

UKVI Visa Counter-Fraud Campaign 2024

Global Communications Pack

Background

Fraud, tricks and scams are common ways in which criminals operate to take advantage of UKVI customers. More and more of these types of criminal activities are coming to light following the lifting of global travel restrictions and the demand of travel to the UK.

This is why, UKVI has decided to refresh their annual visa counter-fraud campaign to enable you, a valued partner, to communicate the risk of fraud amongst your local audience.

Now, is a great time to promote our counter-fraud campaign, just as the peak summer student and tourism seasons begin. We know through data that students wishing to study in the UK are likely targets of scamming tactics as well as those that choose to apply to work in the UK or wish to visit.

This communication asset package is a collection of communication products which can be used to help engage with your stakeholders and customers and to raise awareness.

The assets can be downloaded via the .zip file attached to this email. You are free to share these assets externally.

Communications Objectives

- 1) Reiterate correct visa policy, processes and best practice to customers and partners.
- 2) Raise awareness of common fraud, tricks and scams targeting visa applicants and empower customers to identify and report this behaviour.
- 3) Encourage customers and partners to engage with GOV.UK on fraud awareness guidance.

Context + key messages

1. Examples of common scams

UKVI is aware of the following scams that people fall victim to:

- Websites which offer jobs in the UK that do not exist
- A person pretending to be an officer from the Home Office or from a visa application centre
- People who target applicants for UK work or study visas
- Agents claiming to work for the Home Office or visa application centres
- Fake government websites
- Fake email addresses

Examples of communication messages

“We will never ask for payment by email, at a visa application centre or into a personal bank account. All associated costs such as visa fees of premium services should be paid online on the official GOV.UK and commercial partners websites”

“Remember official Home Office email addresses are always in this format: @homeoffice.gov.uk. If you notice anything different, it's likely a scam!”

“Official UK government websites always have ‘.gov.uk’ at the end of their website address, e.g. www.gov.uk/apply-to-come-to-the-uk. This is where you can find all official visa guidance and where you will start your visa application. If you notice anything different, it's likely a scam!”

For additional information on key messages please visit:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/frauds-tricks-and-scams/fraud-tricks-and-scams

2. How fraudsters may contact you

We know that criminals are:

- telephoning people in the UK and other countries
- using websites to offer fake services, work or study in the UK and guaranteed visas to enter the UK
- using email addresses or SMS numbers which look official but are not

Examples of communication messages

“Fraudsters often use third-party websites to offer fake services, work or study in the UK. Don’t fall for fraud, remain vigilant!”

“Scammers use tricks such as using email addresses that look official but are not. If you notice this, report it and stay safe.”

#DoNotFallForFraud

For additional information on key messages please visit:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/frauds-tricks-and-scams/fraud-tricks-and-scams

3. Tricks they use

Criminals try to make you believe that they can offer you something very easily, such as a visa for the UK, or that there is a problem with your application or visa which only they can correct.

They will try to make themselves seem very genuine and may use language that sounds official or false documents such as a job offer letter which looks real. They may already seem to know something about you, such as your name and address, or that you have applied for a visa. Then they ask you for money or for your personal information.

Examples of communication messages

“If it looks too good to be true, the likely chance is that it’s not what it seems! Remain vigilant and report fraud to your local authorities if you see it.

#DoNotFallForFraud

For additional information on key messages please visit:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/frauds-tricks-and-scams/fraud-tricks-and-scams

4. Ensuring customer safety

We recommend customers always do their own research and be suspicious if:

- they receive a guaranteed visa offer to work or study in the UK if you pay a third-party.
- the offer guarantees quicker and easier entry into the UK compared to official visa offer.
- an agent provides them with the documents guaranteed to meet the visa requirements (bank statements, transcripts)
- anyone other than a genuine UKVI official asks for money or personal details.

Top tips:

- ✓ Is your job or study offer real?
- ✓ Does the company offering you a job offer exist?
- ✓ Are there spelling mistakes on the offer letter or website?
- ✓ Is the offer too good to be true?
- ✓ Have you checked GOV.UK's official guidance page for common fraud, tricks and scams?

