

University of Kent

Visiting Student Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

The University welcomes undergraduate and postgraduate visiting students from the UK and across the world. To strengthen and facilitate academic and research collaborations with other institutions, the University has established a Visiting Student Policy. This policy provides guidance for setting up academic and research visits for students from other institutions. Visits will typically be from one to twelve months. All Visiting Students to the University must be registered on the University's student data system but would not be eligible for a degree or any other qualification.

This policy will apply to all visiting students, regardless of visa status unless otherwise indicated in the policy, and includes those who are undergraduate, postgraduate taught, postgraduate research and doctoral candidates registered at another institution.

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of the Visiting Student Policy is to:

- Define the criteria for a visiting student.
- Provide information on the policy and procedural issues at the University in relation to the admission and administration requirements of visiting students.
- Provide guidance to academic and administrative staff as well as visiting students and outline the responsibilities of each party.
- Provide a framework for admitting and supporting visiting students during their period of time at the University to ensure they are given a positive experience while they are here whilst protecting the reputation and responsibilities of the University by being clear about the expectations of all parties involved.
- Provide a framework for the charging of fees to visiting students.

1.2. Definition of a Visiting Student

For the purposes of this policy the term 'Visiting Student' applies to students who have all of the following characteristics:

- a) A Visiting Student will be registered at an institution in the UK, EU or Overseas on a programme of study leading to an approved qualification, and whose attendance for a defined period of time at the University of Kent will contribute to their qualification¹.

¹ It is recognised that some doctoral candidates and researchers are also members of staff at their home institution. If the purpose of the visit at the University of Kent is directly related to the individual's doctoral research then the individual shall be designated as a visiting student whilst visiting the University of Kent.

- b) Visiting Students normally wish to undertake research at the University of Kent, but some may also attend lectures and seminars and enrol on taught modules, or may participate in a combination of both research and taught components.
- c) Visiting Students will normally be registered at the University of Kent for a period of no less than one calendar month and no more than 12 months as outlined in paragraph 2.
- d) Visiting Students are required to adhere to the University of Kent's Health and Safety and conduct requirements as well as this policy.

1.3. Categories

There are two categories of Visiting Students:

- a) Visiting Taught Students – attend the University for the main purpose of completing taught modules whilst on a term or year abroad from their home institution.
- b) Visiting Research Students – attend the University for the main purpose of undertaking research.

1.4. Individuals not covered within this policy

The Visiting Student Policy does not apply to:

- a) Current students registered for a University of Kent award.
- b) Short term visits from members of staff from external institutions (unless the staff member is also completing a postgraduate research qualification and the purpose of the visit at the University of Kent is directly related to their postgraduate research).
- c) Students or visitors attending the University for the purpose of work experience or internships of any kind including Erasmus traineeships.
- d) Visitors in any other capacity, such as postdoctoral fellows or research associates, who may hold the status of an academic visitor.
- e) Students coming to the University of Kent as part of a formal exchange arrangement through the International Development office or as Dual Registered Research Degree (cotutelle) in which formalised admissions and administrative processes are already in place.
- f) Visits of less than one month.

2. DURATION OF VISIT AND ATTENDANCE

The total period of attendance as a Visiting Student will normally be for a period between 1 and 12 months as part of one visit. Visits less than one month will be considered outside of this policy and arranged within Schools² who will hold their own localised processes for short visits. Visits of more than 12 months will be considered as long as a case can be made to support a visit which exceeds the maximum duration under this policy. Visiting students are expected to undertake study or research on a full-time basis.

3. INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS REQUIRING A VISA

Non-EEA national students require a visa to enter the UK and study and/or conduct research at the University. The type of visa required depends on the duration of study as outlined in paragraphs 3.1 and 3.2. It is the responsibility of the Visiting Student to ensure that he/she has obtained the appropriate visa.

3.1. Visits less than 6 months

Students requiring a visa to study in the UK who are applying to spend less than six months at the University of Kent will normally apply for a **Short Term Study** visa. Students on a short term study visa cannot extend their stay, change to a different visa category or undertake any type of work, either paid or unpaid. To enable the student to apply for a short-term study visa the Admissions Team will provide the student with an offer letter confirming specific details.

3.2. Visits more than 6 months

Visiting students requiring a visa to enter the UK and who wish to attend as a visiting student between 6 months to 12 months will need to apply for a Tier 4 visa. Tier 4 visa conditions will apply and the University is required to comply with all immigration regulations and policies associated with Tier 4 sponsorship including record keeping and reporting duties as well as attendance monitoring requirements. A CAS will not be issued to a visiting student until the School has communicated the applicable fee or waiver to the Admissions Team.

3.3 ATAS Academic Technology Approval Scheme)

ATAS clearance is required for those coming to the UK under the Short-term student route in order to study relevant courses for up to six months.

4. RECORDS MANAGEMENT

4.1. Visiting Students will be registered on a programme of study and hold a student record which will have a programme of study code and identify the start and end dates of the visit. The Visiting Student's application for the visit will be held on KentVision. Recording Visiting

² When the main purpose of visiting the UK is for study students must apply for a short term study visa and NOT for a visitor visa/academic visitor visa

Students on University systems means the University can meet its legal obligations which include but are not limited to the monitoring and oversight of students, e.g. for immigration, insurance, health and safety purposes.

- 4.2. A status letter can be provided to the Visiting Student during their stay by the Central Student Administration Office, and a confirmation of attendance letter may be provided by the School at the end of the stay.

