

## **University of Oxford**

### **Student Immigration: Confidentiality policy**

The staff in the Student Immigration team at the University of Oxford operate a student-focused service comprising two Student Visa Advisers who advise current and prospective students and their dependant/s; and two staff dealing with the issuing of CAS numbers (Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies) and other compliance matters necessary to maintain the University's licence with the Home Office to sponsor international students.

The four members of staff are located in the same office and work closely together. The team act in accordance with the principles of the [University of Oxford confidentiality policy](#), the Data Protection Act of 1998 and the [Office of the Immigration Service Commissioner \(OISC\)](#) code of standards. The University of Oxford is a member of the UK Council for International Student Affairs ([UKCISA](#)) and adhere to its [code of ethics](#).

#### **Advice for students**

You may contact the University Visa Advisers at [student.immigration@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:student.immigration@admin.ox.ac.uk) for advice and your query will be kept confidential within the team. If the Visa Advisers need to discuss matters relating to your CAS or a compliance matter they may consult with the two members of staff responsible for this area of work but the query will be kept confidential within the team.

Sometimes the advisers may need to discuss your case with the college or department in which case we will seek your permission first before contacting them.

Advice is given by email or an appointment can be arranged as appropriate. The team may be able to arrange an appointment by Skype if you are not able to visit the office in person. Please note that the Student Immigration team do not offer a drop-in service.

Anything discussed in meetings, all records of advice and communication with you remains confidential within the team but note the exceptions listed on the next page.

#### **Tier 4 compliance**

Two members of the team deal with the issuing of CAS numbers and compliance matters for the University to ensure that the University continues to meet its obligations under the Home Office licence to sponsor international students. All members of the Student Immigration team share information to provide a student-focused service that assists students in the best way possible and in line with compliance requirements.

The University has an obligation as your Tier 4 sponsor to notify and report certain changes in student circumstances such as suspension, withdrawal, transfer of course, visa refusals and early completion. The Tier 4 compliance staff will always attempt to email you first to check for any unusual circumstances before making a report to the Home Office and will advise you of the implications. You may email them at [Tier4compliance@admin.ox.ac.uk](mailto:Tier4compliance@admin.ox.ac.uk) if you wish to seek advice about changes to your student enrolment status.

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<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/visa>

## **When information about you may need to be disclosed**

The Student Immigration team will only disclose information about you outside the team in the following circumstances:

1. You have given your verbal or written consent; or
2. Where required to do so by law and where failure to do so would lead to civil or criminal court procedures – this includes any situation which may impact on the Tier 4 licence or Tier 2 licence for the University of Oxford; or
3. When the Student Immigration team believe you or someone else may be in danger.

The Student Immigration team will always seek your consent. However, there may be circumstances in points two and three above where they may need to discuss your case with others due to the University's obligations as a Tier 4 sponsor and for safety purposes. For compliance matters, you will always be emailed before a report is made to the Home Office to check for any unusual circumstances so please ensure your contact details are up-to-date. However, if you fail to respond to a second email reminder the team may need to proceed with a report to the Home Office.

## **Location**

The team of four staff is located in a small open plan office in the Examination Schools, High Street which is not shared by other teams. A private room is available for in-person appointments and also for Skype appointments when necessary.

## **Record keeping and data protection**

Under OISC rules a record of any immigration advice that is given to you must be kept. All computers are password protected. Electronic records, email communication, case notes from appointments are stored within areas with restricted access. Case notes and files are stored for six years and after this time they are securely destroyed.

## **Statistics**

Records are kept of students who use our service. These details are used anonymously in all reports.

## **Access to data**

Under the Data Protection Act, you have the right to see notes that are kept about you. If your notes contain references to other people, this information will not be available to you. If you wish to see your file, please see the [University Freedom of Information web page](#).

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