

Guide to completing Tier 4 (General) Student visa application

Updated 3 July 2019

This guide will help you complete the online visa application and includes specific points for Oxford students. Please read it carefully and also look at the [Tier 4 Policy guidance](#) issued by UK Visas and Immigration.

1. [When and how to apply](#)
2. [Exemptions for submitting support documents: low risk nationals and Tier 4 pilot scheme](#)
3. [Completing the online application form](#)- personal details, family, travel history
4. [Sponsor licence number and address](#)
5. [ATAS](#) (Academic Technology Approval Scheme)
6. [Future official financial sponsorship](#)
7. [Course information](#)
8. [Accommodation payments](#)
9. [Course fees](#)
10. [Maintenance funds](#) (fees and living costs)
11. [Documents](#)
12. [Additional information](#)
13. [Declaration](#)
14. [Immigration Health Surcharge](#)
15. [Application payment](#)
16. [Arranging to collect your BRP](#) (Biometric Residence Permit)
17. [Biometric appointment](#)
18. [Further help](#)

Some terminology:

ATAS: Academic Technology Approval scheme, some postgraduate students in Science, Engineering and Medical subjects may need special clearance for their research project- the department will inform you if this is required. Also applies to 4 year undergraduate degrees in Physics and Materials- College will inform you.

BRP: Biometric residence permit- new students will be issued a 30 day travel visa to come to the UK and then you will need to collect the BRP with the visa for the duration of the course and some extra time after arriving in the UK. See step 16 to choose the best location to collect the BRP.

CAS: Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies number issued by your College (undergraduate or visiting student) or Department (graduate or recognised student) for you to apply for a visa.

CAS Statement: the email that contains your CAS number and details about your course and fees.

Differentiation arrangements: reduced evidence requirements for 'low risk' nationals see section 2 below.

IHS: Immigration Health Surcharge- you will need to pay £300 per year times the number of years of your course to access the NHS (National Health Service) in the UK throughout your course. This is paid upfront for the duration of your course and any extra time included in your visa.

NQF/RQF: National Qualification Framework/Regulated Qualification framework- codes used to specify level of course i.e. NQF6/RQF6: undergraduate/visiting student; NQF7/RQF7 Masters, MScRes, 4 year UG exit Masters awards; NQF8/RQF8: DPhil.

Partner organisation e.g. VFS Global, TLS or WorldBridge – commercial companies who administer the visa application process on behalf of UKVI but who do not make the decision on your application.

UKVI: UK Visas and Immigration- will make the decision about your visa.

UKCISA: UK Council for International Student Affairs, advice for international students on a [range of topics](#).

VAC: Visa Application Centre - you will attend here to give biometrics (fingerprints and face scan) at an appointment and submit documents if not already uploaded.

1. When and how to apply

When you apply in your home country for a Tier 4 student visa you need to register for and complete an [online application](#)

You must have your CAS (Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies) number from Oxford before you apply for your visa. For information about receiving your CAS, see the [Tier 4 webpage](#). You will receive an email with your CAS number and other information you will need for completing the online application form. This email is your 'CAS statement'.

You cannot apply for your visa **more than three months** before your course start date as stated on your CAS. You must apply within six months of the CAS issue date. If your CAS was issued more than six months ago, contact your department or college to get a new one.

In several places this Guide refers to UK Visas and Immigration's [Tier 4 Policy Guidance](#) which sets out the exact requirements for a Tier 4 application. You will need to check this and follow the instructions very carefully.

2. Exemptions for submitting supporting documents with your application

You will not need to provide evidence of your funding or previous qualifications if your application comes under a and/or b below.

a. Reduced evidence provision for designated '**low risk**' nationals

If you are a national of one of these countries below you come under these '[differentiation arrangements](#)' and will not have to send documentary evidence of your qualifications and funding with your application. However, you must make sure you have the required documents ready to send in case you are asked for them later in the application process (there might be spot checks). Your application could be refused if you do not provide the specified documents within the requested time limit.

