Extending your Tier 4 student visa in the UK

nottingham.ac.uk/go/visa-application
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The information provided in this guide is correct at the time of publication (September 2017) however it is subject to change without notice. For the most up-to-date information, please check the online version of this guide at nottingham.ac.uk/go/guides

All students are advised to read this leaflet very carefully and to refer to the Tier 4 (General) Policy Guidance when preparing their application.

Preparing for your Tier 4 student visa extension

When to extend your visa

Check your immigration document to see when your current visa expires. Allow plenty of time to complete your application and begin preparing your finances and other documentation at least one month before your visa expiry date.

If you apply after your visa has expired, you are applying as an overstayer – which means that you are in the UK without immigration permission. Overstaying is a criminal offence. You may only apply for a visa extension from the UK within 14 days of becoming an overstayer, and only if you can demonstrate a good reason beyond your control why you could not apply in time. If you overstay by more than 90 days you will normally be barred from coming back to the UK for at least 12 months.

Obtaining your CAS

Students starting new courses automatically receive a CAS up to four months before their course start date when they hold an unconditional offer of study and have paid any necessary deposits.

Current students at the University will need a new CAS number if they are making a visa extension application (in the UK or overseas) to continue their current course or for periods of reassessments and will need to actively request one following the instructions below.

CAS numbers are only valid for one visa application and expire six months after they are issued. If your visa application is refused, you will need a new CAS number. New students who receive a visa refusal need to be aware that the University’s latest date to issue a CAS is three working days before the course start date.

Current students can request a CAS up to four months before the visa expiry date.

Step 1 – How to request a CAS

If you are continuing on your current course of study but you need extra time to do so, you will need to request a CAS via the Online Store:

store.nottingham.ac.uk
(Product Catalogue> Student Documents and Letters> CAS - Existing Students)

You must also meet the Tier 4 academic progression requirements in order to extend your visa in the UK; please contact the Visa and Immigration Team to check that you can apply in the UK.
Making your Tier 4 student visa application

If you are in the UK and you already have a Tier 4 student visa (or another type of visa that permits you to switch into Tier 4) you will be able to apply for your new Tier 4 visa providing that the gap between your visa expiry date and the start of your new course is less than 28 days.

You have a choice of three application services: standard or priority (both by post) or premium (in-person).

Using the online application

Whether opting for the standard, priority or premium service, you will need to complete the Tier 4 online application. When you apply online the date of payment is the date of application. You should ensure that you demonstrate personal funds (where applicable) for at least 28 days before the date of application online.

You have 15 working days from the date of application to submit your paper documents if you are making a standard application by post or 45 days to attend a premium service centre, if you are applying in person. If you choose the priority service, your documents must reach the Home Office within two days. For guidance on completing the Tier 4 online form, please visit: nottingham.ac.uk/internationalstudents/guides

Visit the Home Office website: gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa/extend-your-visa and navigate to the ‘apply online’ section to link to the Tier 4 online application system.

Any dependants extending their visa with you can be included in the Tier 4 student online application form.

Standard service

If you choose the standard service – which is the less expensive option but has a longer processing time – you can either post your application through the Visa and Immigration Team, or by yourself.
We highly recommend that you use our checking and sending service. If there is a problem with an application that you post independently, it will be very difficult for you to follow up with the Home Office. For applications sent through the Visa and Immigration Team, we have access to dedicated support within the Home Office and as your application will have been checked by one of our immigration advisers, there is less risk of a refusal that will affect your immigration status and/or registration with the University.

We rigorously check visa applications, will tell you if anything is incorrect or missing and we only send applications which we think have a good chance of succeeding. There is no cost for the University checking and sending service beyond the £2 postage charge. We also process dependant applications. Applications need to be handed into the Visa and Immigration Team before 4pm on a Thursday to be included in the batch that we send to the Home Office each week on Friday mornings.

If you choose the standard service and post your application on your own or if your application is not eligible for sending via the Visa and Immigration Team, you should use the postal address on the application form and you should send your application by Special Delivery, which is the most secure method of postage. The Visa and Immigration Team can still check your application before you send it even if you are posting it independently and it is advisable that you see us to reduce the risk of a refusal.

If you would like to have your documents returned to the Visa and Immigration Team, please notify us so that we can give you our correct correspondence address and so that we know how to notify you when your documents are returned. Please notify us if you change your contact details while you are waiting for a decision on your visa application.

