

LEARNER RELATED POLICY: INTERNATIONAL LEARNER

This policy is bi-annually reviewed to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Director of Business Development	
Date of next review	March 2021

This policy and procedure is subject to The Equality Act 2010 which recognises the following categories of individual as Protected Characteristics: Age, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex (gender), Sexual orientation, Disability, Socio-Economic Disadvantage

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An International Learner is defined as any learner who has been recruited by the International team either from the EU or sponsored by the college under the United Kingdom Visa and Immigration student visa system
- 1.2 Boston College values the positive contribution made by International Learners who add cultural diversity to the general life of the College.
- 1.3 The College seeks to maximise the range of courses offered to international learners and to attract learners from a wide range of countries.
- 1.4 The College recognises that International learners will have specific educational, personal, social and cultural needs and aims to meet these requirements.
- 1.5 Whilst recognising the individual requirements of International learners, they are subject to the general rules, policies and procedures that are in place for all learners. In particular, Boston College will not discriminate against any International Learner on the basis of any protected characteristic or of any other factor e.g. cultural background or language.

2. ENQUIRIES, APPLICATIONS AND THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS

- 2.1 All enquiries and applications from International learners will be handled by the International Office.
- 2.2 The College recognises the importance of a quick response to all enquiries and will attempt to respond by email or telephone within 2 working days.
- 2.3 All applicants will be provided with a specific response to their course request and an appropriate offer made by the International Office.
- 2.4 The International Office will indicate the English level required for any given course and reserve the right to vary a learner's programme/offer if they do not have the required standard on arrival.
- 2.5 All applicants will be provided with standard information on the College, course fees, facilities, accommodation etc.
- 2.6 All learners will be required to pay a deposit before confirmation of acceptance and pay the balance on or before arrival at the College.
- 2.7 In the event of a student not taking up the offer of the place, the deposit will only be refunded where the reason for this is beyond their control e.g. visa refusal. In this situation the college will retain a proportion of the deposit to cover its administrative costs e.g. visa application documents.
- 2.8 The college will consider individual requests for deposits to be repaid on a case by case basis.

3. WORK WITH PARTNERS OVERSEAS

- 3.1 The College recognises the important role that partners overseas play in helping the College to recruit and support international learners.
- 3.2 The College seeks to work with a number of quality partners in a range of different countries to meet its business objectives and to provide the extra link to the parents of learners in their home country.
- 3.3 The College will attend exhibitions, either independently or in association with its partners, to promote the College and all opportunities offered.
- 3.4 Where appropriate, the College will use its partners to promote, recruit and provide all appropriate advice and guidance at all stages of the admissions process, including issuing offers and collecting fees.

4. ARRIVAL, ACCOMMODATION AND INDUCTION

- 4.1 Prior to their arrival at Boston College all new International Learners will be sent a copy of the International Learner Handbook to begin their orientation as a Boston College student.
- 4.2 The College will arrange for all new learners arriving in the UK to be met at the airport and taken to the College. All arrangements for new learners' arrival will be co-ordinated by the International Office.
- 4.3 All international learners are guaranteed accommodation, with a choice in September of Hall of Residence on Campus or Homestay. Choice may be more restricted at certain times.
- 4.4 All learners will have their English level tested within a few days of arrival at the College and given advice, where required, on course options.
- 4.5 All International Learners will participate in two induction programmes, firstly as part of their course and a separate one arranged by the International team.
- 4.6 A 'Welcome' meeting will be arranged in September of each year for all new full time International Learners before teaching starts. All new International Learners are encouraged to attend.

5. ENGLISH PROVISION

- 5.1 All International learners will be required to attend English classes where appropriate as an important part of their College programme.
- 5.2 Learners will be tested shortly after arrival at the College and placed in the appropriate group, based on level and other timetable commitments. Where there is difficulty in placing learners into planned part time groups, the College will arrange alternative slots either during the day or in the early evening.

