

# Your guide to a successful Tier 4 visa application

This guide has been specifically designed for non EEA passport holders who will be undertaking an internship, service internship or service learning placement as part of an FIE program.

- EEA citizens do not need visas to study in the UK
- Students on a Study Only program should refer to our Short Term Study visa guide

## Steps of the Tier 4 visa application process

- Committing to your offer and uploading a scan of your passport onto MyStudyAbroad@FIE
- Receiving a CAS
- Submit your visa application online
- Attend a biometrics appointment

### Option A - Standard or Priority options (mail)

Attend a biometrics appointment in the location of your choice (several centres available in each state) and then send your supporting documents by mail within 5 days of your appointment

### Option B - Premium Options (in-person appointment)

Bring your supporting documents to one of the 10 US Premium centres where you also attend your biometrics appointment

- Decision within 1 to 21 days
- Passport sent back along with a visa vignette

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. What is a Tier 4 (General) visa?

If you are a citizen of a country that is not in the EU, EEA or Switzerland, you must apply for a Tier 4 (General) visa as it gives you permission to enter the UK for the purposes of studying and undertaking a work placement. If your application is successful, your visa will be in the form of a vignette bearing your photograph and will be stuck to one of the pages of your passport. Please refer to the Home Office's [Tier 4 Policy Guidance](#) for more details about the requirements and the responsibilities.

### 2. What if I hold a European Union (EU) / European Economic Area (EEA) / Swiss passport?

[EEA](#) or Swiss passport holders are not subject to UK immigration control and so do not need permission to work or study in the UK. Therefore, you do not need a visa for the FIE program **but** you must travel to and enter the UK on this passport and ensure it is valid for the duration of your studies. New regulations might be in place for any EEA/Swiss passport-holder entering the UK after 31 October 2019 (Brexit). More information will be available at that point.

We recommend EEA/Swiss citizens renew their passports before travelling to the UK.

### 3. Am I eligible for a Tier 4 visa?

In order to be eligible for the Tier 4 visa, you must:

- ✓ have a **unique CAS (Confirmation of Acceptance for Study) number** given to you by FIE
- ✓ have **enough money** to support yourself while you are in London.  
This is known as "maintenance".
- ✓ be able to **speak, read, write and understand English** to a required level.
- ✓ **have any other acceptable supporting documents** that meet the criteria set out of the Tier 4 Policy Guidance.

### 4. What is a CAS?

Before you are able to make a Tier 4 application, you need to have a Tier 4 visa sponsor (which will be FIE). In order to sponsor your Tier 4 visa, FIE submits an electronic form to the UKVI with details of your identity, program and fees. In return, we receive a unique 'Confirmation of Acceptance to Study' (CAS) number for you.

When you have met our requirements, we will prepare for you a Tier 4 Information Sheet / CAS statement and notify you by email when it is available on our portal. You **must use the instructions on the Tier 4 Information Sheet / CAS statement** to complete your Tier 4 visa application, otherwise you risk making a mistake that could lead to a refusal.

### 5. How long does the Tier 4 (General) visa process take and how much does it cost?

We recommend you submit your visa application **as soon as possible after you receive your CAS number** and at least 6 weeks prior to the program's start date. Depending on the type of application you select, you can expect a decision within the following timeframes. For applications made from within the US:

- With a Standard (postal) application (**\$461 USD**), within 15 working days
- With a Priority (postal) application (**\$461 USD + \$ 296 USD**), within 5 working days
- With the Premium (in person) applications, within 1 to 15 working days:  
Bronze (**\$461 USD + \$410 USD**), within 15 working days; Silver (**\$461 USD + \$875 USD**), within 3-5 working days; Gold (**\$461 USD + \$1900 USD**), within 1 working day
- Additional cost for Standard and Priority: Shipping labels **\$ 41 USD - \$ 70 USD**

Passports/Visas are usually sent back within 1 week of the decision.

*This pricing information is correct as of June 2019.* To find out how much the fee is in other currencies, please see the [UKVI visa fee list](#)

## 6. Should I renew my passport before I apply?

If your passport expires within 6 months of the end of your FIE program, it is strongly recommended that you renew it before completing the Passport Questionnaire in your FIE application. You may not be permitted to travel if your passport is due to expire shortly.

Please let us know immediately if you have renewed or are going to renew your passport after your CAS has been issued. Your passport number is an important detail on your CAS and we will need to amend it if you have a new passport.

## 7. I have travel plans before I arrive in the UK. Will this be a problem?

You will be required to submit your original passport with your application, so **travel plans during the application process** are strongly discouraged.

Be aware that you may need to pay to expedite your application if you need to have your passport sooner than the [standard application processing time](#) (For the US - Location: New York; Category: Points Based System; Type: PBS Tier 4).

## 8. Where can I apply?

- You **must** make your application from **your home country or the country where you are living**. In this context, "living" means somewhere where you are residing lawfully for a reason other than a short-term visit.
- You **cannot** make your application from within a **country you are just visiting**. If you are currently travelling, you must first return home to make your Tier 4 application, before travelling to the UK.
- You **cannot apply for a Tier 4 visa from within the UK**. This is because you are applying for Tier 4 "entry clearance" meaning that you are asking for permission to "enter" the UK as a Tier 4 student. This also means that you cannot enter the UK as a tourist or "visitor", as you will not have the necessary permission to begin your course.

## 9. Do I need to attend a Biometric Appointment?

**Yes.** All students must attend an in-person biometric appointment. At the biometric appointment, your fingerprints and photograph will be taken. This is known as your "biometric information". You cannot complete the application process without first attending your biometric appointment.