**Processing time for standard applications**

It usually takes around 6-8 weeks for the Home Office to process an application made using the standard service but there is no guarantee and it can take longer in some cases. If you are travelling urgently, we suggest you apply for the premium service (in-person). There is no guarantee that your application will be sent back in time for you to travel and we would advise that you do not make any non-refundable plans until your documents and Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) have been returned. Please note that we cannot chase applications with the Home Office unless it has been eight weeks since the date of your online application.

**Priority service**

You must fill in a request form in order to use the priority service. Visit [gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa/extend-your-visa](https://www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa/extend-your-visa) and navigate to ‘Apply for the priority service.’ Only the first 60 requests each day are accepted so you need to wait for email confirmation that you have been successful before you can submit the online visa application, which you must do within 24 hours of receiving the email. Dependants can also apply with you using this service. You will be given an address to send your supporting documents to by post, and you will need to use a special delivery service or courier to ensure your documents reach the Home Office within two days of submitting the online visa application form.

The service standard for priority applications is 10 days.

**Premium service**

If you would like to pay for a premium service and have your application decided quickly, you can apply in-person at a premium service centre. These are located in Belfast, Birmingham (Solihull), Cardiff, Croydon (London), Glasgow, Liverpool, and Sheffield. You must make an appointment as part of your online application using the Tier 4 online application form. If the Home Office is satisfied with your application you will receive a decision on the day and if successful, your new visa in the form of a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) will be sent to the correspondence address used in your application form within 10 working days of your appointment. We do not advise you apply in-person if there are any complex circumstances surrounding your application or immigration history.
If you want your documents returned to the Visa and Immigration Team please notify us so that we can give you our correct correspondence address and so that we know how to notify you when your documents are returned.

Cost

A standard service visa application in the UK costs £457. A priority service visa application costs £916. A premium service visa cost is £1,047. The same application fees apply for each dependant family member.

The application process requires that Tier 4 applicants apply online. This means that you will be required to pay using a debit or credit card (online) and you should receive instant confirmation of payment and an automatic receipt.

The NHS health surcharge

The National Health Service surcharge applies to each visa application submitted. For students and their dependants the fee is £150 per year. The total surcharge amount for the whole period of the visa granted is payable upfront at the visa application stage. For full details please visit: gov.uk/healthcare-immigration-application

Dependants

Your spouse/civil partner – and in some cases unmarried partner – as well as dependant children can extend their visa with you as a Tier 4 student dependant if you can show that:

- you are studying a postgraduate course that lasts 12 months or longer at a higher education institution; or
- you are a government-sponsored student on a course that lasts six months or longer; or
- you are applying for immigration permission to study a course of six months or more, your dependant(s) is applying with you, and you hold (or within three months of the date of your application you were last granted) immigration permission under Tier 4 or as a student.

If your family is currently abroad and you would like to invite them to join you in the UK as your Tier 4 dependants, please refer to our guide, ‘Visas for family and friends’. For more information please visit: nottingham.ac.uk/internationalstudents/visasimmigration/guides

Babies born in the UK to students or to Tier 4 dependants may apply for leave to remain as Tier 4 dependants from within the UK and do not need to leave the UK to gain entry clearance. This application can be made through the Visa and Immigration Team. Our immigration advisers can give you more information about applications for babies born in the UK upon enquiry.

Amount of funding required

You will need to show funding for the course fees shown in your CAS checking document and £1015 per month to cover living costs for each month of your course up to a maximum of nine months (£9135).

Please see ‘Funding for dependants’ on page 6 of this guide if you are applying with family members.

Please note that established presence rules and concessions were removed on 12 November 2015.

Methods of showing funding

There are several different ways of showing the financial evidence required in support of your application. It is important that you check that your financial evidence meets the requirements outlined in the Tier 4 (General) Policy Guidance.

We recommend that you keep the funds in your account until after you receive your visa.

Also, you should check that your funds are held in a financial institution that can satisfy Home Office checks. The Home Office have produced a list of acceptable and unacceptable financial institutions for some countries. gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-rules-appendix-p
Tuition fees paid, tuition fee scholarships and stipends towards living expenses from the University should be confirmed in the CAS. If you are a continuing student, these figures may not automatically be included. Please provide a copy of your scholarship letter to the Visa and Immigration Team so that we can confirm the details and add them to the CAS. Money not shown in the CAS should be shown by the methods listed.