- 5.3 All learners will be tested / assessed during the year, with the majority entered for IGCSE, English as a second language. Learners in their second year of study will be able to access IELTS provision (SELT or UKVI) to prepare them for applying to continue their studies at a UK university.

6. LEARNER SUPPORT

- 6.1 The International Office, tutors and other key members of staff are responsible for providing International Learners with support and mentoring during the year on a wide range of issues. These issues include: adjusting to life in the UK; progression opportunities within College; applying to University; renewing visas etc.
- 6.2 The College will organise a programme of trips and activities for learners as part of their orientation and enrichment programme.
- 6.3 The College has a designated International Office Manager who will manage Hall of Residence and Homestay accommodation.
- 6.4 International Learners are also supported through the College wide Safe Guarding Policy and are signposted to support services through Learner Services.

7. LEARNER FEEDBACK

- 7.1 The College welcomes and positively encourages International Learner feedback.
- 7.2 Each course area will elect a learner representative and meetings are arranged which allow learners to comment on a range of issues which affect them.
- 7.3 Evaluation questionnaires will be issued to learners every year, allowing them to put their positive and negative comments on paper anonymously.
- 7.4 Flat representatives are appointed to discuss issues in the Hall of Residence.
- 7.5 Focus group meetings are held termly to receive feedback on living and studying at Boston College.
- 7.6 Learner surveys and Parent (for students under the age of 18) surveys take place each year to evaluate our provision.

8. ATTENDANCE

- 8.1 All International Learner attendance is monitored and staff in the International Office will encourage and support regular attendance at class.
- 8.2 Staff in the International Office will work with curriculum and other College staff to support individual International Learners to ensure that they have a positive experience of studying at Boston College and to achieve their full potential.
- 8.3 The attendance and activities of International Learners who hold Short Term Study visas or visas granted under the Tier 4 points Based System will be monitored closely to ensure they comply with any conditions of their visa.

9. UKVI COMPLIANCE

- 9.1 Boston College will comply with its obligations to report missed contacts/absences to UKVI in accordance with current legislation.
- 9.2 Boston College will comply with all obligations to meet the requirements of its status as a Tier 4 Sponsor. Guidance on compliance is provided by contacting UKVI.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

1. What is the name of the policy?

Learner Related: International Learner

2. What is the aim of the policy?

To provide guidance on the international learner journey, requirements and expectations.

3. Who does the policy impact on? (Staff, learners, partners etc.)

Staff, learners, parents, internal and external partners.

4. Who implements the policy?

Business Development Directorate, International Team

5. What information is currently available on the impact of this policy?

(This could include data that is routinely collected for this policy and/or minutes from management or team meetings. It could also include conversations with students and/or staff who have used this policy in their day to day role).

International meetings, feedback from internal and external partners, feedback from learners, feedback from Homestay providers, feedback from parents.

6. Do you need more information before you can make an assessment about this policy?

(If yes, please put down what information you need and identify in the action plan, how you intend to collect it)

No.

7. Do you have any examples that show this policy is having a positive impact on any of the equality characteristics shown in Table.1?

Accommodation is arranged with sensitivity to learners' individual requirements (for example, arranging for single sex flat sharing when requested by learner and/or parent). Learner Services and Curriculum are informed at the application stage of any learners who may require support. All International learners have English lesson embedded in their programme and can also access extra support sessions on top of this.

8. Are there any concerns that this policy could have a negative impact on any of the equality characteristics shown in Table.1?

Table. 1

Category	No	Yes	Please supply any additional comments
Race	x		
Disability	x		
Gender	x		
Gender re-assignment	x		
Age	x		
Sexual orientation	x		
Religion/belief	x		
Pregnancy/maternity	x		
Marriage/Civil Partnership	x		
Socio-economic	x		
Rurality	x		

Actions are to be taken as a result of the Equality Impact Assessment			
Action Required <i>(clearly state where within existing management structures these actions will be performance monitored)</i>	Person responsible	Comp date	Review details - impact and outcome
Signed: Paul Collins	Position: Director of Business Development	Date: 19th March 2019	