For applications made from within the USA, this will take place at:

- an Application Support Centre (ASC) - the application form should give you an option to choose the nearest ASC in your region; or at
- a Premium Application Centre (PAC) if you choose to pay for a Premium service (Gold/Silver/Bronze). PACs are currently located in New York City, Washington DC, Los Angeles, Miami, Chicago, Houston, San Francisco, Boston, Atlanta and Seattle.

Be aware that you may also need to undertake a short 'credibility interview' during your appointment.

For applications made from outside of the USA, please check the [application process](#) in your home country for a list of locations of Visa Application Centres (VACs). Be aware that you may also need to undertake a short 'credibility interview' during your appointment.

## 10. What are the 'differentiation arrangements'?

The Home Office considers some countries 'low risk'; these countries (**such as the USA**) have 'differentiation arrangements'.

This means that citizens of those countries can submit fewer supporting documents with their application, i.e. evidence of qualifications (academic transcript) and finances (bank statement).

**However, ALL STUDENTS must still have these original documents available to them before they apply so that they are ready to submit at short notice.** If they want some additional information, the UKVI reserves the right to request any or all of these documents at short notice, and they will refuse your application if you do not provide them by the date stated in their request (usually less than a week). If you are eligible, you will be asked 'Do you want to submit your application under the differentiation arrangement?' when filling in the application form. You should answer **Yes**. This means you are confirming that you have funds and you can provide an accepted type of financial document if requested at short notice.

## 11. Who is eligible for the 'differentiation arrangements'?

You are eligible for the 'differentiation arrangements' if you hold one of the following passports: **USA**, Australia, Bahrain, Barbados, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, The Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, New Zealand, Oman, Peru, Qatar, Serbia, Singapore, South Korea, Thailand, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, British National (Overseas), Hong Kong, Macau SAR, Taiwan (conditions apply).

## 12. What does maintenance mean?

All students must have at least £1,265 GBP for each month of their time in London. This is for living costs or "maintenance" as the UKVI calls it. You are required to have these funds **EVEN** if your housing has already been paid for. Students eligible to the Differentiation arrangements are not required to send those documents when they submit their visa application but might be asked to provide those evidence at a later stage.

## 13. Do I have to mail anything? If so, when should I do this?

**Yes**, unless you plan to pay for a Premium service that will ship your application materials for you.

## 14. Do I need to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS)?

**No**. As long as your course lasts less than 6 months, you do not need to pay the IHS as part of your visa application.

## 15. What is a TB screening?

A tuberculosis screening is only required if you are coming to the UK for more than 6 months AND if you have lived for the past 6 months in [a country listed by the Home Office](#). If you have been living in the US for the past 6 months, you do not need to take a TB screening.

## 16. Will I need to collect a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP)?

**No**. As long as your course lasts less than 6 months, you will not be given a BRP. A BRP is a visa in the form of a separate card (like a driving licence) as opposed to a paper visa that is stuck in your passport. Even though BRP collection does not apply to you, the Tier 4 online application form still has a compulsory section for choosing a BRP Collection Location. You will need to provide a default answer (a postcode, not an ACL code) in order to be able to continue with your application.

## 17. I have a conviction. Do I need to declare this in my application?

**Yes.** Applicants should always declare any type of criminal conviction (**including traffic-related offences**). The Entry Clearance Officer processing your application may request additional information from you, so be prepared to provide documentation related to the conviction at short notice. Depending on the circumstances, this may have an impact on the decision but it is important that you complete the form truthfully.

## 18. How long will my Tier 4 visa last?

If your study abroad program is less than 6 months long, your visa will normally:

- Start 7 days **before** the program start date.
- End 7 days **after** the program end date. Your program end date will be listed on your CAS Statement. (Note: the program end date is the last day of academic commitments, **not the program move-out/departure date**).

## 19. How early can I travel to the UK?

You will only be able to arrive in the UK to start your program **on or after the 'valid from' date** on your visa. You may be refused entry by UK Border Force if you attempt to arrive before your visa is valid. If you intend to travel to the UK before the 'valid from' date on your visa, you will be required to travel back out of the UK and the 'Common Travel Area' (Ireland, Isle of Man, Guernsey and Jersey) before your program begins so that you can re-enter within the validity dates of your Tier 4 visa.

## 20. Can I travel to the UK via Ireland?

It is strongly recommended that you **do not** travel to Ireland before arriving in the UK as this can cause complications. The UK and Ireland are in a "Common Travel Area" and so have no passport control between them. This means you would not encounter a UK Border Force Officer and your Tier 4 visa would not be stamped on entry. In this case, you would be required to retain proof of your travel (i.e. boarding pass) from Ireland to the UK to account for the missing entry stamp. You must have a record that you entered the UK within the dates permitted in your Tier 4 visa.

## 21. Can I stay in the UK after my Tier 4 visa expires?

**No.** You **must leave the UK no later than the 'valid until' date** listed on your Tier 4 visa.

**There is no grace period for overstaying your visa, and you cannot 'switch' to being a tourist without leaving the country.** This does not necessarily mean you have to go straight home; you can of course travel through Europe (or anywhere else) on your way home. If you intend to stay in the UK after the 'valid until' date on your visa, bear in mind that you will be required to:

- **Travel out of the UK** and the 'Common Travel Area' (Ireland, Isle of Man, Guernsey and Jersey) in the period after your program finishes and before your visa expires, so that you do not overstay your immigration permission. This trip can be brief, as long as you leave on or before the 'valid until' date, and only return to the UK after your Tier 4 visa has expired.
- **Carry proof of your onward travel home** You must explain to the Border Force Officer that you went travelling after your study abroad program finished and that you now wish to enter the UK as a 'Standard Visitor' (tourist) in order to catch your onward flight home. Note that the Border Force reserves the right to refuse entry if you cannot provide proof of why you are re-entering after your visa has expired.

