

Home office immigration action against education institutions: factsheet

Sponsor suspensions June 2014

Universities and colleges that wish to recruit students from outside the European Economic Area under Tier 4 of the immigration Points Based System must hold a Tier 4 sponsor licence.

On 24 June 2014, the Home Office took action against three universities:

- Glyndwr University (Tier 4 licence suspended);
- University of West London – unable to sponsor new students (assigned zero Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies); and
- University of Bedfordshire - unable to sponsor new students (assigned zero Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies).

We re-instated the Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) allocation for the University of Bedfordshire on 5 August 2014. We have worked closely with the University of Bedfordshire to improve its standards for recruiting international students and will continue to work with the university to ensure these standards are maintained.

In addition, the Home Office has suspended the Tier 4 sponsor licences of a number of private colleges (see below). Most Tier 4 sponsors and international students are not affected by this action.

The immigration concerns

As sponsors that benefit from immigration, universities and colleges must take responsibility for the students they recruit from outside the European Economic Area. They must satisfy themselves that their students:

- are genuine, and
- will meet the UK's immigration requirements

The Home Office has serious concerns about these institutions, and has taken this action while it investigates whether they pose a threat to immigration control.

Action taken against universities and colleges

Glyndwr University has had its licence to sponsor international students suspended. It has been removed from the register of licensed Tier 4 providers while the Home Office conducts further investigations into its ability to fulfil its sponsorship duties. The same action has been taken against a number of private colleges.

University of West London has been prevented from recruiting any further international students or from sponsoring existing students to extend their leave. The

number of Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) it can assign to new students has been set at zero while the Home Office investigates further.

Circumstances under which licences would be revoked

The Home Office is investigating whether these institutions:

- pose a threat to immigration control
- are not fulfilling their sponsorship responsibilities.

The Home Office will discuss its findings with the institutions involved. If the institutions can address the issues identified, the sanctions against them may be lifted.

If they fail to engage with the Home Office or fail to address the concerns raised, further action may be taken.

For those institutions assigned zero CAS, their licence may be suspended. If an institution whose licence has been suspended fails to address the issues raised, their licence may be revoked.

Licence suspension and zero Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies

Suspension removes the institution from the public register of sponsors while further investigations are carried out. They will be notified that their licence will be revoked. If they fail to address concerns raised by the Home Office, and cannot recruit students during this period.

Assigning zero CAS is a lower level of sanction and the institution remains on the register while investigations continue. They will be unable to recruit new students during this period.

How this affects students

Students studying or applying to study at institutions assigned zero Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS):

- **Students who are already studying with their sponsor:**
These students are not immediately affected. Their visa/leave to remain is still valid. They can continue to study and travel to and from the UK as normal, subject to meeting the other immigration requirements.
- **Students who have an outstanding overseas visa application, or application to extend their leave to remain in the UK:**
These students are not immediately affected. Outstanding visa applications relying on a CAS issued before the action was taken will be processed as usual. Existing visas/leave to remain are still valid.

Students studying or applying to study at institutions whose licence is suspended:

- **Students who are already studying with their sponsor:**
These students can continue studying while their sponsor's licence is suspended.
- **Students who have a visa to come to the UK but have not yet travelled:**
These students are strongly advised not to attempt to travel to the UK until the suspension has been resolved. Students should check the register of sponsors for any change in their sponsor's circumstances.
- **Students have an outstanding visa application to come to the UK, or who have been issued with a CAS and intend to apply for a visa:**
Visa applications relying on a CAS that was issued before the sponsor's licence was suspended will be placed on hold. New applications will be accepted but placed on hold.
- **Students with an outstanding application to extend leave to remain the UK, and those who need to make such an application:**
Students can still extend their permission to stay if it is due to expire when the Tier 4 sponsor's licence is suspended, as long as they were issued with a CAS before the licence was suspended. These applications will be placed on hold until the suspension is resolved.
- **Students who are on holiday overseas when their sponsoring institution's licence is suspended:**
Students with a current valid visa will be able to return to the UK and continue studying (subject to satisfactorily meeting all other immigration requirements).
- **Students who choose to leave the UK whilst their sponsoring institution's licence is suspended:**
Students with a current valid visa will be able to return to the UK and continue studying (subject to satisfactorily meeting all other immigration requirements). However, if the sponsoring institution's licence is revoked whilst the student is overseas the student will not be allowed to re-enter the UK as their visa will be cancelled.
- **Students whose sponsor has had its licence suspended and have not yet applied:**
Students in the UK or overseas who are planning to apply to one of the institutions named above but have not yet done so, should check the register of sponsors regularly for any change in the institution's sponsor status or consider an alternative establishment. Prospective students can find an alternative sponsor by applying to another institution.

What support is available for students at an institution that has surrendered its licence or had its licence revoked?

