

Inviting Family and Friends to the UK



INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICE GUIDES



Inviting Family and Friends to the UK

Visitors

Anyone can come to *visit* you in the UK whilst you are studying here. They will be able to apply for a visitor visa from the British Embassy/ Consulate in their home country. If they are successful in securing entry clearance as a visitor, they will be able to enter the UK for up to six months. The six-month period cannot be extended. It is important that visitors are genuinely seeking entry for a limited period and plan to return home at the end of their stay.

Visitors are not permitted to work whilst they are here as they will have a *prohibition* on employment stated in their visa. Neither will they be entitled to claim public funds. This means that they must be able to prove that they have sufficient funds to finance their stay in the UK without needing to work or use public funds.

What documents should a prospective visitor submit with their application?

- VAF1A form if you are inviting friends. VAF1B form if you are inviting family (download both from www.ukvisas.gov.uk)
- Valid passport
- Visa fee (check the exact amount in local currency with the Embassy)
- 2 recent photographs
- Evidence of funds to cover all accommodation and daily expenses: for example personal bank statements, evidence of earnings or bank statements from the student in the UK if applicable. As a rough guide, estimate £30 per day for daily expenses.
- Evidence of medical insurance, perhaps as part of an overall travel insurance policy. Visitors are not eligible for free National Health Service treatment.
- Evidence to show that they intend to return home at the end of their visit. This might be proof of a job, family members, study or a mortgage.
- University letter giving course details and start, end and graduation dates of your course. This is from Student Registry or the Faculty Office in the School of Biosciences (or - for their undergraduate students - The Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences and School of Education provide letters). For Student Registry requests, fill in the online form at www.nottingham.ac.uk/academicservices/currentstudents/requestaletter.aspx or request the letter at The Student Services Centre, B Floor, Portland Building. This is also where you will collect the letter (unless provided by Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Schools of Education or Biosciences, in which case, collect directly).
- An invitation letter from you. This should provide details of any costs you will cover, accommodation such as a hotel reservation or a room in the student's house (in which case also include the tenancy agreement), and the dates and purpose of the visit.



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Here is an example of the invitation letter you should send, write it in English for the Entry Clearance or Immigration Officer to read:

Dear....

I am writing to invite you to visit me in Nottingham on..... for days/ weeks. I am a full-time registered student at the University of Nottingham, and I've enclosed a letter from the University confirming the details of my course.

I confirm that I will be responsible for the cost of your accommodation whilst you are staying in the UK. You will be able to stay in a spare bedroom in my rented house for the duration of your stay. I've enclosed a copy of my tenancy agreement to prove that I am renting this accommodation, and three months' recent bank statements to show that I have sufficient funds to pay for your room.

(Or...) I confirm I have arranged local hotel accommodation for you, please see reservation enclosed for the following hotel:

I also enclose copies of relevant pages from my passport to show that I have valid Leave to remain in the UK as a student until.....

For further information, I can be contacted at the above address.

Best regards...

If the visitor plans to go to any other European countries in the course of their visit to the UK and requires a Schengen visa, they should apply for this from the appropriate Embassy in their home country before coming here. As the visitor will be granted a visa to *enter* the UK, they should carry relevant documents in their hand luggage to explain the purpose of their visit and their finances in case the Immigration Officer at the airport asks for more information before allowing the visitor to stay here.

Non visa nationals may make their immigration application when they land in the UK. They will be able to visit here for a maximum of 6 months. The Immigration Officer at the airport will ask to see all the documents listed above in order to issue a visa. For a list of visa national countries, please see: www.ukvisas.gov.uk/en/doineedvisa/visadatvnationals



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Dependants - if YOUR visa was granted on or after 31st March 2009 under Tier 4

Only your husband, wife, civil partner or unmarried partner and children under 18 can join you in the UK as your dependants. The Leave to Remain (visa) given to dependants will have the same expiry date as that given to the student, and dependants should intend to leave the UK at the end of the period of stay granted.

Dependants (married, unmarried, same sex) must intend to live with you and the relationship should continue to exist throughout your stay in the UK. Students should be able to maintain and accommodate themselves and their dependants without using British public funds.

A dependant child should be under eighteen or already have leave to remain as a student's dependant. The child must be unmarried and not living in an independent family unit.

Normally, BOTH parents must be lawfully present in the UK or being granted a visa at the same time as the child in order for the child to be successful in getting the visa. This means that if one parent remains in the home country, the child must also.

In which cases can dependants apply to join you in the UK?

Your spouse/civil partner (and in some cases unmarried partner) may 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 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.

Permission to work in the UK

The dependant partner should not intend to take employment here unless permitted to do so by the Immigration rules. Family members of Tier 4 students who take courses which are below degree level (excluding foundation degrees) will not be permitted to work. Permission to work is usually granted if the dependant spouse is given leave to remain for 12 months or more.



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What documentary evidence should a dependant submit with their application?

Funding Method 1

Bank statements from the student¹ showing evidence of funds. You will need £400 for each month of stay for each dependant, up to a maximum of 9 months. An example of this would be a wife and child, joining a student on a Masters programme of 12 months. They need to show £400 x 9 for the wife, and £400 x 9 for the child. This would be £7200.

