



## Student Visa Essential Information

### 1. Introduction

Norland College is your Student visa sponsor and must fulfil several UKVI obligations for us to sponsor you to study with us. You also have requirements and obligations related to the Immigration Rules, your studies, and Norland as your Student visa sponsor. It is very important you understand these conditions as a breach can result in serious consequences for your current Student visa permission and any future immigration applications you may make.

### 2. CAS Issue Guidance

Before you can begin the visa application process, you must have a valid Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) reference number. Your CAS is a unique reference number that Norland will send you by email. It is not a paper document. You will need to enter your CAS number on your visa application form. To issue you with a CAS, Norland must create a CAS statement. This will include information about your course, and personal information we will request from you during the application process. To help us do this, you will need to complete the CAS questionnaire which Norland will give you. Your CAS will be issued when you meet the conditions attached to your offer of study. After you are issued your CAS, please carefully check the document to make sure all the details are correct. If there are any problems with your CAS please inform the Student Visa Manager. You must apply for your visa within 6 months of receiving your CAS from Norland.

### 3. Student Visa Application Process

You must apply for your visa online, via the government website here <https://www.gov.uk/student-visa/apply>. The cost to apply for a student visa from outside the UK is currently £490. If you are coming to the UK to study on a Student visa for the first time, then you must apply for your visa from your home country before you travel. You may be able to switch to a student visa if you already have permission to be in the UK. You cannot switch to this visa if you have one of the following visas:

- a visit visa
- a short-term student visa
- a Parent of a Child Student visa
- a seasonal worker visa
- a domestic worker in a private household visa
- leave outside the immigration rules

If you have settled or pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme, you do not need to apply for a visa.

If you do not meet the conditions of switching your visa from within the UK, you will need to return to your home country to make the application.



#### 4. Documents you will need to apply

Before starting the visa application process, it is important you understand and prepare the required documents. You must have:

- a current passport
- a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) from Norland
- proof you have enough money to support yourself and pay for your course - this will vary depending on your circumstances
- original qualifications and English language documents as listed in the 'evidence provided' section of your CAS. This includes your SELT (Secure English Language Test) if applicable, please check with the Visa Manager to check you have the correct SELT
- Certified translations of any of the required documents used that are not in English
- If you are a resident of any of the countries listed here <https://www.gov.uk/tb-test-visa/countries-where-you-need-a-tb-test-to-enter-the-uk> you will need a copy of your tuberculosis test results

#### 5. Level of English

You must prove your knowledge of the English language when you apply. You can prove your knowledge of English by either:

- passing a Secure English Language Test (SELT) from an approved provider (see more information about this requirement below)
- having a GCSE, A level, Scottish National Qualification level 4 or 5, Scottish Higher or Advanced Higher in English, gained through study at a UK school that you began when you were under 18

Your SELT (Secure English Language Test) must prove you can read, write, speak and understand English to level B2 on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) scale. To meet this requirement, Norland requires an Academic IELTS (for UKVI) with an overall band of 6.0 with no less than 6 in each component skill, or equivalent. This will be quoted in the 'evidence provided' section of your CAS. If you do not already have this qualification, please get in touch with the Student Visa Manager before you book your test to ensure you book the correct test.

You do not need to prove your knowledge of English if you have completed a qualification equivalent to a UK degree in one of the following countries, or are from one of the countries listed on the government website here <https://www.gov.uk/student-visa/knowledge-of-english>

You also do not need to prove your knowledge of English if one of the following applies:

- you're a national of Canada
- you're applying to come to the UK for a study abroad programme as part of a university degree course in the USA
- you proved your level of English in a previous visa application



## 6. Differentiation Agreements

Some Student visa applicants do not need to provide evidence of their finances when they are applying for a Student visa. The Home Office calls this the 'differential evidence requirement'. If you qualify to apply under the differential evidence arrangement, you are not required to include evidence of finances and qualifications with your application. UKVI can request this evidence while your application is being considered though, so we do recommend you prepare evidence of your finances. Norland will also still require evidence of your qualifications and your finances. To qualify for differentiation arrangements, you must either:

