

Subject:	Student Visa Sponsorship
Policy No:	PP-REG-DB-1.1
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Effective Date:	Immediately
Contact:	Registrar

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1.0 Purpose

This document outlines visa processes for undergraduate, postgraduate and LSC students at UOWD and the mandatory health insurance for students.

2.0 Abbreviations

UOWD	University of Wollongong in Dubai
LSC	Language Studies Centre
UAE	United Arab Emirates
LOA	Leave of Absence

3.0 Visa Process

- 3.1 Visa applications can only commence once a student has submitted all relevant forms, paid appropriate fees and an unconditional offer of admission has been issued to commence studies in their nominated program.
- 3.2 The overall responsibility of applying the visa rules lies with the Registrar in consultation with the Administration and Strategy Director. The process is outlined in the Visa Procedure (PP-REG-DB-1.1.1).

4.0 General Visa Requirements

- 4.1 All visa applicants must attend medical examinations as instructed by the Registrar's Department;
- 4.2 all students must be enrolled in the required number of subjects or sessions as per section 4.6 of this policy;
- 4.3 students must adhere to any attendance policy relevant to their program of study;
- 4.4 students failing to abide by clause 4.2 and/or 4.3 will have their visa cancelled and will be required to find alternate sponsorship or leave the country;
- 4.5 all students must be covered by medical insurance, either private or through the UOWD's preferred provider.

4.6 Enrolment Requirements for UOWD Sponsored Students

- 4.6.1 Undergraduate students must be enrolled in a minimum of three (3) subjects in autumn and spring session.
- 4.6.2 Postgraduate students must be enrolled in a minimum of two (2) subjects in autumn and spring session.
- 4.6.3 Higher Degree Research (HDR) students must be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credit points in autumn and spring session.

4.6.4 LSC Students:

4.6.4.1 must be enrolled in a program offered on a full-time basis;

4.6.4.2 must adhere to the attendance policy as outlined in the LSC Attendance policy (PP-SLC-DB-5.1).

5.0 Health Insurance

5.1 All visa sponsored students must have valid medical insurance which is either private or through UOWD's preferred provider;

5.2 Health insurance becomes valid following the medical examination and final stamping of a student's visa.

5.3 Students will be required to renew either their private or UOWD health insurance prior to the expiry date.

6.0 Rejected Visa Applications

6.1 Student visa applications are subject to approval by the UAE's Immigration Department;

6.2 At the discretion of the Registrar, the UOWD may choose not to sponsor a student.

7.0 Visa compliance

7.1 On a regular basis the delegated officer will check students' academic records and class attendance to ensure compliance with this policy;

7.2 Where non-compliance is detected, the student will be contacted by the delegated officer and advised on procedures to comply with the policy or cancel the visa.

8.0 Employment of Sponsored Students

8.1 Immigration laws of the UAE do not permit students on UOWD sponsorship to undertake paid employment in any capacity. The following exception applies:

8.1.1 a student undertaking an internship (unpaid wages) directly related to his / her studies and approved by the Dean of their Faculty.

9.0 Cancellation of Visa

A student's visa will be cancelled in the following circumstances:

9.1 a student wishes to terminate his/her studies prior to the expiry of the visa;

9.2 graduating students' visas will be cancelled following the Graduation committee's confirmation of the students' eligibility to graduate;

9.3 failure to maintain the relevant study load in any given session for the program for which the student is enrolled;

9.4 failure to maintain the attendance requirements as outlined in the Student Attendance Policy(PP-REG-DG-61) or the LSC Attendance policy (PP-LSC-DB-5.1), whichever is applicable;

9.5 a student has outstanding fees or late payment charges as per the Fees Policy (PP-FIN-DB-4.5) or LSC Fees Structure Policy (PP-FIN-DB-4.6);

9.6 a student who fails to meet the minimum rate of progress requirements as per the relevant policy for the program for which they are enrolled;

- 9.7 a student has been expelled or excluded from UOWD for either academic or non-academic reasons;
- 9.8 a student has been convicted of a criminal offence where the UOWD deems expulsion from the University is warranted;
- 9.9 a student is found to be violating the Visa Sponsorship policy and / or not abiding by the UOWD rules and regulations;
- 9.10 a student does not apply for a Leave of Absence before taking a semester off.
- 9.11 a student fails to respond to requests to contact the Visa Officer regarding any issues relating to a student's visa status.
- 9.12 a student visa may be cancelled under any other circumstance (not covered above) that UOWD, at its discretion, deems appropriate.

