Admissions and Child Student UKVI Visa Policy

September 2023

Document Quality Control

Original

Version	Author	Date	Reviewed By	Date
Version 1	Henrietta Lightwood	March 2017	Gareth Collier	March 2017

Document Reviews/Updates

Document Version Editing	Reason for Review/Update	Reviewer	Date	Checked / Approved By	Date
April 2017	Annual Update	Henrietta Lightwood	November 2018	Gareth Collier	January 2019
January 2019	Document Formatting	Cerys Williamson	July 2019	Gareth Collier	August 2019
August 2019	Tier 4 Update	Henrietta Lightwood	Feb 2020	Gareth Collier	Feb 2020
Feb 2020	Annual Update	Gareth Collier	August 2021	Tom Arrand	September 2021
September 2021	Annual Update	Gareth Collier	September 2022	Tom Arrand	September 2022
September 2022	UKVI and annual update	Michelle Walker	January 2023	Gareth Collier	January 2023
January 2023	Annual Review	Tom Arrand	August 2023	Gareth Collier	August 2023

Contents

Admissions Procedure

1.0   Enquiry

1.1   Telephone or e-mail enquiries are received by the Registrar or Admissions Administrators.

1.2   The Registrar or Admissions Staff send full information about the College including application procedure, fees, online prospectus and link to the online registration form. The email will address any specific queries if applicable and encourage further questions.

1.3   A hard copy of the prospectus and registration form is posted if requested.

1.4   All enquiry information is entered onto the Salesforce Admissions database.

1.5   Prospective applicants are encouraged to send their academic information, including IELTS level if taken, for consideration prior to making the application.

1.6   The decision as to the suitability to make an application is usually left to the applicant. Students are made aware of the high academic profile of the College and are encouraged to self-assess their level of knowledge before submitting an application.

1.7   Any student expressing an interest in Cardiff Sixth Form College can attend an Observation Day. These days may enable prospective students to sit in on lessons and speak to both staff and current students about the College and its courses as appropriate.

2.0   Registration

2.1   Candidates submit a completed registration form from the College website which directly feeds into the admissions database Salesforce, an email is then automated to the candidate asking them to provide requested academic information, copy of the applicant's passport, a copy of their birth certificate with a certified English translation (where applicable). A registration invoice is then raised from Salesforce and sent out to the candidate. Once the registration fee has been cleared via the financial system Xero, which is linked to Salesforce, this alerts admissions staff to register the account. The account is now in a registered stage and a parental/Agent portal is activated to allow them to view/edit and track the application as it progresses. Several data checks are held against all information on the application on Salesforce by admissions staff, so can then proceed to the next stage of which is entrance assessments.

2.2   An automated email confirming payment sent to the family/agent is created once Registered stage has been actioned on Salesforce by admissions staff.

2.3   A prospective electronic student file is created from this process on Salesforce that feeds throughout college systems at later stages.

3.0 Interview and Entrance Tests

3.1   The College offers three points of entry: GCSE 1 Year (age on entry: 15-16 years); GCSE 2 Year (age on entry: 14 -15 years) and A Level (age on entry: 16-17 years).

3.2   Admissions staff liaise with the family and their agent/the British Council/student's school to arrange a suitable time to take entrance tests. Invigilation guidelines are supplied and entrance exams sent to the named invigilator. All external costs associated with the entrance examinations, if not facilitated by Cardiff Sixth Form College/Dukes Education staff are the responsibility of the applicant.

3.3   All students are asked to complete relevant entrance and IELTS exams, along with a GL Assessment to gather initial base line academic data, under exam conditions.

3.4   GCSE entrants take entrance exams in English and Maths and an IELTS test for which they need to score at least 5.5 if applying for the GCSE 1 Year course. The GCSE 2 Year course is exempt from IELTS as requirement but applicants will sit our internal English Assessment. Offer of a place is unconditional once the IELTS/English assessment level is met.

3.5   International A Level students sit entrance exams in the four subjects they wish to study for A Level. Applicants also need to score an average of 6.5 in Academic IELTS with a minimum score of 6.0 in each of the four components, for September entry and at least an average of 6.0 with a minimum of 5.5 in each of the four components, and good grades in their entrance tests for August entry. Offer of a place is unconditional once the IELTS level is reached. Scholarship, rather than entrance papers for each subject are undertaken if the student is applying for scholarship. Those applying for a scholarship must declare this at registration stage prior to taking examinations. Scholarship examinations cannot be sat after entrance examinations have been taken (see separate scholarship policy).

