



A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO PARTNERSHIPS TO HELP INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS



Etherton Education has over 160 partnerships with independent schools. Peter Etherton explains what they are and why they are beneficial to students, schools and agents

Q What do you mean by a 'partnership'?

In this context we are talking specifically about a teaching partnership between a Tier 4 sponsor – a main school – and a pre-session summer course provider such as ourselves, Etherton Education. The potential for these partnerships was created when the points-based system was introduced in April 2009. These partnerships must be approved by UKVI (UK Visas and Immigration).

Q What is the purpose of the partnership?

It enables an international student who needs a visa to obtain one single Tier 4 Child

We follow this up with a formal letter and a legal contract signed by both parties. The UKVI must then approve the partnership. As this can take weeks it is always much better to finalise a partnership as early as possible, before the rush to issue CAS in the spring.

Q How does it work?

The main school acts as the sponsor of the student but adds the details and start date of the pre-session course onto the CAS. The visa application then proceeds as normal. We meet the students when they arrive in the UK and report their safe arrival to the main school. We deal with the BRP and Police Registration processes, if required. At

fact that 160 boarding schools have put their trust in us. We are happy to arrange for you to speak to an existing partner school upon request or to provide a reference.

Q Who benefits?

Our list of Etherton partner schools is sent out to over 300 agents regularly and many refer to it when recommending schools to their client families, because they know it will offer a seamless study plan. Students benefit from having a very caring summer course which prepares them academically, socially and pastorally for entry to their British boarding school. The main school receives a more relaxed, well-briefed, value-added, confident student, who has had the equivalent of an additional term to settle in. Parents know the summer course will help their child.

“ We are very proud of the fact that 160 boarding schools have put their trust in us ”

student visa to attend a summer pre-session course and then move directly on to their main school. Without the partnership, the student would have to return to his/her home country and apply for a second visa.

Q How are partnerships arranged in the first place?

It is a very simple process. Usually we will contact a main school and ask them to consider a partnership to assist a particular student. This often happens at the request of a mutual agent. After that, the main school submits a request via the SMS to the UKVI.

the end of the summer, the student moves on to their main school and we provide you with a detailed academic course report.

Q Can a main school have more than one partner?

Yes. Etherton Education believes in freedom of choice and we never ask for exclusivity. It is your decision, but you must be sure you trust your potential pre-session partner. We have a strict ethical policy; we will uphold all your sponsor responsibilities absolutely meticulously, and we will never poach or move a student. We are very proud of the

Q Further information?

Please contact us if you would like to know more about this topic. Our Head of Partnerships, Belinda Holley, has 18 years' experience with the admissions and visa compliance processes in independent schools and will be pleased to talk to you or visit your school to discuss all aspects of international admissions and Tier 4 partnerships.

You can contact Belinda at partnerships@ethertoneducation.com or via 01823 672388.