



## Remote Delivery – Frequently Asked Questions Student Visa Sponsored Programmes

This guidance supports the Remote Delivery Policy and Operational Process.

It is intended for Faculties and academic departments involved in programme design, review and delivery.

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### Key Principles for Calculating Remote Delivery

The following principles apply when determining the proportion of remote delivery within a programme:

#### 1. Programme-level calculation

Remote delivery is calculated at programme level, not for individual students. The approved programme percentage applies to all sponsored students enrolled on that programme.

#### 2. Taught elements only

Only taught elements of a programme are included in the calculation. Non-taught elements such as dissertations, independent research, placements, fieldwork and examinations are excluded.

#### 3. Mode of Attendance provides the starting point

The module's recorded Mode of Attendance (Attendance, Online, Distance) provides the initial indication of delivery type. However, the actual structure of timetabled teaching must be confirmed where proportional calculations are required.

#### 4. Proportional calculation where delivery is mixed

Where modules include a mixture of in-person and remote timetabled teaching, the proportion of remote delivery should be calculated based on scheduled teaching activity (e.g. lectures, seminars, tutorials or workshops) rather than total notional module hours.

#### 5. Worst-case assumption for optional modules

Where optional modules exist, calculations must assume that students select all modules containing remote delivery. This ensures the programme percentage reflects the maximum potential remote delivery.

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## 1. Thresholds and Institutional Position

### Q1. Are we allowed to design programmes with 21–40% remote delivery?

Whilst UKVI permits remote delivery within the 21–40% band subject to prior approval, the University of Strathclyde expects programmes that admit students who require student visa sponsorship to operate within the 0–20% threshold.

The 21–40% band:

- Is not a standard delivery model at Strathclyde.
- Requires approval from the relevant Faculty Academic Committee.
- Requires formal educational justification.
- Requires prior UKVI approval before CAS assignment.

Except where a programme is explicitly designed and approved as an online or distance learning programme, Student visa sponsored programmes should be designed on the basis of predominantly in-person delivery.

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**Q2. What happens if a programme exceeds 40% remote delivery?**

Programmes exceeding 40% remote delivery cannot be offered under the Student visa route, except in very limited exceptional circumstances permitted by UKVI (e.g., Equality Act adjustments or disruption).

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**Q3. Why does the University expect programmes to remain below 20%?**

Student route sponsorship is granted for study in the UK. The University's expectation reflects:

- The principle of majority in-person delivery.
  - The compliance risk associated with exceeding remote thresholds.
  - The need to avoid inadvertent movement into the approval-required band.
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## 2. Mode of Attendance & Module Interpretation

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**Q4. If a module is recorded as “Attendance”, does that automatically mean 0% remote?**

No. Attendance modules are expected to be face-to-face. However, if any timetabled sessions are delivered live online or offer a remote attendance option, the remote proportion must be identified and included in the programme calculation.

The system label is not determinative; the actual structure of timetabled teaching governs compliance.

**Q5. Are modules recorded as “Online” automatically 100% remote?**

Normally yes.

If a department believes that compulsory in-person attendance forms a material part of the taught delivery, this must be evidenced and a proportional calculation applied.

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**Q6. How should “Distance” modules be treated?**

Distance modules are normally treated as remote.

Where there is compulsory in-person taught delivery forming a material proportion of the module, a proportional calculation must be applied.

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**Q7. Do recorded lectures count as remote delivery?**

No. Recorded lectures made available after in-person delivery do not constitute remote delivery unless students had the option to attend remotely at the time of delivery.

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**Q8. If a lecture is delivered in-person but simultaneously streamed, how is it treated?**

Where students are given the option to attend remotely rather than in-person, the session must be treated as remote delivery for calculation purposes.

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## 3. Programme Structure Scenarios

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**Q9. How do we calculate remote delivery for a standard 480-credit undergraduate programme?**

1. Confirm total programme credits.
2. Exclude non-taught elements (e.g., dissertation, research)

3. Establish the total taught credit denominator.
4. Identify remote credits using Mode of Attendance interpretation.
5. Apply worst-case assumption for optional modules.
6. Divide remote credits by total taught credits.

Worked examples are provided in Appendix A of the Operational Process document.

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#### **Q10. How do we calculate for a 180-credit PGT programme?**

Follow the same methodology:

- Exclude dissertation (typically 60 credits).
- Use the remaining taught credits as the denominator.
- Identify remote credits using the proportional method where required.

Worked examples are provided in Appendix A.

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#### **Q11. What “hours” should be used when calculating the remote proportion of a module?**

The module’s Mode of Attendance classification (Attendance, Online or Distance) provides the starting point for identifying whether delivery is remote.

Where a module includes a mixture of in-person and live online timetabled teaching, a proportional calculation should be applied.

In these cases, the proportion should be based on scheduled teaching activity (for example lectures, seminars, tutorials or timetabled workshops).

Notional module hours that include independent study, assessment preparation or project work should not be used when determining the remote proportion.

For example, a 10-credit module may represent approximately 100 notional learning hours. However, if the module contains 33 hours of timetabled teaching, the remote proportion should be calculated based on those 33 teaching hours.

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#### **Q12. How do we treat optional modules?**

Where optional modules exist, departments must calculate the maximum possible remote delivery percentage by assuming students select all modules containing any remote timetabled teaching.

This approach ensures the programme’s remote delivery percentage reflects the maximum remote delivery that could occur within the approved programme structure, rather than the module combinations most commonly selected by students.

##### **Note:**

Where optional modules include remote delivery elements (for example SDG or taught Entrepreneurship modules), these must be included in the worst-case calculation if they could be selected alongside other modules with remote delivery. This may increase the programme’s calculated remote percentage even if the typical student pathway contains less remote delivery.

