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**Postgraduate Research and Operations**

**RESEARCH STUDENT VISITORS**

This paper covers the process for all PGR student visitors including the visa arrangements for international students.

To be eligible for PGR miscellaneous study the applicant must be studying a research degree elsewhere and will be visiting University of Leeds to undertake research toward their research degree.

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**Advice on Research Student Visitors**

**Please make sure any websites reflect the information below.**

**Schools should be aware that in some students registered at EU institutions wishing to visit the UK may be international students and the visa arrangements set out below will apply.**

**An international student who is coming to the UK to undertake study must hold either a Short-Term Study Visa (formerly Student Visitor Visa) or a Tier 4 General Student Visa. If the person already has some other form of visa they should contact the International Student Office for advice before travelling – it may be that if they commence full time study on that visa, they would be in breach of their current visa regulations and not able to apply for a student visa from within the UK.**

# 1. Introduction

**Unless there is a formal exchange arrangement between the University of Leeds and another university**, then it is expected that students should make payment for the use of facilities. See point 3.

There are several categories of student visitors

A) Those students who visit for a period of time up to one month;

B) International Student visitors invited to Leeds for longer periods of time of between one and six months

C) International Student visitors who will be in Leeds for periods of time of more than six months.

D) Partnerships –eg Centre for Doctoral Training

For international students any period of study requires either a Short-term Study Visa or General Student Visa. This will be covered in the information below.

# 2. Arrangements

# (A) Very short visits (of up to one month). Registration as a student not required.

When short visits of this kind (of up to one month) take place it is not proposed that individuals should register as students of the University. It is therefore not necessary for them to complete a University application form and in most cases of this kind no fee will be due to the University although the School can make their own arrangements to charge a fee if they wish.

*Internationals student visitors will require a* ***Short-term Study Visa****.* [*http://www.UKV&I.homeoffice.gov.uk/studyingintheuk/student-visitors/*](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/studyingintheuk/student-visitors/)

The School will need to produce a Student Visitor Letter for visa purposes if the visitor is international (example found on page 8)

# (B) International students under 6 months, Home/EU students any period of time.

# These visitors are expected to register as students

*Internationals student visitors will require a* ***Short-term Study Visa****.* [*http://www.UKV&I.homeoffice.gov.uk/studyingintheuk/student-visitors/*](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/studyingintheuk/student-visitors/)

This visa status entitles the holder to remain in the UK for a period of up to six months and this CANNOT be extended. No work, paid or unpaid, is permitted.

Process:

* Visitors must apply using the on-line admissions system. *Applicant must also be studying at an overseas higher education for a research degree level qualification*
* Schools must check and complete the School section of the School Recommendation. It should then be sent to PGRO

**In the conditions box it should state:**

**1) the number of months (including dates) that the visitor will be studying for and**

**2) what fee is to be charged – see section 3 below**

PGR & Operations update the Banner record and inform Student Finance (Fees) of the fee details

Student Finance (Fees) will amend Banner Where a fee is payable it should be noted that the student will not be able to register until this fee is paid in full.

* The University will, assuming no problems with the application, issue an unconditional acceptance letter containing the details of the offer.
* Applicants accept as normal
* The School will issue their usual communications and instructions to the visitor.

*For international students, Schools must produce a* ***Student Visitor Letter*** *for use in a visa application. Please see Appendix B for a Student Visitor letter template.*

* A Registration Report will be produced by PGR & Operations as normal and sent to the School at the point that the person is eligible to register as a student. This report is for information only. If any form 21’s are required then they should be sent to the Fees Office before informing the student that they can register.
* The visitor can then register as a miscellaneous research non-degree (non-award bearing) student via the normal on-line registration system route and obtain a student ID card.

***International Students:***

* *If the period of study is less than 6 months it will be assumed that an international student requires a* ***Short-term Study Visa****.*
* Overseas individuals should apply for a “**Short-Term Study Visa**”

[http://www.UKV&I.homeoffice.gov.uk/studyingintheuk/student-visitors/](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/studyingintheuk/student-visitors/)

In cases where a Short-term Study Visa is issued the University is *NOT* required to undertake Home Office Tier 4 sponsorship duties eg attendance monitoring or reporting on leavers/non registration.

# (C) International “Visitors” that will be in Leeds for periods of time of more than 6 months

# *Internationals student visitors will require a Tier 4 General Student Visa*

In order for the applicant to apply for a General Student Visa then the University must issue a CAS to the applicant. This means the applicant must demonstrate that they meet University academic and English Language requirements **and be eligible to hold an unconditional offer**. They will also need to apply for ATAS clearance if relevant.

