

UKCISA Corporate Partnerships policy

Objectives of this policy

UKCISA's vision is that every international student who comes to the UK has a positive experience, and is able to tell friends and families that the UK is a welcoming place to study, and live.

We are proud to be a collaborative organisation, working with a range of partner organisations to deliver our vision for the international student experience and generate income to fulfil our charitable objectives.

UKCISA's policy is to work with partner organisations across the private, public and third sector:

- To generate sponsorship income and corporate partnerships for UKCISA, to help diversify its income streams and support its sustainability
- To identify strategically important and useful partnerships for UKCISA, its members and international students studying in the UK
- To support UKCISA statutory obligations as a UK registered charity

Commercial partnerships should reflect UKCISA's organisational values of Quality, Innovation, Collaboration and Trust, and align with what we stand for and the interests of the communities we represent. Partnerships may take a range of forms and must be developed responsibly, in order to mitigate reputational, financial and other risks.

This policy sets out our process for assessing the alignment of corporate and other partnerships with our charitable objectives, and managing risks of partnerships and corporate sponsorship. The policy applies to sponsorship in cash and in kind.

UKCISA works with all potential partners to understand the outcomes they are seeking to achieve from the partnership, in order to assess the relevance and potential success of the relationship and identify the best possible route to partnership.

Restrictions on partnerships

UKCISA will not consider the following:

1. Partnerships with organisations that do not align with UKCISA's values to promote the interests of international students, including:
 - Gambling companies/websites
 - Credit/debt companies promoting or incentivising quick credit products
 - Essay and other study services
 - Accommodation providers that do not comply with Codes of best practice
 - Tobacco/nicotine/vaping products
 - Companies involved in the sex industry
 - Companies manufacturing or distributing arms or weapons
 - Companies promoting incentivised medical testing
2. Anonymous donations, which preclude a full risk assessment.
3. Gifts or inducements to individual members of staff or trustees to facilitate a sponsorship arrangement.

4. Partnerships which embed other organisations' web content on UKCISA website.

Other reasons for non-acceptance of funds might include:

- The sponsor is alleged to have participated or has been found guilty of criminal activity.
- The sponsor presents a significant conflict of interest with UKCISA or member activity.
- The sponsor is affiliated with present or past actions that would be liable to incite protest from UKCISA members and/or stakeholders, and international students.
- The financial origin of the financial contribution is suspected to be illicit.

Where UKCISA decides that a corporate partnership or sponsorship does not meet our criteria, we will inform the funding organisation of the relevant criteria for non-acceptance.

This list is not exhaustive, and will be reviewed annually by UKCISA's Finance and General Purposes Committee, or on a more frequent ad-hoc basis as required.

Ending or withdrawing from partnership arrangements

If any commercial partner acts or is revealed to have acted in a way that harms its reputation, and/or the reputation of UKCISA, or if UKCISA identifies a change in the level of risk, UKCISA reserves the right to immediately withdraw from the partnership, and to comment publicly on the behavior/action that leads to this withdrawal.

UKCISA and its trustees will take the decision on any withdrawal and formally notify the commercial partner of its reasons.

Assessing impact and risk

UKCISA and its trustees will review its corporate partners on an annual basis, or more frequently as required. Repeating partnerships or agreements will be reviewed at the start of each agreement, to reassess all areas of risk.

We will use publicly available sources to research the company and their services/products in order to assess its reputation and its financial status. These will include, but are not limited to publicly available accounts, credit rating, references, other commercial partnerships, press mentions and key personnel CVs.

When assessing risks, UKCISA will consider risks to its own reputation, as well as the reputation of its funders and members. Risks considered will include financial, ethical, technical and political risks.

Partnerships will be assessed initially by the Strategic Partnerships Lead, and an initial decision will then be recommended to UKCISA's income/partnership due diligence group (consisting of Senior Management Team, a trustee and a UKCISA student ambassador).

Any funds received from sponsorship or corporate partnerships will be used to fund activity that benefits international students in line with UKCISA charitable objectives. Use of funds will be monitored by the Board of Trustees' Finance and General Purposes Committee.

Commercial partnerships with UKCISA members will be assessed using the above criteria.

Risk assessments will not be conducted on funding received from UK governments or related agencies.

Updated on 25th May 2021