It is absolutely essential that you protect your immigration status and that you do not breach your visa regulations in any way, including overstaying. **Overstaying your visa can have serious consequences on future visa applications you make to any country.**

# WHAT DO I NEED BEFORE I APPLY?

## 1. A Confirmation of Acceptance for studies (CAS) number

To generate a CAS for you, FIE submits information about you and your program to UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI). We then receive your CAS number: we notify you by email and list the information you need your visa application on your 'Tier 4 Information Sheet / CAS statement' (which you can download from [MyStudyAbroad@FIE](mailto:MyStudyAbroad@FIE)).

### To be issued with a CAS, you must first do the following:

- ✓ Submit your program application via FIE's online admin system and be accepted
- ✓ Complete the Passport Questionnaire in your application.
- ✓ Complete the Transcript Questionnaire in your application. You must upload a scan of an official academic transcript
- ✓ Complete the English Language Requirement Questionnaire in your application, if this applies to you.

## 2. To understand the financial requirements

The UKVI requires that **ALL STUDENTS** possess sufficient funds ("maintenance") to cover the duration of their studies. The minimum amount of maintenance you are required to have will depend on your FIE program fees and the length of your program.

**WARNING: You must refer to your Tier 4 Information Sheet / CAS statement when filling in these sections as the details you enter must match your CAS.**

### a. Tuition Fees ('Course fees')

The application form will ask you how much your tuition fees are and if you have already paid them.

- If you have paid your program fees directly to your home institution, we will have confirmed this information in your Tier 4 Information Sheet / CAS statement, and you will not need to show additional evidence that you have paid your tuition.
- If you have paid your program fees directly to FIE in full, we will have confirmed this information in your Tier 4 Information Sheet / CAS statement, and you will not need to show additional evidence that you have paid your tuition.
- If you are paying your program fees directly to FIE and you had not yet paid at the time of receiving your CAS statement, you may be required to include proof of payment as a supporting document with your application.

### b. Living Costs

On top of the tuition fees, the UKVI requires all students to have **£1,265 for every month** that they will be in the UK. For example: 4 months X £1,265 = **£5,060**; 3 months X £1,265 = **£3,795**

**Please note:** If your program includes a part of a month, the UKVI will round the time up to the next month when calculating maintenance funds. For example, if your course dates are from 10 January to 20 March (2 months and 10 days), you would need to show 3 months of funds.

### c. Accommodation Fees

The application form will ask you how much your accommodation (housing) fees are and if you have already paid them. If you are living in FIE housing during your program, you are allowed to deduct up to one month (maximum of £1,265) from the total amount you are required to have.

For example, a student is participating in a semester program AND staying in FIE accommodation:  
4 months x £1,265= £5,060 - £1,265 (for staying in FIE housing)= **£3,795**



### 3. To demonstrate if need be your English language ability

The UKVI requires that Tier 4 applicants possess a certain level of English. The required level for your program is the equivalent of level B2 on the Common European Framework (CEFR).

The **only** applicants who are exempt from the English language requirement are:

Nationals of a majority English-speaking country: USA, Antigua & Barbuda, Australia, The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Canada, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, New Zealand, St Kitts & Nevis, St Lucia, St Vincent & the Grenadines, Trinidad & Tobago

**OR**

Those who have completed the equivalent of a UK bachelor's degree which was taught in one of the above listed majority English speaking countries (except Canada) or in the UK or the Republic of Ireland.

**OR**

Those who are applying for a Tier 4 (General) visa in order to participate in a study abroad program in the UK as part of their bachelor's or master's degree at a Higher Education Institution in the USA.

[I DO NOT fall into one of these three categories, what should I do?](#)

You must provide evidence of your English language ability (such as a recent UKVI IELTS test report form with a score equivalent to 5.5 for each element). **We will contact you at the beginning of the application process to give you more information**

### 4. To prepare your supporting documents

**Even if you are eligible to the differentiation arrangements and therefore not expected to provide financial and academic supporting documents when you submit your application, you must be able to provide – if required after your application - those documents at a short notice.**

#### a. Acceptable types of documents for financial evidence

All Tier 4 applicants must have the required maintenance funds for their studies. Whether or not you need to include financial supporting documents when you submit your application materials depends on whether you are eligible for differentiation arrangements.

##### i. Funds from an account in your name

You can submit a statement or letter from your bank confirming that you hold the required funds in a bank account in your own name. The statement(s) or letter must show:

- That you have had the **required funds in your account for at least 28 days prior** to making your visa application.
- The account balance has not dropped below the required amount during the 28-day period.
- This date of the bank statement or letter must be **dated within 1 month** of the date you submit your visa application.
- Your name, account number and the financial institution's name and logo must be listed on the document.
- The funds must be **cash funds**, held in a regular current/checking account or a savings account. Salary, stocks, shares portfolios, property value or other non-cash assets are not acceptable.

**Please note:** You can contact Estelle Ritter (FIE's Immigration & Compliance Officer ([eritter@fie.org.uk](mailto:eritter@fie.org.uk)) if you wish to request a **bank letter template**.

## ii. Funds from an account in a parent/guardian's name

You can submit a statement or letter from your parent/legal guardian's bank confirming all of the criteria in (A) above. In addition, you must also submit the following:

- Your original (or a notarised copy) long form birth certificate, adoption certificate or court document confirming legal guardian status; AND
- A signed and dated letter from the parent(s)/guardian(s), confirming your relationship to them, the funds available, and that they give their consent for you to use these funds to study in the UK.