The stages are:

* Visitors must apply online.
* ***International applicants requiring a CAS must demonstrate:***

***English Language - all Tier 4 sponsors must assess their Tier 4 (General) students’ level of English language competence. This means the applicant must have met the required standards by:***

* ***Holding a degree from a majority English speaking country, or***
* ***Being a national of a majority English language speaking country***
* ***Having obtained the relevant standards in IELTS/TOEFL or equivalent (please see Appendix C)***
* ***Academic Evidence - highest awarded qualification***
* **Academic Evidence – highest awarded qualification**
* *Applicant must also be studying at an overseas higher education for a research degree level qualification*
* Schools must check and complete the School section of the School Recommendation Report. It should then be sent to PGRO
* **In the conditions box it should state:**

**1) the number of months (including dates) that the visitor will be studying for and**

**2) what fee is to be charged – see section 3 below**

* ***International applicants studying with a School which comes under the Foreign and Commonwealth Office ATAS scheme will require ATAS clearance and the School must provide PGR & Operations with the relevant “Initial Proposed Summary of Research Area Letter” alongside the School Recommendation Report.***

PGR & Operations update the Banner record and inform Student Finance (Fees) of the fee details

Student Finance (Fees) will amend Banner Where a fee is payable it should be noted that the student will not be able to register until this fee is paid in full.

* The University will, assuming no problems with the application, issue an unconditional acceptance letter containing the details of the offer (If applicable the ATAS statement will also be included with the offer letter).
* Applicants accept as normal
* For international students, PGRO need the School Recommendation, evidence of English Language, Academic evidence and if relevant ATAS summary of research area, before an offer can be made/CAS issued.

***Please note that if the applicant still has to meet the University’s academic or English Language levels then the University will not issue an offer until these have been met.***

* *PGR & Operations will issue a Confirmation of Acceptance for Study (CAS) Statement to the applicant which contains the CAS number, University Sponsor Licence number and details of the fee to be charged where appropriate (see section 3 below). This will enable the student to apply for a GENERAL STUDENT VISA under Tier 4. Details of how to apply for a student visa can be found at the website:* [*http://www.UKV&I.homeoffice.gov.uk/studyingintheuk/adult-students/*](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/studyingintheuk/adult-students/)

*The CAS has a life span of 6 months but can only be used up to 3 months prior to the start date. Therefore PGR & Operations will issue the CAS when appropriate*.

* On arrival, individuals must register via the on-line registration system as miscellaneous non-degree (non-award bearing) students and obtain a Student ID card. The University will also need to take a copy of relevant passport and visa information.

# 3. Partnerships – eg Centre for Doctoral Training

**CDT’s**

These students will normally either apply online for the specific miscellaneous programme code or we will accept a copy of the application to their main University providing it has the core data we need to create a Banner registration record.

# Attendance Monitoring for International Students

**For international students on a Tier 4 visa, the University *is* required to undertake Tier 4 sponsorship duties. This means the University has responsibility for reporting non-registration, unauthorised non-attendance, apparent leavers and monitoring the attendance of these individuals**. Schools must have arrangements in place for monitoring attendance and for reporting non-attendance to Postgraduate Research and Operations.

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# Examples of attendance monitoring events at research level are:

* Formal supervision meetings with supervisor
* School activities associated with registration and other routine communication
* Induction, English Language Test and training courses
* Meeting with Supervisor to discuss and review any training plan
* SDDU courses and Faculty Training (including Research Seminars involving giving presentations)
* Formal review meetings
* Meetings with Post Graduate Research Tutor or other relevant staff
* Attendance at External conference/meetings
* Other events at School level

It is recognised that there are different events and timelines within different schools which reflect the varying nature of research study. Schools may already have their own practices which relate to these events.

Therefore as a minimum, schools will be required to put the following procedure in place:

i) Supervisors (or other relevant staff) will be required to report to the school/faculty when there has been no contact with individual research students within any 1 month period (unless absence has been authorised for events such as fieldwork, illness, etc), or where there is a pattern of absences which is affecting the student’s work or causing concerns for the student’s wellbeing.

ii) An investigation should then be carried out within the School which will provide an opportunity for issues to be resolved with the student.

iii) Where issues are not resolved, a full report will be sent by the faculty/school to PGR & Operations indicating that the student should be required to withdraw from the University.

iv) PGR & Operations will carry out any other appropriate enquiries, and then after further review, notify the Home Office of withdrawal.