3.6   International students who are able to provide their existing GCSE/IGCSE results at the point of application are encouraged to do so. Students will be required to have A* (9-8) grades in the subjects they will be taking at A-Level and the whole combination of results will be taken into consideration. Students may be required to sit additional tests if deemed necessary. A standard unconditional offer would be a minimum of six A* (9-8) grades with the required level of IELTS.

3.7   UK students take entrance papers in each of their chosen subjects for ALEVEL, plus a Online Non-Verbal Reasoning test, and an interview, a decision is then made on this and a conditional offer subject to their GCSE results is given. The standard offer for GCSE exams would be six A* (9-8) grades which must include the subjects to be taken at A level with a minimum of grade A (7) in English Language and Mathematics. A minimum standard of 9A* (9-8) grades for scholarship applicants is required with grade A in English Language and Mathematics (see separate scholarship policy). Acceptable subjects for offer may vary according to career choice of the candidate and are determined at the discretion of the college. UK students must also complete a GL assessment.

3.8   Students are encouraged to revise before taking the entrance tests and a website link to the college examination board is advised to view past practice papers for this purpose. Only one attempt at the entrance tests is allowed. Papers are marked as 'sent' on the admissions database Salesforce Stage and an automated email is sent to the registered applicant updating them.

3.9   All applicants are interviewed unless the applicant decides to withdraw before the interview takes place. Applicants resident in the UK or who are applying, as 'day students' are required to attend the College for interview. International students are offered the option of being interviewed by Cardiff Sixth Form College staff at an overseas education fair or to be interviewed online. Interview details are logged onto the admissions database Salesforce and an electronic copy put into files on student application profile on Salesforce, the stage can then be changed to "Interviewed" Candidates must present their original passport to be checked at the point of interview which is verified by the interviewer and recorded.

3.10   Interview and entrance tests may be taken in any order.

3.11   Papers are received back from agents/British Council/school and 'papers received stage' marked onto the admissions database Salesforce, which sends an automated email to the applicant to update them.

3.12   Papers are marked by teaching staff, or an external marker and a % mark and comment provided. Marks, along with results of the GL assessment, interview and school reports are considered for offer or rejection by the Admissions Manager and/or the Principal. Marked entrance papers are filed electronically in the student's file on Admission's database Salesforce. Exact results of the examinations are not made available to candidates/agents/parents.

3.13   All interview information, GL assessment data and exam marks are entered into the admissions database, Salesforce.

4.0 Offer of a Place

4.1   The Registrar sends an offer letter, which is produced and sent via Salesforce, which outlines the conditions of the offer, and includes an acceptance form, parental consent form and terms and conditions. If the applicant chooses to accept at this stage they will need to complete and submit the forms using the specific link from Salesforce and signing electronically the acceptance form and parental consent form if needed, this then registers on Salesforce as transaction completed, and then Admissions staff proceed to raise a deposit invoice from Salesforce which feeds into Xero and is sent out to the applicant. Payment of the deposit is requested. The offer is valid for one week from the date of the offer letter and extensions are only granted in special circumstances. The offer date is entered into the admissions database, Salesforce.

4.2   Conditional offers can be made, subject to an international student gaining the appropriate IELTS qualification, as often timelines for this (invigilated by the British Council) may be longer. Once all the conditions of the offer have been fulfilled, the Registrar sends an unconditional offer to the student, via Salesforce automated email templates.

4.3   Offers made to ALL international students would include reference to demonstrated levels of proficiency in English Language, usually with a minimum IELTS or equivalent level of 6.5 for September entry, 6.0 for August entry and 5.5 for GCSE.   The received copy of their IELTS Test Report Form is verified on the online IELTS Test Report Form Verification Service. Students are required to bring original copies to their enrolment session. IELTS levels are reported to the Head of English, and database manager for the college.

5.0 Acceptance

5.1   A candidate is accepted, and their place confirmed when both the acceptance form has completed successfully via Salesforce and deposit has been cleared through an integration from Xero to Salesforce. Admissions staff then change the stage to Accepted and an automated email is sent to the parents/agent to confirm acceptance.

5.2   When an applicant notifies the Registrar of a transfer of funds for a deposit, this is verified by the Finance Manager and matched with Xero and fed through to Salesforce.

5.3   Once the Acceptance Stage has been activated on Salesforce an automated email response is sent to the parents of the students' application, and a receipt is sent directly from Finance confirming receipt of deposit. Dukes Immigration Department (specialist visa solicitors) will be in touch regarding the preliminary CAS and visa application and that new joiners' documentation will be sent normally in April or within a week if after this date.

