



Readiness Interview Guidance for Students

AUGUST 2024



How to Use this Document?

- Read through each section of the guide carefully **before** you attend your Readiness Interviews.
- Use the **sample questions** from **page 6** and **'Common Reasons for Refusal at Interview'** on **page 7** - to research and prepare effectively for your interviews.
- Contact us if you have any questions – our contact details are included on the final page of the document.

Content

This document provides guidance on both Study Group readiness interviews and UK Visas and Immigration [UKVI] credibility interviews for prospective students, agents and internal Study Group staff. It will provide the following information:

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What is a UKVI credibility interview?

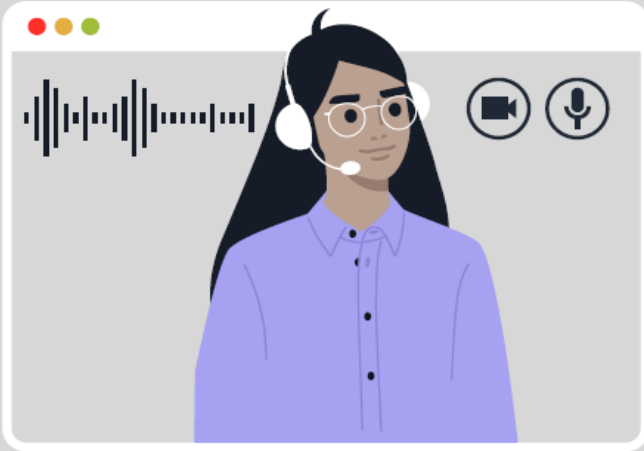
- As part of your student visa application, you are required to attend a **credibility interview** to ensure that you comply with the UK's Immigration Rules.
- The purpose of a credibility interview is for the Entry Clearance Officer (ECO) to establish whether or not you are a genuine student. In order to assess this, you may be asked questions about your **study plan, future career plans and study and immigration history**.
- If you are a Student visa applicant and an overseas national not listed on the [UK Government list of low-risk nationals](#), you are **highly likely to be interviewed**.
- In order to be eligible to apply for a Student visa, you must first have received a CAS from a licenced education provider in the UK and provided financial statements which prove that you have the funds to cover the course and your living costs. If your documents are approved by the UKVI, you will then be required to attend a credibility interview.
- Further information regarding students who require a credibility interview can be found at <http://www.gov.uk/student-visa>



How will the UKVI credibility interview be conducted?

- The interview will be conducted in **English**.
- Your **UKVI** interview will be conducted either via a **video interview**, **telephone** or **in person** at the Visa Application Centre. If you are invited for an interview in the UK, this will usually be conducted via Skype with a member of staff from UKVI.
- You should usually receive an **email** asking you to attend an interview, so make sure to check your email (including the 'spam' folder) regularly.
- The interviewer will type your answers during the interview.
- If you feel unwell and you think this may affect your performance in the interview, you should inform the interviewer of this. Also, if the network connection is poor and this affects your ability to hear the interviewer, you should let the interviewer know of this immediately.





What do I need to know for Study Group interviews and UKVI credibility interviews?

- At the start of the credibility interview, we expect you to be asked:
 - how much your course will **cost**
 - your **course start date** and **end date**
 - the **name** of your **pathway programme**
 - what **qualification** you will gain once you complete your course
- Your answers for the remainder of the interview will need to demonstrate that you have **conducted detailed research into your UK education**. You should be able to back up all of your responses, including opinions, with objective facts found through research.
- We also expect some of the following areas to be covered throughout the interview:
 1. Why you chose to study at this institution
 2. Why you chose to study in the UK
 3. Why you chose to study this course
 4. Your previous education and any study gaps
 5. How you will fund your studies
 6. Your previous Visa applications

English Language Requirements

- The interviewer will expect your English language level to be at the **level stated on your CAS letter**.
- You will be **refused a visa if you are unable to communicate your points clearly** to the interviewer without using an interpreter. You will be **considered unsuitable for UK study** if it is necessary for you to accept the services of an interpreter.

Sample Questions

Why did you choose to study at this institution?

- Why did you choose this university over other universities?
- What specific requirements did you have in mind when making your choice?
- What facilities and services does the institution provide that attracted you to studying there?