For additional information on key messages please visit:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/frauds-tricks-and-scams/fraud-tricks-and-scams>

4. How to protect yourself

You should be suspicious if:

- What they offer seems too good to be true such as an easy job in the UK, or a way to get a UK visa quickly and easily.
- You are guaranteed a visa to enter the UK using documents they provide to support your application
- They ask you for money, particularly if they ask you for cash or to pay using insecure payment methods.
- They ask for your bank account or credit card details, or confidential information
- They demand secrecy or try to force you to act immediately
- The website does not look professional
- You are asked to reply to a free email account such as Gmail or Hotmail.
- **If you are suspicious, do not give out any personal information, do not pay them any money and do not pay them using electronic vouchers.**

Examples of communication messages

“Remain suspicious if someone offers you to pay using insecure payment methods which do not allow the recipient to be traced.”

“If you are suspicious of visa fraud then make sure you do not give out any personal information, do not pay them any money and do not pay them using electronic vouchers”

“Remain suspicious if you notice poor grammar and spelling from someone guaranteeing you a visa to enter the UK!”

For additional information on key messages please visit:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/frauds-tricks-and-scams/fraud-tricks-and-scams

5. Report any instances of fraud

As customers become more aware of the type of scams which may disrupt the normal application process this will help avoid pitfalls and remove the need to report anything more formally.

Customers can also help stop scammers by sharing this information with classmates, colleagues, friends and family,

For those outside the UK who feel like they may have been a victim of fraud they are encourage to contact and report this to the relevant local authority in their particular country.

For customers already in the UK report any suspicions or incidents to Action Fraud, either on the [Action Fraud](#) website or (only if you are in the UK) by phoning 0300 123 2040.

Action fraud provides a fraud-reporting and advice centre, where people and small business can report fraud, attempted fraud and scam emails.

Examples of communication messages

“Have you been a victim of visa fraud or attempted fraud? Please report it to your local authority. If you’re in the UK you can report it to Action Fraud via www.actionfraud.police.uk”

“While in the UK you also can report examples of visa fraud by phoning 0300 123 2040”

“Help to stop visa scammers by warning your friends and family, and report to the relevant authority”

For additional information on key messages please visit:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/frauds-tricks-and-scams/fraud-tricks-and-scams

Our Ask

The Brief

We've produced assets and accompanying post copy for you to **use organically on your official Embassy / High Commission social media channels** to help communicate and raise awareness of common Visa Fraud, Scams and Tricks.

Content on the following slides are **intended to be used prior and during the summer student peak period between the months of April and August**. These posts can also be published during other periods of high visa application submissions such as during global holidays such as Lunar New Year (**February**), Eid (**April & June**), Diwali (**November**), Easter (**March**), Christmas and New Year (**December**).

You are welcome to **translate the post copy** into local languages and **use the hashtag #DoNotFallForFraud** to allow us to better track and analyse the effectiveness of our campaigns. Furthermore, you may also replace the text on the assets to match your audience's local language. **Please refrain from modifying the font, colour scheme and aesthetic as this must adhere to the Safe & Legal Brand Guidelines.**

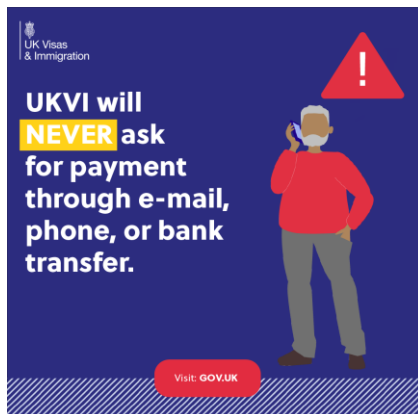
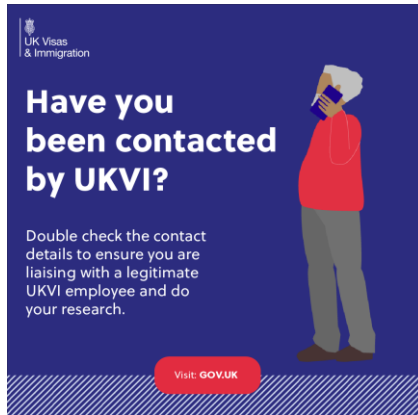
We also encourage you to **amplify our counter-fraud posts** from our [@UKVI Twitter/X](https://twitter.com/UKVI) channel by resharing it onto yours to help increase our engagement amongst your audience, e.g.

