The University acts as sponsor for all students admitted with a visa under Tier 4 of the points-based immigration system (PBS). Students must co-operate with the University in all ways required of the University by UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI) to ensure that the University is able to fulfil its responsibilities to the UKVI. These responsibilities will be notified to the University by the UKVI and may be changed unilaterally by the UKVI from time to time. Such co-operation includes, but is not limited to; ensuring the University always has full and current contact details, that the University is informed of any changes to circumstances which might affect a student’s immigration status, and that the University is able to keep and maintain a copy of a student’s immigration documents.

Section 1:

1. Introduction

1.1. This policy applies to all international students who have been issued a Tier 4 visa in order to study at Oxford Brookes University. Oxford Brookes University is a ‘Tier 4 Sponsor’ and is required to ensure full compliance with the sponsor duties prescribed to it by United Kingdom Visas and Immigration (UKVI). These sponsor duties are subject to change and as such, this policy should be read in conjunction with the latest legislation available on the UKVI website, a link to which can be found in the reference section of this document.

2. Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS number)

2.1. A CAS number is described by the UKVI as being the University's way of confirming that:

   a. We wish for an overseas student to study in the UK and;

   b. to the best of our knowledge the student meets the requirements of the rules for a valid CAS and will be able to make a successful application for leave to come or stay in the UK.

Oxford Brookes University is committed to retaining its ‘Tier 4 Sponsor’ status and as such will only issue a CAS number provided that the above criteria are confirmed as being fully met.

2.2. Oxford Brookes University reserves the right to refuse to ‘assign’ or to ‘withdraw’ a CAS at any time. The decision of Oxford Brookes University is final.

3. Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS)

3.1. Students on specifically designated courses are required to obtain an ATAS certificate. This certificate must be applied for and obtained prior to making a Tier 4 visa application.

4. Enrolment

4.1. Students issued a CAS number detailing a last date of enrolment must ensure that they arrive and enrol by that date. Enrolment after this date will not be possible and the University will withdraw the sponsorship of those students who have failed to enrol.

4.2. The University must only enrol students who hold an appropriate passport and visa to enable study. Due to this, the University will require a passport and visa in order to begin the enrolment
process. Should a passport and visa not be available, enrolment will only be allowed where it can be evidenced that the passport and visa have been sent off with an appropriate in-time application for a Tier 4 visa (using an Oxford Brookes CAS).

4.3. Students who will not be able to enrol by the deadline must contact the Admissions Office should they wish to defer their place. Students who do defer their place will be issued a new CAS which must be used prior to enrolling upon the deferred course.

5. Attendance

5.1. Students must meet the University’s attendance requirements as detailed in the ‘Attendance Monitoring’ policy below. This includes completing the Tier 4 student check-in process twice per academic year.

5.2. Students must meet the university’s attendance requirements as failure to do so will result in exclusion and sponsorship being withdrawn.

6. Contact details

6.1. Students must ensure that up-to-date and accurate details of their address and telephone number in the United Kingdom are held on the Student Information system at all times.

6.2. Students must also inform the UKVI of any changes to their contact details during the course of their studies.

7. Visa extensions

7.1. The University must at all times keep up-to-date details of students’ passports and visas. Students who fail to provide passports, visas or evidence of an ‘in-time’ application when requested to do so, may be excluded from the University.

7.2. Students whose Tier 4 application is rejected or refused by the UKVI must inform the International Student Advice Team.

8. Study mode

8.1. Students are required to undertake a full time programme of study throughout their course. The only exception to this requirement exists where modules need to be retaken in order to progress stages or complete.

9. Approved and Permanent Withdrawal

9.1. Students who take approved temporary withdrawal or permanently withdraw from the University will be reported to the UKVI within ten working days of the withdrawal being applied.

9.2. During periods of withdrawal no study is required and as such students must leave the country as their leave will be curtailed. Students must provide evidence of having left the United Kingdom to the International Student Compliance Team when asked to do so.

10. Course length and subject changes

10.1. Students who complete their course earlier than the expected completion date on their CAS will have their award date reported to the UKVI within 10 working days.

11. Employment

11.1. Students must comply with the conditions of their visa at all times. Students must not work for more hours than is stated on their visa.

11.2. Students must refer to their programmes specific regulations to determine their eligibility to work additional hours during vacation periods or contact the International Student Advice Team for advice.
11.3. Students found to be breaching the conditions of their visa will be excluded and reported to the UKVI within 10 working days.

