

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENT VISA POLICY

### I. Introduction

Full time international students must apply for appropriate student visas in order to study in China, for example, X1 Visa & X2 Visa which requires students to apply overseas or in their home countries before coming to China, and residence permit for pure study purpose after their arrival in China, etc. (see below Section 4. XJTLU International Student Visa Regulation).

All international students are treated equally by the XJTLU Global (XGLO hereinafter); however, it is a common practice that international students' visa applications might be influenced by factors such as relationships between countries, agreements signed between governments; a specific policy or law at a certain period of time or tensions between countries and so on. All these factors might affect the visa application of all international students or only students of a specific nationality. XGLO will try and advise international students on policy changes which may impact them but the ultimate decision on the granting of visa rests with the Chinese authorities.

### II. Student Visas and Relevant Requirements

International students are eligible to apply for one of the five (5) types of student visas depending on their studies duration or purpose. These five student visas are as follows:

#### a. X1 Visa

International students, whose studies duration in China is over six months, will be provided with documents to apply for this type of visa in the Chinese embassy or consulate overseas. Since it is only a short-term visa, bearers of such visa are required to convert their visas into residence permits for study purpose within 30 days after their arrival. The entry date in China, which is indicated on the passport, is counted in the 30 days.

#### b. X2 Visa

International students, whose studies duration in china is less than six months, will only need to apply for an X2 visa with single entry in their home country before coming to China. There is no need to convert an X2 visa into a residence permit, if students intend not to extend their studies at XJTLU.

#### c. Residence Permit for Study Purpose

As long as the programme attended by international students at XJTLU lasts for more than six months, they must apply for a residence permit for study purpose. Students, who fall in this category, are as follows:

- Non-degree students
- Exchange students
- The University of Liverpool (UoL) One-Year-in-China Programme students
- Undergraduate students

- Postgraduate students on full-time study mode

This policy also applies to students who are transferred to XJTLU from the other universities based in China. Although their residence permits or X2 visas are still valid, these students have to apply for their new residence permit in their first week at XJTLU.

Only students, who are enrolled in a part-time programme leading to either a master's degree or PhD degree, are not required to apply for residence permits for study purpose; however, as requested by the Exit & Entry Bureau and the law, information about their employment, work permit or other valid visa type & its expiry date and so on will be reported to the bureau for archive purpose. If any specific visa is required by the EEB, students of this type must apply without any delay.

**d. Residence Permit for Off-campus Internship**

International students in Suzhou are allowed to do a six-month full-time internship in China regardless of the city. However, before starting the internship, international students must apply for the residence permit endorsed with the statement of "off-campus internship". According to the policy, the internship must be a full-time internship with duration no more or no less than six months.

**e. F Visa for Visiting Student Researcher**

International students, who plan to visit XJTLU and conduct their researches here, will be assisted by XGLO to applying for an F visa. Such visa can only be applied overseas, and sometimes only in their own home country.

According to the law, international students are not allowed to use these five types of visa to take any paid employment in China.

### III. Others

**a. Registration at Police Station**

Within 24 hours after arriving in Suzhou the first time, changing living address or coming back to China from overseas, international students must register in the police station, which is charge of the residence area where international students are living. As a result, international students will receive an accommodation registration form, which should be kept for police check or residence permit application purpose.

**b. Re-registration at Police Station**

In following cases, international students are required to re-register at the police station. First of all, when they convert their visa into residence permit successfully, and secondly when they return to Suzhou after travelling outside China including Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macau regions you are required to re-register at the local police station. Take original passport within one or two days of the return and the police officer will re-register on the police record system. It is normally a quick procedure taking less than 2 minutes. If you stay in a hotel before getting back to Suzhou, you do not need register when you get to Suzhou.

Any failure to re-register at the police station is violation of the Exit & Entry Law, which will incur negative consequences for international students themselves, for example, unable to obtain the 'Certificate of No Criminal Record' required by the employers, required to pay fines and so on.

**c. Visa Conversion**

Conversion of an X1 visa into a residence permit for study purpose is a standard process for foreigners who intend to study in china for over six months. This is done within 30 days of arrival in China. Changing of F visa (visiting), L visa (tourism), S visa (family/personal), Z visa (work) and sometimes X2 visas into a residence permit for study purpose is likely to be denied by the Exit & Entry Bureau. According to regulations, X1 visas can only be obtained outside China.

**d. Residence Permit Reapplication after a New Passport Issued**

Student, whose new passport has been stamped with a Chinese entry stamp by the China Border officer at the airport, must use the new passport to apply for a new residence permit within 10 days after their arrival in China. Student, who failed to do so, has to go to the Exit and Entry Bureau to report the case and probably pay a fine with a daily charge of 500rmb.

