visa to see if it states work is allowed.

If work is allowed, you will be restricted to either 10 or 20 hours per week and this will be stated on your BRP. Unpaid work also counts towards your weekly hours.

This is the MAXIMUM you can work each week. You cannot average out the hours over the month. During the official holiday periods of your course you can work full-time but you must follow the restrictions below.

On your student visa you cannot work in any of the following categories:

- Self-employment
- Business activity
- Employment as a professional sports person or sports coach
- Employment as an entertainer
- Full-time, permanent employment

### Work placements and work experience

If you are doing a placement or work experience this may count as work, and you may be restricted as to the number of hours you can do. As the rules change frequently on this, for the most up-to-date information please look at the UKCISA website:

<http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Working/Can-you-work#layer-5430>



## 5. Changing address

It is a requirement that the University holds your correct UK contact details because important information may be sent to you at any time by the University or UKVI. It is your responsibility to keep everyone informed of any changes to your address.

If you change address remember to update the following:

- Birmingham City University (your Faculty Office)
- UKVI (UK Visa and Immigration)  
<https://www.gov.uk/change-circumstances-visa-brp/youre-in-the-uk-and-have-a-brp>
- Police registration certificate if you have one

## 6. Changing course

**If during your studies at Birmingham City University, you find that the course you are studying is not suitable for you, you need to be aware that changing course may have immigration implications. In the first instance you must submit the Course Approval Form to your faculty who will assess whether it is academically possible. If it is an acceptable change, the UKVI Compliance team will then confirm whether the immigration rules allow you to make the change depending on a number of factors such as subject area, time already spent in the UK etc.**

**You should never start attending a different course before receiving written approval from the University.**

## 7. Visa expiry date

Due to strict immigration rules, there are limited circumstances in which you can make a visa extension from within the UK. In some situations students may need to apply for the visa extension from their home country.

Therefore if you want to stay in the UK after your visa is due to expire, for example to study further, you should request a new CAS as early as possible.

The International Student Advisers provide a visa advice service to ensure you have the correct documents for the visa application. Where possible you should contact them 3-4 months before you intend to extend your visa.

If you are not going to extend your visa you must leave the UK before the end date on your visa to avoid overstaying.

## 8. Sharing information with UKVI

**As part of the terms and conditions of your online enrolment, you agreed that the University could share your information with UKVI and also that UKVI could share your information with us. This means that if you are waiting for information on a Tier 4 visa application we can contact UKVI on your behalf.**



## 9. Lost or stolen documents

If your passport and/or visa are stolen or lost, you must immediately report this to the police and ask for evidence that you have made this report.

**Passport** – you must notify your embassy immediately so they can cancel your passport. You should immediately contact the International Student Advisers as they can assist in applying for a replacement visa. You can contact them by emailing: [batch@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:batch@bcu.ac.uk)

**BRP Paperwork** – keep copies of all your visas and any papers sent to you by UKVI; you may need this information for future UK visa applications. You may find it easier to keep electronic copies in your email account so you can always access this information quickly and easily.

### Travelling during the holidays

Please be very careful if you travel to popular tourist areas such as Amsterdam, Barcelona, and Madrid, as tourists can be targets for pickpockets (thieves that steal without you knowing). If your passport and/or visa are stolen it can cause delays for your return to the UK, and can be an expensive process. Please make sure you always keep these documents in a very safe place.

## 10. Do not claim 'public funds'

International students cannot normally claim 'public funds'; this means welfare benefits like having the UK government pay for your rent. If you are unsure please contact the International Student Advisers.

Please note 'council tax exemption' is not a public fund; international students are allowed to be exempt from paying council tax.

## Useful contacts:

### International Student Advisers:

Ask Student Enquiry Service  
1st Floor The Curzon Building  
4 Cardigan Street  
Birmingham  
B4 7BD

Ask Student Enquiry Service  
1st Floor Baker Building  
City North Campus  
Birmingham  
B42 2SU

Ask Student Enquiry Service  
2nd Floor Seacole Building  
City South Campus  
Birmingham  
B15 3TN

Telephone: 0121 331 7777

Ask enquiry service: [icity.bcu.ac.uk/ask](http://icity.bcu.ac.uk/ask)

### International Office

University House  
15 Bartholomew Row  
Birmingham  
B5 5JU

Telephone: 0121 331 5389

Email: [international.admissions@bcu.ac.uk](mailto:international.admissions@bcu.ac.uk)

Web: [www.bcu.ac.uk/international](http://www.bcu.ac.uk/international)

### UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA)

Immigration advice line for students in the UK

Telephone: 0207 788 9214

Web: [www.ukcisa.org.uk](http://www.ukcisa.org.uk)

International Student Advisers have the necessary expertise to help you with your visa extension application and offers the Batch Scheme. Please note that only the International Student Advisers are qualified to give immigration advice at Birmingham City University.



The International Office recruits new international students. It deals with enquiries and applications from prospective students and is responsible for issuing offer letters and Confirmations of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) to new international students.