12. Changing Immigration Category

12.1. Students who change their immigration category during their studies are required to show their new visa to the International Student Compliance Team in order to have their status changed on the University systems.

13. Extant leave

13.1. Students who intend to apply for a visa extension in order to receive extant leave must request a CAS number no later than five working days prior to their course end date on the Student Information system.

14. Police Registration

14.1. Students who are required to register with the police must do so within the time limits set by the UKVI. Failure to register with the police may result in exclusion from the University.

15. References

15.1. Your Tier 4 responsibilities:
http://www.brookes.ac.uk/documents/students/isat/T4responsibilities

15.2. Protecting your Tier 4 status:
https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Visas-and-Immigration/Protecting-your-Tier-4-status

15.3. UKVI policy guidance for students:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-application-for-uk-visa-as-tier-4-student

Section 2:

Attendance Monitoring Policy:

Oxford Brookes University holds ‘Tier 4 Sponsor’ status which we use to sponsor international students to obtain a Tier 4 student visa to enable them to study with us. As a ‘Tier 4 Sponsor’ Oxford Brookes University is obliged to adhere to the sponsor duties set down by United Kingdom Visas and Immigration (UKVI) as detailed in their guidance and regulations. For information on these requirements, please see the UKVI guidance.

One of the primary duties of a ‘Tier 4 Sponsor’ is to monitor the attendance and engagement of students holding a Tier 4 visa and to withdraw sponsorship of students found to be breaching the conditions of their leave. This policy sets out the various processes and systems utilised by Oxford Brookes to appropriately monitor the attendance of the students it sponsors as well as the circumstances under which sponsorship will be revoked.

It is not in the interest of the students concerned, Oxford Brookes University, nor the UKVI to report non-attendance for international students who have ceased to attend their course for some valid reason. This policy, therefore, sets out a procedure for ensuring that in instances where international students are in danger of being reported as non-attending, they are identified, contacted and investigated thoroughly well in advance of exclusion, giving ample opportunity for the situation to be resolved.

Due to the diverse nature of the different programmes studied at Oxford Brookes, the University has tailored its attendance monitoring methods to fit the level, structure and type of
programme being studied. The remainder of this policy details the methods utilised to monitor students’ attendance in accordance with their course of study.

1. Oxford Brookes Pathway and International Foundation Courses (University English, Pre-Masters and International Foundation courses)

Enrolment and Re-enrolment

- **New students**: The University requires new students to arrive, enrol in person and attend by week 2 of the semester in which they are due to start. Students who do not meet that deadline will need to defer their place at the University. Where a student fails to enrol by the deadline set, they will be withdrawn and reported to the UKVI within 10 working days.

- **Continuing students**: The University requires students to complete the re-enrolment process once per year. This process is to be completed by students via the Student Information system. Where a student does not complete their re-enrolment by the end of week 4, this will be flagged as unapproved temporary withdrawal to be investigated by the University’s International Students Compliance Team. Students whose unapproved withdrawal is not resolved at this point will then be withdrawn from the course and this exclusion reported to the UKVI within 10 working days.

Registers

- Students on Oxford Brookes Pathways or International Foundation courses; University English (MC22/BH13), International Foundation Diploma, International Foundation Arts, Humanities and Law, International Foundation Business and Technology and Pre-Masters programmes, will have their attendance monitored via class registers. Registers will be taken daily by the lecturers and attendance will be monitored by the specific Programme Administrators with responsibility for these courses.

- Where a student has missed more than 3 consecutive or 6 individual classes, the Programme Administrator will phone and send a letter to the student to outline concerns, and to alert them of their attendance responsibilities in accordance with the rules and regulations of their Tier 4 visa. If the student remains absent and does not respond to requests, the matter will be referred to the Programme Portfolio Manager with responsibility for the relevant course who will investigate and if necessary refer the matter to the International Students Compliance Team to report the student.

- Where a student misses 10 individual classes / contact points or more in a semester without a valid reason, the International Students Compliance Team will exclude the student and notify the UKVI of non-attendance.

The ‘Tier 4 student check-in process’

- Students studying on a Tier 4 visa are required to complete the check-in process in both semesters 1 and 2 each academic year. Students holding a Tier 4 visa will be contacted via email and informed of the week in which the check-in can be completed in the given semester. The check-in will normally take place in either week 6 or 7 and students will be given a range of locations where it can be completed.

- Students who miss their check-in will be contacted by the University’s International Students Compliance Team and given 1 week within which to complete the check-in. If it has not been completed after that week has passed, the students account will be blocked and as a consequence access to specific facilities withdrawn.