Australia, Bahrain, Barbados, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, The Dominican Republic, Hong Kong SAR or BNO passport, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Macao SAR, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, New Zealand, Oman, Peru, Qatar, Serbia, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, Taiwan (holding Taiwanese passport which includes identification card number), Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and USA.

b. Reduced evidence provision for Masters students under the **Tier 4 pilot scheme**

The Tier 4 Pilot Scheme is running at 27 UK Universities, including Oxford, for students starting a Masters course of 13 months duration or less. As part of the Pilot Scheme you will not be required to provide evidence of previous academic qualifications or financial information when submitting documents to support your visa application. You will also be issued with a visa valid for 6 months beyond the end date of your course. Please note that you must still ensure that your academic qualification and financial evidence meets the Tier 4 requirements and are readily available, as these documents can be requested during processing and spot checks may be made.

[Please read these FAQs](#) for important details about this Pilot Scheme.

3. Completing the online application form- personal details, family, travel history

a. Before you start

There may be technical issues when using Apple devices to complete the online form. If you do experience problems we would suggest using a non-Apple device or, if this is not possible, connect to the site using Internet Explorer.

Try using a different browser if you experience technical problems while you are applying.

Do save the document as you progress so that you can return to it at a later date (you will also get an email link). You will need to set up a password and use this each time you access your application.

b. Starting the online application

When applying most students will choose Tier 4 (General) but there is a separate option for Chevening, Marshall and Commonwealth scholars. All other scholarship holders should choose Tier 4 (General).

You need to apply online in the country where you are living and confirm that you will be able to attend one of the Visa Application Centres that come up in a list to give your biometrics (fingerprints and face scan). Occasionally these might be in a neighbouring country, but otherwise you cannot choose to give biometrics in a country different to your country of application.

Passport/Travel Document

You **must have one blank page front and back** in your passport/travel document to avoid the processing of your application being delayed or rejected.

Personal information

Write your name exactly as shown in your passport and CAS statement. Include middle/other names with your Given name(s).

If you only have one name, click on the link '*I cannot enter my name using a current passport or travel document*' and then click on '*I do not have both a given and family name*' and then you can enter one name.

Sponsor

CAS reference number

Enter this as given on your CAS Statement being careful to make clear the difference between '0's and 'O's and '1's and 'I's

Personal Information

Your individual details, including your home address

Passport details

Include the information exactly as stated on your passport ID page

Travel information

Date you plan to arrive in the UK?

Give your intended date of travel to the UK. Do not specify a date earlier than one month before your course start date as stated on your CAS.

How long do you intend to stay in the UK?

This is only an indication but include the length of your course as stated on your CAS plus any additional time which will be added to your visa. Details of how long this will be is covered on the [UKCISA](#) website in the section titled 'When your visa is issued'

English Language

This question only appears if your nationality is not on the [list of English speaking majority countries](#) or for Canada. For the question, 'Does your Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) statement indicate that your English language ability was assessed by your institution or that you are a 'gifted' student? select 'Yes'. Check your CAS, it should state '**Higher Education Institution (HEI) sponsor has made assessment**'

Information about a spouse or partner

Although a separate application has to be made for each dependant coming to the UK with you, you are also required to give information on your own application about a partner or spouse or financially dependent family members whether or not they will accompany you.

Information about your parents, and any family in the UK

You will then need to enter information about your parents, and any close family members who live in the UK.

Accommodation in the UK

Do you have an address for where you are going to stay in the UK?

If you know the address include it here with dates. If you don't know state NO and go to the next question.

Where do you plan to stay in the UK?

Include details of where you are hoping to stay if not confirmed. If you will be in College accommodation but this has not been finalised, you can give the main College address as on their website.

Travelling as part of an organised group

Answer no

UK Travel History

Try to include as much information as you can

How many times have you been to the UK in the last 10 years?

Choose a number and give the details.

Medical Treatment

If you answered yes to the question above you will be asked to include details and dates of *any* medical treatment received in the UK including visits to doctor's surgery (known as a General Practitioner or GP) and whether you had to pay.

National insurance number

You will only have a National Insurance number if you applied for one e.g. for work during a previous UK stay.

International Travel History

How many times have you visited the following places in the past 10 years?

You are asked to record visits to a list of four countries plus the European Economic Area in the past 10 years. Follow the instructions and give the information as accurately as you can.