**e. Application Approval**

Approval on whether to award international students a specific visa is made by the Chinese embassy or consulate overseas, and the Suzhou Municipal Exit & Entry Bureau or the Jiangsu Provincial Exit & Entry Bureau domestically. Normally, you can't appeal to the relevant government office if you don't have convincing evidence, and at the same time the university can't impact the government office to change their decision or ask for explanation.

**f. Travel to Hong Kong, Taiwan and Macau**

Despite being part of China these regions are self-governed and travel to these places requires a re-entry stamp back into mainland China. If you have a residence permit, this is not a problem as you have unlimited entries into China. If you have an X2 visa this is only for a single entry so you should check with XGLO as well.

**g. S visa for students family members**

The family members of international students can apply to the Chinese embassy or consulate overseas for the S visa to come to and stay in China. Depending on the course length, either S1 or S2 visa can be applied. The relevant policy is as follows:

S1 Visa:

- When applying for the visa, the studies of the foreign student should last for more than 180 days.
- Family members of this student are limited to his/her spouse, parent or parent in law, kid under 18 years old.
- Such applicants can stay in China for more than 180 days.

#### S2 Visa:

- When applying for the visa, the studies of the foreign student is less than 180 days.
- Family members of the foreign student includes his/her spouse, parent and parent in law, children, children's spouse, siblings, grandparent from both sides, grandchildren.
- Applicants can stay in China for less than 180 days.

The policy is subject to change, hence foreign students or their family members are advised to consult the Chinese Embassy or Consulate for the most accurate and updated information.

#### **IV. XJTLU INTERNATIONAL STUDENT VISA REGULATIONS**

XJTLU follows strictly the visa regulations of the People's Republic of China. In addition we have some additional University policies for international student visas which have been agreed in discussion with the Suzhou Exit and Entry Bureau (EBB), as following:

- a. Full-time master students pursuing 18 months' programmes at XJTLU will be supported by XGLO to apply for a 1.5 years' residence permit at a time to cover their whole programme at the university. (we may just treat PG students the same as the other degree students as many of them will definitely find and do internships after they finish their studies, and attend graduation ceremony at the end of July)
- b. 'Chinese Language' programme will be supported to apply for a residence permit to cover the duration of their programme length. However, they must do this within the first teaching week, including police registration and health check, etc.
- c. UG and Ph.D. students will be supported to apply for a residence permit for 12 months at a time.
- d. All international students who are registered as full time degree students must hold a valid and legally recognized student visa to study at XJTLU, including residence permit and X2 visa.
- e. Part-time registered students can use a valid Z work visa or other suitable visa type. XGLO will check the visa and consult the Suzhou Exit and Exit visa for advice if necessary.
- f. Part-time students are not eligible for an X type student visa sponsored by XJTLU.
- g. If a student is de-registered or withdraws from the University, the University will report the change in status to the Suzhou Entry and Exist Bureau after which point their student visa will be cancelled.
- h. Students who suspend study will normally not receive visa support during the suspension period. Normally students will not be permitted to suspend study from a degree programme (for whatever reason) and enroll on non-degree study also at XJTLU
- i. Students must conform to the Chinese Higher Education Law and attend at least 80% of classes and all examinations. Students need to pass (through attendance) required academic content as specified by the Ministry of Education and or Foreign Affairs. The university will report any breach of the Chinese Higher Education Law and the attendance policy to the Exit & Entry Bureau, and as a result, students might be considered not to be genuine students and visa privileges removed.

- j. The University will not tolerate violation of visa laws in China and these regulations. If students fail to obtain the required student visa they will be de-registered or suspended from the university.
- k. The University will report to the EEB any case of breaching the visa laws in China. Students' illegal behavior may lead to a shortened residence permit/visa, financial punishment or even deportation, etc. The EEB makes the decision on what kind of punishment the student should undertake.

## **V. XJTLU INTERNATIONAL STUDENT VISA PROCESSING POLICIES**

All students who require a visa will be supported by XGLO (see XGLO responsibilities in section VI). This support will be given according to the following policies:

### **a. Enrolled Students**

All continuing students will be provided with the documents to extend their visas every year in the Entry and Exist Bureau in the Suzhou Industrial Park to cover their study period at XJTLU. It is the student's responsibility to check when their visa's expires and contact XGLO to collect renewal documents (see Section VII).

### **b. New Students outside China**

All new students joining XJTLU will be given the necessary documents to apply for a visa in their country of residence. The documents will be sent when an undergraduate or master's student has paid their deposit in full. Chinese language students must pay the full tuition fee in advance and then visa processing will commence. Summer school, PhD students with scholarships and exchange students do not need to pay a deposit and visas will be processed after you have received your offer letter. We advise students to start to apply for their visas 4 weeks before arrival. The cost of the visa applicant is the responsibility of the student. Upon arriving at XJTLU, XGLO will help the student with application for the residence permit.