# 4. Fees for Research Student Visitors

In some situations a formal reciprocal agreement will be in place with the Institution where the student visitor is currently studying. In these cases any fee can be waived if there is an existence of a formal reciprocal agreement. If there is a fee waiver then this should be noted in the conditions box

For all other students, there is a minimum standard annual pro-rata fee – currently:

2017/18 £1,758

2018/19 £1,830

This covers University overheads (schools may, however, charge the normal full time international fee if there will be significant consumption of academic resources[[1]](#footnote-1)). Schools can agree to pay on behalf of the visitor using a Form 21. In the event that visitors are in Leeds for less than a year a pro rata fee for a certain number of months may be charged. PGR & Operations should be advised of the number of months (including dates) via the Application for Miscellaneous Research Study form. PGR & Operations will inform Strategy and Planning Office for Resource Allocation Model purposes,

In addition to the academic fee, where the research projects undertaken require a high expenditure on consumables, equipment or other resources an annual bench fee may be charged.

# 5. Student visitors wishing to undertake taught studies

These student visitors must contact the appropriate office:

Undergraduate and taught admissions – enquiriesadmissions@leeds.ac.uk

Language Centre – langc@leeds.ac.uk

Study Abroad – studyabroad@adm.leeds.ac.uk

# 6. Visits by International Visitors (equivalent to Staff Status)

Enquiries about the position of international visitors who are not students but have a more senior status may be addressed to HR - Caroline Langham (c.j.langham@adm.leeds.ac.uk). Please see Appendix E on page 15

Please also see the International Student Office website for further information on types of visitors.

<http://www.leeds.ac.uk/info/130114/visas_and_immigration/157/research_study_and_academic_visits> - Academic Visits.

**7. Faculty questions about research student visitors**

Further questions about postgraduate research student visitors and visa issues may be directed to Postgraduate Research and Operations and the International Student Office respectively.

Sept 2017

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# Appendix A - Example of a Student Visitor Letter (for production by Schools)

To be produced and provided by the School for those international student visitors to Leeds for periods of time of six months or less or anytime for Home/EU. Other details can be added but the letter must contain the content below:

For overseas students to enable him/her to apply for a Short-term Study Visa, pPlease ensure you quote:

**Sponsor Licence Number: H3GNC03A4**

AddressLine 1

Address Line 2

etc

Country 15 March 2018

**Offer of a place to study as a miscellaneous research student at the University of Leeds**

I can confirm that you have been made the offer of a place to study at the University of Leeds as follows:

**Programme:** Miscellaneous Postgraduate Research

**School:**  XXXXX

**Proposed Supervisors**: XXXXX

**Area of Research:** XXXXX

**Tuition Fees:**  XXXXX

**Period of study:**  X months from XXXXX (£1,758 for 17/18)

**Home University:** XXXXX

This letter together with the Student Contract makes up the agreement between you and the University. In taking up this offer of a place you are agreeing to the terms contained in these documents. A copy of the Student Contract can be found at [www.leeds.ac.uk/studentcontract/](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/studentcontract/).

You should read these documents carefully as they include important information such as your right to withdraw from your place and cancel your contract.

Important notes:

* This is an offer of an academic place. It does not constitute an offer of funding
* Let us know if any information in this letter is incorrect or if any details have changed
* If the names on your offer letter, national ID card or passport do not match those on your transcripts and certificates, an official confirmation of change of name must be produced and accepted
* If it is necessary to make any material changes to arrangements, we will notify you as soon as possible

Questions or complaints: If you have any queries or concerns email: xxxxxx

Yours sincerely

Signature

Job Title

Contact Details

Miscellaneous Postgraduate Research does not lead to the award of a qualification from the University of Leeds and as such we do not require evidence of previous qualifications.

# Appendix B – English Language minimum

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | RP Standard English minimum |
| IELTS overall | 6.0 |
| IELTS reading | 5.5 |
| IELTS writing | 5.5 |
| IELTS speaking | 5.5 |
| IELTS listening | 5.5 |
| Ibt TOEFL over all | 87 |
| Ibt TOEFL reading | 20 |
| Ibt TOEFL writing | 21 |
| Ibt TOEFL speaking | 22 |
| Ibt TOEFL listening | 20 |

Please see the PGR & Operations English Language booklet at <http://ses.leeds.ac.uk/info/20140/english_language_requirements/881/research_postgraduate>

This guide is intended to provide administrative and academic staff with information and guidance on minimum standards of English language, approved on a University wide basis by the Graduate Board.

