

UK CREDIBILITY INTERVIEWS

This document provides an update on recent changes to student visa processing for the UK and the actions being taken by Navitas UK colleges to continue supporting our students and recruitment partners.

Background

In 2008, the UK Government introduced the 'Points Based System' for visa processing - enabling better, faster and more consistent decision-making for student visas (Tier 4). This system has been regularly updated to make it easier for genuine students to obtain visas for UK study, whilst harder for non-genuine (or bogus) applicants to use the student visa route to gain access to the UK in order to work.

All nine Navitas UK colleges operate as Associate or Affiliate Colleges within our partner universities. The visa 'sponsorship' for students is undertaken by the relevant partner University. Our ability to offer students a joint CAS (normally for the entire duration of study) demonstrates the very strong relationships between each college and the university - and also the trust given to the Navitas colleges by our partner universities and the UKBA.

Credibility interviews

The UK Government recently announced that up to 100,000 students will be interviewed during 2013 as part of the student visa application process to provide further assurance that applicants granted a visa do intend to study in the UK. Following testing in a number of countries, these interviews are being implemented worldwide in the summer of 2013. For further information from the Government please read: ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/newsarticles/2012/july/18-student-interviews.

Students should therefore be aware that, as part of their Tier 4 student visa application, they are likely to be required to undertake a short interview when they visit the visa centre to submit their application. For most students the

Government expect that this interview will be around 5 minutes long and will be conducted via a video link with a specialist team who will be based in Sheffield, UK. The interview will focus on their reasons for choosing to study in the UK - this is known as a credibility interview.

A video record of this interview will be attached to the application file and then the visa officer in the responsible Embassy will consider this with the visa application and other supporting documentation. Some students may be called for a face to face interview if the visa officer requires more information.

If students are requested to attend an interview then it is mandatory and failure to attend without a satisfactory explanation will result in an automatic refusal of the visa application.

Our students

Navitas UK colleges have always worked closely with prospective students to ensure they have a good understanding of the pathway for which they are issued a CAS. We do not expect applicants to encounter problems as a result of the credibility interviews. However, you should be aware that it is possible for students to satisfy normal requirements (30 points for the CAS, 10 points for maintenance) and not obtain a visa if the Entry Clearance Officer does not believe that the student has genuine intent to undertake study in the UK.

It is therefore important that our students are able to explain their chosen course of study and onward career intentions when they are questioned. We suggest that it is advisable for

Students who are nationals of countries deemed by the UK Government to be 'low risk' are unlikely to be interviewed. Students who are already in the UK will not be required to undertake an interview.

'Low risk' countries are defined by the UKBA and can be found at: ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/visas-immigration/studying/adult-students/evidence.

students to look at the possible questions they could be asked below and consider about how they might answer them (some example questions are included below). Students should not be unduly nervous about a credibility interview - our experience shows that students applying through a trusted representative have considered their UK study very carefully and understand the benefits of studying their degree commencing at a Navitas UK college. These students can therefore explain their credibility easily and therefore obtain their visa.

Navitas UK: actions and next steps

In order to continue providing sector leading support to our students and recruitment partners, Navitas UK is currently:

- Preparing information sheets to be distributed with CAS detailing course outlines, city and university information as a reference guide for students;

