



ممثلية وزارة التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي العراقية في المملكة المتحدة وإيرلندا
Representative of the Iraqi Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MOHESR) in the UK and Ireland

**No: 4088/2014
Date: 12/08/2014**

**To: Mr Graham Zebedee
Re: UK Visa for Iraqi Students**

Dear Mr Zebedee,

I am contacting you as the Cultural Counsellor at the Iraqi Cultural Attaché, the official representative of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in the UK. I would like to thank you for your time to have met with my staff Dr Asaad Al-Tamimi at the IBBC Retreat at Cumberland Lodge on 11-13 July 2014, and for the discussion on the various issues on the UK visa for Iraqis.

In this letter, we would like to address three issues related to UK Visas that our students require to study and/or continue studying in the UK: (1) the tuberculosis (TB) test requirement; (2) delivery of passports, application form and supporting documents to the Visa application centre in Amman, Jordan; and (3) switching from *Student Visitor* visa to *Tier 4 Student* visa.

(1) The Tuberculosis (TB) Test Requirement for UK Visa:

We would like to thank the Home Office of considering resumption of limited UK Visa services in Baghdad and Basra in July 2014 for biometric appointments. In spite of it is a limited service, but it significantly helped our students when applying for UK visa due to the unstable situation in Erbil region. However, the requirement of tuberculosis (TB) test is still an outstanding challenge facing our students. According to the UK Visas and Immigration's guidance on Tuberculosis testing in Iraq (published 7 April 2014 on the gov.uk website); the approved clinics for Iraqi applicants are in Baghdad and Erbil (in Iraq) and Amman (in Jordan). Due to the current circumstances in Iraq, it is becoming extremely difficult for our students to travel to Erbil to do the TB test. The clinic in Baghdad is currently not giving appointments. It is also difficult for our students to travel along with their families to Jordan due to current visa complications for Iraqis. This is almost putting numerous numbers of our students at risk of losing their scholarships to study in the UK, and is affecting all collaboration efforts to strengthen the Higher Education projects between Iraq and the UK. Therefore, we ask you to kindly reconsider the condition of TB test centres for Iraqi students/applicants, and either to approve and activate clinics in Baghdad and Basra or –if possible– to find alternative clinics in the region, or –if possible– to exclude Iraqi students/applicants from TB test by proposing a compulsory TB test in the UK within the first weeks/months of arrival in the UK.

V1 .Jan 2014



ممثلة وزارة التعليم العالي والبحث العلمي العراقية في المملكة المتحدة وإيرلندا
Representative of the Iraqi Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MOHESR) in the UK and Ireland

No: 4088/2014
Date: 12/08/2014

(2) Delivery of passports, application form and supporting documents to Amman, Jordan:

As you know, the UK Visa services in Baghdad and Basra are limited for biometric enrolment only and applicants are responsible for delivering their passports, application form and supporting documents to the UK Visa Application Centre in Amman, Jordan. This has been quite problematic and affected by post delays, and is putting the applicants at risk of losing their original important documents. Therefore, we ask you to kindly reconsider the previous ordinary service of your centres in Baghdad and Basra by re-authorising them to receive all documents of Iraqi students/applicants, as this will facilitate the process and eliminate all risks of postal unreliability and delays.

(3) Switching from Student Visitor visa to Tier 4 Student visa from within the UK:

Due to the currently security situation in Iraq, it could be difficult for our students who are currently studying English language in the UK on Student Visitor visa, when they return back to Iraq and risk their lives to go through the visa application process for Tier 4 Student visa, especially with the complication of TB test explained in (1) above. We would like to ask you kindly to re-visit this switching process and –if possible– to exclude Iraqi students currently in the UK from returning to Iraq to apply for Tier 4 Student visa and allowing them to apply from within the UK after fulfilling the English language and other requirements specified by the UKVI; due to the exceptionally unstable current situation in Iraq.

We sincerely look forward for your kind response to our requests and we hope the British Government will take into consideration when evaluating our humanitarian concerns and proposed suggestions.

Sincerely yours,

Prof. Mosa Almosawe
Cultural Attaché

For office use only:

نسخة منه إلى:

- دائرة البعثات والعلاقات الثقافية / مكتب السيد المدير العام / للتفضل بالاطلاع ... مع التقدير
- الموقع الإلكتروني / يرجى الإشارة الى ذلك في الموقع الإلكتروني
- ملف الصادر العام، ملف الصادر المصور.

د. أسعد 2014/8/12

V1 .Jan 2014