5.4 Any documentation received in the process of the applicant fulfilling their conditions is added to their prospective student file and entered into the Salesforce database.

5.5 Admissions staff then change the stage on Salesforce to "Transfer to ISAMS" which automatically sends all data over to ISAMS, the college MIS (management information system). Additionally, all documents are then uploaded to ISAMS directly and grouped, in terms of Admissions, Entrance Assessments and UKVI Information.

6.0 New joiners' documentation

6.1 New joiners' documentation will be sent by the Registrar to the Student / Parents / Agent and online forms uploaded onto the school website to include:

- Initial letter for parent event including time and date
- Pre-Arrival Guide
- Medical Questionnaire
- Insurance Form
- Guardianship information
- Photographic permission form
- Travel and contact form for students arriving by plane
- Uniform Guide
- Textbook List

6.2 Parents are informed that CAS will not be requested until **all** forms listed above have been returned to the Registrar.

7.0 Visa Application

7.0 For all non-UK/Ireland applications, a CAS request form is sent to Dukes Immigration Department by the Registrar via Salesforce.

7.1 A CAS is issued where relevant via Dukes Immigration Department, in line with our visa policy (see below).

8.0 Post-Acceptance

8.1 The Admissions Data specialist transfers all student data to the Academic Data Manager for input into ISAMS. All accepted students' data and files are transferred via Salesforce to ISAMS, and documents are uploaded directly.

8.2 ISAMS is now available to other members of admin staff:

- Senior Houseparent – to allocate accommodation;
- Finance Manager – to issue an invoice;
- Academic Data Manager – to create a timetable

9.0 Pre-Arrival

9.1   A confirmation of the issue of a visa and BRP is received by the Registrar from Dukes Immigration Department.

9.2   The Travel Coordinator manages and finalises arrival arrangements.

9.3   The Admissions Manager finalises accommodation with the Head of Boarding, and room preparations.

9.4   The Academic Data Manager finalises the student's timetable and notifies tutors.

9.5   The student's timetables are given to students on the first day of their course.

9.6   The Finance Manager confirms payment of first term's fees to the Admissions Manager, the Principal, the Academic Data Manager & the Head of Boarding,

9.7   The Administration Team send out Enrolment information and the Admissions team send out an invitation Letter for the initial Parent Event.

10.0 Induction, Registration and Enrolment

10.1   During this process, the student will be made to feel welcome and provided with all the relevant information and support to enable them to settle in quickly to Cardiff Sixth Form College. The following events will take place during this stage:

1. Induction event with parents and students

2. Register with the College

3. Receive student handbook

4. Complete international Student Data Form

5. Immigration check/BRP/Visa/Vignette/Passport/Birth Certificate

6. Student ID Card issued and photograph taken

7. Speak with IELTS and Careers representatives

8. Collect Uniforms

9. Complete enrolment with College administration (who take copies of all the documents stamps and files and organises student signing of permission forms)

10. Assistance to open a bank account

11. Be given a tour of the building

12. Be introduced to staff and at least one other student

13. Be briefed on Health & Safety, Safeguarding and Fire Evacuation rules

14. Be introduced to senior members of staff and given an up-to-date timetable

15. Presentations given by senior staff and guest speakers

16. Team building activities

17. Environmental orientation in the City of Cardiff

Compliance with UKVI requirements

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This policy is guided by and should be read in conjunction with the UKVI sponsor's guidance for educators (revised from time to time to implement changes to the UK Immigration Rules) which can be found on www.gov.uk website.

1.2 In order to recruit students who are non-UK/Ireland students to study full-time academic programmes in the UK, CSFC must hold a valid Sponsorship Licence with Student Visa sponsor status, which is issued and approved by UKVI under the direction of the Home Office and UK Government.

1.3 The Dukes Education Student Sponsor status covers all Colleges in the Dukes Education Group and is reviewed and approved annually by UKVI who carry out a Sponsor Basic Compliance Assessment every 12 months. In addition, CSFC must provide evidence of compliance with its UKVI sponsor duties, if requested, by way of UKVI visit or audit. Failure to do so can result in the immediate suspension or revocation of Sponsor Licence.

2.0 Compliance

2.1 In recognition of the continuously changing demands on Sponsors to meet the UKVI compliance regime – not least the challenge of adhering to the permissible refusal rate for student visa applications (currently 10%), the College has contracted with Dukes Immigration Department to act on its behalf and assist in compliance.