<https://twitter.com/UKVIgovuk/status/1780532035028750623>



Suggested social media post copy

April to July / run-up to global holidays



Post 1

Scammers use tricks such as asking you for personal information through social media to 'help' you with your visa application. Remember, @UKVIgovuk will never contact you through social media for any reason #DoNotFallForFraud + 'Fraud campaign – post 1' PNG image

Post 2

(1/2) Fraudsters will tell you to send money as soon as possible using different methods of payment. UKVI will never ask for payment by email, at a visa application centre or into a personal bank account.
(2/2) All associated costs such as visa fees or premium services should be paid online on official GOV.UK and commercial partner websites. #DoNotFallForFraud + 'Fraud campaign – post 2' PNG image

Post 3

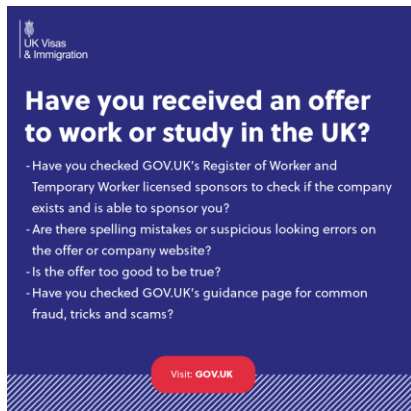
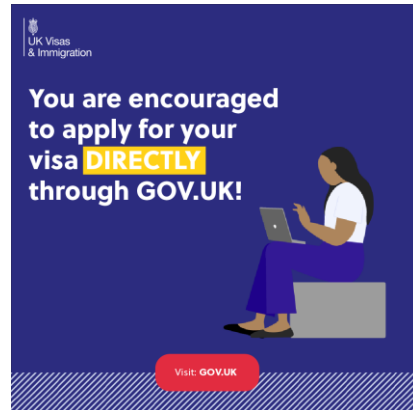
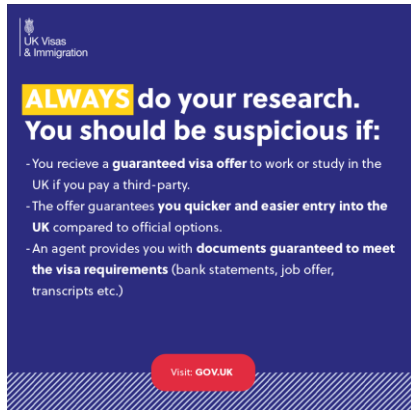
Fake agents may claim they can speed up the UK visa process or may ask for payment into a personal bank account. If you need to use a third-party to help complete your visa application make sure they are genuine and do your research. #DoNotFallForFraud + 'Fraud campaign – post 3' PNG image

Post 4

Scammers will use impersonation tactics to claim they work for UKVI. They do this to coerce you into giving them your personal information. If you notice this you should report it. #DoNotFallForFraud + 'Fraud campaign – post 4' PNG image

Suggested social media post copy

April to July / run-up to global holidays



Post 5

If you are suspicious of any of the listed items, then we encourage you to always do your research to protect yourself from fraud. #DoNotFallForFraud + 'Fraud campaign – post 5' PNG image

Post 6

When viewing your offer to work or study in the UK, you should check if it's real. Please visit www.gov.uk/government/publications/frauds-tricks-and-scams/fraud-tricks-and-scams to read up on the common tricks that fraudsters will use against you. #DoNotFallForFraud + 'Fraud campaign – post 6' PNG image

Post 7

We encourage that you apply for your visa directly through GOV.UK rather than through a third-party. This can put you at risk of being scammed. If you notice this, please remain vigilant! #DoNotFallForFraud + 'Fraud campaign – post 7' PNG image