If the student has a current valid visa and has either

- a) *completed a previous course of more than 6 months within their last period of leave, OR*
- b) *has completed at least 6 months of their current course*

The student and dependants may fall into the reduced maintenance category and only need to show 600 x 2 months for each dependant.

The money MUST:

- a) Be in cash funds – NOT shares/bonds/investments
- b) Have been showing in the bank account for 28 days prior to your application. IT CANNOT DIP BELOW THE REQUIRED AMOUNT, EVEN FOR 1 DAY – otherwise your application will be refused.

The CLOSING BALANCE must be dated within 1 calendar month of your visa application.

It is important to check the bank statement requirements in the Tier 4 (PBS Dependant Policy Guidance) online here:

www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/applicationforms/pbs/pbsdependantspolicy1.pdf

Funding Method 2

If you are a sponsored student you can only rely on your sponsorship letter to demonstrate funding for your dependants if they are mentioned in the letter. Otherwise, you must show the money for dependants living costs in YOUR bank account. You should also supplement any sponsor letter if the monthly stipend is not sufficient to cover all dependants.

Funding Method 3

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.

¹ PBS Dependant Policy Guidance states that the money for dependants can be in student and/or dependant bank accounts. We would recommend that money is shown in the student bank account.



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This applies to nationals of:

- 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 is
- a British National Overseas

Other documents

- VAF10 form (download from www.ukvisas.gov.uk)
- 2-3 recent passport photos
- Valid passport
- Visa fee (£255)
- Photocopies of your passport and visa
- Marriage/ birth certificates as evidence of the applicant's relationship to you.
- An invitation letter from the student confirming you will be responsible for the dependant's stay here. This should provide details of financial support and accommodation arrangements
- University confirmation letter (*not a Tier 4 visa letter*) giving course details and start, end and graduation dates of your course. This is from Student Registry or the Faculty Office in the School of Biosciences (or - for their undergraduate students - The Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences and School of Education provide letters). For Student Registry requests, fill in the online form at www.nottingham.ac.uk/academicervices/currentstudents/requestaletter.aspx or request the letter at The Student Services Centre, B Floor, Portland Building. This is also where you will collect the letter (unless provided by Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Schools of Education or Biosciences, in which case, collect directly).
- Official confirmation of any scholarship you have, including the amount and duration of payment
- Evidence to show the dependant intends to return to their home country at the end of their stay here



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Please remember that if one of your documents is not English or Welsh, the original must be sent with a fully certified translation by a professional translator. This translation must include:

- the translator's qualifications;
- confirmation from the translator that it is an accurate translation of the original document;
- the date and
- the translator's signature.

Here is an example of the invitation letter you should send to your dependant:

Dear....

I am writing to invite you to join me in Nottingham as my dependant and stay with me for (x months/ years) until I complete my degree in (subject) on (date). I am a full-time registered student at the University of Nottingham.

I confirm that I will be responsible for financing our stay in the UK (and that of our children). I will provide for our daily expenses and the cost of our accommodation.

I've enclosed documents with this letter for you to use in your application for entry clearance. The documents are: a letter from the University confirming the details of my course, a letter from my scholarship body giving details of my award and recent bank statements from my UK account.

I also enclose copies of relevant pages from my passport to show that I have valid Leave to remain in the UK as a student until (date).

Best regards.....



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Dependants *If YOUR visa was granted under the old immigration rules (before 31st March 2009)*

Only your spouse or children are eligible to come to the UK as your dependants. The Leave to Remain (visa) given to dependants will have the same expiry date as that given to the student, and dependants should intend to leave the UK at the end of the period of stay granted.

A dependant spouse must be married to a student or postgraduate doctor or dentist. The marriage should continue to exist and the couple should intend to live together throughout their stay in the UK. They should be able to maintain and accommodate themselves and their dependants without using UK public funds. The dependant spouse should not intend to take employment here unless permitted to do so by the Immigration Rules. Permission to work is usually granted if the dependant spouse is given leave to remain for 12 months or more.

A dependant child should be under 18 or already have leave to remain as a student's dependant. The child must be unmarried and not living in an independent family unit.

What documentary evidence should a dependant submit with their application?

- VAF3b form (download from www.ukvisas.gov.uk)
- 2-3 recent passport photos
- Valid passport
- Visa fee (£255)
- Photocopies of your passport and visa
- Marriage/ birth certificates as evidence of the applicant's relationship to you. Some Embassies ask for additional family documents such as the *hukou* book in China
- An invitation letter from the student confirming you will be responsible for the dependant's stay here. This should provide details of financial support and accommodation arrangements
- Evidence of reserved accommodation, such as a tenancy agreement and landlord's letter
- Three months bank statements from the student and any further evidence of available funds
- University confirmation letter (*not a Tier 4 visa letter*) giving course details and start, end and graduation dates of your course. This is from Student Registry or the Faculty Office in the School of Biosciences (or - for their undergraduate students - The Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences and School of Education provide letters). For Student Registry requests, fill in the online form at www.nottingham.ac.uk/academicsservices/currentstudents/requestaletter.aspx or



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I also enclose copies of relevant pages from my passport to show that I have valid Leave to remain in the UK as a student until (date).

Best regards.....



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**The University of
Nottingham**

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 Border and Immigration Agency, 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