2.2 Dukes Immigration Department are experts in this field and run across all the Dukes colleges, and schools.

2.3 The College's admissions team must ensure that when making an offer of study, the applicant meets the following UKVI requirements:

2.4 Academic suitability (varies depending on the chosen course of study)

2.5 Proof of identity and parenthood.

2.6 English language proficiency (if the student applying from overseas and has not previously studied and completed a course of study in the UK).

3.0 Dukes Immigration Department Responsibilities

3.1 Issue all CAS as a level 1 user

3.2 Maintain the College's licence

3.3 Engage with the UKVI on the College's behalf as and when necessary

3.4 Report any changes or student absences on the SMS

3.5 Liaise with consultants, students and parents to ensure that only visa applications that meet the immigration rules are submitted

3.6 Maintain all the school's recording data in a format that meets the compliance requirements of the UKVI

3.7 Attend any announced inspection of the College by UKVI

3.8 Operates a policy of attendance online in the case of unannounced visits (see section 6)

3.9 Ensure that the College is visa compliant at all times

3.10 Visit the College at least twice every academic year

4.0 Process for issuance of CAS

4.1   Upon a student's acceptance of the College's offer of place, the College will, within a reasonable time (normally April onwards), send the CAS Request Form to the Dukes Immigration Department Senior Account Manager via Salesforce.

4.2   Dukes Immigration Department will immediately contact the consultant / parent to introduce themselves

4.3   So as to protect the College's refusal rate, Dukes Immigration Department 's starting point is to advise and guide on all student visa applications.

4.4   Some consultants are known to be very competent and can be trusted to ensure that only compliant applications are submitted. In these cases, CAS can be issued to the trusted agent as long as the application form and documents are checked by Dukes Immigration Department. Decision for this is made by the College.

4.5   Where a consultant is unknown – or a parent is acting directly – or is operating in a high-risk area and insists on submitting the application themselves without any guidance, Dukes Immigration Department will intervene to ensure that the application is handled accurately.

4.6   All correspondence will be copied to the College

4.7   If a student has been found to have provided the College with false documentation at Registration they may be asked to leave the College and the UKVI notified

4.8   Where consultants / parents are uncooperative, Dukes Immigration Department will refer the matter to the College for a final decision.

5.0 Data recording and reporting duties

5.1   Students are normally advised to arrive 1-2 days prior to the start date of their course by the College. Thus, if their course starts on Monday, their expected arrival date will be Saturday or Sunday. Students arriving before this time must be catered for and accommodated by parents/guardians.

5.2   Upon arrival, the College's enrolment team will check the following originals

5.3   Student passport

5.4   Student visa / Biometric Card

5.5   Original copies of IELTS and other academic certificates

5.6   Dukes Immigration Department will carry out a Visa enrolment at the beginning of every term and half term to ensure that all Visa students have arrived.

5.7   Copies of passports and visas will be kept on ISAMS at all times.

5.8   Any Visa student whose circumstances have changed will be referred to Dukes Immigration Department as soon as possible so that all necessary reports can be made on the SMS.

5.9   Dukes Immigration Department will maintain a compliant master sheet of data at all times.

6.0 Attendance and studying

6.1   Visa students must be "genuine" students and must demonstrate progression.

6.2   Only recognised and accredited courses – GCSEs and A levels - are offered by the College to visa students.

6.3   Attendance is monitored on a daily basis and non-attendance is challenged on the day of absence.

6.4   As all of the College's international students are also boarders at CSFC, any absences are identified and tackled at a very early stage through disciplinary discussions with Welfare and Academic teams and, where necessary, with parents/guardians

6.5   The College is aware that unauthorised absence must be reported to the UKVI and ten missed consecutive interactions must lead to the withdrawal of sponsorship, unless a college pastoral and academic review has been set in motion and sound reasoning has been applied.   Attendance below 90% is deemed unacceptable, unless evidence to the contrary has been documented.