10.0 Responsibilities of Sponsored Students

- 10.1 Students ensure that their visas are renewed before the visa expiry date;
- 10.2 Students are aware of and adhere to all regulations governing visa sponsorship;
- 10.3 All sponsored students are required to ensure their contact details are up-to-date.

11.0 General Leave of Absence Rules for Visa Sponsored Students

- 11.1 Students who want to take a leave of absence for a period not exceeding one (1) semester and continue sponsorship must complete an Application for Leave of Absence (F-REG-DB-2.1) and submit it to the Registrar's department;
- 11.2 enrol in the semester following the approved leave of absence as per section 4.6 of this policy;
- 11.3 have no outstanding tuition or other related fees.
- 11.4 Undergraduate students must have been enrolled for a period of three (3) consecutive semesters (excluding Summer) prior to applying for leave of absence;
- 11.5 Postgraduate students must have been enrolled for a period of two (2) consecutive semesters (excluding Summer) prior to applying for leave of absence;

11.6 LSC Students

- 11.6.1 Must have completed two (2) consecutive terms (12 weeks), and have a deposit of AED 7000 in their student account.
- 11.6.2 Apply in writing to the LSC Registrar.
- 11.6.3 Leave of absence is limited to one term only (6 weeks).
- 11.6.4 UOWD visa Students who fail to return from their approved leave of absence or take leave without approval for two consecutive terms will forfeit their deposit of AED 7000 as outlined in the LSC Fees Structure Policy (PP-FIN-DB-4.6).

12.0 Students Returning to UAE for Graduation Ceremony

The UOWD will sponsor and organise a tourist visa for students returning to the UAE to attend the Graduation Ceremony. Students will bear the cost of the visit visa for attending the Graduation Ceremony.

13.0 Records and Review

Records pertaining to transactions with the UOWD Public Relation Officer (PRO) and Immigration authorities, regarding the process of visa attainment, are kept and maintained by the Registrar's Department.

This policy will be reviewed no less than once every two (2) years from the date of creation or most recent review.

14.0 Related Documents

Student Visa Sponsorship Procedure	– PP-REG-DB-1.1.1
Fees Policy	– PP-FIN-DB-4.5
Minimum Rate of Progress Policy	– PP-REG-DB-2.6
Enrolment Policy	– PP-REG-DB-7.1
LSC Attendance Policy	– PP-LSC-DB-5.1
LSC Fees Structure Policy	- PP-FIN-DB-4.6
Rules for Student Conduct and Discipline	– PP-COR-DB-6.1
Application for Leave of Absence	- F-REG-DB-2.1

Modification History

Version - No. and Date:	Modification Details:
V4 July 04	Changed from form format to policy format
V5 February 05	Combined REG-1.1 and REG 1.2 / updated staff responsibilities
V6 18 Dec 05	Updated 5.1 from CES to CLC
V7 09 Apr 08	Updated the policy throughout to reflect change in the process.
V8 22 Apr 08	Updated Section 1 of the policy regarding enrolment requirements for undergraduate students to be on university sponsorship. Added a clause in section 2 relating to re-sponsoring of excluded students.
V9 14 Mar 2010	Separated the procedural elements. Revised the leave of absence rules for UOWD sponsored students. Added sections to cover visa compliance, health insurance.
V10 17 Jun 2010	Revised clause 11.6.1.
V11 02 Sep 2013	Revised personnel and department title in line with current organisation structure. Added enrolment requirements for HDR students (clause 4.6.3). Revised clause 11.6.1. Added clause 11.6.4