## iii. Official Financial Sponsorship letter

An 'official financial sponsor' is ONLY one of the following: A university, your home government, an international organisation or company, the UK government, the British Council or an independent school in the UK **who is covering your course and accommodation costs with a scholarship or grant.**

No one else will count as a UKVI official financial sponsor, including a federal loan, your parents, or any other private sponsor.

## iv. Student Loans letter

You can also use student loans from a financial institution or organisation in your home country. The financial institution must be regulated by the official regulatory body in the country where they are based.

## b. Academic documents

Your official academic transcript must be the original (not a copy) and must clearly show:

- your name; and
- the name of the academic institution; and
- the title of your course or qualification; and
- course dates

## c. Photograph

- If you are applying from within the USA, the photograph taken at your biometric appointment will be used for your visa, so you do not have to submit an additional photograph.
- If you are applying from outside of the USA, you must submit a photograph with the visa application. This is in addition to the photo taken at your biometric appointment. Your photo must measure 45mm x 35mm (standard size in the UK/EU) & not be a cut down version of a larger picture



## WHAT DO I NEED TO SUBMIT MY VISA APPLICATION?

1. **Wait until you receive an email notification from FIE confirming your Tier 4 Information Sheet / CAS statement are available, and carefully read ALL the information on it**

FIE will upload on your MyStudyAbroad profile a Tier 4 Information Sheet / CAS statement. It will contain your CAS number and guidance on how to complete the Tier 4 section on your online visa application. We will use the email address you provided in your Profile on FIE's My Study Abroad system.

Once you receive the email, you should check that all the information listed for you is correct and let us know if you see any error (for instance if you have recently received a new passport and your old passport number is listed).

**Please note:** It is your responsibility to let FIE know of any errors on your CAS statement or any changes to your information.

2. **Go to the UKVI website and refer to this guide when you start filling your application:**

<https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/apply-visa-type/tier4>

### **CONFIRM YOUR VISA TYPE:**

Select: **Tier 4 (General) student visa**

**Please note:** Be careful not to select another Tier 4 sub-category.

### **SELECT YOUR LOCATION:**

Enter the country in which you are making your application, (e.g. USA)

**Please note:** This **must** be your home country or a country where you are currently legally residing (e.g. if you are not a US citizen, you can apply from within the USA if you hold a valid US student visa).

### **APPLY FOR A UK VISA – [COUNTRY]**

You must be able to attend an in-person appointment at a visa application centre in the country where you are applying.

In the US, there are two types of visa application centres to choose from:

- Application Support Centres (referred to as US Dept. of Homeland Security Application Support Centres) can be visited at no extra charge. You can check your nearest standard application centre are listed by state, then drop down menu
- Premium Application Centres are located in Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Washington DC, Houston, Los Angeles, Miami, New York City, San Francisco and Seattle. Premium Application Centres offer special services like expedited processing and walk-ins, but additional charges apply.

If you are applying from outside of the US, a list of visa application centres in the country in which are applying will be shown on this page. If there are no visa application centres in your country, you will be shown your closest options.

You must confirm that you can attend an appointment at one of the listed visa application centres in order to continue.

### **Confirm your visa type**

Confirm what type of visa you want to apply for from the options below. If you are not sure, use the [check if you need a UK visa tool](#), or see the [visas and immigration guidance pages](#) for information.

- Short-term student visa
- Tier 4 (General) student visa
- Tier 4 (Child) student visa
- Tier 4 student visa (for Chevening, Marshall and Commonwealth scholars)

## CLICK APPLY NOW

You will be able to save your application and come back to it at another time if you need to.

## REGISTER YOUR EMAIL

- Enter a valid email address (that you regularly check)
- Your password must be 8 characters or longer and include a letter and a number or symbol.
- You will then be emailed a unique link to let you log back in to your application at a later point, if needed.
- Throughout your application, you can select the option to 'Return to this application later' in order to re-send the link to your latest saved application.
- **Make a note of your email and password!**  
**WARNING:** Make sure you make a note of the email address and password you have used to create your account. Keep them safe. You may have trouble resetting the account and submitting your application on time if you lose these details.

## SAVE YOUR APPLICATION REGULARLY

Please save your answers regularly as you fill in the form so changes are not lost. There are two buttons at the bottom of each page:

- **Save and Continue**
- **Return to this application later**

**WARNING:** Your application will automatically log itself out after 25 minutes and changes will be lost.

If you cannot complete all of the questions on a page, click **Return to this application later**. You will be given a unique link back to your application.

## STEP BY STEP APPLICATION FORM

- You must start your visa application as soon as possible after you have received your CAS
- You should ask for help if a question is unclear
- If you realise you made a mistake on your visa application, **DO NOT** cancel it but contact us instead
- Keep us updated and let us know when you receive your visa

Estelle Ritter, Immigration & Compliance Officer ([eritter@fie.org.uk](mailto:eritter@fie.org.uk))

## FILL IN THE FORM

Most questions are straightforward, but most do have brief explanations in blue if you have trouble.

