

MEDIA INFORMATION

Manila, Philippines | 11 March 2024

New UK Visa Application Centre launched in Manila

- *UK visa customers can visit the new and upgraded centre from Monday to Friday, between 7AM to 4PM to apply for all categories of UK visas.*
- *Customers get a range of optional services to choose from including Premium Lounge, Prime Time Appointments, Keep My Passport, and SMS Alerts among others.*
- *Customers can also apply for their UK visa from a location of their choice through our optional On Demand Mobile Visa (ODMV) service.*

To offer an enhanced visa application submission experience to UK visa customers in Manila, Philippines, Mr. Alistair White, British Deputy Ambassador to the Philippines, inaugurated the new and upgraded UK Visa Application Centre in Manila on 08 March 2024, in the presence of Mr. Julian Salisbury, Assurance and Integrity Manager for Asia Pacific, UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) and Mr. Kaushik Ghosh, Head-Australasia, VFS Global.

The new UK Visa Application Centre in Manila located on the 6th Floor of the Makati Circuit Corporate Tower Two will offer customers a more comfortable and relaxed visa application submission experience. This spacious facility, equipped with modern amenities and services, will have the capacity to process a higher volume of visa applications per day, and enhance the customer experience by making the customer journey even more smooth and seamless.

Mr. Alistair White, British Deputy Ambassador to the Philippines, said, "This new and improved visa application centre (VAC) located at the city center is easily accessible by public transportation, providing our customers with added convenience to ensure they have a smooth start to their journey to the UK, whether that's to visit, work or study at one of our world-leading institutions. In 2023, UKVI issued around 77,500 visas to Philippine nationals. This was a 24% increase from the numbers we saw issued in 2022. As always, we're excited to welcome more travellers this year, as the UK stands as a key travel destination for many in the Philippines."

Spread across 3,300 square feet, this centre offers 10 submission counters with a capacity to process over 300 applications per day. The new center also provides a newly designed state-of-the-art Premium Lounge as one of the optional services for UK visa customers.

Mr. Kaushik Ghosh, Head - Australasia, VFS Global, said, "VFS Global has shared a long-standing relationship of trust with the UK Government since 2003, and this new Visa Application Centre is a reflection of the strong partnership we share. This centre in Manila will play a crucial role in effectively catering to the growing demand for travel to the UK. We are confident that this new Visa Application Centre will enhance customer experience by making the visa application process even more smooth and seamless, thereby helping us better serve travellers to the UK better."

The visa application centre also offers a host of optional services that include the Premium Lounge service for end-to-end personalised assistance throughout the application process, Prime Time Appointments to allow submission of visa applications beyond regular working hours, and the Keep My Passport service to allow applicants to retain their passports while their applications are being assessed, and only submit them once a visa decision has been reached. Similarly, Courier Return service facilitates delivery of the processed documents to the registered address, while SMS Notifications can help in giving updates at each step of the application journey.

Additionally, UK visa customers can apply for their visa from any preferred location – home or office -- by opting for our On Demand Mobile Visa (ODMV) service.

VFS Global operates UK Visa Application Centres across two cities in Philippines – Cebu and Manila. This new Visa Application Centre in Manila will cater to UK visa applicants including study, travel, business, and others.

VFS Global, which has been a trusted partner for the UK Government since 2003, won the global contract for overseas UK visa and Citizenship services last year. As part of the contract, during 2024, VFS Global will deploy 240 Visa and Citizenship Application Service (VCAS) Centres for the UK in 142 countries across Africa & Middle East, Americas, Australasia & Europe, China & Taiwan, and Asia & Asia Pacific regions. These centres will accept all categories of visa applications as well as UK passport applications in some locations. Combined, these new centres are estimated to process 3.8 million applicants every year.

For more information, please visit <https://visa.vfsglobal.com/phl/en/gbr/>.

About VFS Global

As the world's leading outsourcing and technology service specialist, VFS Global embraces technological innovation including Generative AI to support governments and diplomatic missions worldwide. The company manages non-judgmental and administrative tasks related to applications for visa, passport, and consular services for its client governments, increasing productivity and enabling them to focus entirely on the critical task of assessment.

With a responsible approach to technology development, adoption and integration, the company prioritizes ethical practices and sustainability while serving as the trusted partner to 67 client governments. Operating over 3,300 Application Centres in 150 countries, VFS Global has efficiently processed more than 280 million applications since 2001.

Headquartered in Zurich and Dubai and backed by majority shareholder Blackstone, along with the Swiss-based Kuoni and Huentobler Foundation and EQT, VFS Global is committed to creating value for all stakeholders and leading in responsible, innovative solutions making government services more effective and efficient.

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