- hold a passport which shows you are registered as a British National (Overseas) or which was issued by the competent authorities of Hong Kong SAR, Macau SAR or Taiwan (which includes the number of the identification card issued by the competent authority in Taiwan)
- be a national in any of the countries listed on the government website, here <https://www.gov.uk/student-visa/money>

## 7. Immigration Health Surcharge

Applicants coming to the UK for 6 months or longer are required to pay a mandatory immigration health surcharge to access the National Health Service (NHS). As a Norland student this will apply to you. When you make your visa application online, you pay the surcharge as part of your application or when you book an appointment. For students, the current rate is £776 per year, which you must pay for in one lump sum during your visa application (for example, for 3 years, you will need to pay £2,328). You will pay half the yearly amount if your application includes part of a year that is less than 6 months. You will pay for a whole year if your application includes part of a year that is more than 6 months. You will automatically get a partial refund if you paid the healthcare surcharge for more years than you were granted leave. You can start using the NHS when you have paid the healthcare surcharge and your visa is granted. You will still need to pay for certain types of services, such as prescriptions, dental treatment, and eye tests. When you access healthcare in the UK, you may need to provide your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) or prove your status online using a share code, if you have a digital immigration status.

## 8. Biometric Residence Permit

EU and EEA nationals who have used the UK Immigration: ID check app receive their visa in the form of an online digital status. Along with the online digital status, you will also receive an accompanying letter from the Home Office to confirm the grant of your immigration permission. This letter also contains instructions on what you should do if you notice any errors with your digital status. The Visa Manager will ask to see your digital status and can help you if you do notice any errors. EU and EEA Nationals will not receive a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP). For other international students, you will receive a BRP. A Biometric Residence Permit is an ID card that you will be issued with upon successful completion of your visa application. It can be used to confirm your identity, right to study in the UK, and right to any public services or benefits you are entitled to. Your BRP will include the following information:



- your name, date and place of birth
- your fingerprints and a photo of your face (this is your biometric information)
- your immigration status and any conditions of your stay
- whether you can access public funds, for example benefits and health services

You will be asked to provide your fingerprints and photo for your BRP as part of your visa application. If you apply for your visa from outside the UK, you will need to collect your BRP once you arrive in the UK. You will be issued with a vignette sticker in your travel passport to allow you to travel into the UK to collect your BRP, and you must collect your BRP before the vignette expires (which is usually after 30 days of issue) or within 10 days of arriving in the UK, whichever is later. Your visa decision letter will tell you where to collect your BRP from, it will be either:

- a named Post Office branch
- your sponsor (Norland) if you chose this option when you applied

We would advise you choose to collect your BRP from Bath post office at 6-7 Union Street, Bath, BA1 1RT. The Post Office will keep your BRP for 90 days. When you go to collect your BRP, be sure to bring your passport or travel documents with your vignette sticker in. Please be sure to carefully check your BRP when you collect it for any mistakes or damage, as you must report any problems within 10 days. If you notice any issues, please contact Norland's Student Visa Manager who will help you report this. If your BRP is lost or stolen during your time at Norland, please inform the Student Visa Manager immediately who will then be able to guide you through the process of replacing your BRP. You can be fined up to £1,00.00 and made to leave the UK if you do not apply for a replacement within 3 months of losing your BRP. You will also need to bring your BRP into college for us to take and store a copy as part of our sponsor record keeping duties for UKVI. The Student Visa Manager will contact you to request this.

**Please note** that UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) are currently in the process of developing a digital immigration system. This means that physical immigration documents are being replaced with online records of immigration status.

#### **If you already have a BRP**

From December 2024, physical Biometric Residence Permits will be discontinued. From April 2024, BRP holders are being emailed directly with instructions on how to create a UKVI account to access their eVisa. These email invitations are being sent out in phases, before the service will be made available to all BRP holders in the summer. BRP holders who have not yet received an email should not worry, as the process will soon be opened to all without an invitation. For the latest information, BRP holders should visit [www.gov.uk/evisa](http://www.gov.uk/evisa). In the meantime, you should continue to keep your BRP safe and with you when you travel until it expires, even if you get your eVisa before this.