So that you know what information you will need to have to hand when filling in the application, most questions are listed here:

### Your name

- Enter your name **EXACTLY** as shown on your passport.
- If your name has a suffix (for example Jr.), include this with your given name

### Your Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies

- Select **Yes**
- Enter your unique 14-digit CAS number **EXACTLY** as listed on your CAS statement

### Your home address

- What is your address and telephone number
- How long have you lived at this address?
- What is the ownership status of your home? (Drop-down menu options)

### Your gender and relationship status

- What is your gender, as shown in your passport or travel document?
- What is your relationship status? (Drop-down menu options)

### Your nationality, date and country of birth

- You must enter all the nationalities you hold
- Date of birth. Enter date in the UK format (DD MM YYYY)
- Country and place of birth

### Your passport

- You must use your passport or travel document to complete this section.
- If you are a US passport holder, the 'Place of Issue' on your passport is also known as the 'Authority'. You can enter 'US Dept of State'

### Do you have another passport or travel document?

- If you hold dual nationality and have another valid passport, enter its details here
- If you have an expired passport that contains UK or US visas, enter its details here

### National identity card

- This is the identity card issued by your national government. Please select 'No' if your country does not issue national identity cards or you do not have your card.

### Your immigration status

This question appears for applicants NOT applying from within their country of nationality, (e.g. non-US citizens who hold a US student visa, etc.)

- What permission do you have to be in (e.g.) United States of America?
  - I have a temporary visa (*correct choice for those with a valid student visa*)
  - I am a permanent resident (*correct choice for those with a Green Card*)
  - I do not have a visa and I am not a permanent resident

### Your planned travel information

- You must give your planned dates of travel to the UK.
  - Date you plan to arrive in the UK  
**Note:** This should **NOT be more than one week** before the start of your program
  - How long do you intend to stay in the UK?  
**Note:** This should **NOT be longer than the duration** of your study abroad program, (e.g. 4 months if enrolling on a semester program, etc.) Please see the FAQ: [How long will my Tier 4 visa last](#) for more information on this.

### Spoken language preference

- Select **English**

If you are a citizen of a **non-majority English speaking country**, you will be asked the following questions related to the English language requirement:

- [Study as a Tier 4 \(Child\) student](#)  
Unless you have previously studied in the UK on a Tier 4 (Child) student visa, select **No**
- [English language assessment](#)  
Are you coming to the UK to study at a higher education institution? Select **No**
- [Short-term Study](#)  
Are you attending a short-term study abroad program in the UK as part of a university course in the USA? Select **Yes**

**Note for students not at a university in the USA:** If you do not meet one of the exemption categories listed in the English Language Ability section of this guidance, you must answer No to this question. You will be taken through a series of questions about how you meet the English language eligibility requirements. You will be asked to confirm your IELTS for UKVI certificate or online reference number.

### People financially dependent on you

- If you do not have any children or relatives who are dependent on you financially, select **No**.

### Give details about two of your parents

- The form will request details about parents or stepparents:
  - Name, Date of birth, Country of nationality, Have they always had the same nationality?
- If you do not have your parents' details, you can confirm this
- If you only have the details of one parent, you can confirm this

### Family who live in the UK

- Do you have any family in the UK? This includes:
  - immediate family - such as spouse, civil partner, parents or children
  - grandparents
  - your spouse or civil partner's family
  - your partner, if you have lived with them for 2 out of the last 3 years
- If yes, you must confirm:
  - Their names, relationship to you, nationality, type of immigration permission in the UK

### Travelling as part of an organized group

- If you will be travelling together with some or all of your cohort on an organized flight, you can confirm this, e.g. **XXX University Study Abroad Group**

### Staying with family

- If you entered details of immediate family in the UK, the form will ask you if you are staying with them. If no, you can leave the tick box next to their name(s) blank and continue with the form

### Travelling with another person

- If you are not travelling as a large group, will you be travelling to the UK with someone who is not your partner, spouse, or dependant?
- Select **Yes** if you will be travelling with a parent or friend

### Accommodation in the UK

- Have you already made arrangements for where you are going to stay in the UK?
  - Select **Yes** if you are staying in FIE housing
  - Select **No** if you are not staying in FIE housing and have not yet booked accommodation

### Accommodation in the UK

- Where are you planning to stay in the UK?
- If you are staying in FIE housing, enter: **Foundation for International Education Student Housing**
  - Metrogate House**
  - 3-7 Queen's Gate Terrace**
  - London**
  - SW7 5PE**
  - United Kingdom**
  - Start date: **[ENTER EXACTLY AS LISTED ON YOUR TIER 4 INFORMATION SHEET / CAS STATEMENT]**
  - End date: **[ENTER EXACTLY AS LISTED ON YOUR TIER 4 INFORMATION SHEET / CAS STATEMENT]**
- If you have plans to stay elsewhere in the UK before you move into or move out of FIE housing, you can add another place on the next page.
- If you are staying with friends, other relatives, or in another person's home, give their full name.

### UK travel history

- How many times have you been to the UK in the last 10 years?
- Give details for your two most recent visits to the UK (including dates, purpose of visit)

### UK visa applications

- Have you been issued with a UK visa in the past 10 years? If yes, provide details

### International travel history

- **Note:** If you are a citizen of one of the countries listed here (e.g. USA), you would not be deemed a visitor there. Only answer 'Yes' to this question if you have visited other countries on the list.
- How many times have you visited the following places in the past 10 years?  
Australia, Canada, New Zealand, USA, [Schengen area](#)
- Give details for your two most recent visits to these countries (including dates, purpose of visit)

### Travel history

- Have you visited any other countries in the past 10 years? Do not include visits to the UK, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand or the [Schengen area](#)

### Problems with immigration to the UK

- Have you ever been:
  - refused a visa for the UK, deported from the UK, removed from the UK, required to leave the UK, refused entry at the UK border
- Give details of what happened. Include a reference number or other background information if you have it.

