

International Student Advice Service **Statement of Service**

The International Student Advice Service provides specialist immigration advice to applicants, students, and graduates of the university. This advice is delivered free of charge. We deliver immigration advice which is holistic; meaning that we consider your whole situation when we advise you, as well as making sure that you know what the other university services can offer to you. Because we work for the university, we understand how the policies and practices of the university work, and how this fits with UK immigration law.

As a regulated immigration advice service, we will always work to represent your best interests when you use our service.

How we provide advice

We provide guidance and advice at workshops and one to one appointments. We can offer you an appointment in person, by video call, or phone. We also provide guidance on all study & visa related topics for University of Greenwich students at: www.gre.ac.uk/visa.

What we can advise you on

We advise on all of the following areas of immigration law and policy:

- ✓ The Student Visa route
- ✓ Post-study work options, including the Graduate Route and Skilled Worker Visa
- ✓ Visa applications for your dependants where relevant
- ✓ Visa refusals and administrative reviews
- ✓ Visa cancellations (or curtailments)
- ✓ Working conditions of your visa (what work you can legally do in the UK and when)
- ✓ Proving your right to study / work / rent in the UK
- ✓ Helping you to understand the university [visa sponsorship policy](#), how this fits with UK immigration law, and how it applies to you
- ✓ The EU Settlement Scheme
- ✓ Lost or stolen passports and Biometric Residence Permits (BRP's)
- ✓ Correcting errors on visas
- ✓ Visitor Visas and study
- ✓ Travelling in and out of the UK and crossing the UK border
- ✓ Visas for family and friends to visit you in the UK
- ✓ Withdrawing, interrupting, or changing your programme

This list is not exhaustive, meaning there are times when we will advise on other areas of immigration law and policy also.

If the advice you need is beyond our professional competency, we will always explain this to you and aim to give you guidance on how to find an immigration adviser who can meet your needs.

Please note, we cannot offer you advice on the following areas:

- Academic advice
- Advice on making academic appeals or complaints to the university
- Advice on housing / accommodation
- Finance advice
- Visas for other countries (except Schengen visitor visas)
- Legal advice on matters not related to immigration
- Detailed advice on asylum applications (we may provide some basic guidance)
- Advice on applying for British Citizenship or Indefinite Leave to Remain in the UK

Who can access the service?

The International Student Advice Service is available to:

- Applicants who have an offer to study at the university
- Current students of the university and their dependants
- UGIC (University of Greenwich International College) students

The service is open to any student for up to **6 months** after completing their studies (i.e. from the date of their final results letter).

Please note, we are not able to advise students who are studying at our partner institutions (with the exception of UGIC), or staff of the university.

How to access the service

If you would like to access our advice, please complete a [self referral form](#).

Once a [self-referral form](#) has been completed, we will assess your information and will shortly contact you regarding the next steps. We will give you guidance and advice until you feel clearer on your options, and have a better understanding of how the immigration rules apply to you. If you need an appointment, we will arrange this with you.

If you cannot access the self-referral form because you do not have access to university systems, please email us at internationaladvice@gre.ac.uk with details of your situation and your student ID number. Please provide as much detail as possible so we can help you.

We aim to respond to all Self-Referrals and emails within a maximum of 5 working days.

What you can expect from us

- A polite, professional, and confidential service
- A response to [self-referral forms](#) and emails within 5 working days
- Immigration advice which is competent and [OISC](#) compliant
- Timely and convenient access to guidance, advice and appointments
- A written summary of any immigration advice we deliver to you in an appointment or phone call
- Time to ask us questions, if you need to, following our advice to you
- If a need for detailed advice is identified, you will have access to an experienced adviser with the appropriate knowledge and skills
- When we believe that your case is completed we will confirm this to you in writing
- We will keep a record of any advice we have given you, so that if you come back to the service again, we are able to view this previous advice (Please see the section on 'Record Keeping' below, for more information)

What we expect from you

- That you will provide us with all relevant information about your situation
- That you will arrive on time for appointments, and let us know at least one hour in advance if you cannot attend
- That you will interact with our service in a way which is in line with our university values and the [Student Charter](#)
- That you will keep us up-to-date with developments in your situation, such as any emails or letters you have received from the Home Office, or other changes
- That you will follow any advice or instructions that we give, and you will let us know if you are not able or willing to follow this advice
- That you will keep your contact details with the university up-to-date, so that we can contact you
- That you will respond to any emails, telephone calls, or correspondence from our service in a timely manner

Confidentiality

The International Student Advice Service is fully confidential. We will not discuss your case with anyone, unless:

- you give us permission to do so
- one of the exceptions in the [Confidentiality Policy Statement](#) applies

Consistency of Advice

If you need relatively straightforward advice, you will have a named Support Lead. This Support Lead will correspond with you and give you guidance and advice. Occasionally the Support Lead may change. This will not affect our service to you.

If you need more complex or detailed immigration advice, a named Case Lead will be appointed to manage your case. The Case Lead will be allocated after you have booked your first appointment with the service. For the duration of your case, all future appointments and correspondence will be with the same Case Lead. If your named Case Lead is unavailable, for example due to annual leave, we will let you know and offer you an alternative Case Lead if appropriate.

