

ILPA Comments on UK Border Agency Leaflet – Your Stay in the UK

ILPA thanks the UK Border Agency for the opportunity to provide comments on this draft leaflet, following correspondence between ILPA and Glynn Williams in June last year.

1. Errors in the draft leaflet

1.a. Pages 4-5, picture of visa and annotations.

The picture shows a six month *multiple* visits visa. The person is able to come and go as many times as s/he wishes within the period of validity of the visa. Therefore the statement over the figure 180 that “This is the maximum amount of time you are permitted to stay in the UK, from the date you first enter the UK” is not correct. For example, if the person enters on 15 July, s/he can only stay until 1 August. Either it is necessary to change the picture to a 5/10 yr multiple visa or revise the wording.

1.b. Work

This is mentioned only under the heading ‘Help us to stop human trafficking’. The statement ‘be aware that this right is limited to certain types of employment only’ is not accurate in every case and may mislead. For example a dependant of a worker is likely to associate him/herself with the category in which the primary applicant is coming and therefore treat the leaflet as applying to him/her. Dependants of workers are not limited as to the type of employment that they can take.

The inaccurate statement as to work which ILPA had raised in its letter to Glynn Williams on 8 June 2010 and to which Mr Williams had responded in his letter of 16 June 2010 has been removed. However, we now have no information whatsoever on work in the leaflet save in the section on human trafficking at the back. It would be helpful in the main body of the leaflet at the very least to direct people to where they can find out more information about their entitlements to work.

2. Other matters raised in the previous correspondence

2.a. Clarification of intended audience

ILPA had suggested that this would be helpful, in particular to ensure that those in other categories, for example family members coming for settlement, do not think that the leaflet applies to them. The Agency indicated that it would look to tighten up the language. The sentence ‘Important information for visitors, students and workers who have a visa to come to the UK’ on the title page is helpful. However, there is still the risk, as happened with earlier versions of the leaflet, that it is distributed to people in other categories and that they assume that, since it has been given to them, it contains information that applies to them. And, of course, some of the more general information in the leaflet, such as duty free allowances, does indeed apply.. It would be helpful to expand the text box on the front page to state:

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email: info@ilpa.org.uk website: www.ilpa.org.uk

This leaflet is intended for those coming to the UK in the visitor, student and worker categories and includes information specific to people coming to the UK in those categories. It is not aimed at persons coming under other categories (such as people coming to the UK to live permanently with family members).

As indicated above in the section on work, a dependant is likely to associate him/herself with the category in which the primary applicant is coming so more clarity on the extent to which the leaflet does/does not apply to dependants would be helpful.

2.b. Access to the NHS

Accurate information on use of the National Health Service is useful, and is also relevant to protecting both the health of individuals and public health.

While no information, as in this version of the leaflet, is better than inaccurate information, as the first version of the leaflet, accurate information is better still. Students and workers should be informed explicitly that they are permitted to use the National Health Service. Visitors should be informed explicitly under what circumstances they may or may not access the National Health Service. As with other sections in the leaflet, this could be done through a combination of text in the leaflet and a link. For example

“Students and workers are entitled to access the National Health Service. The limited circumstances in which visitors to the UK from countries outside the EEA are permitted to access the National Health Service are set out at: http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Healthcare/Entitlementsandcharges/OverseasVisitors/Browsable/DH_074373 “

3. Other matters including minor corrections and comments from members.

It may be useful to state in the section on travelling with children:

“The UK Border Agency takes its duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children very seriously and is grateful to all travellers for their cooperation when we ask further questions about children. By working together, we can all help to protect children.”

No one likes being held up and asked further questions, and no one likes their relationship to their child being called into question, but most people will be more sympathetic if they know it is in a good cause.

Page 7, last line 'different surname from the child.'

ILPA

14 February 2011