Where optional or elective modules could result in a sponsored student exceeding the permitted remote delivery threshold, the programme team may need to manage module choice for Student visa sponsored students. This may include identifying modules that are not available to sponsored students or providing clear advice to students and programme leaders at the point of selection.

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**Q13. How do we treat direct entry students (e.g., entry to Year 3)?**

A direct entry student may complete 240 credits at Strathclyde (Years 3 and 4 of a 4-year programme).

However, remote delivery percentages are calculated at programme level, not recalculated based on entry point.

The programme's approved remote delivery percentage applies consistently to all sponsored students enrolled on that programme.

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**Q14. How should exchange students be treated where module choices are not known in advance?**

Remote delivery is calculated at programme level rather than for individual students.

Where programmes include optional modules, the worst-case assumption should be applied by assuming that students may select all modules containing remote timetabled delivery.

This ensures the programme's remote delivery percentage reflects the maximum remote delivery possible within the approved programme structure.

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**Q15. How should IJEP or joint programmes be treated where students study outside Strathclyde before arriving in Glasgow?**

Where students undertake part of their programme at a partner institution before studying at Strathclyde, the remote delivery calculation should normally reflect the Strathclyde-delivered taught elements of the programme for which the CAS is issued.

The calculation therefore focuses on the delivery structure of the Strathclyde component of the programme.

Where the University was not the sponsor during partner delivery, those years are not included in Strathclyde's calculation.

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**Q16. What about articulation agreements (e.g., 2+2)?**

Remote delivery must be calculated based on the Strathclyde-delivered taught elements of the programme.

The programme-level percentage applies to sponsored students studying at Strathclyde.

Where the student was not sponsored by the University during the college or partner-delivered element, that earlier study is not included in the University's remote delivery calculation. The calculation applies to the Strathclyde-delivered taught elements of the programme for which the University assigns the CAS.

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**Q17. How are postgraduate research (PGR) or doctoral programmes treated?**

For postgraduate research programmes, independent research, thesis preparation and self-directed research activity are not treated as taught delivery and are excluded from the remote delivery calculation.

Only structured, credit-bearing taught elements that form part of the sponsored programme of study should be considered. This may include taught doctoral modules or formal taught components within professional doctorate programmes.

This should not be interpreted as meaning that all doctoral provision has the same taught-credit structure. Some doctoral programmes may have little or no structured taught delivery, while others, such as professional doctorates, may include a larger taught component. The calculation must therefore be based on the approved structure of the specific programme.

Where a separate or additional development award, such as a PGCert or researcher development activity, sits outside the sponsored award or is primarily self-directed/experiential rather than timetabled taught delivery, it should not automatically be included in the remote delivery calculation. Where there is uncertainty, the Faculty should seek advice from Visa Compliance.

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**Q18. What about programmes with placement years?**

Placement years, and placement modules consisting entirely of workplace activity, are not treated as taught elements and are excluded from the remote delivery calculation.

Where a placement module includes structured taught sessions, those taught sessions should be considered when identifying any remote delivery. The placement activity itself is not included in the calculation.

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**Q19. How should group project modules that combine online and in-person cohorts be treated?**

Where group project modules include structured teaching (for example project briefings, workshops or supervision sessions), the remote delivery calculation should reflect the delivery mode of those sessions.

The composition of the student cohort does not determine the classification. Instead, departments should consider whether students were required to attend in person or whether remote attendance was available for the timetabled session.

Where sessions allow remote participation, those sessions should be treated as remote delivery for calculation purposes.

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**Q20. What about research-heavy final years or integrated Masters?**

Research elements are excluded from calculation.

Only taught modules are included in the denominator.

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**Q21. Are examinations included when calculating remote delivery?**

No. Examinations are not treated as taught elements for the purpose of the remote delivery calculation.

Assessment activity, including examinations and online submission of coursework, is excluded unless it includes timetabled taught delivery.

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## 4. CAS & Compliance

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**Q22. Can a CAS be assigned if a programme falls within the 21–40% band?**

No. Where a programme falls within the 21–40% band, UKVI approval must be obtained before CAS assignment.

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**Q23. Do we calculate remote delivery separately for each student?**

No. UKVI thresholds apply at programme level rather than at individual student level.

The University does not calculate separate remote delivery percentages based on entry cohort or study pattern.

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**Q24. What happens if delivery method changes mid-year?**

Departments must notify Faculty and Visa Compliance immediately.

Remote delivery must be recalculated, and escalation may be required if the programme approaches or exceeds 20%.

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## **Q25. What happens during a UKVI audit?**

UKVI may request:

- The methodology used to calculate remote delivery;
- Evidence of module classification;
- CAS data consistency;
- Records supporting any proportional calculations.

Departments must retain documentation supporting their calculations.

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## **5. Exceptional Circumstances**

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### **Q26. What if a student requires remote delivery due to disability?**

Where remote delivery is required to prevent discrimination under the Equality Act 2010, this may be permitted.

Such cases must:

- Be recorded internally;
  - Not change the programme's approved remote delivery percentage;
  - Be capable of being evidenced at audit.
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### **Q27. What about industrial action or severe weather?**

Temporary remote delivery due to disruption may be permitted.

These circumstances must be recorded internally and do not automatically change the programme's approved remote delivery percentage.

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## **Important Reminder**

The University expects Student visa sponsored programmes to remain below 20% remote delivery.

Faculties should monitor programme design and delivery structures proactively to avoid inadvertent movement into the 21–40% band.

Where there is uncertainty, departments should consult the Visa Compliance team ([visa.compliance@strath.ac.uk](mailto:visa.compliance@strath.ac.uk)) before confirming programme calculations.