Have you visited any other countries in the past 10 years?

The form continues to ask about travel to all other countries. Again answer this to the best of your ability.

[back to start of document](#)

Problems with immigration to the UK and other countries

It is very important that you give the required information about any immigration problems for the UK and other countries.

Convictions and other penalties, and further security questions

It is very important that you answer this section accurately and give details however long ago any offence occurred.

The form continues with further security questions and then another section about war crimes, terrorist activities and certain forms of employment.

Note: previous convictions will not necessarily lead to a visa refusal, particularly for non-custodial offences, but failure to disclose information that is requested here **is** likely to lead to a refusal.

4. Sponsor licence number and address

This section is asking for information from your CAS about your course, the title, level, etc. If you do not have a CAS number, you cannot proceed with your application. For information about receiving a CAS see [Step 1 on our webpage](#). To be valid, your CAS must not be more than six months old at the time you apply for your visa. If you are reapplying after a visa refusal, you **must get** a new CAS

The information you need for this section will appear on your CAS Statement:

Sponsor Licence Number UED4UGNF1

Sponsor's address

University Offices
Wellington Square
Town/city: Oxford
Postcode: OX1 2JD

Place of Study

Oxford is a higher education institution

Did you apply for your course through UCAS?

Answer 'no' unless you are coming for an undergraduate degree

5. ATAS (Academic Technology Approval Scheme) Certificate

Your CAS will state whether you need an ATAS certificate, although it is not necessary to wait for your CAS to be issued to apply for ATAS, as long as you have the necessary information from your Department or College. For information about ATAS see [Step 2 on our webpage](#). If you have a question about whether you need an ATAS certificate, contact College (undergraduates – 4 year physics and materials courses only) or your Department (graduates) or email student.immigration@admin.ox.ac.uk.

If you do require an ATAS certificate, you must get it before you submit your visa application – this could take 20 working days or more. You will receive your ATAS certificate by email – you must print this out and include it with your application.

[back to start of document](#)

6. Future official financial sponsorship

The online form contains the definition of an 'official financial sponsor' and asks for information from those being financially sponsored for studies in the UK and will receive or continue to receive a scholarship for future studies. You may be receiving funding from another source, but it will not count as an 'official financial sponsor'. Note that if you will be funding your studies using a student loan, the answer here is No.

Please note that your CAS **will not** contain details of financial sponsorship so **do not** choose 'My Tier 4 sponsor has confirmed this information on my CAS'.

7. Course information

Course name

Enter the Programme Title given on your CAS

Qualification you will get

This should match 'Course Level' on your CAS Statement – course level is stated as an NQF number on your CAS, for example NQF7. On the application form, select the option where the **RQF** section of the code matches the NQF section of the code from your CAS.

e.g.

Undergraduate or visiting students (on CAS NQF 6) select RQF6/SCQF9/10

Undergraduate masters eg MEng, MChem, MBiochem, MPhys (on CAS NQF 7) select RQF7/SCQF 11

Masters students (on CAS NQF7) select RQF7/SCQF 11

DPhil (on CAS NQF8) select RQF8/SCQF12

Course start date

If you are coming to Oxford for the first time, or starting a new course, enter 'start date 2' from your CAS

If you are a continuing Oxford student applying for more time to complete a course, including after suspension, enter 'start date 1' from your CAS

Are you taking a pre-sessional course?

Select 'yes' if you are taking Oxford's Language Centre pre-sessional course or a Departmental pre-sessional course, and enter the dates.

Course end date

Use the 'Expected End Date' from your CAS statement

8. Accommodation Payments

Currently UKVI require a minimum of £1,015 a month for living expenses. The maximum amount you will need is for **9 months (£9,135)** even if your course is longer. You will need to use this figure as a basis for living costs with this application.

You can only state an amount paid towards accommodation if you will be or are staying in College or University accommodation, money has been paid to college/university and:

- this amount is shown on your CAS statement as 'Accommodation Fee Already Paid' or
- you have an original official paper receipt for the amount paid from college
- your CAS states Accommodation Provided 'Yes'

In both cases choose “Yes”, enter the amount below and choose how this will be evidenced

Note: even if you have paid a higher amount to College or the University for accommodation, you are only allowed to offset a maximum of £1265 towards the amount you may need to show for maintenance.

