

Guidelines for Lawrence Academic Travel to the United Kingdom

Overview: To protect our T4 visa sponsor status for the London Centre, any faculty-led academic travel to London or other parts of the United Kingdom, such as for a field experience or December Term course, must not involve London Centre facilities or staff and must not be characterized as study abroad. This document provides information and guidelines for such travel.

Background: Lawrence University holds an immigration sponsorship license with the U.K. Home Office for our London Centre program. Because of our standing in U.K. immigration processes, Lawrence needs to set clear guidelines and roles for any academic work conducted in the U.K. As part of our responsibilities as a Tier 4 visa sponsor, the London Centre Resident Director needs to adhere to strict immigration policy guidance for London Centre students and to be prepared for unannounced immigration inspection visits. While short-term faculty-led travel to the U.K. is separate from the London Centre program, Lawrence has some institutional compliance responsibilities within the U.K., so there are implications for how short-term travel might impact the LU London Centre.

Guidelines: If you plan to lead student travel to the U.K., it is important to note the ways in which the London Centre is limited in its ability to assist with such travel:

1. The London Centre Resident Director must have oversight of any academic work falling under the London Centre program, and it must be clear that the program and director are not involved with Lawrence travel that is not part of the program. *The London Centre Director cannot advise or assist with planning or make purchases or bookings to the program's accounts on behalf of academic travel not taking place as part of the London Centre program.*
2. The London Centre Resident Director and the Off-Campus Programs office provide information to students regarding U.K. immigration processes only for students participating in the London Centre program. Students who are visa nationals of the U.K. need to apply in advance of travel to be allowed entry to the U.K., and students participating in short-term travel fall into immigration categories different from those for London Centre students. *The Off-Campus Programs office cannot provide visa documentation for students who will be in the U.K. on short-term courses which are not part of the London Centre program.*
3. It is essential that students participating in short-term faculty-led travel to the U.K. not claim to be participating in a study abroad program through Lawrence University. *In any immigration documentation provided to students, in any student application for a U.K. visa for short-term travel, and in any communication with immigration officials at the point of entry, it should be clear that students are taking a short course led by a faculty member from their home institution and not participating in a study abroad program.*

Suggestions: While the London Centre is not able to have an advisory role in travel outside of the program, the following information may help faculty planning short-term academic travel to the U.K.:

- While the organization Lawrence partners with for our London Centre program does not provide short lets for classroom or housing, we do know of organizations who provide this type of service in London. You may want to contact one or more of the following as you explore options: *Nido Student, International Students House (ISH), Anglo Educational Services, Accent*

International, Acorn, and Unite Students. The London Centre does not endorse any of these organizations and is not able to assist you in working with them.

- For immigration purposes, it is important that faculty or students traveling to the U.K. not connect through the Republic of Ireland. The U.K. currently has a Common Travel Area with Ireland, which means that connecting flights from Ireland to the U.K. do not have passport control. Anyone arriving in the U.K. from Ireland with a visa requiring prior entry clearance (a visa applied for in advance of travel) would not have the proper visa endorsement.
- Be aware that the U.K. places limitations on volunteering or voluntary work for some immigration categories. Seek more information if volunteer activity is part of your course plan.