Can you talk about your previous education and any study gaps?

- Is there any link between your previous studies and your desired course? What did you learn that will help you?
- Do you have any study gaps?
- Have you had any work experience?
- What skills can you bring from your experience to help with your new course?
- If you're not currently working, can you explain what you do with your time?

Why have you chosen to study in the UK?

- There are many countries which offer a high standard of education all around the world, so why choose the UK?
- Why did you choose to study abroad rather than in your home country?
- Did you consider any other destinations? Why did you not choose these other destinations?

How will you fund your studies?

- How do you intend to fund the full duration of your studies?
- Who is sponsoring you?
- Will you be bringing any dependents?

NOTE: You will be expected to know your sponsors salary and any savings you have (for your education) in your local currency.

Why did you choose to study this course?

- What makes this course stand out from the rest?
- What makes this course better suited to you than other courses?
- Why are you interested in this subject?
- Which modules are you most excited for and why?
- Why did you choose this pathway programme rather than applying directly to university?

Previous Visa Applications

- Have you ever previously made a visa application to the UK or any other country, and was this visa refused? If so, please be prepared to give the key details for the refusal.

	<i>Do</i>		<i>Don't</i>
✓	Check your emails for any correspondence from the UKVI	X	Forget to check your spam folder so that you don't miss any emails
✓	Answer all of the questions honestly and comprehensively - failure to answer all of the questions may result in a visa refusal	X	Be evasive when answering the questions as this may damage your credibility
✓	Ask the interviewer to repeat the question if you do not hear/understand	X	Make up information – any fact you give will be checked by the ECO
✓	Make sure you answer the question before elaborating on your answer	X	Answer any questions with just “yes” or “no”
✓	Remind yourself of your research in detail so that you are prepared for the interview	X	Recite set answers. They may not be relevant to the questions you are asked during interview
✓	Use language you understand and explain, e.g. if you choose your institution because it is a Russell Group university, you need to be able to explain what this means and why it was important when making your final decision.	X	Use phrases that you do not understand from the institution's website
✓	Speak naturally	X	Take notes into the interview with you / read from notes

Top tips:

- ✓ **Always answer in your own words** – try to provide specific and personal information.
- ✓ **Always be honest**, you cannot re-apply for 10 years if you are rejected for deception.
- ✓ The interviewer won't see your personal statement or any other documents you have submitted, so make sure to **explain everything clearly**.
- ✓ English language is checked in the interview, remember to remain **calm** and **confident**.

Common Reasons for Refusal at Interview

From previous credibility visa refusals we have seen, common reasons that interviewers give for refusing a student's visa at interview include:

- × Providing **limited reasons for choosing your institution** and providing reasons that also **apply to many other institutions**.
- × Demonstrating a **limited understanding of your future plan** and what this would involve.
- × Providing a **limited explanation** for how the **course** will help you **to achieve your future career plan**.
- × Not providing strong, logical reasons for why you are **returning to study after a gap in your studies** (if applicable).
- × Being unable to demonstrate that you have **sufficient funds** to cover the **full duration of your UK studies**.
- × Students who come to the interview with **pre-rehearsed answers** and are then **unable to answer follow-up questions** regarding their answers.

What do I do if I receive a visa refusal?

If you do not fulfil the criteria in the credibility interview as per the UKVI's Immigration Rules, your Student Visa application will be refused.

If you receive a visa refusal, you have 28 days from the date on the Refusal Letter, to submit an Administrative Review to the UKVI and contest the decision made by the ECO. This requires you to respond in writing to each of the points raised in the refusal and you must submit your Admin Review from outside the UK.

www.gov.uk/ask-for-a-visa-administrative-review

If your credibility visa interview is refused, please contact Study Group as soon as possible.

We will assist you to submit an administrative review if we believe you have valid grounds to challenge the Entry Clearance Officer's decision.



Useful links

Please see the links below for more information on Student or Child student visas, depending on your application:

<http://www.gov.uk/student-visa>

<http://www.gov.uk/child-study-visa>

Contact Details

If you have any questions about the Study Group readiness Interviews, please email:

studentvisainterviews@studygroup.com

If you have any general queries about UK and Europe visas, or about Student and Child student visas, please contact us at:

VisaQuestions@studygroup.com