**Funding method 1 – for self-funding students**

You can show original bank statements in your name, jointly in your name and another or in your parents’ names. Your application will be simpler if the funds are in your name. The funds must:

a) be in cash – **not** shares/bonds/investments/credit cards

b) have been in the bank account for a consecutive 28 days prior to your application. The balance cannot dip below the required amount, even for one day, otherwise your application will be refused

c) show a **last transaction date** within 31 days of your visa application. The immigration officials will not consider the closing balance on the day the statement was printed

If you are using printed statements from the bank or internet, they must also:

- show the financial institution’s name and logo
- show your name and account number
- be stamped by the bank on each page

If your printed statements do not confirm the required details, you should supply a bank letter on signed, letter-headed paper which confirms the amount of money available to you and the dates it has been held in the account.

Please note that business/ company account statements will not be accepted.

If you are using your parents’ personal accounts, you must include:

- an original letter, signed and dated by the account holder confirming your relationship and that the funds are for you to use for tuition fees and/or living expenses while studying in the UK
- your original birth certificate

**Overseas bank statements**

When applying in the UK, it is safer to use UK bank statements because the format is familiar to the Home Office and the statements are easier to verify. If overseas bank accounts are used, a foreign currency conversion must be printed and submitted with your application from [www.oanda.com](http://www.oanda.com). Statements must be in English or officially translated. Deposit accounts (used in China, India, Russia and Kazakhstan for example) can be the most risky form of financial evidence as the funds are sometimes considered to be frozen rather than readily available.

**Funding method 2 – for applicants with official financial sponsorship**

Students sponsored by the UK government, their home government, the British Council or any international organisation, international company or university can rely on an original sponsorship letter issued within the last six months to demonstrate funding. Please note that if the duration of your funding or permission to stay is shorter than your course, your visa will be granted to the shorter date.

**Funding method 3 – for applicants with a loan**

You must show formal evidence of a loan you may have taken out in your own name. The bank providing the loan must be regulated by an official regulatory body.
Funding method 4 – for applicants from ‘low-risk’ countries

If you are considered by the Home Office to be a national of a ‘low-risk country’ you can tick a box on the application form indicating that you hold the required evidence but don’t need to include it with your application. You should still meet the requirements as you may be asked to submit proof at a later stage. This applies to nationals of:

- Argentina
- Australia
- Barbados
- Botswana
- Brunei
- Canada
- Chile
- Hong Kong
- Japan
- Malaysia
- New Zealand
- Oman
- Qatar
- Singapore
- South Korea
- Taiwan
- Trinidad and Tobago
- United Arab Emirates
- United States of America
- British Nationals Overseas

Funding for dependants

You will need £680 in support funds for each month of your studies per dependant up to a maximum of nine months.

Please note that in some cases where dependants are making visa applications for a short period of less than nine months, dependants may need to show funds for more months than the main applicant (the student) due to the different way UKVI calculate this requirement. Both students and dependants will still only ever need to show living costs for a maximum of nine months. The Visa and Immigration Team can help you calculate how much money you need to show for dependants’ living costs.

Sponsored students who receive financial support for their families will ideally be able to produce a sponsor letter with the names of their dependant family members as well as details of the specific amount that they receive. You should supplement the sponsor letter with your personal bank statements if the stipend from your sponsor is not sufficient to cover all dependants.

ATAS

If you need clearance from the Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS), it will be confirmed in your CAS. If you are a non-EEA or Swiss national planning to undertake study in the UK in certain science, engineering or technology disciplines, then you will need to obtain an ATAS certificate before you can apply for a visa extension or fresh entry clearance. The application is made online at [gov.uk/academic-technology-approval-scheme](http://gov.uk/academic-technology-approval-scheme).

On the application you will be asked to include a statement outlining your area of research. This statement must be the same as the one held on file in your school and agreed with your supervisor. ATAS is valid for six months only and if it is not used within this time, new clearance must be obtained before your visa application is made.

Generally, ATAS applications will be processed within 20 working days from the date the application is completed, but do allow plenty of time to get the certificate in advance of your visa expiry date. Your visa application cannot be processed until you have received ATAS clearance.

If your research changes during your studies, you are required to obtain new ATAS. If you wish to transfer to a course which requires ATAS clearance, you are required to obtain clearance before your transfer can be processed. Students extending their visas while in thesis pending or while awaiting a viva voce also require new ATAS clearance.