Sponsorship working group

- The Home Office has set up a sponsorship working group with representatives from the education sector, to discuss how to support genuine students. The Home Office will inform the group of any new developments, while working group members will report any issues affecting students. The working group will develop a process to assist genuine students, and ensure this is communicated to students affected.
- The working group are currently developing a process to help students at institutions that have had their sponsor licence revoked or surrendered, to find an alternative sponsor. We will add more detail to this factsheet as it becomes available.
- Members of the sponsorship working group include:
 1. Association of Colleges (AoC)
 2. Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS)
 3. British Council (BC)
 4. English UK
 5. Guild HE
 6. Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)
 7. Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW)
 8. Million+
 9. National Union of Students (NUS)
 10. Russell Group
 11. Scottish Funding Council
 12. Study UK
 13. UCAS
 14. UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA)
 15. Universities UK (UUK)
 16. University Alliance
 17. Welsh Assembly Government

If the Home Office action results in the revocation of an institutions' licence, what will happen to its students?

If the outcome of the Home Office investigation into the institution's actions is that a licence is revoked, the Home Office will publish further information and write to the students affected.

Who can students contact for advice?

Students who are concerned about how this affects them can contact the Home Office on 0114 207 1688 between 9:00am and 5:00pm, Monday to Friday and 9:00am to 1:00pm on Saturday. Further updates will be published on the [GOV.UK website](http://GOV.UK).

For students whose institution has had their licence revoked:

The Home Office has a responsibility to take immediate action where we have reason to believe that a sponsor is no longer fulfilling its obligations. Education providers have a duty to take their immigration responsibilities seriously.

- **Students with applications outstanding:** they will be given a period of time to find a new sponsor and the application is kept on hold
- **Students with leave at the institution:** in most cases they will have their leave curtailed down to 60 days (starting from the date of notification by the Home Office) in which to find a new sponsor
- **Students overseas who have not yet travelled:** will have their visa cancelled. If the student does travel to the UK they will be refused entry.

Students seeking a refund of any fees will need to discuss this with their educational institution; the Home Office cannot become involved in these discussions as it is a contractual issue between an individual and their education provider. If an individual feels that they have been the victim of financial fraud then they should contact the Police or seek legal advice.

Students who are still unclear or concerned about their immigration status, can contact our dedicated support line: **Home Office on 0114 207 1688 (UK) or 0044 114 207 1688 (outside UK) between 9:00am and 5:00pm, Monday to Friday and 9:00am to 1:00pm on Saturday.**

Which private colleges have had their licence suspended on and after 24 June 2014?

1. Alpha College
2. APS Computer Solutions Ltd Trading as Pitman Training Centre Peterborough
3. Birmingham Informatics College
4. Blake Hall College
5. Bradford Regional College
6. Bristol College of Accountancy
7. CAHRO Academy Ltd
8. Central College London (Huawen Institute Division)
9. Central College of Studies (CCS)
10. Central Cranbrook College
11. Citizen 2000 Education Institute
12. City of London Academy
13. College of Advanced Studies

14. College of East London
15. Cranford College
16. Essex College Ltd
17. Finance and Business Training Ltd (FBT)
18. Forbes Graduate School
19. Helios International College
20. IIM Bedford
21. Interlink College of Technology and Business Studies
22. LIT LON Ltd
23. London Academy of Management and Business (LAMB)
24. London College of Business Management and Computing Studies
25. London College of Finance and Accounting
26. London Corporate College
27. London Educators Limited
28. London Empire Academy
29. London Metropolitan College
30. London Premier College Limited
31. London Regal College
32. London School of Advanced Studies
33. London School of Business and Finance (LSBF)
34. London School of Marketing Trading as LS Business School
35. London St. Andrew's College
36. Manchester College of Management Sciences Limited
37. Manchester International College
38. Manchester Trinity College Limited
39. North West College Reading
40. Pharez UK Ltd Trading as Pharez College
41. Radcliffe College
42. Sanjari International College
43. South London College
44. UK Vocational Training College Trading as UK College of Arts and Technology
45. Vernon Community College
46. West George College

As at 21 August 15:00

Which private colleges have had their licence revoked or surrendered on and after 24 June 2014?

1. Alpha Meridian College – Revoked
2. Birmingham Institute of Education Training & Technology – Revoked
3. Bradford College of Management – Surrendered
4. Bradford Metropolitan College – Revoked
5. Britain College – Surrendered
6. College of Excellence Limited – Revoked
7. Eynsford College – Revoked

8. Hammersmith Management College – Revoked
9. Katherine and King's College of London – Revoked
10. Kinnaird College – Revoked
11. London School of Technology – Revoked
12. Midlands Academy of Business and Technology - Revoked
13. Queensbury College – Revoked
14. Shakespeare College – Revoked
15. Stanfords College UK Ltd – Revoked
16. Superior College London – Revoked
17. UK Business Academy – Revoked
18. West London Business College – Revoked

As at 21 August 15:00

This list is subject to change. For the most up to date information on the status of these sponsors, please check the sponsor register on the [GOV.UK website](http://gov.uk).

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