5. INDUCTION, SUPPORT AND INFORMATION FOR VISITING STUDENTS ON ARRIVAL

Ensuring that Visiting Students have the appropriate information and support when they arrive will ensure they are able to maximise the benefit of their visit. Visiting Students should have a pre-arrival contact assigned to them from the School who should assist with providing information on orientation and acting as a first point of contact on arrival. Schools will be responsible for ensuring resources are in place on arrival, including providing desk space for Visiting Research Students as well as providing Visiting Students with a satisfactory induction to the School and the University and ensuring students receive a health and safety briefing and are aware of relevant policies.

6. APPLICATION PROCESS

- 6.1. Individuals meeting the conditions of paragraph 1.2 of this policy must formally apply through the University of Kent online application form (KentVision).
- 6.2. All Visiting Students will be asked to provide a confirmation of study letter from their current institution as part of the application process. The letter must provide written consent from the student's home institution and confirm that the period of study or research topic is relevant to the student's current study. This letter should be included with the online application form. Any documentation requiring the University's authorisation /signatory must be submitted at this stage so the documentation can be reviewed in advance of the visit.
- 6.3. Schools may use their discretion on the level of English language required of a Visiting Student; however, at a minimum all students must meet IELTS Level 5.5 (CEFR B2) in all four components (speaking, writing, listening, and hearing) as well as overall, unless a student is exempt from English language requirements as defined by UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI). Evidence of English language will be required for all Visiting Students requiring a study visa unless the Visiting Student is from a UKVI majority English speaking country.
- 6.4. Visiting students must include with their application:
 - A reference from their current supervisor or tutor
 - Research proposal and CV (for Visiting Research Students only)
 - A copy of relevant qualifications and transcript

- Evidence of English language ability if appropriate
- A letter from the student's current institution in accordance with paragraph 6.2.

6.5. Visiting Research Students

6.5..1. Enquiries from prospective Visiting Research Students wishing to undertake research can be made informally to a supervisor or directly to the School. Students should be encouraged to approach the School or a potential supervisor before they make a formal application to the University.

6.5..2. A research proposal and CV should be presented to the supervisor to consider the benefit to the University and School, him/herself and to the student. Should a supervisor be confident the period of attendance as a Visiting Student will be beneficial to the student, themselves, the School and the University, then with the agreement of the School Administration Manager (SAM) and Head of School (HoS) the applicant may be requested to apply as a Visiting Student and complete the University of Kent online application form.

6.5..3. Applications for Visiting Research Students will be approved on Kent Vision by the Director of Graduate Studies, or their delegate, within the admitting School, as per the normal admissions process for postgraduate students. In accordance with paragraph 6.5.2 prior approval will be obtained by the HoS and SAM.

6.6. Visiting Taught Students

6.6..1. Any student wishing to visit the University to participate solely in taught components and enrol on modules shall follow the process outlined in paragraphs 6.1 to 6.4. Applications will be approved on KentVision by the applicable School's Admissions Officer in accordance with the admissions process for taught programmes.

7. REGISTRATION OF VISITING STUDENTS

7.1. Visiting Students will complete the online enrolment process and are also required to register in person with either the Central Student Administration office in the Registry (Canterbury), Medway Administration team in the Gillingham Building (Medway) or the administration team in Brussels. Visiting Students must present their passport and visa upon registration to confirm their immigration permission to visit the University.

7.2. Upon registration Visiting Students will be provided with a Kent One card providing them with:

- Access to buildings and library facilities

- Access to IT facilities
- Access to specialist equipment appropriate to their research

8. RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES

Visiting Research Students must have appropriate access to facilities and an active research environment for them to undertake their research effectively. Visiting Research Students will have access to appropriate resources such as library facilities, IT facilities and other specialist equipment where appropriate for their research and be encouraged to attend and present their work at seminars. Resources and access to facilities for Visiting Research Students should be provided at the same level as Kent students.

9. FEES

It is the University's policy that any individual student registering at the institution pay fees. Visiting students will be charged the visiting student fee which is pro-rata equivalent to the full-time taught or research fee and will also be dependent upon length of stays. Fees may be waived by the Dean of the Faculty in consultation with the Head of School and SAM.

10. SUPERVISION OF VISITING RESEARCH STUDENTS

Visiting Research Students should have an initial induction with their supervisor during their first week which sets out the aims of their visit.

The supervisor should have monthly meetings with the Visiting Research Student where the aims of the visit are reviewed. Please refer to Section 6 of [Annex H \(Supervision\) of the Code of Practice for Quality Assurance for Research Programmes of Study](#) which provides guidance on the frequency, format and recording of supervisory meetings.

11. RESPONSIBILITIES OF VISITING STUDENT

- Engaging with the academic School throughout the duration of their visit. Whilst it is understood that Visiting Research Students may have short absences for conferences and other events, the University must be the primary base during the visit.
- Participating in local seminars and meetings as appropriate and attend all compulsory timetabled events.
- Engaging with their research and/or attending taught components as required
- Participating in monthly meetings with their supervisor for the duration of their stay and complete supervisory meeting records in accordance with paragraph 10 of this policy (applicable to Visiting Research Students only).
- Responding to requests for information from University staff.

- Complying with the University's Tier 4 policies and procedures (applicable to Tier 4 students only).

12. RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUPERVISOR (Applicable to Visiting Research Students only)

- Offering guidance on the student's project.
- Ensuring that the student is aware of his/her responsibilities during the period of study/research.
- Scheduling regular meetings with the student and setting aside adequate time to discuss progress.
- Ensuring the Visiting Student is introduced to all School, Faculty and University facilities which are relevant to their research.
- For Visiting Research Students, ensuring that there are clear records on the Student Data System of supervisory meetings and interactions with their students.
- Requesting written work as appropriate and returning such work with substantial constructive feedback within an agreed timetable.

Approved:

Graduate School Board, 3rd November 2015

Learning and Teaching Board, 4th November 2015