It may not be necessary to have ATAS if you are applying for the Doctorate Extension Scheme but the rules around this are complex, please speak to an immigration adviser.
Further checklist for documents

- All documents provided in your application need to be original, not scans or photocopies.
- If you are applying with your dependant partner, you will be asked to show some evidence that your relationship is subsisting. This could be a council tax letter, a utility bill or a joint bank account statement. The document needs to confirm both names at the same address.
- If any documents are not produced in English or Welsh, you will need to provide official certified translations.
- If within the last 12 months you have been sponsored for both tuition fees and living costs, you will need a letter from your sponsor giving consent to your extension application.
- If you are making a first visa application for a baby recently born in the UK, you will need to provide their original birth certificate.
- If you are under 18, you will need to provide a consent letter from your parents.

Document checklist

- Tier 4 form (printed draft version). Please note that the Tier 4 online form should be mostly completed by you first. Please use our example application form:
  - nottingham.ac.uk/internationalstudents.guides

- Copy of your CAS checking document (if you are applying through the Visa and Immigration Team).

- Two new passport photographs (check the photo guidance to meet criteria: www.gov.uk/photos-for-passports).

- Current passport.

- BRP card (if applicable).

- Police registration certificate (if applicable) ensuring that your current address is updated.

- Personal bank statements and/or sponsor/scholarship/loan letter.

- ATAS certificate (if applicable).

- Original previous qualification certificate or transcripts (if referred to in the CAS).

- £2 cash per applicant for postage (if you are applying through the Visa and Immigration Team).

Please photocopy everything for your own records.

While your application is pending

Provided that you’ve submitted an extension application before your current visa expires, you are legally allowed to remain in the UK while your application is considered. The conditions of your stay remain the same as they were before you sent the application.
After your Tier 4 student visa application

Providing your biometrics
All visas issued in the UK are issued onto an ID card called a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP). In order to have a BRP issued, you will have to provide fingerprints and have a photo taken, otherwise known as 'enrolling your biometrics'.

If you opt for the premium service and apply in-person, you will complete this on the day of your application. If you opt for the standard or priority service and submit an application by post, the Home Office will send you a biometric invitation letter with instructions about giving biometric data at the local Post Office.

For applications posted through the Visa and Immigration Team, the Home Office will usually send the biometric invitation letter to the Visa and Immigration Team and we will contact you to collect the letter from us. If your dependants were included in your visa application each family member will be issued with a separate biometric invitation letter and the whole family must attend to enrol their biometrics. If you receive your biometric letter/s directly to your home address, please let us know.

If you have not received a biometric invitation letter within one month of posting your application please let us know.

The nearest place to the University to enrol your biometrics is the Post Office on Queen Street in Nottingham city centre, postcode NG1 2BN. The current cost is £19.20 per applicant.

The Home Office has the right to reject your extension application as invalid (incomplete) if you do not supply your biometrics within an appropriate time frame.

After you successfully enrol your biometrics, your application will be assigned to a caseworker in the Home Office and processed.
Requests to process an application urgently
If you need to travel urgently for an emergency, please come to see an immigration adviser in the Visa and Immigration Team.

Once your extension has been granted
Once a decision is made on your application, the documents and passports included in your application will be returned from the Home Office — either to you personally or to the Visa and Immigration Team if you have used our address in your application form. Your new BRP card will be sent separately by post approximately 10 days later. We highly recommend you do not make any arrangements to travel until you have received all of your documents as well as the BRP card. You will need to keep the BRP card safe as you will need it as well as your passport if you travel out of the UK. You will also need to show the BRP to an employer if you are looking for part-time work.

The Visa and Immigration Team will inform you by email once all of your documents are ready to be collected.

If you make your extension application in-person, the documents included in your application should be returned to you on the day though they are occasionally held for further processing. You will not be given your BRP card on the day, but will have to wait for it to be sent to you by post, approximately 10 working days later. We recommend you do not make any arrangements to travel until you have the card.

Providing copies of your passport and visa
Your immigration responsibilities require you to provide a copy of your current passport and visa to the University while you are studying with us. If your documents are returned to the Visa and Immigration Team, we will take a scanned copy for our records. If your documents are returned to you personally, you must provide a copy to the University by having your BRP and current passport scanned at any Student Service Centre. Similarly, if you obtain a new passport, please bring it to any Student Service Centre for scanning. Failure to provide copies of your documents may have an effect on your registration at the University.