- The student and relevant staff members (e.g. Programme Administrators, Academic
Advisers and Student Support Co-ordinators) will then be contacted and given a one week deadline by which to resolve the situation. If the student has still not completed the check-in after that deadline has passed, the student will be excluded and given 10 working days to resolve the situation.

• If on the tenth working day the student has not completed the check-in, the student’s exclusion will be permanent and a report will be sent to the UKVI by the University’s International Students Compliance Team on that same day.

2. Undergraduate and Taught masters students

Enrolment and Re-enrolment

• New students: The University requires new students to arrive, enrol in person and attend by week 2 of the semester in which they are due to start. Students who do not meet that deadline will need to defer their place at the University. Where a student fails to enrol by the deadline set, sponsorship will be withdrawn and reported to the UKVI within 10 working days.

• Continuing students: The University requires students to complete the re-enrolment process once per year. Where a student does not complete their re-enrolment by the end of week 4, this will be flagged as unapproved temporary withdrawal to be investigated by the University’s International Student Compliance Team. Students whose unapproved withdrawal is not resolved at this point will then be withdrawn from the course and this exclusion reported to the UKVI within 10 working days.

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• Students who miss their check-in will be contacted by the University’s International Students Compliance Team and given one week within which to complete the check-in. If it has not been completed after that week has passed, the students account will be blocked and as a consequence access to specific facilities withdrawn.

• The student and relevant staff members (E.G. Course Administrators & Student Support Coordinators) will then be contacted and given a one week deadline by which to resolve the situation. If the student has still not completed the check-in after that deadline has passed, the student will be excluded and given 10 working days to resolve the situation.

• If, on the tenth working day, the student has not completed the check-in, the student’s exclusion will be permanent and a report will be sent to the UKVI by the University’s International Students Compliance Team on that same day.

Assessment Submission and Outcomes

• At the end of each semester, the International Students Compliance Team will generate and receive detailed reports highlighting students who have missed assessments as well as students who have failed to pass modules taken.

• Students who have missed assessments or who have failed to achieve at least a resit grade in their modules will be investigated to see if non-engagement and a breach of the conditions of their visa has occurred. Investigation will involve direct contact with the student, as well as where appropriate: checks on the exceptional circumstances system, academic staff feedback and also liaison with Course Administrators, Academic Advisors or Student Support
Coordinators.

- Following investigation, if a student is found not to have engaged appropriately with their studies and there are no exceptional circumstances to explain the non-engagement, the student will be withdrawn from the course. This withdrawal will be reported to the UKVI within 10 working days.

3. Students on work placements

For students studying on a Tier 4 visa while on work placements, either in the UK or overseas, the University remains responsible as the student’s sponsor for monitoring their attendance even though there may be no submission of work during the period spent on the placement. Therefore, when a student is on a work placement, non-attendance will be reported to the UKVI when a student has missed 10 working days.

- Staff in Faculties who organise work placements must ensure that every placement provider has signed an agreement (in the form set out in Section 3 below) to inform the University of the student’s absence. The University must not allow students with a visa issued through Tier 4 to attend placement providers who are unable or unwilling to agree to report absences back to the University.

- The placement provider must notify their normal contact in the University when a student has missed 7 working days. The normal contact within the University will notify the Faculty’s Student Support Co-ordinator (or other nominated individual), who should attempt to make contact with the student. If the student’s absence remains unaccounted for after the tenth missed working day, the University will report the absence to the UKVI within a further 10 working days.

4. Research Students (PGR)

- The attendance of all research students is monitored regularly during the course of each year both as part of their academic programme and via the check-in process.

- Attendance and engagement with the programme for all research students will be recorded at the following stages of the programme: enrolment and the payment of fees in September and January, the submission and approval of the Research Degree Sub-Committee (RDSC) applications for Registration and Transfer as appropriate and during the course of the full annual RDSC Progress Monitoring which takes place between May to August each year.

- Students studying under Tier 4 are required to comply with the Tier 4 check-in process as detailed in sections 1 and 2 of this document.

- A student will be recorded as in attendance where they are engaging with their research, i.e. the threshold for engagement is the equivalent of ‘attendance’ for taught students and is not a statement that academically satisfactory progress is being made. It is, therefore, possible that a student may be ‘falling behind’ for academic purposes but is, nevertheless, still ‘engaged in their programme’ for attendance monitoring purposes.

