

International Advice & Guidance **Provision of Immigration Advice**

The International Advice & Guidance (IAG) team is part of Student Welfare Advice and Guidance (SWAG). It provides information and confidential advice on many aspects of immigration and welfare to current students, applicants, recent graduates and their families. This information sheet refers to the immigration advice that IAG provide.

IAG is able to provide advice in relation to applications for Tier 4 visas (plus Dependants), Short Term Study visas; Tier 2, Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur, BRP replacement applications, Doctorate Extension Scheme applications, Standard Visitor Visa applications and switching immigration status.

The IAG website has lots of useful information and guidance, please see here:
<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/studentssupport/international/>.

Information & Advice

The IAG team provides advice based on information that you give us about your current situation. This advice is given in good faith and we endeavour to ensure that our advice is accurate but it is subject to change, often at short notice and depending on further information being disclosed to us or a change in your circumstances.

We cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions, for consequences arising from the use of our advice nor for decisions made by the Home Office or other agencies regarding immigration applications.

IAG advisers must not advise a student if this requires them to act beyond the permissions granted to us under OISC regulations (please see next section on regulation). If we find ourselves in this position we will inform you of this immediately giving the reasons why we are unable to continue. Where possible, we will refer you to appropriately qualified legal professionals.

We are usually only able to advise current applicants, current students and those who have recently graduated.

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, and Rules:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-of-the-immigration-services-commissioner>.

The University of Liverpool is authorised to provide immigration advice and services by the OISC. The University is a member of the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) and Association for International Student Advisers (AISA). We operate in accordance with the UKCISA/AISA Code of Ethics, a copy of the Code of Ethics is available from UKCISA's website: www.ukcisa.org.uk.

Only the International Student Advisers in the IAG team are qualified and authorised to give immigration advice. The IAG advisers will only provide immigration advice within our competence, on some occasions we may need to refer you to appropriately qualified legal professionals.

If you want to seek advice from an immigration solicitor or adviser, we would advise you to search for a solicitor/adviser using the 'useful contacts' at the end of this document.

Conflict of Interest

An adviser must not act where there is a real or potential conflict of interest between them and the student. An adviser must explain fully and clearly to the student any circumstances in which they might have any personal interest or advantage in acting for them and it may be necessary to refer your case elsewhere.

Record Keeping

Advisers record the information provided and advice given during an appointment or drop-in. Any advice notes will be held in accordance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018. Only advisers from the IAG team have access to these notes or, if required, senior managers within Student Services.

Data Protection and Confidentiality

The IAG team operates in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018. This Act aims to ensure that personal information is used in a way that is fair to individuals and protects their rights.

You have the right to confidentiality when you seek advice from the IAG team. Our Confidentiality Policy can be accessed on our website here:

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/studentssupport/international/> and is displayed in the Student Services Centre. Any information we receive from or about an individual using our service will not be disclosed to others outside the University.

Exceptions to this are rare and would arise only:

- Where you have given your explicit consent to disclose information or data to an individual or organisation
- Where there is risk of harm to yourself or others, including safeguarding issues eg child protection or where disclosure is required by law, for example, meeting compliance obligations as a Tier 4 licence holder, a court subpoenas records required in court or under prevention of terrorism legislation.

If we are legally obliged to provide information to outside agencies we will do this in line with the Data Protection Act.

The IAG drop-in is held in an open space in the Student Services Centre. If you need to talk in confidence please let the IAG team know in advance of your appointment or at the drop-in so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

Diversity, Equality, Discrimination and Respect

The IAG advisers are committed to providing an equal service to all students without prejudice or bias. We also expect respect from our students and will not tolerate any inappropriate behaviour, threatening or abusive language. You can find more information about the University's commitment to diversity and equality online here:

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/intranet/hr/diversity-equality/>.

Comments, Suggestions and Complaints

We welcome your feedback on the service you receive from us and suggestions for how we might improve. There are feedback cards in the Student Services Centre (please ask at the reception) to complete and we are also happy to receive comments by email, in writing or in person.

If you have a complaint about the service you have received, please raise this initially with the adviser, or request to speak to a manager within SWAG. We will try our best to resolve the matter quickly and informally.

If you would like to make a formal complaint through the University, please see the information online here: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/student-administration/student-administration-centre/policies-procedures/complaints/> regarding the process and how to submit a complaint. There are Stage 1 and Stage 2 complaints using the formal University procedure. You will be informed after Stage 2 of your right to request an independent review of your case by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education. The Independent Adjudicator will only investigate a complaint after the formal university process has been concluded, for further details please see here: <http://www.oiahe.org.uk/>.

If your complaint is specific to immigration advice you have been given, you can make a complaint to the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) whether or not you have made a complaint to the University. For details of what you can and cannot complain about and a complaints form, please see here: <https://www.gov.uk/find-an-immigration-adviser/complain-about-an-adviser>

Useful Contacts

- Guild Advice, Liverpool Guild of Students:

A free and confidential advice service to all University of Liverpool students. The Guild is your students' union, is independent from the University and there to support you. The Guild are able to deal with a wide range of academic, housing and wellbeing issues. The Guild are not able to advise you on immigration matters. For more information see here: <https://www.liverpoolguild.org/advice>.

The service is open Monday to Friday, 9.30am - 4.30pm, email to guildadvice@liv.ac.uk, drop-in usually takes place on Monday - Friday between 1pm-3pm although can be subject to change. Email or call the Guild reception on 0151 794 6868 to confirm drop-in times.

- UKCISA:

The UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) is a national organisation, which gives advice to international students studying in the UK as well as students' unions and educational institutions. UKCISA have lots of information online for students and offers a free student advice line. UKCISA are able to offer immigration advice through their advice line. Please visit: www.ukcisa.org.uk or telephone: 020 7788 9214 between 1pm and 4pm Mon-Fri for their advice line.

- University of Liverpool Law Clinic:

The clinic offers free confidential advice to students and members of the public, for more information see here: <https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/law/liverpool-law-clinic/>

- Liverpool Law Society:

Liverpool Law Society has a list of local organisations on their website who are able to offer free legal advice initially, please see their website here: <https://www.liverpoollawsociety.org.uk/general-public/free-legal-advice/>

- Immigration Law Practitioners' Association (ILPA):

Legal professionals who specialise in immigration law are often members of this association. You can search their database for a local solicitor/adviser who specialises in the area for which you require assistance. www.ilpa.org.uk

- The Law Society:

This is the professional association, which regulates the legal profession in the UK. All reputable solicitors will be members, you can search their database for an immigration law solicitor. Please note, a fee may apply. www.lawsociety.org.uk