

Information for pre-sessional students on making a successful visa application to enter the UK (entry-clearance)

What type of visa do I need?

All international students from outside the European Economic Area or Switzerland will need a visa (entry clearance) to come to study in the UK. If you have not already done so, you need to prepare for your [Tier 4 \(General\) Visa Application](#), and if you have [dependants](#) coming with you, their visas too.

If you plan on studying for a short course of 6 months or less, there is an option to apply for a [Short Term Study Visa](#). However it is not possible to extend your Short Term Study visa from within the UK, so if you want to extend your visa in the UK for your main programme of study you will require a Tier 4 (General) visa.

If you are in the UK and already hold a [visa for another Higher Education Institution](#) you will need to apply to switch visa sponsor to the University of Birmingham. If you are studying at a College of Further Education you cannot apply for your Tier 4 (General) visa in the UK and will need to return to your home country to make your application. If you hold another type of visa please send a scanned copy of your current visa along with a copy of your current offer of study to:

www.studenthelp.bham.ac.uk.

When we have received your scanned documents we will email you with further advice.

When can I make my visa application?

Please do not submit your application until you have received your Confirmation for Acceptance for Studies (CAS) from the University of Birmingham. You cannot use your CAS to make your visa application any earlier than 3 months before the start of your course in the UK. We recommend that you prepare as early as possible and aim to submit your visa application for entry to the UK approximately 3 months before the start of your course. This will ensure that you have enough time to make your application to arrive at the University for the Start of your course.

Remember, different Embassies and Visa Application Centres across the world have different processing times. Find out about the [processing times](#) of applications in your closest Embassy or Visa Application Centre and select your country for further information.

How do I apply for my visa?

To make an application you should complete the [online application form](#) for applications made outside of the UK and pay the appropriate [fee](#).

It is **very important** that when you make your visa application you provide the correct information for consideration by the Visa Office. **In particular, the financial evidence you submit must be held in the bank account for at least 28 days.**

If your visa application is refused, you will not be assigned a new Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies until you can prove to the International Students Advisory Service that you hold the correct visa documentation. A refusal remains on your immigration history and submitting a new visa application will delay your arrival in the UK and may mean that you are not able to start your studies.

Documents you need to submit with your Tier 4 (General) application:

Your application will be rejected if your documents do not exactly meet the requirements set by UK Visas and Immigration. All documents must be original copies (not scanned or photocopied) and if documents are not in English then an official certified translation must be provided. The following documents must be included with your application:

- Your current passport as well as any previous passports you have used to travel to the UK
- 2 passport sized colour photographs with your name written on the reverse ([see requirements](#))
- Proof that you have the amount of money required by UKVI for immigration ([see money requirements](#))
- ATAS, if you need it ([find out if you need ATAS](#))
- CAS number from the University of Birmingham
- Academic qualifications that are listed in the CAS
- Translations of any documents that are not in English (see [translation requirements](#))
- Proof of parental or legal guardian consent if you are under the age of 18.

All the documents must be originals. You do not need to provide a paper copy of your CAS document: you simply enter the CAS number on your application form.

Once you have submitted your online application:

You must book an appointment with a visa application centre where your biometric information will be taken (photograph and fingerprints) and you may be interviewed. You should therefore be prepared to explain:

- Why you decided to study in the UK and how this will help your future career
- If you considered other UK universities and why you chose to study at Birmingham
- What you know about the course content, how you will study and why you choose your particular course?
- Where in the UK the University of Birmingham is, and what you know about the University, campus and facilities?

The majority of pre-sessional students will be granted a visa as a vignette (sticker) in their passport which is valid for a period of less than 6 months.

If you are applying to stay in the UK for 6 months or longer you are encouraged to use the University's ACL (**2HE322**) code which ensures you collect your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) from the University of Birmingham. The ACL code is a unique code provided to the University of Birmingham which enables students to collect their BRP from the University Campus. Please read the information on collecting a [Biometric Residence Permit \(BRP\)](#) collection from the University before completing your Tier 4 visa application.

www.intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/as/studentservices

What happens next?

- Your visa will either be granted which means you will make travel plans to come to the UK;

OR

- Your visa will be refused, in which case you must send a scan of your refusal notice as quickly as possible to visarefusals@contacts.bham.ac.uk so that we can advise you further.

Please note that changes to the visa process for students making an application outside of the UK mean that if you are applying to come to the UK for more than 6 months you will receive:

- A decision letter which explains that your visa has been granted and explain that you need to collect a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP); and
- A visa vignette in your passport which is valid for 30 days. This visa allows you to travel to the UK and on arrival you must collect your BRP card which will show you have valid leave for the full period you were granted.

Further information

International Student Advisory Service:

<https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/student/student-hub/homepage.aspx>

ISAS information on collecting a Biometric Residence Permit:

<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/International/students/visas/biometricresidencepermits.aspx>

UKVI Tier 4 Policy Guidance

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-application-for-uk-visa-as-tier-4-student>

Glossary

UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI)	UK Visas and Immigration is part of the Home Office and is responsible for making visa decisions to visit or stay in the United Kingdom.
Tier 4 (General) Student	Tier 4 is part of the Points Based System for Immigration. You can apply for a Tier 4 (General) student visa to study in the UK if you are 16 or over.
Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies Certificate (CAS)	The Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) is a unique reference number that you will need when you make your Tier 4 (General) student visa application. The CAS is confirmation of your unconditional offer of a place to study with us.
International Students Advisory Service (ISAS)	The ISAS is the only department in the University of Birmingham that can provide immigration (visa) advice and guidance. Staff in the ISAS are fully trained and qualified to provide information around UK Immigration law.
Biometric Residence Permit (BRP)	If you are coming to the UK for more than 6 months you will need to apply for an 'entry clearance' visa from outside of the UK. Since 2015, applicants coming to the UK for more than 6 months are required to collect a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP).

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