- Where a student has permission to be away from the University, whilst engaged in fieldwork or other activities associated with their research programme, an email and other electronic communication may be used as evidence of engagement. These communications have to be validated by the student’s Supervisor and confirmation sent to the Research Degrees Team.
• Students recorded as having missed one of the registration points will be given one further period to re-engage. Once a student has been notified as non-engaged in two consecutive registers, the Research Degrees Team will liaise with the Faculty and attempt to contact the student within ten working days. In respect of international students, if the student’s non-engagement remains unaccounted for, the University’s International Students Compliance Team will be notified and will report the absence to the UKVI.

• Attendance monitoring will be recorded at the following points in the year:
  o Enrolment and payment of fees in September
  o Check-in with International Student Compliance Team (ISCT) during Weeks 6-7 - Semester 1
  o Enrolment and payment of fees in January
  o Check-in with ISCT during Weeks 6-7 – Semester 2
  o Annual RDSC Progress Monitoring, May to August, which will include an interview with each student in addition to a full assessment of their current work and progress during the course of the year
  o Submission and approval of RDSC applications for Registration and Transfer as appropriate

5. Doctorate extension scheme students

• Students who are granted leave on the Doctorate Extension scheme are required to have regular scheduled contact with their sponsoring institution. Students sponsored by Oxford Brookes will have three points of contact made at four monthly intervals during the course of the year. Failure to adhere to these scheduled contacts without adequate explanation when contacted will lead to a report being sent to the UKVI, sponsorship being withdrawn and the visa being curtailed. Please see below details of the scheduled contacts expected.

  o 4 Months after the start of the Doctoral Extension Scheme: an email will be sent asking for confirmation of whereabouts and current activity. A reply must be received by the Head of the Research Degrees Team within 10 working days of the date the email was first sent. An acknowledgement of the response will be issued and will contain information and a date for the next virtual monitoring point.

  o 4 Months after the first contact point: this monitoring point will be carried out via Skype, Telephone or Google chat, at a time and date previously agreed in the first monitoring email exchange. A date for the last monitoring point will be agreed during the course of this session.

  o 4 Months after the second contact point: an email will be sent to asking for confirmation of whereabouts and current activity. In addition, information must be provided concerning the planned date of departure from the UK, including confirmation of the address and country of final residence. A reply must be received by the Head of the Research Degrees Team within 10 working days of the date the email was first sent. An acknowledgement of the email response will be issued and confirmation of safe arrival at the agreed destination requested.
Section 3:

Work Placement Attendance Monitoring Agreement

Agreement

Oxford Brookes University is the sponsor for international students who hold a visa under Tier 4 of the points-based immigration system (PBS). As sponsor, the University is obliged to meet the expectations of UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) laid down from time to time in their guidance and regulations which can be found on the UKVI's website.

Specifically, the UKVI requires sponsors to report any international students who are not attending their programme. Once an international student has been identified as not attending, the University is required to notify the UKVI of that student's absence within ten working days. The University remains a sponsor even when the student is on placement. The requirement to report students who are not attending also remains.

We are asking you to sign this agreement as the University cannot allow students with a visa issued through Tier 4 to attend placement providers who are unable or unwilling to agree to report absences back to the University.

Therefore, for students with a Tier 4 visa on placements, either in the UK or overseas, the University has agreed the following policy to ensure that it complies with the UKVI.

When a student is on a placement non-attendance will be reported to the UKVI when a student misses ten working days. (This is the normal reporting expectation for individuals in the UK for employment, i.e. those with a Tier 2 visa.) Therefore, the placement provider must notify their normal contact in the University when a student has missed seven working days. The normal contact within the University will notify the Faculty's Student Support Co-ordinator (or other nominated individual), who should attempt to make contact with the student. If the student's absence remains unaccounted for after the tenth missed working day, the University will report the absence to the UKVI within ten working days of the tenth missed working day at the placement provider.

You should be reassured that students with a Tier 4 visa are made aware of our obligations as sponsor and our Attendance Monitoring policy is publicly available. The disclosure of this information to the University is in our view covered under the Data Protection Act (1998). The processing is necessary for our legitimate purposes as a requirement of the UKVI.

This agreement is a record of your confirmation that, as the authorised representative of an organisation which provides placements for students at the University, you agree to report student absences greater than ten working days, as described above.

I agree to monitor the attendance of students on work placements and to report absences to the University as outlined above.

Name

Position

Organisation

Date

For further information about this Policy, please contact International Student Advice Team.