### Problems with immigration to countries other than the UK

- Same as above

### Convictions and other penalties

- At any time have you ever had any of the following, in the UK or in another country? Only select one answer at a time. If you need to give more than one answer, you can do so on another page.
  - A criminal conviction
  - A penalty for a driving offence, for example disqualification for speeding or no motor insurance
  - An arrest or charge for which you are currently on, or awaiting trial
  - A caution, warning, reprimand or other penalty
  - A civil court judgment against you, for example for non-payment of debt, bankruptcy proceedings or anti-social behaviour
  - A civil penalty issued under UK immigration law
  - No, I have never had any of these

### Your previous employers

- Include information for any paid or unpaid work for the types of organisations listed. You can select more than one option.

### Sponsor licence number and address

- What is your sponsor licence number? **WRXMF40W2**
- Sponsor's address: **Foundation for International Education**  
**114 Cromwell Road**  
Town/City: **London**  
Postcode: **SW7 4ES**

### Place of Study

- Will you be studying at a school or higher education institution?
  - Select: **Higher education institution**

### Primary site of study

- Is this the site where the majority of your study will take place?  
Foundation for International Education, 114 Cromwell Road, London, SW7 4ES
  - Select: **Yes**

### UCAS details

- Did you apply for your course through UCAS? Select: **No**

### Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS)

- Do you need to obtain permission from the ATAS? Select: **No**

### Future official financial sponsor

- Will you be receiving money from an official financial sponsor for your continuing studies?
  - Select **No** if you, your family or any other private sponsor is covering your maintenance costs; OR
  - Only answer "Yes" if you have a **full** scholarship or grant (that covers your program fees and living costs) from one of the following: your university, your home government, an international organisation or company, the UK government, the British Council or an independent school in the UK. No one else will count as a UKVI official financial sponsor, including a federal loan company, your parents, or any other private sponsor.

### Course information

**ENTER THE FOLLOWING ANSWERS EXACTLY AS LISTED ON YOUR TIER 4 INFORMATION SHEET / CAS STATEMENT:**

- Name of sponsor institution
- Course name
- Qualification you will get
- Course start date
- Course end date
- Are you going to be a student union sabbatical officer? Select **No**

### Accommodation payments

**ENTER THE FOLLOWING ANSWERS EXACTLY AS LISTED ON YOUR TIER 4 INFORMATION SHEET / CAS STATEMENT:**

- Have you or your parent(s)/legal guardian(s) already paid any money to your sponsor for accommodation?
  - How much has been paid?
  - How can you prove this amount has been paid?
- What are your course fees for your first year?
- Have you or your parent(s) or legal guardian(s) already paid any of your course fees?
  - How much has been paid?
  - How can you prove this amount has been paid?

### Maintenance funds

- Are all of the maintenance funds required for this application in a bank account with your name on it?
  - Select **Yes** if your maintenance funds are in a bank account in your own name; OR
  - Select **No** if all or the majority of your maintenance funds are in a bank account in your parent or legal guardian's name
    - Are you relying on money held in an account under your parent(s) or legal guardian(s) name?
    - Do you have permission from your parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to use this money?

- How can you prove they are your parent(s) or legal guardian(s)?
  - Birth certificate
  - Adoption certificate
  - Court document

#### **Additional information about your application**

You do not have to enter anything in this section. However, you can use this section to input any additional information you wish to be considered as part of your application. Maximum of 1,000 characters

#### **Check your answers**

- Check the information you have listed before you continue to the next section. Depending on the section, you can add / change / remove.
- **Note:** You can only edit this information before you book your appointment and make your payment. Once an appointment is booked, no further changes can be made.

#### **Differentiation Arrangement**

If you are a citizen of a country that is subject to **differentiation arrangements** (such as the USA) you will be asked the following question:

- Do you want to submit your application under the differentiation arrangement?

Select **Yes**

#### **Documents showing the required maintenance funds**

If you are **not** a citizen of a country that is subject to differentiation arrangements, you will be asked the following question:

- You must provide documents showing that you have the required maintenance funds to cover living costs for you and any of your dependants while you are in the UK.
- Financial institution (such as a bank or building society)
- Type of document (Required)
  - Statements from a personal bank or building society account
  - Building society passbook
  - Letter from a bank, building society or other recognised financial institution

**Please make sure you only use the documents checked by FIE.**

#### **Documents**

- **Mandatory documents**  
A checklist of documents that you must provide as part of your application will appear (e.g. passport). If you do not submit these documents, your application may be automatically rejected.
- **Other documents**  
A checklist of additional documents that you should provide as part of your application will appear. If you do not submit these documents, your application may be delayed or refused.
- **Note:** When you have finished your application, **you must print off the checklist and appointment details.** You will need to bring this to your appointment.

#### **SIGN DECLARATION**

You must confirm that the information you have given is correct and that you accept the [privacy policy](#) and [terms and conditions](#).



## IMMIGRATION HEALTH SURCHARGE (IHS)

You will be directed to the IHS payment page and will be required to complete a questionnaire in order to get an IHS reference number. At the end of this process, you will be redirected back to your application and the IHS reference number will be added to your application but you will not be charged. You can then proceed to the next step and pay for your visa application. If your study abroad program is less than 6 months long, **the amount to be paid is USD 0.**

### **IHS Questionnaire:**

Select **No** for the following questions:

- Are you applying from within the UK?
- Are you applying to stay in the Isle of Man, Jersey or Guernsey?
- Is your course at NQF 7?
- Is your course a Master's degree?
- Is your course at any of these locations: University of Oxford, University of Cambridge, University of Bath or Imperial College London?

Select **Yes** for the following question:

- Is your course for 13 months or less?

### **Return to your visa application**

#### **Collecting your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP):**

BRPs are only issued to visa holders who will be in the UK longer than 6 months, so you will NOT be required to collect a BRP; (your visa will be in the form of a paper vignette stuck in your passport as opposed to a plastic BRP card).

