

International Student Advice Service: Statement of Service

Our Mission

We aim to provide high quality, free, confidential immigration advice and guidance to prospective and current City St George's, University of London students. We can advise you on a range of issues including Student Visa Entry Clearance and in-country extension applications, challenging decisions, Standard Visitor Visa applications, EVisas, ATAS, dependant rules and applications, working during study and options to remain in the UK after your study including Graduate Immigration Route.

If you are coming to City St George's, University of London to take up a job offer or undertake work with us, you should approach our Human Resources department. We are unable to advise on visa procedures for other countries.

Student Visa Application check

If you are making an immigration application in the UK (e.g. to extend your visa or obtain) we would strongly advise you make an appointment with us to check your application before you apply. There is no extra charge for this service.

We reserve the right to withdraw or limit service in, but not limited to, the following situations: you consistently fail to attend appointments; you are abusive to our staff; you are untruthful about your situation, meaning we are not able to give you accurate advice; you fail to take action agreed with an adviser.

Our Advisers

Our team consist of trained advisers with many years' experience of advising students on Student Visa applications, extensions and other student and student-related immigration matters. **We are the only City St George's staff authorised to provide immigration advice to students.**

How to contact us

We can be contacted via Support@City platform. The system is checked regularly during our opening hours, and you should usually expect to receive a reply within five working days. If you do not hear from us within five working days, you can call us on +44 207 040 7040 (option 3).

If you would like a one to one appointment with our adviser, where we can check your application, and provide confidential advice and guidance, you need to complete [this form](#) . We provide in person or online appointments through Monday to Friday.

Due to the complex nature of immigration advice we are not able to advise you by telephone.

What to expect from us:

- ✓ You will receive a prompt reply to your query – we aim to respond to all emails within five working days of receipt;
- ✓ You will be treated in a courteous and non-judgemental manner;
- ✓ If you attend in person appointment you will be interviewed in a comfortable and confidential space;
- ✓ We will follow up on any action points as agreed in the meeting;

- ✓ We will do our best to assist with your enquiry and strive to provide up to date, detailed and accurate advice and information, though we cannot ever guarantee the success of an immigration application as these decisions rest with UK Visas and Immigration and
- ✓ If we are unable to advise on a particular matter we will inform you and refer you to someone who can.

What we expect from you:

- ✓ You will arrive on time for your appointment and will let us know if you are unable to attend your appointment or are going to be late;
- ✓ You will provide us with all the relevant information about your situation, and let us know promptly if anything changes and
- ✓ You will follow any action points which we agree with you.

The Immigration Advice Authority and the regulation of immigration advice

The provision of immigration advice is regulated by the Immigration Advice Authority (IAA). They set principles to which immigration professionals must comply in a Code of Standards and The Commissioner's Rules: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/immigration-advice-authority/about> Higher Education institutions are authorised under a Ministerial Order (Part V of the Immigration and Asylum Act, 1999) to provide immigration advice and services and should adhere to the Code of Standards.

City St George's, University of London is a member of the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) and operates in accordance with the UKCISA Code of Ethics for those advising international students: www.ukcisa.org.uk/code-of-ethics

Only the International Student Advice team are qualified and authorised to provide immigration advice to students at City St George's, University of London. **DO NOT take immigration advice from academic staff, other administrative staff or other students.**

If the level of immigration advice you require is beyond our competence we will refer you to appropriately qualified external legal professionals. Any consultation fees charged by external agencies would need to be met by you.

Confidentiality and your data

We operate within the University's Data Protection Policy, as outlined in the Data Protection Act 1998 and [General Data Protection Regulations](#). Further information can be found at [Data Protection Policy • City St George's, University of London](#). Any personal data held by the service will be securely destroyed after 7 years, and you can ask for it to be destroyed at any time. You have the right to confidentiality when you use our service. We define confidentiality as a "circle of confidentiality" within which International Student Advice Team members may discuss information about you, in an appropriate environment, e.g. to help resolve your case as efficiently as possible, or to assist with staff training and development. Any information we receive from or about you will not be disclosed to others outside our team, and we cannot talk to anyone else, such as a parent or friend, about your case without your explicit permission. The only exceptions to this are:

- When you have given your explicit consent to disclose information to an individual or organisation
- Where we are required to discuss your situation with Visa Compliance staff to help resolve your query
- If you or others are in immediate danger
- If the provision of such information is required by the law
- If there is any risk to the institution's Sponsor Licence.

We may decide it is in your best interest to contact an external organisation such as the Home Office or UKCISA for further advice or opinions about your case. We will not usually give your personal details, such as your name, when doing this, and whenever possible we will advise you if

we intend to do this. However, sometimes this may not be practical and we would generally assume that by coming to us for help, you are allowing us to resolve your queries in the best way we can.

Conflicts of interest

Under IAA rules, an adviser must not act where there is a real or potential conflict of interest between them and the client. Advisers must act objectively and in the client's best interests, even where they may hold different personal views or beliefs from the client. In such situations we would explain the circumstances fully and clearly to you. It may be appropriate to refer your case elsewhere or transfer it to another member of the team.

Referrals

Sometimes we are unable to help with your enquiry as it is outside our area of expertise and training. We work closely with other services in the university such as Careers and Student Health and Wellbeing and can signpost students to those services if appropriate.

Giving us feedback

We are always keen to improve our service so would appreciate any feedback you have about your experience of contacting us. We welcome feedback by email or in person. If you have a complaint about our service please let us know and we will do our best to resolve the matter quickly. You can do this by writing directly to the member of staff concerned, or to the International Student Advice & Compliance Manager (jelena.culum@citystgeorge.ac.uk). If you are not comfortable contacting the service directly, or you have done so but do not feel your complaint has been satisfactorily dealt with, you can contact the Head of Student Support (Louise.Jennings@citystgeorges.ac.uk).