

International School of Creative Arts

International Student Safeguarding Policy

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1. Purpose and Scope

This policy outlines ISCA's commitment to safeguarding international students throughout the recruitment process, visa sponsorship, and their time in the UK. It ensures compliance with UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) requirements and promotes the welfare of students aged 15–19 under the Student or Child Student visa routes.

2. Legal and Regulatory Framework

ISCA operates in accordance with:

- UKVI Student Sponsor Guidance
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students (AEGIS) standards

3. International Student Recruitment

3.1 Due Diligence

ISCA conducts thorough checks to verify the authenticity of applicants' identity, academic records, English language proficiency, financial means and source of funds. This includes:

- Interviewing all applicants
- Reviewing their art and design portfolio
- Verifying academic qualifications
- Assessing English language proficiency as per UKVI requirements
- Ensuring financial capacity to cover tuition and living expenses
- Checking the ID of parents and their relationship to the applicant
- Checking parents are not on the UK sanctions list
- Only allowing fee payment from the bank account of the applicant or of their parents

3.2 Agent Management

3.2.1. Agent Selection and Approval

- Agents must complete an application form and submit references.
- Agents are approved only after due diligence checks (e.g., background, track record, country-specific compliance concerns).

3.2.2. Terms of Agreement

- All agents must sign a formal agreement outlining:
 - ✓ Expected standards of conduct
 - ✓ Zero tolerance for misrepresentation or unethical practices

3.2.3. Training and Information

- The school provides annual updates to agents.
- Agents are supplied with current admissions criteria, safeguarding policies, updates to the code of conduct and visa guidance.

3.2.4. Ongoing Monitoring

- Student application, visa refusal, and enrolment rates are tracked.
- Any complaints or concerns raised by students or families are reviewed and followed up.
- Underperforming agents may be suspended or removed.

3.2.5. Compliance Reporting

- The school maintains an up-to-date list of all active agents.
- Agent use is recorded in the Sponsorship Management System (SMS) as required.

4. Issuing Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS)

As a licensed Student sponsor, ISCA issues CAS to eligible international students after:

- Confirming the offer of a place
- Verifying academic and financial documentation
- Ensuring the student meets English language requirements
- Securing payment of the deposit and fees for at least the first two terms
- Receiving consent letter from parents for applicant to travel to the UK and study at ISCA
- Receiving a letter of undertaking from the applicant's guardian
- Receiving a copy of the applicant's TB test (if needed)

ISCA maintains accurate records and reports any changes to UKVI as required.

5. Care Arrangements for International Students

ISCA is committed to ensuring that all international students, particularly those under the age of 18, have appropriate care arrangements in place, in compliance with the latest UKVI regulations effective from May 29, 2025.

5.1 Nominated Guardians

UKVI formally defines a "nominated guardian" as an individual appointed by the student's parent or legal guardian. A Letter of Undertaking must be provided, confirming the guardian's responsibilities as defined by UKVI. ISCA requires that all nominated guardians:

- Are nominated by the parents
- Are over 25 years of age
- Reside in the UK and are easily accessible to the student
- Provide a Letter of Undertaking detailing their responsibilities and contact information
- Declare that neither they nor any adult members of their household:

- ✓ have ever been convicted of a criminal offence in the UK or overseas with a custodial sentence of 12 months or more; or
- ✓ are a persistent offender showing disregard for the law; or
- ✓ have ever committed offences that caused serious harm.

ISCA maintains a list of approved guardians and works with AEGIS-accredited organizations to ensure high standards.

5.2 Private Foster Care Arrangements

For students under 16 (or under 18 if disabled) living with a private foster carer, ISCA ensures:

- Local authority notification in compliance with the Children (Private Arrangements for Fostering) Regulations 2005
- Parental confirmation of arrangements
- Receipt of confirmation from the local authority

5.3 Boarding and Holiday Care

ISCA provides full boarding facilities with trained staff. Students may:

- Stay with parents during UK visits
- Return home during holidays
- Take part in school-organised excursions and trips with parental consent
- Remain at school during holidays in exceptional circumstances, if facilities allow

Additional care arrangements may not be needed if travel is direct and the school remains the emergency contact.

5.4 Occasional Weekend Leave

For occasional weekends away (e.g. exeat weekends), the following must be in place:

- Written consent for each instance from parents or nominated guardian
- Stay with a nominated guardian, relative, or school-approved host
- Verified travel arrangements
- Emergency contact availability

ISCA records all weekend leave requests and monitors compliance.

5.5 Monitoring and Compliance

ISCA is responsible for:

- Maintaining records of care arrangements
- Ensuring compliance with UKVI and safeguarding requirements
- Reporting changes in arrangements to UKVI
- Conducting regular risk assessments

6. Pre-Arrival Safeguarding Measures

Before arrival, ISCA provides:

- Information on policies and expectations

- Accommodation and pastoral care details
- Contact information for key staff

For all students, including those over the age of 17, ISCA ensures guardianship has been arranged by parents, ideally with AEGIS-accredited providers.

7. Onboarding and Induction

Upon arrival, students undergo induction covering:

- School rules and conduct
- Safeguarding and welfare
- Health and safety
- Academic expectations

8. Accommodation and Welfare

ISCA provides full board and lodging in secure boarding facilities with trained staff.

9. Monitoring and Reporting

ISCA monitors attendance and academic progress. Welfare concerns are addressed promptly and referred as needed. Changes in circumstances are reported to UKVI.

10. Staff Training

All staff receive training in safeguarding, Prevent duty, and supporting international students. Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) receive advanced training.

11. Review and Continuous Improvement

This policy is reviewed annually. Feedback from students, parents, and staff informs improvements.