

Applying for your Student Visa Overseas



INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICE GUIDES



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Frequently Asked Questions

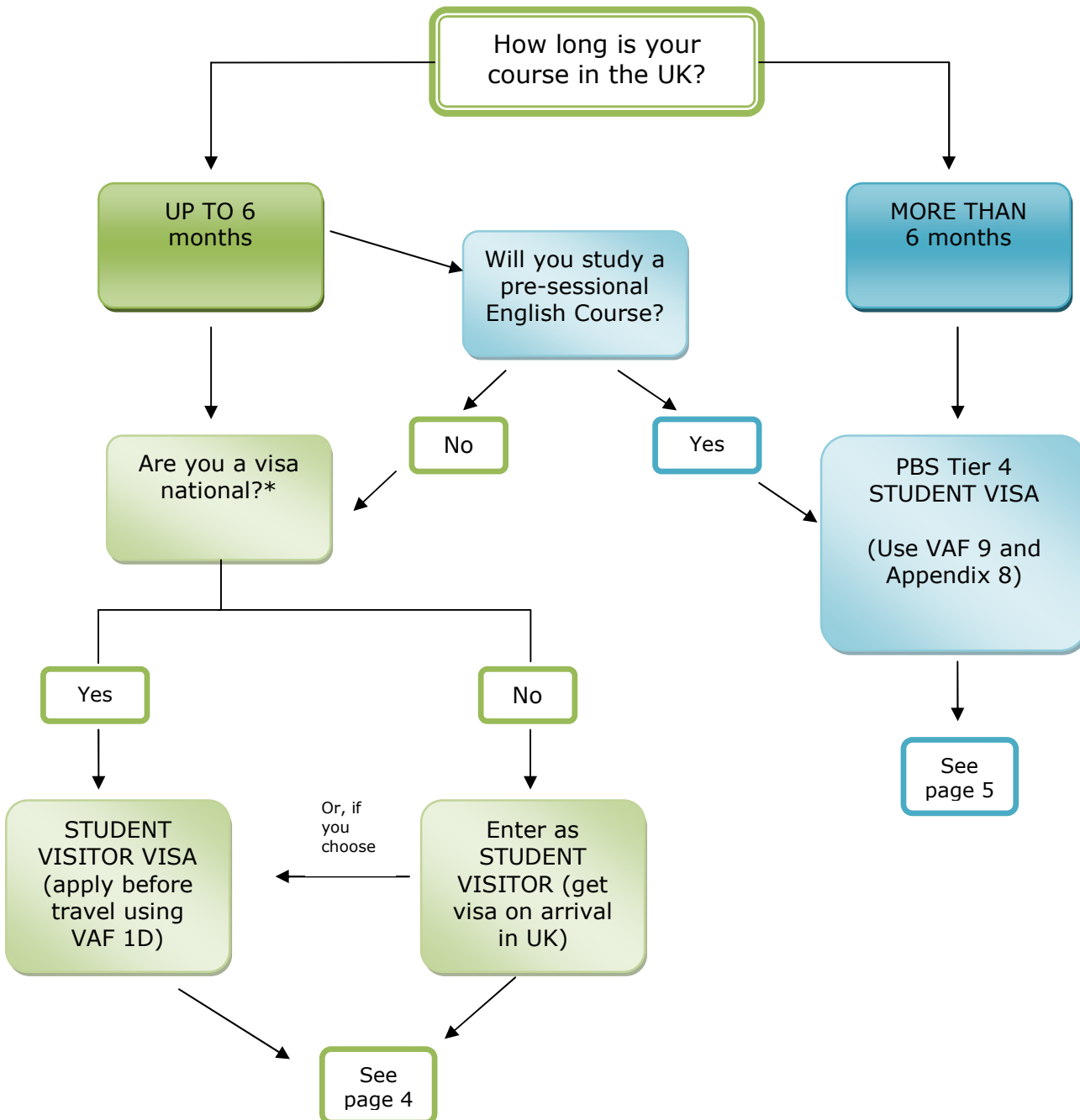
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Applying for your Student Visa Overseas

New students, coming to study in the UK for a new course

➤ Visa routes depending on length of study



* 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



Applying for your Student Visa Overseas

➤ **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 soon after completing 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. Applications should be made through the British Diplomatic Post in your country, using application form VAF1D. You will need a Student Visitor Visa Letter from the Admissions Office, (Study Abroad / Exchange students please contact the Study Abroad team in the International Office)

You will also need to show that you have the necessary funds to pay for any course fees and support yourself for the whole period of your stay in the UK. This can be in the form of bank statements in your name, scholarship or financial award letters – these must also have your name and details of amounts covered. 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/infs/inf2visitors#445910682.

