

Student visas

Most international students need a student visa to study in the UK. Finding out whether you need a visa to study is easy - simply check on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk). Your student visa will allow you to live and study in the UK throughout your course.

Types of student visa

Student visa (previously Tier 4 visa)

If you are 16 or over and want to study at higher education level, you'll need to apply for a [student visa](#) through the Student Route. From 5 October 2020, the Student Route has replaced the Tier 4 Route. The Student Route falls under the UK's new points-based immigration system.

You need to wait until you have an offer from a university or college before applying for a visa. Your university or college will then be able to give you a document called a Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS). To do this, your chosen institution needs to be approved by the UK government as a licensed sponsor.

You will need to complete an application, and have it accepted before you arrive in the UK. You can apply for a student visa up to six months before your course starts.

You will need to pay an application fee (£363 for students) and have a current passport or other valid travel document. You will also need to pay a fee called an Immigration Health Surcharge. This gives you access to the UK's National Health Service. Students receive a 25 per cent discount on the usual cost of this surcharge – so the rate for student visa holders is £470 per year.

If you are a student from an EU country, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway or Switzerland, you can use the '[UK Immigration: ID Check](#)' app to complete the identity stage of your application.

The UK government has also published [guidance for EU students](#) on the points-based immigration system.

Short-term study visa & Standard Visitor route

A short-term study visa is available for students who apply for entry clearance to do an English language course between six and 11 months long. You can find out more about the [short-term student route](#).

It is also possible to apply via the [Standard Visitor route](#) for certain study-related visits for up to 6 months:

- to study at an accredited institution (this includes English language courses);
- to do a short piece of research that is relevant to your course overseas;
- to do an 'elective' - an optional additional placement, if you're studying medicine, veterinary medicine and science, nursing or dentistry;
- to sit an entrance exam, retake an exam or course module, or do a PhD oral exam (a viva);
- to do an unpaid clinical attachment if you're a graduate from a medical, dental or nursing school
- to take the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) test or the Professional and Linguistic Assessment Board (PLAB) test.

Other types of visa

If you're aged between four and 17 years old and you want to study at school in the UK, you can find out more about the child study route [here](#).

If someone you know is coming to visit you on holiday to the UK, they will need to apply for a visitor visa. You can find out more about this [here](#).

Working in the UK while on a study visa

Many international students in the UK take a part-time job, work placement or internship alongside their studies. The hours and type of work you do will depend on the type of visa and your sponsoring university or college.

You can find out more about the hours and types of work you can do on the [UKCISA website](#).

After your studies: the Graduate Route

From 1 July 2021, international students who have successfully completed an undergraduate or master's degree will be able to benefit from two years' work experience in the UK upon graduation, through the new Graduate Route. Students who complete their PhD will be able to stay for three years. Here is everything you need to know:

- The Graduate Route is available to international students who have a valid student visa at the time of application and have successfully completed a degree at undergraduate level or above at a UK Higher Education Provider with a track record of compliance.
- Successful applicants on this route will be able to stay and work, or look for work, in the UK at any skill level for a maximum period of two years if they have successfully completed an undergraduate or master's degree. PhD graduates will be able to stay for three years. Graduates will be able to switch into skilled work once they have found a suitable job.
- The Graduate Route requires a specific visa application, which will only be possible from inside the UK. The route is unsponsored.
- It includes the payment of a visa fee of £700 and the Immigration Health Surcharge at the full rate of £624 per year.
- Students will need to know the Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) they used for their most recent Student (or Tier 4) application in order to apply for the Graduate Route.

You can find more information on studying in the UK on the [Study UK website](#).