

Student Services
International Student Advice

Standards and Confidentiality Policy

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Students at London Metropolitan University access our services for a wide variety of reasons. They may be seeking information about their own immigration needs or perhaps they need advice about dependants. International students may find that they need advice on matters regarding work in the UK, or further studies and options available once they have completed their current course or perhaps they need to take a break in their studies for personal reasons.

Whatever your reason for contacting our International Student Advice Service, we are aware that you may be sharing sensitive information with us.

Conditions of Service

All advice provided by the International Student Adviser is done so in good faith, based on the information provided by you about your current situation. We expect that you will be open and honest about your circumstances so that we can provide you the best possible advice. While we always strive to ensure our advice is accurate, immigration regulation changes regularly and therefore our advice may change, sometimes at short notice. It is your responsibility to check the visa requirements for your particular circumstances before making any decisions on how to proceed in your situation.

Immigration Advice Regulation: Codes of Standards and Ethics

The provision of immigration advice is regulated by the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC). The OISC sets the principles to which immigration professionals must comply in a Code of Standards and The Commissioner's Rules: <http://oisc.homeoffice.gov.uk/>

Higher Education institutions have been authorised under Ministerial Order (Part V of the Immigration and Asylum Act, 1999) to provide immigration advice and services and should adhere to the OISC Code of Standards.

London Metropolitan University is a member of the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) and operates in accordance with the UKCISA and AISA (Association of International Student Advisers) Code of Ethics for international student advisers: www.ukcisa.org.uk/code-of-ethics

Our International Advisers are trained to comply by these standards and provide students with immigration advice. You should always check with the service if you have a question about visa matters. Please don't seek advice from other University staff who, while helpful, may not have the most up to date information for you and may not be aware of the guidelines around providing advice.

Data Protection and Confidentiality

The International Student Support Team operates in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018 (data protection legislation). The purpose of the legislation is to protect personal information and ensure it is used in a way that is fair to individuals and protects their rights. For more information about the London Metropolitan University policy for data protection, [visit our website here](#).

Our International Advisers keep all paper documents relating to individual cases locked securely at the end of each working day. Where possible, case notes are made on an electronic system with access limited to staff within the International Advice Service and direct line management.

You have a right of access to a copy of your records. If you wish to request them, please see our [Data Protection Policy](#) pages for information.

The International Student Support Team may keep records of the numbers of visitors to the office and the kinds of issues discussed. This is for statistical purposes and helps us monitor demand for our service and to identify any practical or policy issues where we can improve the service, such as focused workshops.

The information that makes up any reports produced with this information is completely anonymised, so that individual users of the service cannot be identified.

You have the right to expect confidentiality when you use our service. We understand that you may share sensitive information with us and we will not discuss any information we receive from or about you with others outside our team, except in the circumstances outlined below.

- Where you have previously given your explicit consent to disclose information to an individual or organisation
- If you or others are in immediate danger including safeguarding issues
- If the provision of such information is required by the law
- If there is any risk to the University's Tier 4 Licence
- Anonymised information used for training purposes within University departments

Sometimes it is necessary to discuss your case with other departments or individuals within the University in order to provide a better service for you, such as student records or academic staff. In these cases, we will try to seek your consent first of all. If you do not give consent, we may be limited in the support we can provide. Where we determine that waiting for your consent may delay and negatively change the outcome of a decision, we may speak to the relevant member of staff before obtaining your consent. We do so on the basis that as you have sought our support, you will expect us to do what we can to help. Please note that all University staff are bound by the same data protection legislation.

On occasion, we may decide it is in your best interest to contact an external organisation such as the Home Office or the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) for further advice or opinions about your case. Where possible we will advise you if we intend to do this and we will not disclose identifying information if this is not necessary to obtain the information needed.

To help protect confidentiality, advice will be given in a private space, with the door closed. These arrangements will be made according to the individual student's accessibility needs.

Conflict of Interest

Under OISC rules, an adviser must not act where there is a real or potential conflict of interest between them and the person they are advising. This can be because of background knowledge of a particular situation or where the adviser knows the person being advised in a personal capacity. Advisers must be objective and always work in the client's best interests.

In these situations we would explain the reasons why there is conflict of interest to you clearly. It may be appropriate to refer your case elsewhere or transfer it to another member of the team.

Referrals and signposting

An adviser must not advise a client if this requires them to act beyond their level of competency (see [Immigration Advice Regulation: Codes of Standards and Ethics](#)). If, after having an initial conversation with you about your needs, we find that we are unable to advise you appropriately, then we will inform you of this immediately. This may be in person at the time and will also be followed up in writing, clearly giving you the reasons why we are unable to assist and advise you to seek qualified legal advice.

If appropriate, we will signpost you to where you can find a suitably qualified advisor whom you can contact independently. If required, we can provide your case notes to your new adviser if it is appropriate to do so and with your consent. In these cases we will not be able to continue to provide you advice on the same subject, however, you will be able to contact the Advice Service for any future queries.

Discrimination

The International Support Team will not discriminate, or tolerate discrimination on the part of others, on the basis of race, gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, nationality, faith or physical ability. We are committed to providing a fair service to all students without any prejudice or bias.

Feedback and Complaints

We are committed to providing a high quality service to all our students. If you feel we could have handled your case differently, please tell us about it so that we can work to improve our service. We also welcome feedback from you or suggestions for how we might improve and develop the service we provide. You can contact us by email, or in person. You can also complete a blue Feedback Form available from any of our service areas.

If you have a complaint regarding our service, please let us know and we will do our best to resolve the matter with you. In these cases, you can contact the International Support and Compliance Manager, Natalia Mulley, on n.mulley@londonmet.ac.uk or call +44 (0) 207 133 2985.

If you would like to raise a formal complaint, you can do so by following the [University complaints procedure](#) which you can find on our website.

If you have exhausted the university's complaints procedure and you are still unsatisfied, you are entitled to contact the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (see www.oiahe.org.uk) for review. Please note the OIA does not review complaints regarding admission to the University.

If your complaint is specific to a piece of immigration advice you have been given, you can make a complaint to the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner ([UKVI – OISC Complain about an adviser](#)) whether or not you have made a complaint to the University.

Contact Us

International Advisers
Joheobe Ulegede-Sonuga

@: adviceinternational@londonmet.ac.uk

Tel: +44 (0) 207 133 4186

Appointments

Book an appointment by phone or email using the above details.

Drop in Dates and Times:

Come to our drop in sessions located in Holloway Hub. You don't need an appointment to see us at drop-in.

Monday 9:30 am to 12 pm

Friday 9:30 am to 12 pm