Police registration
If your visa or visa decision letter says that you have to register with the police, you must inform the police of any changes to your visa — such as a new visa expiry date — within seven days of receiving your visa. You will need your BRP card and current passport along with your police registration certificate to have the certificate updated. There is no charge for alerting the police of changes to your stay and you do not need to make an appointment.

If you had not previously required a registration certificate but your new visa or visa decision letter indicates that you do, you will need to make an appointment with the police within seven days of obtaining your visa.

The police are available on campus and the Visa and Immigration Team can provide details to you on request.

Refusals
If your visa is refused, it is essential that you contact the Visa and Immigration Team immediately so that we can advise you accordingly. A visa refusal may have an effect on your registration at the University.

Applying from overseas
If you are applying for your visa overseas please see our guide Applying for your student visa from overseas. You may wish to speak to an immigration adviser about the documents you will need to submit with your application — particularly the financial evidence. The Visa and Immigration Team cannot issue you with the CAS number needed for your extension application until we are confident that your financial evidence will satisfy UK Visas and Immigration rules and result in a successful visa application.
Immigration responsibilities

It is important that as an international student, you comply with the immigration regulations during your stay in the UK. Your responsibilities are:

- To provide the University with a copy of your passport and visa/BRP
- To keep your contact details in the UK up to date via the Student Portal
- To register for your course on time each academic year
- To study while you are in the UK (ensuring that you have good attendance on your course and no significant gaps or absences)
- To follow University processes if you decide that you would like to defer or suspend your studies or withdraw from your course
- To return home if you defer or suspend your studies, withdraw from your course or your course is terminated
- To act within the Immigration Rules if you change education provider (to another approved institution). It is a criminal offence to register for studies at an institution other than the one shown on your visa. Students switching institutions need to make a new visa application as soon as a CAS is produced for them.
- To act within the immigration rules if you change your course. If you applied for your current visa using a CAS, the university will report the change to the UKVI. If you applied for your current visa before the CAS system, or before 31 March 2009 when Tier 4 was introduced, there can still be immigration implications to changes in your studies – please contact the Visa and Immigration Team for further information on individual cases.

In addition to these points, you should be sure to only work within the restrictions allowed by your visa and to know when your visa is due to expire so that you can prepare to apply well in advance of the expiry date if you require a further extension.

The University’s responsibilities

The University has certain responsibilities and duties under the Points-Based System which we are required by the UKVI to comply with. Our responsibilities include:

- To take and keep copies of the passport and visa/BRP for non EEA nationals
- To keep contact details up to date (and to keep a record of any changes of address)
- To check registration and to report non registration to the UKVI
- To monitor attendance and to report unauthorised non attendance to the UKVI
- To monitor changes of status and to report deferrals, interruptions, withdrawals and course terminations to the UKVI
- To notify the UKVI of any significant changes in your circumstances (such as a change of course or the successful completion of your course where this is earlier than expected)
We’re here to help, get in touch:

We offer a professional and confidential immigration advisory service to all international and EU students both before they join the University and once they have arrived.

You can contact us by email, telephone or in person. We run a regular service where you can meet an immigration adviser, Monday to Friday throughout the academic year. To find out more about our service times and locations, please visit:

+44 (0)115 846 6125
immigration-support@nottingham.ac.uk
nottingham.ac.uk/internationalstudents/advisers

We are always looking for ways to develop and improve our support service and welcome feedback from staff and students.

The information in this leaflet is given in good faith and correct at the time of writing. It has been carefully checked in line with UKCISA and Home Office guidance, but The University of Nottingham accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of the information.

If you would like any further information or assistance, please contact us. The advisers, Rosemary Gibson, Melanie Bentham-Hill, Ruth Hudson, Amy Hewitt, Sofia Markopoulou and Hong Sun are authorised to provide immigration advice and services by an order made under Section 84 (4) (d) of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

If at any time you are not happy with the advice you have been given by the Visa and Immigration Team in the first instance you should raise this with the Visa and Immigration Team Manager or the Head of Specialist Services. If the matter is not resolved or you are still unhappy, you can make a complaint to the OISC (Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner) via their website:
oisc.gov.uk

We're here to help, get in touch: