

Applying for your Student Visa Overseas



INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICE GUIDES



Applying for your Student Visa Overseas

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Applying for your Student Visa Overseas

This booklet contains immigration advice for students applying from overseas to study at The University of Nottingham.

What if I am entering the UK for 6 months or less?

International students entering the UK to study for a period of 6 months or less* are advised to apply for a Student Visitor Visa.

*This advice applies to split site PhD students but does not apply to English language students planning to register on a degree programme as soon as they have completed the English language course.

How do I apply for a Student Visitor Visa?

If you are a visa national, you will need to apply for Entry Clearance as a Student Visitor before you travel. If you are a non-visa national, you will be able to get the Student Visitor Visa on arrival in the UK as long as you have proof of your study offer and funding in your hand luggage, to show immigration officers at the airport.

You can check if you are a visa national (and therefore need Entry Clearance before travelling) from this list: www.ukvisas.gov.uk/en/doineedvisa/visadatvnationals

Information on student visitor visas and how to apply for this type of visa can be found online at www.ukvisas.gov.uk/en/howtoapply/infos/inf2visitors#16052814 respectively.

It is important to note the restrictions attached to a student visitor visa:

- The visa is for a maximum of 6 months and cannot be extended from within the UK. (Therefore the Student Visitor route is not usually appropriate for English language students registering on a degree programme soon after the English language course)
- The visa holder is not allowed to undertake any kind of work, either paid or unpaid whilst in the UK
- The visa holder will not have access to the National Health Service
- Dependants are not able to accompany student visitors to the UK



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What if I am entering the UK for more than 6 months?

International students entering the UK (The University of Nottingham) to undertake full-time courses or parts of courses for a period of more than 6 months have to apply for entry as 'adult students' or 'general students' under Tier 4 of the Points Based System (PBS).

You should think very carefully about which institution you wish to study at because the visa issued to you under Tier 4 will be linked to a particular education provider (the one whose visa letter you use to apply for your visa). For visas issued on or after 5th October 2009, it will be a criminal offence to register for studies at an institution other than the one shown on the visa.

When should I apply?

Applications can normally be submitted up to 3 months prior to the start of the course where applicants hold all of the necessary supporting documentation as outlined below. We recommend that applicants apply as early as possible.

What is the cost?

The cost of an application made overseas will be £145.00 in local currency.

How do I apply and what documents do I need?

For detailed guidance on how to apply, see the UK Visas website for more information:

www.ukvisas.gov.uk/en/howtoapply/infos/inf29pbsstudent

The above link will show you the **VAF 9** application form which you need, plus **Appendix 8** which you must also complete. Any dependants must complete the **VAF 10** application form.

Under the PBS, applicants are required to score 40 points in order to be issued with a student visa under Tier 4. The points are awarded as follows:



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Points Awarded	Documentary evidence required to score points						
<p><i>30 points for your Visa Letter or CAS (Certificate of Acceptance of Studies)</i></p> <p>From February 2010, CAS Certificates will replace Visa Letters.</p> <p>Students who hold an offer for a course starting on or before 15 April 2010 will need to apply for the visa, using the Visa Letter (<u>wherever possible</u>), between 15 January 2010 and 26 February 2010, before CAS becomes compulsory.</p>	<p>Visa letter or CAS Certificate dated within 6 months of your visa application. This will be provided to unconditional offer holders who have firmly accepted their offer to study with us.</p>						
<p><i>10 points for Funding</i></p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 15%; text-align: left; padding: 5px;">Course length</th> <th style="width: 85%; text-align: left; padding: 5px;">Maintenance needed</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">9 months or less</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">Course fees and £600 to cover living costs for each calendar month of the course</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">More than 9 months</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">First year of fees and £5,400 to cover nine months of living costs in the UK Or, if you have just finished your course in the UK and your last course finished less than 4 months ago AND was of more than 6 months in length, you can show a reduced level of funding for living costs amounting to £1200 (for 2 months only, £600 x2)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Note: You must still ensure you have access to sufficient funds to cover your tuition fees and living expenses if your course is longer than one year although this additional evidence is not required for your visa application.</p>	Course length	Maintenance needed	9 months or less	Course fees and £600 to cover living costs for each calendar month of the course	More than 9 months	First year of fees and £5,400 to cover nine months of living costs in the UK Or, if you have just finished your course in the UK and your last course finished less than 4 months ago AND was of more than 6 months in length, you can show a reduced level of funding for living costs amounting to £1200 (for 2 months only, £600 x2)	<p>A) Bank statements for a cash account in your name, held jointly in your name or parents bank account details. Funds must be held for at least 28 days prior to the date of the application. Shares, bonds, pension funds and similar types of investments will not be accepted</p> <p>Bank statements in your parent's name must be accompanied by an original, signed and dated letter of guarantee from the parent confirming the relationship to the NAMED student and consent for funding to be given for study. Student's must also include a BIRTH CERTIFICATE to prove the relationship.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>B) A letter confirming a loan in your name and clearly showing the amount. The bank providing the loan must be regulated by an official regulatory body. Where you are relying on a loan to cover part of your tuition fees and/or living expenses you must also include financial evidence as outlined above to show that you have the difference in your bank account or in a joint bank account including your name and you must have held this money in your account for 28 days prior to the date of your application.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>C) A letter confirming you are in receipt of official financial or government sponsorship. The letter from your official financial sponsor must be on official letter-headed paper and have the official stamp of that organisation on it. The letter must also include the length of the sponsorship and the amount of money you will receive (or a statement that your official sponsor will cover all of your tuition and living expenses). Where the period shown on the sponsorship letter is less than that shown on the visa letter your application may be refused or a shorter visa issued.</p>
Course length	Maintenance needed						
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Overseas accounts

Where the financial evidence you present refers to overseas currency you must write on your statement the closing balance in pounds sterling according to the exchange rate on the following website (www.oanda.com/convert/classic). We recommend that you print off the conversion from this site and include it with your application.

Statements must be in English, or officially translated.

Paying money to the University in advance

Where you have paid money to the University in advance, you need to ensure that this is referred to in the visa letter or that you have a separate official receipt confirming the amount of money paid. Unsupported online receipts will not be accepted.

Please be careful - if you make your payment late (in late August for example), the university may not be able to get the official receipt to you in time for your visa application, therefore in some cases you may be best to show the funding in your bank account instead.

Funding for dependants (partners and children that may accompany you)

If you are bringing dependants (partners and/or children) with you to the UK you must show that you have an extra £400 per month for up to 9 months to cover the living expenses for each dependant.

What else MUST I provide?

- Evidence of your academic qualifications referred to in the visa letter
- Evidence of your English language qualifications if required
- Unconditional consent from a previous sponsor to remain in the UK if you were in receipt of sponsorship for a course during the past 12 months
- An ATAS certificate (if applicable). This will be indicated on the visa letter we send to you. alternatively you can find a full list of courses where an ATAS certificate is required at www.fco.gov.uk/en/fco-in-action/counter-terrorism/weapons/atas
- An official translation of all documents in a language other than English or Welsh. The translation must include: *The translators qualifications; Confirmation from the translator that it is an accurate translation or the original document; The date; The translators signature*
- If you are under 18 years old, you must have a letter from both parents or legal guardians confirming support for application and consent to arrangements for your care in the UK.



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This is not an exhaustive list of documents and we strongly recommend that you check the documents required with your local British Embassy or High Commission before submitting your application.

What about Biometric Data?

You will be required to provide your biometric details with your application. Further information on this can be found online at www.ukvisas.gov.uk/en

How long will my student visa be?

If your visa application is successful, you can expect to receive the following:

Type of course	Length of course	Length of stay allowed
Degree level or above	12 months or more	The full length of the course plus four months
Degree level or above	6 months or more but less than 12 months	The full length of the course plus two months
Pre-sessional English courses	Less than 6 months	The full length of the course plus one month
Below degree level	12 months or more	The full length of the course (up to a maximum of three years if you are over 18) plus four months
Below degree level	6 months or more but less than 12 months	The full length of the course (up to a maximum of three years if you are over 18) plus two months

If your application for a Tier 4 visa is successful but you think there is a mistake in terms of the length of stay that has been given to you based upon the guidelines outlined above we would recommend that you contact your local British Embassy or High Commission in the first instance to see if it is a mistake which can be corrected. If you are unable to contact the Embassy/High Commission but feel that a mistake has been made please email us at:

International-support@nottingham.ac.uk

What are my Immigration Responsibilities?

UKBA regulations mean that as a Tier 4 student visa holder you will have certain responsibilities once you enter the UK. It is very important that you are aware of these responsibilities and that you take them seriously. Your responsibilities will be as follows:

- To provide the University with a copy of your passport and visa/biometric ID card when this information is requested once you arrive in the UK
- To keep your contact details in the UK up to date via the University's Student Portal



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- To register for your course on time
- To study whilst 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 stop studying in the UK (for example if you defer or suspend your studies, withdraw from your course or your course is terminated)
- To notify the UKBA by email if you change your course or your Education Provider (to another approved provider) after you arrive in the UK. **For visas issued on or after 5th October 2009, it will be a criminal offence to register for studies at an institution other than the one shown on the visa.**
- To observe the Immigration Rules and not work more than 20 hours a week during University term-time

What are the University's Immigration Responsibilities?

The University has certain responsibilities or duties under the Points Based System which we are required by the UKBA to comply with. Our responsibilities are:

- To take and keep copies of the passport and visa/biometric ID cards for students who are 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 UKBA
- To monitor attendance and to report unauthorised non attendance to the UKBA
- To monitor changes of status and to report deferrals, suspensions, withdrawals and course terminations to the UKBA
- To notify the UKBA 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)

What is Administrative Review?

If for any reason your application is unsuccessful and you think a mistake has been made you can apply for an Administrative Review of the decision. Your request must be made within 28 days from the date you receive the refusal notice. The administrative reviewer will examine the evidence sent with the original application as copies are kept at the refusal post. You will not be allowed to submit fresh evidence as part of this process. The administrative reviewer will finish



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their review and tell you in writing of their decision usually within 28 days from the date they receive your administrative review request notice.

You should also send a copy of your refusal notice through to the International Office either by email (International-Support@nottingham.ac.uk) or fax +44 115 951 5155 so that we are aware of your situation and can offer further advice and guidance as appropriate.

Further information

If you are applying for your visa overseas further information is available online at www.ukvisas.gov.uk/en

What if I am already in the UK?

If you are applying for your visa in the UK further information is available online at www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/studyingintheuk/quickguideforstudent/adultstudents/

For students already in the UK, the International Office runs the Student Batch Scheme where we can check your visa application forms and supporting documents and, if everything is in order, we can submit your visa extension application to the UK Border Agency on your behalf. It is possible to use this service before you register with the University providing you hold a visa letter from The University of Nottingham and you intend to study with us. Please make contact with us through the details below.



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We offer an appointment service between 10am and 12noon Monday to Thursday at the Student Services Centre on University Park Campus. Appointments must be booked via telephone on: 0115 951 3710. This is term time only.

We also offer a drop in service, no appointment needed at the International Office on Jubilee Campus between 1pm and 4pm Monday – Friday throughout the year.

In addition, we offer a series of workshops on a range of topics which can be booked online. See www.nottingham.ac.uk/international/current_students/student_support for further information.

The information in this leaflet is given in good faith and correct at the time of writing (November 2009). It has been carefully checked with UKCISA and the UK Border Agency (UKBA), 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 the International Support Services Team. The Advisers, Rosemary Gibson, Hong Sun, Ruth Fox, Helen Rylands and Deborah Webb, 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 International Support Services Team, in the first instance you should raise this with the Head of the International Support Services Team or the Director of the International Office. 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 www.oisc.gov.uk

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www.nottingham.ac.uk/international/current_students/student_support
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