Despite this, the application form will still ask about BRP collection so you will need to take the following steps:

- Select Collect from a UK Post Office
- Enter the postcode for FIE (Foundation House): SW7 4ES
- Click Find a Post Office near you
- You will be shown the nearest default location. Just click Save and Continue

## CHOOSE AN APPLICATION SERVICE

For applications made from within the US:

- You can either book an appointment at an Application Support Centre near you (for biometrics to be taken) and then mail your application.
  - Standard (postal) application (**\$461 USD**), decision within 15 working days
  - Priority (postal) application (**\$461 USD + \$296 USD**), decision within 5 working days
- Or, you can book an appointment at one of the 10 Premium Application Centres (for your biometrics to be taken and your documents to be collected).
  - Bronze (**\$461 USD + \$410 USD**), decision within 15 working days;
  - Silver (**\$461 USD + \$875 USD**), decision within 3-5 working days;
  - Gold (**\$461 USD + \$1900 USD**), decision within 1 working day

Passports/Visas are usually sent back within 1 week of the decision.

*This pricing information is correct as of June 2019*

For applications made from outside of the US:

Application services vary around the world and your options will be dependent upon the country from which you are applying. You will be given a list of your options on this page.

Please check the application process in your home country for information arranging appointments.

## **CHOOSE A VISA APPLICATION CENTRE**

Depending on the service you have chosen, the appointment locations available to you will be shown.

## **CHOOSE AN APPOINTMENT**

Once you have selected an appointment location, available appointment slots will be shown.

## **PAY FOR APPLICATION**

Available payment methods vary by country and your options will be listed on this page. You can double check how much your visa fee will be in your local currency by using this online checker:

<https://www.gov.uk/visa-fees>

**Note:** Some countries cannot accept online payments for visa applications, and this is clearly shown on the payment page. If this is the case, you will make the payment for your visa application at your Visa Application Centre appointment – some of these accept card payment and others are cash only.

**Note:** Before you pay, remember to double-check your chosen appointment details and application service.

## **PRINT APPLICATION**

A copy of your application form will be sent directly to the team processing your application. However, it is highly recommended that you print a copy for your own records. You can download a copy of the completed application form to keep for your records by returning to your application on Access UK. This copy is available for 10 weeks after you have completed and paid for your application.

## **CONFIRMATION EMAIL**

You should receive an email with the following details:

- Your appointment details
- Your unique application reference number (GWF number)
- Barcode that will be scanned at your appointment to confirm your attendance
- Supporting document checklist

**Note:** You must print out this information and bring it to your appointment.

## **ATTEND YOUR BIOMETRIC APPOINTMENT**

Please make sure you arrive on time and in the correct location for your biometric appointment. At this appointment, your "biometrics" (fingerprints and photograph) will be taken. These are security measures for the UK that all visa applicants must fulfil.

**You will need to bring the following to your biometric appointment:**

- **your passport**
- **a printout of your confirmation email and/or letter that confirms your GWF number and appointment details with barcode**
- **online application printout**

Do not forget your passport, the online application printout and the appointment confirmation page. Without them, your biometrics cannot be taken and your application will be cancelled. This will mean that you will have to start the application process again, including paying the fee.

**At the appointment, please ensure that the appointment confirmation page with the barcode is stamped as you will need to send this with your application for processing.**

**Please note:** After your biometric appointment, you will only have **5 DAYS** to mail your application materials to the UKVI.

### **Credibility Interviews**

Depending on your circumstances, you may also be asked to undertake a short credibility interview. The purpose of these interviews is to confirm that the applicant is a genuine student with legitimate reasons for coming to the UK. If you are asked to undertake an interview, it will take place when you go to have your biometrics taken. The interview will normally be conducted by secure telecommunications system (similar to Skype), conducted in English, with a member of staff at the Home Office in the UK. It should last less than 10 minutes and should be quite informal.

You may be asked questions like:

- Why do you want to study in the UK?
- Why did you choose to study with FIE?
- How did your studies fit into your future career plans?
- Where will you be living during your studies?
- What is the level of your course?
- Are you planning to work while you are in the UK?
- How are you financing your studies while you are in the UK?

The Home Office will want to be satisfied that you are genuine student who can communicate in English to the required level, and that you have the necessary funds to pay for your studies and living costs. If there are technical problems with the video link and you cannot hear properly, please make sure you point this out to the interviewer. Afterwards, an interview report will then be sent to the Entry Clearance Officer processing your visa application.

You may be called for a longer face to face or telephone interview if the Entry Clearance Officer needs more information. If you are requested to attend an interview, notification will be sent to the email address you provided on your online application form.



### **What happens if I cannot attend the interview?**

Attendance at the interview is mandatory. If you do not attend without a satisfactory explanation your visa application will be automatically refused. You may be able to reschedule your appointment in advance, but not if you have missed it.

