

UKVI STUDENT VISA: ARRIVAL & ATTENDANCE MONITORING PROCESSES

Scope and Purpose	Guidance for staff and UKVI Student Visa students to ensure compliance
Implication of non-adherence	Potential loss of HTS
Compliance and Regulatory requirements	UKVI and Home Office guidance
Policy Owner	Head of Education
Roles and Responsibilities	UKVI Authorising Officer and UKVI Level 1 Users will oversee the process
Policy approval and review	This Policy is approved by the Board and will be reviewed at the end of each academic year or more often as required.
Date last reviewed	June 2026
Date of next review	June 2027

This process is subject to changes as they are notified by UK Home Office, and/or Visa and Immigration Service.

Student Arrivals

As an integral and imperative part of the enrolment procedure, the Admissions Team of Belfast School of Theology (BST) will ascertain from the student and record the arrival details of every student accepted under the Student Visa scheme; such details will include flight number, departure airport, time of departure and airport arrival time.

It will be normal procedure that a member of Admissions Team will ascertain a student's arrival or non-arrival on site.

In the case of any non-arrival, the procedure to be followed is:

- a member of the Admissions Team responsible for overseas students will contact the student immediately by phone.
- should the student inform the Admissions Team member that they will not be arriving, the UKVI Level 1 User will be informed and, in turn, will make immediate contact with UKVI through the SMS system, providing such information re the student as is required.
- should it prove impossible to make contact with the student within the next working day following the ETA, the Admissions Team member must inform the UKVI Level 1 User who, in turn, will make immediate contact with UKVI to ascertain whether the student has been detained on entry and, if not, provide such information regarding the student as is required.

Students under the Student Visa Scheme who arrive as expected will undergo the compulsory registration process of BST, which is applicable to all students, along with the following, additional, procedures:

- The Admissions Officer will photocopy the student's passport (biometrics page, visa stamp and front cover)
- these copies will be stamped with the BST stamp, dated and initialled by the staff member.
- Electronic copies will be held in the student's personal file.

Other documents included in the file are:

- the initial application
- references
- records of any correspondence between the student and BST
- records between any other person, or body, and BST which concerns the student
- copies of the student's qualifications

- the financial plan submitted by the student setting out information as to how all financial obligations (including fees and other expenses pertaining to the student's period of study) will be met
- IELTS results and any other relevant information BST feel necessary

Student visa regulations require students from some countries to be registered with the PSNI. Where a vignette states "police registration" (or similar wording) the Admissions Officer will ensure an appointment has been made to register. <https://www.gov.uk/register-with-the-police/overview>

During Orientation Week (held during the week prior to beginning of teaching) all students will be briefed on BST's Attendance Policy and required academic levels. Students who study under the Student Visa scheme will be specifically briefed by the Admissions Officer about the consequences of failure to comply with attendance requirements, including the requirement that the UKVI Level 1 User immediately reports such failure to UKVI.

A current Student Visa student at BST is **not** permitted to defer arrival or request a gap year, without specific and special arrangement.

Absence

The following information on absence is given to all Student Visa students prior to arrival and is contained in the BST Handbook:

Absence – If students are unable to attend any BST class (be they on campus or online), they should first inform the Academic Office. Permission to be absent from BST, should be requested in advance of planned absences and will be assessed on the basis of the reasonableness of the cause of the absence, for example a personal or close family emergency, a family celebration or major event such as a wedding, birth or baptism. (See Attendance Policy for detailed list)

Absence notification for absences due to emergency or illness may be accepted retrospectively as soon as is reasonably possible. **Please note, however, that the UKVI attendance threshold for unexcused absences is 90%.**

Process for the Completion and Monitoring of Class Attendance Registers

1. Academic Office will ensure individual student attendance is monitored in a means which ensures individual registration is identifiable.
2. Admissions Officer will update the Student Visa Attendance, recording any absences on a regular basis.
3. Continuous monitoring of each Visa student's attendance levels will take place. If a student has had unexcused absences for 10% of BST classes, the Admissions Officer will notify the UKVI Level 1 User.
4. The UKVI Level 1 User will contact the student asking them to attend a meeting within 3 working days.
5. At a meeting the UKVI Level 1 User (and the Admissions Officer) will warn the student about their attendance level and ask for reasons for any unexcused absence.
6. The Admissions Officer will have a note of the meeting placed in the student file and give a copy to the student. Where appropriate the UKVI Level 1 User will notify the Programme Lead and/or Pastoral Care.
7. If the student does not attend the meeting, or make alternative arrangements, it is the responsibility of the UKVI Level 1 User to immediately inform the UKVI of this absence.
8. If attendance continues to fall, the details will be presented to the Head of Education and the UKVI Level 1 User will notify UKVI.

If a student changes their course of study to a course of a shorter duration, it is the responsibility of the Academic Office to notify the UKVI Level 1 User within 5 working days. The UKVI Level 1 User will then notify UKVI within 10 working days.

If a student discontinues their studies, it is the responsibility of the Academic Office to inform the UKVI Level 1 User immediately. The UKVI Level 1 User will then notify UKVI within 5 working days.

Should a student need to apply for a **new or extended visa** on the basis of permission having been granted by BST for the student to extend their period of study, the student must speak to Admissions no later than 6 months prior to the proposed recommencement of their studies.

Useful Information

See BST Handbook for further Information