

Family Guardian Scheme FAQs

1. Does the scheme replace the BSA Certified Guardian Scheme?

No. BSA strongly recommends international students register with BSA Certified Guardians. However, we appreciate that occasionally family members or family friends may be asked to fulfil a guardian role and to act as an emergency contact. This scheme is designed to provide peace of mind in those situations.

2. What is included in the scheme?

- Advanced DBS checks
- Online training on guardian responsibilities and safeguarding (1 hour)
- Certificate confirming BSA Family Guardian status
- Ongoing support and advice

3. What is the cost?

£199+VAT per guardian, plus £100+VAT per additional person aged 16+ regularly living in the guardian household (to cover additional DBS checks).

4. Will every person aged 16+ in the guardian household need a DBS check?

UKVI will run checks on those regularly living in the same household, so this is recommended.

5. Will all people aged 16+ in the guardian household need to complete the online training?

This is only required for the lead guardian, although other members of the household are welcome to be present whilst the training is completed.



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6. Is the training in English?

Yes. Guardians are expected to be UK citizens or have settled status, so this would not usually be an issue, but translation software is readily available if needed.

7. Is there a minimum age for the lead guardian?

Typically this is 25, but schools have the discretion to set a higher age.

8. Would this be an annual charge or a one-off?

Certification won't officially expire, but schools may wish to require guardians to undertake a fresh DBS check periodically. BSA can assist with this.

9. How will payment be taken?

Schools should email a list of guardians they would like on the scheme to bsa@boarding.org.uk and BSA will issue an invoice. Alternatively, schools running an 'opt-in' model will be given a registration form to share with guardians and BSA will then invoice per registration received. It is up to the school whether they pass the cost onto parents.

10. What if the student changes guardian, or one guardian has multiple students?

The cost is per guardian, not per student.

11. Would BSA check in with guardians to see if their circumstances have changed?

This lies with the schools, but BSA can offer ad hoc support if required.



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12. Does the guardian need to be related to the pupil or can they be a family friend?

They can be a family friend. However, we recommend schools carry out due diligence on who is acting as guardian so they can fulfil their statutory duties to ensure the arrangement promotes the wellbeing of the student.

13. Will BSA check immigration status?

UKVI is responsible for checking immigration status.

14. Will BSA issue a letter of undertaking?

The school is responsible for issuing a letter of undertaking but BSA Group Legal may be able to assist if you have queries (BSA members receive 15 minutes of free legal advice per term).

15. Will the certificate be sufficient for the application of the Child Student Visa?

UKVI will still run their own checks but BSA certification will aid the school in meeting their sponsor duties to ensure:

- Appropriate policies and procedures are in place to ensure the safety, wellbeing and protection from exploitation of sponsored children
- Where a Child Student is living in the UK in accommodation not provided by the sponsor, their living arrangements meet the requirements of the route.

The certification will also help the school to ensure that the visa application will not be refused based on criminal records of the guardian or those in their household.



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16. Can education agents apply on behalf of guardians?

Applications should be made via schools rather than agents.

17. How do I register?

Please email bsa@boarding.org.uk in the first instance.

18. How long does the process take?

This will vary depending on how quickly guardians submit information and complete the training, but we recommend submitting applications 4-6 weeks in advance.

19. I have a question that has not been answered...

Please email bsa@boarding.org.uk or call us on +44 (0) 20 7798 1580.

