Credibility interviews – applications made in the UK
(Updated in Sep 2016)

What is a credibility interview?
A credibility interview is something UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI) has introduced to try and make sure that only genuine students are studying in the UK. At City, we know that our students are genuine, but unfortunately you might be asked to attend an interview and answer some questions, to help UKVI understand your motivations for studying in the UK.

What is the purpose of the interview?
The interview is to check that you are a genuine student. Questions may be asked about your background and immigration history; about your previous education; about the studies you are planning to undertake in the UK; and/or about your financial circumstances.

Will I have to attend an interview?
From 6 April 2014, students from any country applying for a Tier 4(General) visa either overseas or in the UK can be asked to attend an interview. It is important that you attend any interview you are requested to attend by the Home Office. If you don’t attend, your visa application will be refused.

What I have to do before attending an interview?
You need to complete the Interview Reply Form and Declaration sent to you in the post by the Home Office and email it to the Home Office at tminterviewhub@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk before the deadline as stated on the Home Office’s covering letter. Please remember to bring the original signed forms to your interview.

How will the interview be conducted?
The interview will take place at a VAC as stated on the Home Office’s covering letter. The interview will be conducted in English and therefore your ability to communicate in English will be tested.

For most students the interview will be 30 minutes long and it will be conducted via video link with a Home Office member of staff in Sheffield in the UK. The report of the interview will then be sent to the visa officer who will consider it alongside your visa application and supporting documents.
What kinds of questions will the Home Office ask me at my interview?

This will depend on your individual circumstances. The main areas you are likely to be asked questions about are explained in more detail below. We know that it might be frustrating, or make you a little anxious, but it's important that you remain calm and answer any questions honestly. Take time to think about your answers, if you need to. You will need to speak in English, so try not to ask for an interpreter unless you really can't understand the questions you are being asked. We are confident that you are a genuine student and we have already assessed your English to be at a high standard, so try not to worry too much during the interview.

Topics you might be asked to discuss:

| Your previous immigration history | • They might ask you about any previous UK visas you have had  
|                                 | • They might also want to know whether you have ever breached any of the conditions of your UK visas  
|                                 | • They could ask you about visas you have had for other countries around the world |
| Your previous study history, current study and post study plans | • If there is a long gap between your new course and any previous studying you have done, you might be asked to explain why there has been a break  
|                                                               | • You could be asked information about your new course and why you chose to study at City  
|                                                               | • They might want to know what you plan to do after your studies, including where you might like to work |
| Your finances | • The Home Office might ask you where you have received your money from, for example from your parents or a sponsor  
|                                                        | • They could ask you about your family’s financial situation at home |

The interviewer will also be checking your ability to speak English. If you cannot hear them because there is a technical problem (e.g. via the video link), you should ensure that you mention this so that interviewer is aware that it is a technical issue and not one of comprehension.

We recommend the following to help you prepare for your interview:

• Make sure you read about your course and about City University in case you are asked details about your course.
- Be prepared to explain your source of funding, so if you have worked and saved money to study in the UK, you might want to make sure you explain that to UKVI. If your family are helping you to fund your studies, you will need to tell UKVI this if they ask you about it.
- Consider what you might want to do after you finish studying. For many of you, you will know what type of job you want to do after you graduate, be prepared to explain this if you are asked about it.
- Be calm and honest. We know you are a genuine student, and we know it is stressful being asked lots of intrusive questions but you must tell the truth.

Feedback

Following your interview we would welcome any useful feedback about the experience in order to assist other students. Please email us at visaadvice@city.ac.uk with ‘Credibility Interview Feedback’ in the subject title.