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, 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

Applying for a Student Visitor Visa on arrival (non visa nationals only)

If you are a [non-visa national](#), you will be able to apply for a Student Visitor Visa on arrival in the UK. You will need the same documents as above; original offer letter from the University and proof of funding (details of scholarship or grant or bank statements dated within 1 month of your arrival in the UK). These documents must be in your hand luggage, to show immigration officers at the airport.

Return tickets are also helpful to show. Non-visa nationals arriving through Ireland should actively seek out an immigration official on arrival in the UK to ensure their passport is stamped with the student endorsement.



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➤ *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?

This is £255.00 in local currency. It is the same for any dependants applying at the same time.

Can I bring my family with me as Tier 4 dependants?

Your spouse/civil partner (and in some cases unmarried partner) may apply to join you as a Tier 4 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 6 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 3 months of the date of your application you were last granted) immigration permission under Tier 4 or as a student.



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How do I apply? How do I complete the visa forms?

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.

The International Office produce guidance on 'How to Complete the VAF 9 form' and 'How to Complete the Appendix 8 Self Assessment form', see here:

www.nottingham.ac.uk/internationaloffice/offer-holders/preparing/index.aspx#visa

It is also now possible to apply online in some parts of the world. You should check the information for your country here: www.ukvisas.gov.uk/en/howtoapply/wheretosapply/

What documents do I need to apply?

Under the Points Based System, 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:

Points Awarded	Documentary evidence required to score points
<p>30 points for CAS (Certificate of Acceptance of Studies)</p> <p>CAS have now replaced Visa Letters.</p> <p>If your visa is refused, you will need a NEW CAS number</p>	<p>CAS. This is not a paper document. It is a virtual document similar to a database record. Your CAS has a unique reference number and contains information about your study offer. You will be sent a CAS Checking Document by email, followed by the unique CAS reference number which you will then enter onto the visa form.</p> <p>A CAS will be provided automatically to unconditional offer holders who have firmly accepted their offer to study with us (and for Postgraduate Taught students when they have paid the £1000 deposit). The CAS is sent no more than 4 months before the start of the course. Tier 4 visas can only be applied for 3 months early.</p>



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	<p>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> <p>Note: Where a student is sponsored financially by a company, that company must be an <i>international</i> company.</p> <p>Method 4</p> <p>If you are considered by the UKBA to be a national of a low risk country (list below) you can tick a box on the Tier 4 (G) application form meaning that you don't need to show financial evidence. You should still meet the requirements however, as you MAY be asked to submit PROOF at a later stage by the UKBA.</p> <p>This applies to nationals of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Argentina, • Australia, • Brunei, • Canada, • Chile , • Croatia , • Hong Kong, • Japan , • New Zealand , • Singapore , • South Korea , • Taiwan (those who hold a passport issued by Taiwan that includes the number of the identification card issued by the competent authority in Taiwan in it), • Trinidad and Tobago, • United States of America or one who is• a British National Overseas
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Compulsory Tuition Fee Deposits

Postgraduate Taught students and Foundation Programme students are required to pay a £1000 deposit to accept their offer, after which they will receive a CAS. Students can make this payment via the portal (<https://my.nottingham.ac.uk/pgapps/welcome/>) either by credit card or bank transfer.

The deposit requirement will not apply to other groups of students and it will be waived for:

Sponsored students (where they provide a sponsor letter to helen.rylands@nottingham.ac.uk) and Federal loan students. For answers to common questions about deposits, please see here:

www.nottingham.ac.uk/internationaloffice/documents/deposits-faqs.pdf

Paying Tuition Fees in Advance

Students can pay money to the university in advance however this is not a requirement of the visa process. A student can instead show necessary funding in their own or their parent's bank account. Students who have paid money to the University in advance need to ensure that this is referred to in the CAS Checking Document emailed to them. Payments made after the CAS has been issued will not be shown on the CAS and therefore will not be taken into account when the visa is processed.

Accommodation Fee Payments

We do not include information on accommodation fees owed or paid as part of the CAS. The default for these fields is £0.00. In light of this students are advised to keep money for their living expenses (including accommodation) in their bank account until after their visa application has been processed. Any damage deposits required in order to secure the accommodation must be paid, but will not be included on the CAS.



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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. If a student falls into the lower maintenance category because they have recently completed a course in the UK, the family members will also fall into the lower maintenance category and funding for 2 months only needs to be shown.

What else MUST I provide?