### **c. New Students inside China**

XGLO will advise foreign nationals, who already live in China with a valid visa, on changing their current visa or applying for a residence permit in Suzhou. However, the EEB makes the final decision on whether they must go back to their own countries or overseas to apply for an X1 visa or X2 visa, and then return to China to commence studies at XJTLU. An X1 visa must be converted into a residence permit after the arrival of the new foreign students.

### **d. Changing Passport**

As required by the Chinese visa application policy, international students must use passports which are valid for more than 6 months, otherwise students will be unable to apply for a new visa or renew the visa. It is students' responsibility to check the validity of their passports and apply for new passports in advance in their own countries or embassy and/or consulate in China. Since the passport application processing might be very time consuming in some countries, international students are advised to plan their passport application a long time ahead.

International students must apply for new passport as soon as possible after their passports is lost or stolen. Given the time that is required for all necessary processes before actually submitting documents in the embassy and/or consulate to apply for new passports, 2-4 weeks is sufficient for international students to 1) apply for student status certificate with the Registry Office at the University; 2) report the loss of their passports to the police station; 3) obtain accommodation registration form; 4) and then apply for the legal loss statement from the municipal public security bureau. Staying in China without a valid passport and visa is a violation of the Exit & Entry Law and will cause significant personal inconvenience and possible fines if the process of replacing these documents is delayed without good reason. It is the students' responsibility to prioritize actions to obtain new documents and XGLO will support you by making the necessary appointments. If appointments are missed and appropriate actions are not taken by the student in a timely manner the university may be forced to suspend study so students can return to their home countries to obtain documents.

**e. Denial of Visa Support**

XJTLU reserves the right to withdraw visa support and/or reduce the length of the residence permit to international students in the following circumstances:

- Student has been subject to university discipline policy for serious misconduct.
- Student who has been suspended or chooses to suspend study and then enrolls on a non-degree programme at XJTLU.
- Student has been charged with a criminal offence in China.
- Student has lower than 80% attendance record.
- Student has unpaid tuition fees amounting to more than RMB 10,000.
- Student does not provide the correct necessary documents to XGLO within a reasonable time frame.
- Students whose conduct towards EEB officers has led to complaints will not be further supported with visa applications by XJTLU.

The VP, Academic Affairs and VP, Student Affairs will make the final decision in such cases and students will be clearly notified in written form clearly stating the reasons.

**VI. XGLO Responsibilities**

XGLO is responsible for the following actions to support all students who require a student visa.

- a. Provide clear information to students on how to apply or extend their visas including up to date information on the University website.
- b. Prepare the necessary visa documents and post them by registered mail to students.
- c. Keep a copy of students passport and residence permits in a secure online system.
- d. Help students register with the police on first arrival as a new student into China.
- e. Provide transportation to students undertaking their residence permit application who enroll in the induction week in Semester 1.

- f. Give timely up to date visa advice to international students on policy changes.
- g. Support students who are undertaking internships.
- h. Seek advice from the Suzhou Entry and Exit Bureau when students have visa questions
- i. Alert students to national holidays and closure days of the local Entry and Exit Bureau.

## VII. Student Responsibilities

All students are responsible for the following to ensure that they have the correct visa and residence permit for a legal stay in Suzhou:

- a. Send a photocopy of your current passport to XGLO at the time of application.
- b. Check they have a valid passport with at least 6 months validity.
- c. Locate where the nearest Chinese embassy or consulate is to their place of residence.
- d. Pay the deposit in full and on time.
- e. Send XGLO a correct postal address to post the visa documents to.
- f. Arrive in time for the compulsory induction week on campus at the start of each semester.
- g. Pay careful attention to visa information in the International Student Welcome Guide including national holidays when XGLO and the Entry & Exit bureau are closed.
- h. Register with the police after arrival into China (see Section III. a) and b) above).
- i. Move your residency permit to Suzhou if you have moved from another city in China.
- j. Follow the instructions of XGLO in order to apply for a residence permit (if needed).
- k. Attend punctually appointments set up by XGLO to support visa processing.
- l. Send a scan of your residence permit to XJTLU for archiving purpose after you have been issued with it. Any ignorance of this action will lead to receive limited support from XGLO to renew your residence permit.
- m. Make a note of the expiry date of your residence permit and coming to XGLO at least 2 weeks before the expiry date to get the documents for extension.
- n. Inform XGLO of any change of passport and sending a scan of a new passport right after using the new passport to come to China.

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### Revision and Approval Log

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