

VISA UPDATE – BEST PRACTICES

NAFSA
Education Abroad –
Regulatory Practice Committee
Region 2 Conference
Albuquerque, New Mexico
October 29, 2009



MEMBERS SUPPORTING MEMBERS

Regulatory Practice Committee

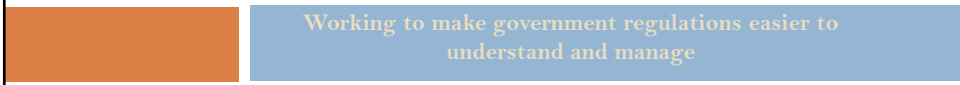
- Chair
- Government Liaison
- Financial Aid Monitor
- Consular Affairs Liaison (CAL) Subcommittee Chair
- CAL Country Coordinator Rep to Committee

Visa Education Subcommittee

- Chair
- At Large Committee Members

Subcommittee is made up of Country Coordinators for:

France, Spain, UK and Italy



UK Visas: A case study

Bridget Donoghue – one liaison’s impact

“Can someone explain the Tier 4 visa process to me?”

“Does anyone know what is happening with entry documents for British internships?”

“Where can I find a sample of the financial guarantee letter?”

Regulatory Information

UK Visa Regulations Updates

In November 2008, the United Kingdom Border Agency (UKBA) began implementing a five-tier visa regulation system that affects both education abroad programs within the United Kingdom and any foreign students or participants. NAFSA has created this update page to provide information to international educators from a variety of sources on these changes. If you have questions or concerns about the new visa regulations, or if you have information that you would like to share with your colleagues through this update page, please submit to NAFSA leaders through [IssueNet: Report an Issue](#).

August 21, 2009


As of August 21st the NAFSA Consular Affairs Liaison Subcommittee of the Education Abroad Regulatory Practice Committee has confirmed changes to the financial requirements of the Tier 4 Student Visa process for the UK.

[Learn more](#)

www.nafsa.org/regulatory_information.sec/uk_visa_regulations_update/

The screenshot shows the NAFSA website interface. On the left is a navigation menu with categories like 'About NAFSA', 'Membership', 'Regulatory Information', and 'Public Policy'. The main content area is titled 'Regulatory Information' and contains sections for 'Education Abroad', 'Foreign Visas for U.S. Students', 'International Travel Resources', and 'U.S. Services'. A red arrow points from the 'click' label to the 'Regulatory Information' header. Another red arrow points from the 'Education Abroad' text to the 'Foreign entry requirements (DOS)' link under the 'Foreign Visas for U.S. Students' section. A third red arrow points from the 'Education Abroad' text to the 'IssueNet' logo. At the bottom, a URL is provided: http://www.nafsa.org/regulatory_information.sec/education_abroad/

Kirsten McKinney
Hollins University




Regional Liaisons

- Bridget Donoghue, LA
- Penny Schouten, NY
- Laurence Tuccori, Chicago

WHAT'S NEW: UK

- Two Student Routes:
 - (1) Student Visitor: less than 6 months (no work)
 - (2) Regular Student Visa Under Tier 4
 - General Student in Points Based System (PBS)
 - Tier 4: 28-rule for proof of funds went back into effect on October 1st, 2009
 - Consulates now have a bit more leeway when reviewing visa applications (not totally black/white)
 - Allow for 6-week minimum processing time
- Internships (50% rule/BUNAC)
- No route at this time for teacher training programs that don't include coursework
- Faculty Route: Business Visitor

Heidi Soneson
University of Minnesota



Regional Liaisons

- Karen Horn-Jansen, NY
- Jason Sanderson, DC
- Volunteers Needed:
Houston and Atlanta

WHAT'S NEW: FRANCE

- Biometrics is being introduced at *ALL* consulates in the US starting fall 2009. As a result, all consulates, including Washington, D.C., will require in-person student visa appointments.
- US students studying in France for longer than 90 days are required to complete immigration registration procedures in France. This process requires extended visa processing time at the consulates in the United States, and students should estimate 2-3 weeks to process their visa. Once in France, students must submit the residence form completed during the US visa process, undergo a medical exam, and pay an immigration registration fee.
- Refugees in the US are not being granted visas for stays over 90 days in France because the refugee documents are not valid for the required time period.

**Ismael
Betancourt**

Northern Arizona
University



Regional Liaisons

- Lee Frankel, Boston
- Roseanne Galegher, Chicago
- Maria Delgado-Librero, DC
- Minita Santizo, Houston
- Angela Dittrich, LA
- Jolie Roetter, NY

WHAT'S NEW: SPAIN

- New Orleans Consulate closing at the end of October. All applications will be serviced by the Houston consulate.
- Most consulates require Apostille for some documents if staying over 180 days.
- Institutions may batch process visa applications.
- Consular Liaison openings for Miami and San Francisco still open!!! More information on NAFSA's website.

Diane DeSalvo

Central Michigan
University



Regional Liaisons

- Debbie Miller, Boston
- Diane DeSalvo, Detroit
- Courtney De Vries, Houston
- Suzanne Shane, NY
- Scott Keller, Philadelphia
- Karen Wardzala, DC

WHAT'S NEW: ITALY

- Italian Law requires **ALL** students studying in Italy to have a student visas.
- The law is less clear on students who will be in the country for short "travel study" programs.
- The visas are free of charge.
- Institutions may batch process visa applications.

Batch processing: A process in which the institution collects passport and visa application forms from the students and sends or delivers them to the consulate. If interested in batch processing you should contact your respective consulate to inquire.

Discussion: What do you need from us?

- What other countries consistently need guidance?
- What U.S. government regulations are you concerned about?
- What types of sessions/workshops would you like to see at Annual Conference?
- What challenges are you facing determining your office's visa policy?

5 minute break

Visas: Your Level of Involvement

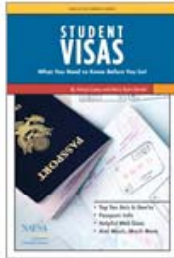
- What is your current level of involvement in the visa process?
- What resources would you provide if you had infinite time and resources?

Visa Education: Your State of Affairs

- How many countries do you work with?
- How many different programs?
- Where is visa information already coming from?

Visa Education – Best Practices

The newest addition in the Education Abroad Series of booklets, *Student Visas, What You Need to Know Before You Go!*



Helps to inform students about the entire student visa process. It provides much-needed information and common sense steps to smooth the visa application process and avoid last minute problems-why they need a student visa, navigating the process, working with the consulate, and the pitfalls to avoid.

Booklet includes top ten do's and don'ts, FAQs, passport info, helpful Web sites, glossary of visa terms, and much more. Available in single copies or packs of 40.

By: Kenya Casey and Mary Ryan Dando, 2008

Visa Education: Your Resources

- What are your current resources?
 - staff
 - financial
 - time
 - other

- What will your future resources be?

Visa Education: Pros & Cons

- What are the benefits and disadvantages of your current involvement?
- What are the benefits and disadvantages of a different level of involvement?
- What assistance is expected? What is necessary?

Visas: Your Plan

- List one to five services that you think (would) benefit your student (and parent, if applicable) population?
- What resources are needed for each?
- How are your resources best employed?

Visa Education - Best Practices



In conclusion, three questions to consider in deciding on a plan:

1. What level of assistance do your students really need?
2. What amount of time and resources does your office have to commit to this task?
3. What are the possible benefits and risks?

ENSURE CLARITY

No matter what...

Student and staff confusion does not further our mission.
Take the time to write down your office's visa policy in your student materials.

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*Both committees will be seeking new volunteers for 2010.
Consider getting involved!*

THANK YOU