If you are not in College or University accommodation answer No

If you are a Visiting student who is not required to pay any accommodation fees to Oxford, because your home institution is paying Oxford directly, answer No

9. Course fees

What are your course fees for the first year?

Enter the ‘Total Fees’ figure from your CAS Statement, which you will find under the heading, ‘Fees and Payment’. Note that for courses longer than one year, this is your fees for the first year only.

Have you or your parent(s) or legal guardian(s) already paid any of your course fees?

Select ‘yes’ here if you have paid anything towards your fees and this is either recorded on your CAS or for which you have a paper receipt from the University or College, and enter the amount as shown on your CAS or receipt.

If you are a Visiting Student who is not required to pay any course fees direct to Oxford because your home institution is paying Oxford and you have £0.00 for ‘Total Fees’ on your CAS, state No to this question. You might have to include with your visa application a letter from your home institution confirming the arrangement.

Some continuing students are likely to have £0.00 for ‘Total Fees’ on the CAS. You must also answer No

10. Maintenance funds (fees and living costs)

Are all of the maintenance funds required for this application in a bank account with your name on it?

If you are self-funding the answer is Yes. For other sources of funding answer No and continue to the next question.

Are you relying on money held in an account under your parent(s) or legal guardian(s) name?

There is only a Yes/No option.

11. Documents

You will now have to indicate that you are providing the documents listed. If your application comes under the ‘differentiation arrangements’ for low risk students, because of your nationality or because you come under the Tier 4 Masters Pilot Scheme, you should not be asked to provide financial or qualifications evidence.

a. Documentary evidence to show funding

- i. If you come under the reduced evidence ‘[differentiation arrangements](#)’ provision (low risk nationals) or Tier 4 Pilot Scheme (see page 2) you will not have to provide supporting documents but remember you must have the documents available to provide if UK Visas and Immigration asks for them later.
- ii. **If you are not exempt based on the above conditions you must follow the requirements for evidence of funding as given in the Tier 4 Policy Guidance and get translations if necessary. Only the specified documents will be accepted.** Note: these requirements to show evidence of funding for your visa

application are completely separate from any requirements you may already have had to comply with to fulfil your college Financial Declaration – do not assume the same evidence will be adequate. The requirements for documentary evidence of funding are in the [Tier 4 Policy Guidance](#).

If you are showing evidence of money held in either your own or a parent/guardian's account, you must be able to show (as set out in the Tier 4 Policy Guidance) that you have held the required level of funding **for 28 consecutive days** prior to application; any documents must also be dated **within 31 days** of the date you submit and pay for the application, otherwise your application is likely to be refused.

If you will be funded by a US Federal Student Loan, ensure you have proof of the loan and notification from the University's Student Fees and Funding office. Send this with your visa application unless you come under the reduced evidence '[differentiation arrangements](#)' provision (as mentioned above).

If you need further information about this, email us.loans@admin.ox.ac.uk. Remember that if the loan is partial you may need to provide other documents as specified in [Tier 4 Policy Guidance](#) to show that you have the balance.

b. Documentary evidence of academic qualifications

- i. If you come under the reduced evidence provision (low risk nationals) or Tier 4 Pilot Scheme (see page 2) you will not have to provide supporting documents for any academic qualification/s upon which your offer to study at Oxford has been based. However, make sure you have them available to send if UK Visas and Immigration request them as there might be spot checks.

If you are coming to Oxford as a visiting student, your CAS may state 'student has been assessed as competent by the home institution – we have not required to see any qualifications' and you are not required to submit any evidence with your application.

- ii. If you are not exempt from submitting documents based on the above conditions, look at the heading on your CAS Statement, 'Evidence Considered in Accepting Application'. For qualifications listed here, you are required to provide a scan /copy of your certificate **or** transcript for the award(s) listed. There is also the option of submitting print-outs of your qualification or transcript results from the awarding body's online checking service. The print outs must clearly show your name, the title and date of the award, and the name of the awarding body.

You must have completed any qualifications listed; UK Visas and Immigration will not accept provisional documents*.