6.6   Students are only permitted to work within the parameters stated on their visa / BRP (some students from age of 16 are permitted to work – detailed on their visa – but not all)

7.0 Visa Student Responsibilities

7.1   Ensure timely arrival to the College prior to the start date of the course

7.2   Ensure collection of their BRP. BRPs are normally sent to Dukes Immigration Department directly for checking. Those without errors sent to the Registrar. If there are errors, they are sent back to the BRP office for them to correct and re-distribute to Dukes Immigration Department. These are then sent to the College and distributed by the admission team during enrolment. If a BRP is sent to the local post office the College's designated member of staff will collect the BRP and issue to the student (only the designated member of staff can collect BRP's from the post office)

7.3   Bring all relevant originals of IELTS certificates, academic reports/certificates

7.4   Maintain an acceptable level of attendance (at least 90% of the scheduled hours in each month) – except where the hours are rearranged or cancelled due to a college trip/field visit authorised by the Principal and/or Academic team

7.5   Notify the College admin team of any changes to their contact details

7.6   Comply with restrictions specified on their BRP

7.7   Register with the police (if required by their BRP) – the designated member of staff will accompany the student to the local police station within one week of the student's arrival (or when required to do so by police)

7.8   Not engage in any criminal or indecent/offensive activity which may harm the reputation of the College.

8.0 English Language Proficiency

8.1   Prior to making a visa application, visa students must also show competency in English language

8.2   Offers made to ALL international students would include reference to demonstrated levels of proficiency in English Language, usually with a minimum IELTS or equivalent level of 6.5 (September entry), 6.0 (August entry) for A Level and 5.5 for GCSE as well as an internally set English Language test

8.3   Students will be expected to take additional tutorials in English if their minimum level of English is insufficient to cope with the academic demands of their chosen programme

9.0 Unannounced visits by the UKVI

9.1   The UKVI can undertake an inspection at any time. Sometimes the UKVI will call in advance and give notice of their inspection (an "announced" visit). However, increasingly, the UKVI is relying on "unannounced" visits (i.e. without notice)

9.2   Inspectors can visit the school even during the school holidays when key staff are away. In the case of an unannounced visit:

- The inspector(s) will present themselves at reception. Please check their ID and ask for their names

- Reception staff should inform the Authorising Officer, Paul Ludlow (07584012130) and the College Principal, immediately.

- The Authorising Officer will contact all other Principals in the Dukes Education Group.

- A call should be made to Lee Tatum (LT) immediately (+44 (0)20 3953 8470)

- Inspectors should be offered refreshments and told that the key staff are being contacted and will be with them shortly.

- If LT is in the vicinity, he will immediately attend.

- LT will ask to speak to the inspector and explain that he is on his way.

- If LT is not in the vicinity, LT will speak with the inspector and either persuade the inspector to return another day or, alternatively, to allow LT to carry out the inspection online.

- If the inspector insists on continuing with the inspection, this will have to take place in a room which has online access.

- Whilst LT should be able to answer all questions posed by the inspector, it would be helpful to have a member of staff physically present in the room in case additional documentation is required.

- If LT is not present in person, Dukes Immigration Department will e-mail all required spreadsheets to the Key Contact or other nominated staff member and / or to the inspector.

- In the extremely unlikely event that LT cannot be contacted (on a flight, for example), a nominated senior member of staff at Dukes Immigration Department will fulfil LT's role.

- LT will follow up any inspection with representations in writing to the UKVI to ensure that any outstanding issues are clarified.

Fees and refunds

1.0 Prospective international, students receive an offer letter that contains information relating to the type of course and the start and completion dates

2.0 At the point of registration there is a non-refundable charge of £250 (international) or £180 (local)

3.0 Boarding students are asked for a deposit of £9,500 (International) and (EU and EEA) £9,500 and (UK/Ireland) £500 at time of acceptance. It is explained that the entire deposit is held until completion of the course when it is returned in full minus any outstanding charges.

4.0 The incidental charges are explained to the students which are currently £500 per annum

5.0 UK students are given a conditional offer letter based on their predicted GCSE results and entrance test.

6.0 International students, EU and EEA and UK/Ireland students are sent a deposit and acceptance confirmation letter upon receipt of their deposit.

7.0 Tuition fees are invoiced bi-annually and must be paid by 30 June and 30 November of each year for the following term or immediately following acceptance if after this date. Tuition does not commence until fees are received.

8.0 Each student is a separate customer within the College's accounting system. This records all invoices issued and funds received, and therefore the balance owed or paid in advance for each student

9.0 If the student is unsuccessful in obtaining an education visa, or in meeting the conditions contained in their offer letter, a full refund of the deposit will be given upon evidence of the same

10.0 At the end of the course, a full financial reconciliation is undertaken. The College aims to reconcile all accounts and return any deposit and fees outstanding by 31st December following successful completion of an academic course

11.0 Annual fees structure can be found on the college website link https://www.ccoex.com/admissions/fees/