

News Release

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Visitor Visa study 'a sensible move', says English UK

The Home Office has today published changes to the visa rules which will allow people coming to the UK on tourist or business visas to study for up to 6 weeks on their six-month UK visa.

Visitors will be able to use the study allowance flexibly, either doing a six week course in a single block or in weekly sessions, but may only take courses at centres accredited by approved bodies, such as Accreditation UK for the English language sector.

English UK Chief Executive Tony Millns said accredited English centres would be delighted with the change: "This is a sensible move to end the current anomalous situation where technically tourists could learn to ride a horse or do pottery or yoga, but not sit in a classroom and learn the language of the country they are visiting.

"Our members get many requests from people here on business to brush up their business English and negotiation skills, but they must currently turn them away because study is not permitted on a business visitor visa. So we strongly support this change and will work with the Home Office to try to ensure that non-accredited centres do not see this as a loophole for abuse."

Notes to Editors

1. English UK is the world's leading language teaching association, with more than 470 accredited centres in membership. It covers university and further education college language departments, international study centres in independent schools, educational trusts and charities, and private sector colleges. English UK is a UK registered charity (www.englishuk.com).
2. The Immigration Rules have the status of a Statutory Instrument or secondary legislation, and these changes are being made by 'negative resolution', which means that unless an MP actively objects, the changes are deemed approved and become law, in this case in early October.
3. These changes bring the UK into line with regulations in competitor countries, including the USA, Australia and Canada.

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