***NOTE FOR SOME INDIAN STUDENTS ONLY – if your CAS states "please note we have accepted the provisional certificate as the degree is complete and awarded" you can provide an original provisional certificate as evidence of your academic qualification.**

Look at the [Tier 4 Policy Guidance](#) to ensure your documents fully meet the requirements. If you cannot provide the required original documents, contact your College (undergraduate and visiting students) or Department (graduate and recognised students) for advice, including where qualifications that you have not completed are mentioned. If any of these documents are not in English you must also send a translation in the required format. Only send evidence for qualifications listed on your CAS Statement.

- iii. Current Oxford students: If your CAS has reference to 'satisfactory progress' or 'coming back from a break' or to 'complete an exam resit' because you are a current Oxford student you are not required to provide evidence of any academic qualification.

12. Additional Information

Add anything here that you think is relevant to your application.

13. Declaration

You must then make a declaration that all the information is correct to the best of your knowledge.

14. Immigration Health Surcharge

For information about how the IHS is calculated and why you have to pay it at this stage, [see step 6 on our webpage](#).

Note that you will **not be able to edit** your visa application after clicking through to the IHS website. You will be asked to re-enter your course start and end date again on the IHS website and answer some other questions. Use start date 2 and the expected end date from your CAS.

15. Application payment

After you have paid you will be prompted to arrange an appointment for giving your biometrics (fingerprint and face scan) which must be done before your application can be processed, and also to select where to collect your BRP after arrival in the UK.

16. Arranging to collect your BRP (biometric residence permit) in the UK

Deciding where to collect your BRP card – for new students

When prompted, you will have to choose where to collect your BRP within 10 days of arrival in the UK (this will include any BRPs for your dependant/s who are travelling with you).

- a. **If you are arriving between 1 and 8 October 2019:** you can choose to collect the BRP at the Examination Schools which will be easier and more convenient than the Oxford Post Office.
 - You **must enter the alternative collection code** on the visa application form: **2HE627** for yourself and also on any application/s for your dependant/s.
 - You **must then sign up on the Eventbrite page** to let us know the date and time you wish to collect the BRP so we can plan the numbers attending each day.
 - We cannot give you the BRP earlier than 1 October and you will need it to enrol and open a bank account so choose a. or b. according to your travel plans.
- b. **If you are arriving before 1 October, or after 8 October 2019:** it will be better to collect it at the Oxford Post Office or another Post Office near where you are staying for the reasons explained above.
 - To collect the BRP in Oxford select 'Sponsor Address Postcode' and enter OX1 2JD
 - To choose another location in the UK, you can enter your residential address and postcode

Once your application has been processed you will be issued with a short 30 day travel visa which will be a sticker (vignette) in your passport and an explanatory letter confirming where to collect your BRP. The date you can enter the UK using this travel visa will be calculated to start based on *either* 7 days before your 'intended date of travel' as included on your application form *or* one month before the course start date on your CAS, whichever is later.

[back to start of document](#)

Example: if your CAS start date is 6 October 2019 and you choose an 'intended date of travel' of 3 October 2019 your 30 day travel visa will start 7 days before i.e. 26 September and run until 26 October. You cannot ask for the travel visa to start earlier than 6 September in this example.

If you are currently studying in the UK at another University and apply for a new visa to study at Oxford within the UK, your BRP will be sent to you by courier.

17. Biometric Appointment

You will be prompted to book an appointment to give biometric information at a Visa Application Centre (VAC). Please follow the instructions on the application.

18. Further help

If you experience any difficulties email student.immigration@admin.ox.ac.uk for advice. In the summer months, it may take us a couple of days to reply due to the volume of queries. If it is an urgent matter, we will try to reply the same day.

If your visa application is refused, please email us a copy of the refusal notice so we can advise you before a new CAS number is issued.

If you think you have made a mistake on your application after submission and payment, please do not cancel it until you have contacted us and received advice on how to proceed.

NOTE FOR STUDENTS APPLYING IN THE USA

UK Visas and Immigration in the US has produced a guide. You are required to provide a return shipping waybill and envelope. This must not be hand written but electronic:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/usa-apply-for-a-uk-visa>

[back to start of document](#)