#### **If you are due to apply for a Student visa before October 2024**

UKVI will be issuing BRPs for visa recipients up until October 2024. So, if you are due to join us before this date with a Student visa, you will still get a physical BRP and should follow the



guidance on the Norland website here <https://www.norland.ac.uk/international-students/> and from the Student Visa Manager.

### **9. Academic Engagement Policy**

As part of our sponsorship duties, Norland is required to ensure that sponsored students are academically engaging throughout the period of leave for which the student is being sponsored. We must notify UKVI and withdraw sponsorship where a student stops academically engaging within 10 working days of the last expected contact point, or the date from which the student has stopped academically engaging. Academic engagement is indicated by activities such as:

- attending required lectures, seminars or tutorials
- submitting essays, assignments and attending examinations

Visa students are also expected to follow the same conditions of attendance as stated in our Student Attendance Policy.

### **10. Norland as a New Visa Sponsor**

Norland was granted our licence from UKVI to become a student sponsor in April 2021. Until we have proven a track record of compliance (which is granted after four years of consistent and successful student sponsorship) there are some limitations on permitted student activity. For example, visa students cannot re-sit an examination more than twice, or work in the UK at any time. This includes voluntary work. During this period that we build our track record of compliance, placements must not make up more than 33% of a student's overall course in the UK. As work placements currently make up just over 40% of the course at Norland, you will be required to complete part of your placements in your home country before your course begins. This requirement must be met by you completing 4 weeks of a work placement in a formal setting (such as a nursery/pre-school environment) that we must pre-approve. You must spend a minimum of four days a week of this four-week placement in this setting. As this placement finishes, the setting must complete a satisfactory End of Placement Appraisal document that Norland will provide. This will then be credited to you using the APEL method to ensure you meet the course requirements. When you join Norland, your first 2 placements (which are 4 weeks in length) will be made up of 2 weeks in a physical setting, and 2 weeks in a 'virtual' setting. The 'virtual' placement experience will provide you with opportunities to observe children's learning and development, assess how they're doing, plan to support their development and meet their care needs in a virtual way. The remainder of your placements will then run as normal. Similarly, whilst we build our track record of compliance, the NQN year will need to be undertaken in your home country. Our NQN team will support you in finding suitable employment in this circumstance.

### **11. Our Responsibilities to You**

Norland is your Student visa sponsor and must fulfil a number of obligations to UKVI in order for us to sponsor you to study with us, and to protect our status as a Student sponsor. Fulfilling these



obligations safeguards our ability to recruit international students in the future. It is a privilege to be a Student sponsor, and our success in maintaining this status ensures you can complete your studies securely whilst under our sponsorship. We are required to report to UKVI any changes in your circumstances, such as:

- If a student withdraws from their course before they travel to the UK
- If a student does not enrol within the enrolment period
- If a student stops academically engaging
- If a student is suspended
- If a student completes their course early
- If the student accrues any unauthorised absences
- If a student defers their studies after they have arrived in the UK and is no longer actively studying. If the student does not resume their studies after 60 days of deferment, we must withdraw sponsorship unless there are exceptional circumstances
- We withdraw you from the course
- Anything which suggests a student is breaking the conditions of their permission to stay in the UK, such as working on breach of their conditions

The reporting of some of these changes may result in the curtailment of your visa. It is very important you maintain contact with your tutor and the established support systems we have in place at Norland so together we can try to avoid having to take any steps that may result in the cancellation of your visa.

We are also required to maintain up to date records of your contact details, including term time address and phone numbers. Norland checks these details with all students on an annual basis, but if you change these details at any time, please be sure to let the Student Visa Manager know.

## **12. Further Information and Advice**

Norland is placed to support you as much as possible during the visa application process. However, it is very important that you read and understand the documents and web pages below, as you will be submitting the application yourself. Common factors that cause a visa application to be refused can be because the applicants do not read and fully understand the guidance, or do not have sufficient funds for the required amount of time, or do not provide the correct documents with applications. Making sure you fully understand the requirements of making a visa application is essential.

1. UKVI: [guidance for students.](#)
2. UKVI: [how to apply for a student visa from outside the UK.](#)
3. UKCISA: [making a student immigration application in your home country.](#)



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