- Original evidence of your academic qualifications referred to in the CAS. Original transcripts or certificates are necessary, provisional results are not accepted.
Note: if you are a current, continuing student at the University of Nottingham (i.e. you have been studying at Nottingham for 6 months or more) you do not need previous qualifications for your visa application. Refer to questions 5.4 and 5.5 of our guidance here: www.nottingham.ac.uk/internationaloffice/documents/completing-the-appendix-8.pdf
- Evidence of your English language qualifications if referred to in the CAS
- 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 CAS we send to you. alternatively you can find a full list of courses where an ATAS certificate is required at www.fco.gov.uk/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 your application and consent to arrangements for your care in the UK.
- If you are bringing family (spouse, civil partner or children) with you, you will need marriage and birth certificates to prove the relationships. *Please note that the immigration rules prevent students from travelling alone with children (without the other parent) unless they can prove sole custody for the child or that they are the sole surviving parent.*

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

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. Providing that your visa does not end more than 1 month before the start of your new course, it is possible



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to use this service before you register with the University if you hold a Tier 4 CAS from The University of Nottingham and you intend to study with us. Please make contact with us through the details at the end of the leaflet.



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Current students, continuing an existing course or re-sitting an exam

- **Continuing on your current course but extending your visa at home**

What is the cost?

Please refer to page 5 of this guidance

How do I apply and what documents do I need?

Please refer to page 5 of this guidance

Documents needed

The CAS (30 points)

In order to extend your visa you firstly need to request a CAS from the University. The visa letter system of previous years is not in place any more, the CAS system (Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies) is the new system.

To request a CAS, you can go in person to the Student Services Centre nearest to you, or you can request the CAS by email (complete only STEP 1 of the request form) see here:

<http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/academicservices/currentstudents/confirmationofacceptanceofstudiescertificate.aspx>

After 3 or 4 days, you should receive your CAS checking document by email. Check the information and if you are happy and want your CAS activating, you should contact the International Office by email at international-support@nottingham.ac.uk. When we activate your CAS, we give you a unique reference number which you use in your visa application.

- Tuition fees paid and tuition fee scholarships from the University will be confirmed on the CAS
- University accommodation fees paid will be confirmed on the CAS.

A student must allow 5 working days in total for a CAS to be prepared and activated.

If your visa is refused, you need a NEW CAS number



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Evidence of funding (10 points)

Course length	Maintenance needed
9 months or less	Course fees and £600 to cover living costs for each calendar month of the course up to a maximum of two months*
More than 9 months	Course fees for one year and £1,200 to cover two months of living costs in UK* <i>*if you hold a current valid visa and you have either a) completed a previous course of more than 6 months within your last period of leave, OR b) you have completed at least 6 months of your current course</i> In any other case, show £5400

What financial documents should I show?

Money not shown in the CAS should be shown in the methods listed on pages 6 & 7 of this guidance.

Other documents

- Passport, and if you have been issued with a visa on a UK ID card (if you have made a visa application in the UK since November 2008), then you would be best to take this home for the visa application too.
- If you are required to register with the Police and you have a Police Registration Certificate, you would be best to take this home for the visa application too.

For other suggested documents, please refer to page 8 of this guidance.

- Applicants also need to provide photographs – see here for UKBA guidance on this:
www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/applicationforms/flr/photoguidance0409.pdf



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Funding for dependants

Note: you can only bring dependants to the UK under Tier 4 if you meet one of the conditions highlighted on page 5 of this guide.

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 2 months to cover the living expenses for each dependant.

If the student falls under the higher maintenance rate, the dependant will also and will need to show £400 per month up to max of £3600 (9 months)

➤ *Re-sitting an exam*

If you are re-sitting exams in attendance you can follow the guidance above, or if extending your visa in the UK, you can use our guidance notes on 'Extending your Visa in the UK'.

Under the Points Based System if you are re-sitting exams as an external candidate (not in attendance) and there is a gap between your visa ending and your exams of more than 60 days, you will need to return home to make your visa application.

If your exams fall over two examination periods (for example in January and May) and your existing visa does not cover the first period, you will need to enter the UK under the Student Visitor Visa Category for the first exams, then, providing you can progress or complete your course you should return home and re-enter the UK on a full Tier 4 Student Visa.

For information on the Student Visitor Visa Category, please refer to page 3. You will need a Student Visitor letter and a Tuition Fee Receipt from Student Services Centre



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Frequently Asked Questions

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
- To register for your course on time



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



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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



Applying for your Student Visa Overseas



We offer an appointment service between 2pm and 4.20pm Monday to Thursday at the Student Services Centre on University Park Campus. Appointments must be booked at the Student Services Centre in Portland Building or 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 (**July 2011**). 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 Hudson, 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

International Office, Jubilee Campus, Wollaton Road, Nottingham, NG8 1BB
www.nottingham.ac.uk/international/current_students/student_support
Tel. 0115 951 5247

Email: international-support@nottingham.ac.uk