## MAIL YOUR APPLICATION MATERIALS

### a. Document Checklist

You should have received a document checklist in your confirmation email. Make sure that you obtain all of the supporting documents requested of you. This may include:

Document	Information	Who Does This Apply To?
<b>Passport</b>	You must submit your original passport (not a copy).	All students
<b>“Document Checklist” / Biometric Appointment Confirmation Page</b>	This is the 6-page document with a barcode that was stamped at your biometric appointment. The 5th page must be completed (tick the boxes) and signed by you. The biometric appointment confirmation might be on a separate document.	All students
<b>CAS Statement</b>	You can find this document on MyStudyAbroad@FIE. It contains your CAS number and basic information about your study abroad course.	All students
<b>1 X Colour Photograph</b>	You <b>do not</b> need to submit a photo as your biometric photograph will be used.	 Students applying from within the USA
	Your photo must meet the requirements	 Students not applying from within the USA
<b>Financial Evidence</b>	Evidence that you hold the minimum funds required for maintenance, in an acceptable form (e.g. bank statement).	Only students who <b>DO NOT</b> qualify for the differentiation arrangements (US citizens are exempted from sending this)
<b>Parental Letter of Consent</b>	Letter of consent from your parent(s) or legal guardian(s)	Students who are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>aged <b>under 18</b> at the time of application; AND</li> <li><b>DO NOT</b> qualify for the differentiation arrangements.</li> </ul>
<b>Academic Transcript</b>	An official academic transcript from your home institution.	Students who <b>DO NOT</b> qualify for the differentiation arrangements (US citizens are exempted from sending this)
<b>Return shipping / Submission</b>	Prepaid electronic shipping label and appropriate packaging from an accepted provider.	 Students applying from within the USA, using the Standard or Priority service
	Follow the submission instructions given by your <a href="#">particular Visa Application Centre</a> (VAC).	 Students not applying from within the USA

## b. Shipping Information

### Students applying from within the US:

Students choosing the Standard or Priority application options must enclose a shipping label (for their passports/documents to be safely returned to them) when sending their supporting documents to the UKVI. The only shipping company approved by the UKVI is UPS and the labels should be bought using a company called VFS (associated to the UKVI).

**We recommend you chose the “Round trip shipping labels” and therefore not only track the return of your passport but also its delivery to the UKVI. FedEx and US Postal Service shipping labels are NOT accepted.**

This specific type of prepaid electronic shipping label is available to purchase ('Most popular services' section) on the [VFS Global website](#).

**Start by creating an account.** You will be asked for your **application's details** (see screenshot), your personal details and a reference number: this is the GWF reference you receive upon submission of your visa application.

You will then have to enter the address you want your documents to be returned to (Customer address).

You will finally be presented with 3 options:

- Priority visa: if you have already paid the Standard (decision within 15 days) fee for your visa application but now wish to make an additional payment for your application to be reviewed in Priority (decision within 5 days) \$296 USD
- Roundtrip Courier service \$70 USD
- Return Courier service \$41 USD

*This pricing information is correct as of June 2019*

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Enter application details". It contains several dropdown menus and radio buttons. The "Location\*" dropdown is set to "United States Of America". The "Premium or support application center\*" dropdown is set to "USA Application Support Center". The "Reason for visit\*" dropdown is set to "Tier 4 (General) student visa". The "Applying as\*" section has two radio buttons: "Individual" (which is selected) and "Family Group". At the bottom, there is a checked checkbox with the text "I have read the [instructions](#) and confirm to proceed.\*".

### WHERE TO SEND

For all applications made within the United States, send your application materials to:

**VFS Services USA Inc.  
UKVI Scanning Hub  
80 Broad Street, Floor 6  
New York, NY 10004**

### WHEN TO SUBMIT

Everything must be submitted **within 5 days of completing your biometric appointment**. You should send all your documentation as soon as you have completed your biometric appointment and collected all required supporting documents.

### HOW TO SUBMIT

Bring your documents to your local UPS office (if you chose the Roundtrip shipping label) for them to be sent.

**If you paid for the Priority application (as opposed to Standard), you should write the words 'Priority Service' in large black print on the outer envelope.**

If you are having technical difficulties with the VFS website, you can also purchase your labels from UPS directly.

### Students applying from outside the US:

You must follow the shipping/submission instructions given by your particular Visa Application Centre.

## RECEIVING AND CHECKING YOUR VISA

Once you receive your passport back, it is very important that you check your visa to make sure that all the information is correct.

Below, you will find an example of what your Tier 4 visa should look like. Make sure that the sections highlighted in the example are correct. If you believe any of the information on your visa is incorrect, please email us immediately with a clear scan of your visa.



[1] Visa category: Tier 4 (General) Student

[2] FIE's Sponsor Licence Number: WRXMF40W2

[3] Check the dates of validity: They should cover the duration of your course. Remember, the start and end dates of your visa depend on the length of your program. **DO NOT enter the UK before your 'Valid from' date.**

[4] Make sure your name, date of birth and passport number are correct

[5] Your visa will be stamped by a Border Force Officer when you enter the UK

### ***My visa application has been refused. What should I do?***

You will have received a letter from the Home Office explaining why your application was refused. You should scan the letter you received and immediately email it to Estelle Ritter, FIE's Immigration & Compliance Officer ([eritter@fie.org.uk](mailto:eritter@fie.org.uk)).

## ARRIVING IN THE UK

### ***What documents will I need other than my passport?***

- You must download and print your Tier 4 Statement from MyStudyAbroad@FIE prior to your departure, it confirms that you will be a student in the UK and giving details of your program. This document should be presented to a Border Force Officer if they ask for information about your studies.
- Keep recent bank statements and the address of your accommodation (if you are not staying in FIE housing) in your hand luggage, as Border Force Officers may ask to see this information.

### ***What should I do at passport control?***

- Complete the landing card given to you during your flight before you arrive at border control.
- Make sure you get in line to see a Border Force Officer – do NOT attempt to use the fast lane ('eGate')
- Have your passport and your CAS Statement ready.
- **Make sure that you have your Tier 4 visa endorsed with an entry stamp by the Border Force Officer.** It will be helpful if you have your passport already open on the visa page when you present it to them.
- Expect Border Force officers to ask simple questions about your stay in the UK when you arrive at passport control.