# Appendix C Quick guide to processing miscellaneous students and visa requirements

**Please note that for people visiting the UK on Tier 4 student visas, they must be students enrolled on a course abroad that is at least equivalent to the level of a UK**

**bachelors degree.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Length of Study | **Under 1 month** | * **Overseas Under 6 months/EU students any period of time:**
 | **Over 6 months** |
| Type of Visa | Short-term study | Short-term study visa | General Student Visa |
| Document required for visa | School produce student visitor letter | School produce student visitor letter | PGRO issue a CAS |
| **Summary of Process** |
| Enquiry | Applicant contacts School who collects relevant information |
| Application | Applicant does not need to complete University application form, or be entered onto Banner or register | * Applicant completes online University application form.
* School sends recommendation to PGRO (with fee and time period details completed in the Conditions box).
 | * Applicant completes online University application form.
* School sends this to PGRO (with fee and time period details completed in the Conditions box)) and if relevant proposed summary of research for ATAS purposes
 |
| Admission criteria | None | None | Applicant must:* Show academic qualifications meet UoL entry requirements
* If relevant, must show they meet UoL minimum English Language requirements
* If relevant, obtain ATAS clearance from the FCO before applying for visa

The applicant should already have the relevant academic and English language qualifications.  |
| PGRO Offer letter required | No | * School issues letter of invite or student visitor letter for international short-term study visa.
* PGRO issue offer letter
* Applicant must accept offer
 | * PGRO issue offer letter and include the ATAS summary, produced by the School
* Applicant must accept offer
 |
| CAS issued  |  |  | Yes if applicant has accepted unconditional offer |
| What does Applicant need to do next |  | Applicant:* Accepts
* applies for and obtains Short-term study visa
* arrives, registers and obtains ID card.

(School must inform student when to register and ensure that any F21’s have been completed) | Applicant * accepts
* applies for General Student Visa using the CAS issued by UoL (and ATAS if necessary prior to this)
* arrives, registers and obtains ID card

(School must inform student when to register and ensure that any F21’s have been completed) |
| Requirements of the Points Based System – attendance monitoring | None | None | Student’s attendance must be monitored. If student registers late, suspends, is absent, or leaves, this will be reported to the Home Office and the student’s visa will be curtailed |

**An international student who is coming to the UK to undertake study must hold either a Short-term Study Visa or a General Student Visa. If the person already has some other form of visa they should contact the International Student Office for advice before travelling – it may be that if they commence full time study on that visa, they may be in breach of their current visa regulations and depending on the type of visa they already hold, not able to apply for a student visa from within the UK.**

# Appendix D International research students and visitors – immigration routes

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Status at Leeds | Current status at overseas institution | Tuition/bench fees payable | Salary paid by UoL? | Source of funding (sponsorship?) | Duration of research visit | Supervision/ attendance monitoring | Visa type | ATAS required(for relevant programmes) | Source of further information |
| Student | Student | Yes | No | Any | Any, but must be within period of research study at overseas institution. | Mandatory for duty of care and compliance purposes | Tier 4 | Yes | PGRO Admissions |
| Student | Student | Yes | No | Any | Up to six months | Mandatory for duty of care purposes | Short-term study | No | PGRO Admissions |
| Visitor(Academic Visitor) | Academic staff | No | No | Paid and employed by home institution | Up to 12 months |  | Standard visitor (academic visitor) | No | Faculty Human Resources |
| Visitor(Sponsored Researcher) | Newly qualified PhD student or research assistant |  | Not normally | Home government, home institution or other organisation. Cannot be self funded. | Up to 24 months |  | Tier 5 (Temporary Worker – Government Authorised Exchange) | No, as long as research is not linked to any studies | Faculty Human Resources |

1. The definition of “significant consumption of academic resource” may be different in various Schools but might in general include some or all of the following: a supervisory and advisory load upon a member(s) of the academic staff which is similar to that provided for a research degree candidate; significant technical assistance and support; use of laboratory facilities and consumables; participation in advanced skills and generic training courses offered by the Faculty, SDDU or other University providers. If the research of the visitor will entail specific identifiable costs for the School a “bench fee” may be charged but the basis for this in terms of consumables, equipment and other resources should be clearly identified in any correspondence with the student/sponsor and in information for Postgraduate Research and Operations. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)