Post 8

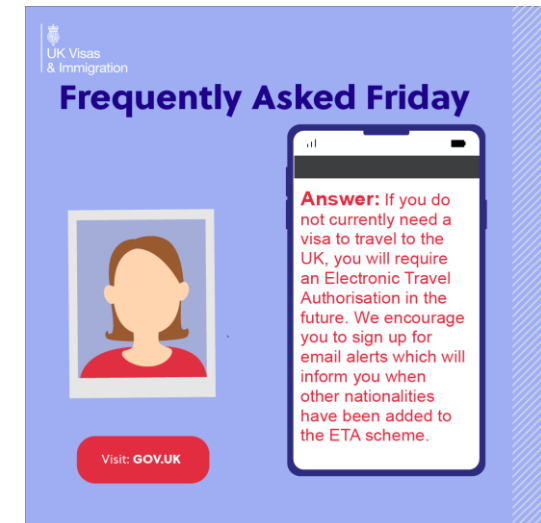
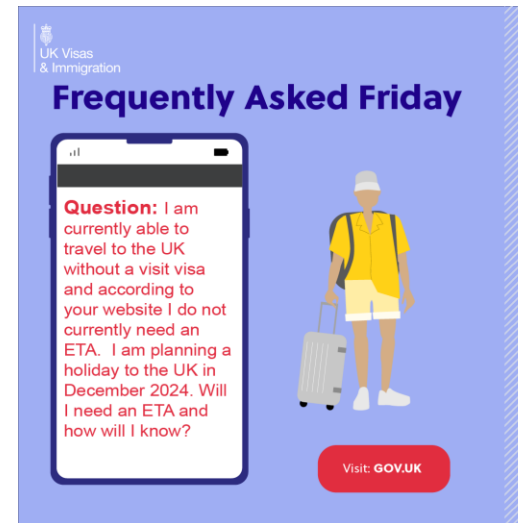
Be careful if you are contacted by telephone or email by someone claiming to be a UKVI employee. Double check the contact details to ensure you are liaising with a legitimate UKVI employee. #DoNotFallForFraud + 'Fraud campaign – post 8' PNG image

Frequently Asked Fridays

The UKVI Twitter/X channel hosts a weekly poll on Fridays to test the knowledge and awareness on the topic of visas. Alongside the campaign, we will implement some questions and answers to test customer knowledge of fraud, tricks and scams.

From the results of these polls, we will be able to analyse how well the campaign material is performing in terms of conveying our counter-fraud message and how vigilant customers are when coming to face with suspicious and fraudulent activity.

You are free to share these posts on your X/Twitter channels for further reach and awareness. The polls can be designed to start polling on Friday and end polling on Monday allowing customers to engage during the weekend.



Online Guidance

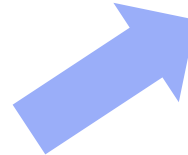
For all the latest guidance on fraud, tricks and scams we recommend directing your audience to our main guidance page on gov.uk:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/frauds-tricks-and-scams/fraud-tricks-and-scams

For those already in the UK you can also find further advice, including how to report, via the following websites:

- Action Fraud: www.actionfraud.police.uk
- National Fraud Intelligence Bureau: www.cityoflondon.police.uk/advice-and-support/fraud-and-economic-crime/nfib/Pages/default.aspx

Customers in the UK can also phone 0300 123 2040



GOV.UK

Home > Entering and staying in the UK > Fraud, tricks and scams

UK Visas and Immigration

Guidance

Fraud, tricks and scams: guidance

Updated 28 May 2021

Contents

1. How the fraudsters may contact you
2. Tricks they use
3. We know about the following scams
4. How to protect yourself
5. Report any suspicions of fraud

Print this page

This page gives you advice on protecting yourself from tricks and scams the Home Office is aware of.

If you receive an unexpected email, telephone call or letter from someone who claims to be from the Home Office, it may be a scam. We will never contact you to ask for money or your personal details.

1. How the fraudsters may contact you

We know that criminals are:

- telephoning people in the UK and other countries
- using websites to offer fake services, work or study in the UK and guaranteed visas to enter the UK
- using email addresses or SMS numbers that look official but are not

Thank you