If you wish to get a second opinion or change your advisor, this must be requested in writing. Full details on how to do this can be found in Annex A of this document.

Please note, if your case is completed, and then later on you return to the service, you may be given a different Case Lead.

Referrals

If we do not have the expertise or ability to give you the immigration advice that you need, we may give you the contact details of external providers of immigration advice. However, this should not be considered as a recommendation from the university. The International Student Advice Service does not make a personalised referral to any external immigration advice services. It's important to be aware that when you seek advice from outside of the service, this is at your own risk. However, we are always able to give you guidance on using external immigration advisers in the best way.

If you need advice on a topic which is not immigration related, and we cannot advise on it, we will check if another university service or the Students' Union is able to provide support. Where it is helpful to you, and you wish us to, we are able to make a personal referral on your behalf to other university services and the Student's Union.

Record Keeping

We will keep copies of all relevant documents, correspondence, and advice relating to your case. Details of your case and any related documents are treated as highly confidential. All notes and documents are stored digitally, in a secure system. Only members of the International Student Advice Service have access to casefiles, these are not accessible to any other members of the university.

We will retain casefiles for a period of six academic years, after which they will be securely destroyed. We keep them for this period of time, because this is a requirement of our [OISC regulation](#). If you wish to have a copy of your casefile, you may make a [Subject Access Request](#).

The university complies with the provisions of the Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), and you can find more information about this in our [information compliance governance webpages](#).

Refusal or withdrawal of service

Please note, whilst we are advising you, if you do not make contact with us for 3 weeks, we will close your case. If this happens, you are welcome to return to get advice at any time (providing you meet the definition of 'who can access the service' at the top of this document).

Please note, we may not offer our service to you in the following instances:

- If you do not meet the eligibility criteria specified in this document
- If you withhold or provide misleading information
- If you miss several appointments without informing us
- If you do not follow advice or instructions that we provide
- If you display rude or threatening behaviour towards any member of staff
- We have good reason to believe that you may be breaking the law or engaging in deception
- We become aware of any potential conflict of interest. (A conflict of interest is when we may not be able to give you advice neutrally, because there are reasons that prevent us from doing this. If this occurs we will always explain this to you).
- You have been banned from accessing the university campus or services

We will always aim to explain to you why we are not able to offer our service to you, if that is the case, and also give you guidance on how you can find advice externally.

Feedback

We are always keen to get your feedback so that we can improve our service. When we confirm that our advice to you is complete, we will ask you to complete a feedback form. Sometimes we will ask for your feedback at other points too. This information will allow us to improve our services and better the student experience. Please give us your honest feedback for this purpose.

If you have any suggestions about our service, please feel free to discuss these with your adviser at any point.

Concerns or Complaints

We aim to always provide a professional service. However, if you have a concern with the service we are providing to you, you should speak to your Support Lead or Case Lead in the first instance. Most concerns can be addressed informally and quickly at this stage, through a discussion.

Alternatively, you can contact the Senior International Student Adviser to discuss your concerns. The Senior International Student Adviser manages the service. You can raise an informal concern or complaint in this way.

Details: Katie Jenkins / k.jenkins@greenwich.ac.uk

Any student who is unhappy with services received by the university can raise a formal complaint via the [university's official Complaints Procedure](#).

If you wish to complain about the quality of the immigration advice we have delivered to you, you can [complain directly to our regulatory body OISC](#).

Regulatory Information

All immigration advice provided by the International Student Advice Service is given in accordance with the [Code of Standards](#) published by [Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner \(OISC\)](#).

Following the OISC Code of Standards means that when you interact with our service, we are obligated to follow codes relating to:

- Confidentiality
- Correct and secure record keeping
- Being ethical in delivering our advice
- Competency

We take our obligations under the OISC Code of Standards seriously and are committed to offering you a service that is professional, accountable, transparent, and which puts your best interests first.

Appendix A: Procedures for requesting a change of Case Lead or Support Lead, or getting a second opinion

1. Switching Case Lead or Support Lead (Adviser)

- a) Students who want to change their Case Lead or Support Lead should make their request in writing to Katie Jenkins, Senior International Student Adviser, at: k.jenkins@greenwich.ac.uk . In this email you should explain your reason for wanting to change your Case Lead.
- b) Wherever possible, we will aim to help you with your request, and provide a new Case Lead within five working days if appropriate.
- c) Where it is not possible to give you a change of Case Lead, a written explanation will be provided.

2. Getting a second opinion

- a) We understand that from time to time, a student may wish to ask for a second opinion from another trained adviser. We are happy to offer this.
- b) To make a request for a second opinion, please submit a new [Self Referral Form](#). You should make it clear that you have already had advice, but you want a second opinion. We aim to provide a response with 5 working days to all Self Referrals.

If you cannot access the self-referral form because you do not have access to university systems, please email us at internationaladvice@gre.ac.uk with details of your situation and your student ID number. You should make it clear that you have already had advice, but you want a second opinion. We aim to provide a response with 5 working days to all emails.