

Top Tips for your UK Tier 4 student visa application



UK Visas
& Immigration



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There are some things you can do to ensure that making your application is quick and straightforward. This guide provides some top tips and advice on Tier 4 (General) student visas.

Further information on visa types and how to apply is available at www.gov.uk/visas-immigration

Tier 4 (General) student visa

1. Apply early



You can apply for your visa up to three months before your course start date. Summer is the UK's busiest period for processing visas so apply as far in advance as you can. You can check the average processing times for your country at www.gov.uk/visa-processing-times

2. Check that a Tier 4 (General) student visa is right for you



There are different types of visa for studying in the UK. These vary according to the type and length of your course and the type of institution you will be studying at.

A Tier 4 (General) student visa will be granted for the period of your study as well as some additional time after the end of the course. It's important you chose the right visa and understand what activities you can and can't do with each visa type.

3. Check what documents you need



All visa applications require you to provide additional documents, which will vary according to the type of study visa you're applying for. You can check what documents are required for your application at www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/student-visas

Make sure you have the documents ready, that they are originals and translated into English. Try not to rush your application and ensure that all the information you provide is correct.

All students need to demonstrate that they have a place to study at an institution on our list of Tier 4 sponsors, and that they can speak the required level of English for the course. You will also need to show that you can financially support yourself and pay for your course. Applications from some countries will also require a Tuberculosis certificate, to find out more visit www.gov.uk/tb-test-visa/overview

Make sure you have the documents ready when you apply, try not to rush your application and ensure that all the information you provide is correct.

4. Knowledge of English



You must prove your knowledge of the English language when you apply. The level of English required will depend on the type of institution you are studying at and the type of course. This may mean passing a secure English language test (SELT). If you require a SELT you must obtain this before your sponsor issues a confirmation of acceptance for studies (CAS).

If you are studying at a UK Higher Education Institution, most degree level or above courses will not require a SELT as your institution will assess your level of English and state your level on the CAS. If in doubt, check with your institution.

To find a centre near you and book your English language test visit:

www.ielts.org (for tests inside and outside the UK)

www.trinitycollege.com/SELT (for tests inside the UK only)

5. Visa fee and funding



When you apply, ensure you have sufficient funds to cover the visa fee, including those for dependents. It costs £322 to apply for a Tier 4 (General) student visa from outside the UK.

Make sure the funds to support yourself are held in either your or your parent's or guardian's accounts for at least 28 days. We recommend you put a little more money in to take account of currency fluctuations.

It is a good idea to provide evidence of where your funds have come from, for example through letters from a family member or payslips, evidence of a loan or scholarship.

If a member of your family is supporting you, or the money is held in someone else's account you must provide evidence of your relationship with them, such as a letter or birth certificate.

6. Go priority if you're in a hurry



If you are on a tight timescale you may be able to use our priority services, which will place your application at the front of the queue. In many countries we offer a range of fee-paid services and options for additional flexibility, for example 24 hour visas, 3-5 day visas or the Passport Passback service, which enables customers to retain their passport for the majority of the application processing period.

Find what services are available from your local visa application centre:

- Europe, Africa and parts of the Middle East visit www.tpcontact.co.uk
- All other countries visit www.vfsglobal.com

7. Health surcharge



If you're coming to the UK for more than six months and a non EEA national, you'll need to pay the health surcharge. This is £150 per year for students. If you are liable for the surcharge, you and any dependants must pay at the same time as your visa application.

8. Biometric residence permit



If you apply from outside the UK you will need to book an appointment at a visa application centre to have your fingerprints and photo taken. This forms part of your visa application and will enable you to get your biometric residence permit once in the UK, which provides evidence of your immigration status. You'll have to collect your biometric residence permit within 10 days of your arrival date in the UK.

9. Booking your travel



We advise visa applicants not to confirm any travel arrangements until their visa has been granted. Our processing times vary according to the type of visa application and can also vary during busy periods.

10. If you need help



You can contact UKVI for free by e-mail and receive a reply within 24 hours in a range of languages via our International Enquiry Service. If you need to speak to someone you can call the helpline for an additional fee, or start a webchat, visit www.gov.uk/contact-ukvi-outside-uk for details. Please note that British Embassies and Consulates cannot answer visa questions.