

By email only

Lee Graham  
Engagement Lead  
External Engagement & Inclusive Policymaking  
Strategic Engagement & Delivery Improvement Unit  
Future Border & Immigration System (FBIS) Programme  
Migration and Borders Group, Home Office

cc: Ed Mackie, Deputy Director, Cross-Cutting Service Operations, Visa, Status and Information Services, Home Office

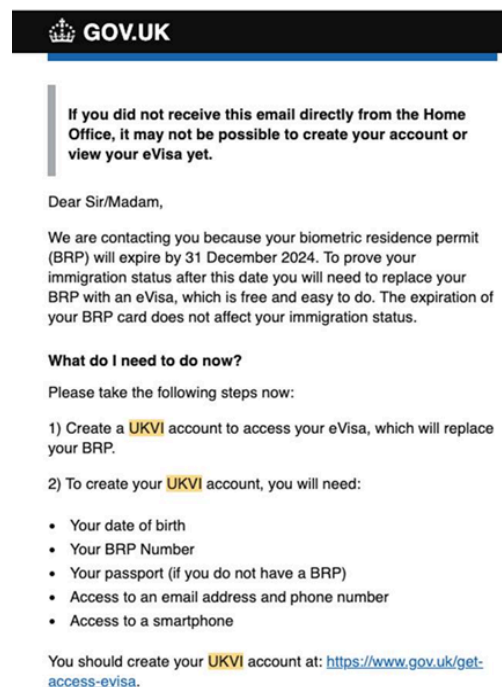
25 July 2024

Dear Lee,

### Re: eVisa Engagement Communications for Entry Clearance Applicants

We are writing regarding email communications received by prospective students who have been granted entry clearance to study in the United Kingdom (UK).

An ILPA member who advises students at a higher education institution reports that they have been inundated with emails from prospective students who are due to commence their studies in September 2024. These students, who have not yet arrived in the UK, have received emails instructing them to create a UKVI account to replace their BRP card with an eVisa. A copy of the email forwarded to our member is provided below:



**GOV.UK**

**If you did not receive this email directly from the Home Office, it may not be possible to create your account or view your eVisa yet.**

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are contacting you because your biometric residence permit (BRP) will expire by 31 December 2024. To prove your immigration status after this date you will need to replace your BRP with an eVisa, which is free and easy to do. The expiration of your BRP card does not affect your immigration status.

**What do I need to do now?**

Please take the following steps now:

- 1) Create a **UKVI** account to access your eVisa, which will replace your BRP.
- 2) To create your **UKVI** account, you will need:
  - Your date of birth
  - Your BRP Number
  - Your passport (if you do not have a BRP)
  - Access to an email address and phone number
  - Access to a smartphone

You should create your **UKVI** account at: <https://www.gov.uk/get-access-evisa>.

Students, and indeed all individuals, granted entry clearance to the UK do not obtain their BRP cards until they collect it upon arrival in the UK. The usual process is that upon grant of entry clearance, an individual is provided with a vignette in their valid passport, which allows them to travel to the UK. This vignette is usually valid for a period of 90 days, with the possibility of an extension. The individual then collects their BRP card at the designated collection point, once they have entered the UK.

First, it would be helpful to know if and when any change to this process is anticipated to take place. We have heard that BRP cards will not be produced for students after 31 October 2024, but it is unclear if this applies to all entry clearance applicants.

Step 2 of the process outlined in the email explains that a passport can be used to set up a UKVI account in the absence of a BRP number. However, the opening paragraph of the email which refers to the upcoming expiration of the recipient's BRP and the need to 'replace your BRP' is causing significant confusion for recipients who have not yet collected their BRP cards.

Second, to avoid unnecessary confusion, we would recommend amending this communication as follows:

1. Amend the opening paragraph to: 'The biometric residence permit (BRP) you will collect upon arrival to the UK will expire on 31 December 2024. To prove your status in the UK after 31 December 2024, you need to create a UKVI account to access your eVisa, which is free and easy to do. The expiration of your BRP card will not affect your immigration status.'
2. Amend the second and third bullet points under step 2 to:
  - 'your passport (if you create your account prior to your arrival in the UK)
  - your BRP number if you create your account after you have arrived in the UK and collected your BRP'

Third, please confirm whether these emails are being sent to everyone who has been granted entry clearance or only to students. It is our understanding that the eVisa roll-out has not yet entered the public beta phase.

Fourth, we would welcome clarification as to whether individuals without biometric passports will be able to set up their UKVI account in the absence of a BRP card. The email contains no information in relation to this.

We would have welcomed better communication to stakeholders, such as ILPA, regarding these steps in eVisa roll-out. Had we been given an opportunity to comment on the draft email in advance

of it being sent to students, confusion could have been avoided and time could have been saved by all.

Finally, it would be helpful to know when FBIS intends to re-convene its Advisory Group meetings, so that these issues can be raised and discussed with other relevant stakeholders present. We appreciate that these meetings were temporarily put on hold leading up to the General Election. However, we would be most grateful if you could now provide an indication of when we can expect to meet.

Yours sincerely,

Zoe Bantleman  
**Legal Director**  
**Immigration Law Practitioners' Association (ILPA)**