

Student Visa Guide Outside the UK

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Step 1

Check if you are eligible to apply for a Student Visa

All international students who are 16 or over and wish to travel to the UK to study a course of over 6 months, can apply for a Student visa (entry clearance / permission to enter) to travel to and study in the UK. You must have been offered a place on a course by a licensed student sponsor (UWS), be able to fully finance your stay and your course and meet the English language requirements.

If you are applying for study of less than 6 months, you may be eligible to apply for the Standard Visitor Visa. Please check if you are eligible from the UK Gov webpage:

<https://www.gov.uk/standard-visitor/apply-standard-visitor-visa>

The Home Office/UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) have set a maximum time limit on studying at undergraduate level with a student visa. For further details on this, including which courses are exempt please check the Maximum Period of Study requirement at the [UKVI student rules](#).

Step 1b

Check if your spouse/partner/children are eligible to apply

Only some types of students can have their spouse, partner and/or children in the UK as dependants. You can have dependants with you if you are either:

- government sponsored and your course is longer than six months OR
- you are doing a postgraduate-research level course which is a PhD or other doctoral qualification (SCQF Level 11 or above) of 9 months or more. Visit the [UK Council for International Student Affairs \(UKCISA\) website](#) for full information.

If you are applying for immigration permission after 3pm on 17 July 2023 for a postgraduate course that starts on or after 1 January 2024, you can only have dependants in the UK (in this category) if, your course is a PhD, other doctoral qualification, or a research-based higher degree.

To apply for a dependant visa for your child, both parents are normally required to be in the UK. For further information visit the [UKCISA website](#).

The definition of a 'partner' has been expanded for those permitted to bring dependent partners to the UK. A 'partner' now includes a fiancé, or proposed civil partner.

Step 2

How and when to apply

You apply online for Student entry clearance outside the UK, in the country where you live – use the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/student-visa/apply>.

Begin the process of applying for your new visa no more than 6 months before the start date of your course and no later than 6 months after your CAS is issued.

Student visa applications should be processed within 3 weeks of attending your appointment or (if using the IDV Check app) within 3 weeks of submitting your application. Do not make any definite travel plans until your new visa has been granted and your documents have been returned to you.

As part of your entry clearance application, you may be required to provide your biometrics (facial photograph and fingerprints). In addition, it is likely that you will be required to attend a credibility interview at the visa application centre. This initial interview will be a video interview. You will be asked questions about your course, where you want to study and your reasons for studying in the UK. This is a very important part of your visa application so we advise you to research your course, UWS, and where you are going to live before you go to the interview. The report of the interview will be sent to the Entry Clearance Officer who makes the decision on your application. They need to be satisfied that you are a **genuine student** and that your English language ability is at the correct level. All the documentation you submit with your visa application **MUST** be genuine. The consequences for submitting fraudulent or falsified documentation are very serious, including not only a visa refusal but also a lengthy ban from entering the UK in any capacity.

To help you prepare for the credibility interview, think carefully about these four questions. Give as much detail as possible, avoiding general and vague answers:

1. Why have you chosen to study this particular course at the University of the West of Scotland? (Motivation for coming to the UK)
2. How are you planning to fund your course? (Personal and financial circumstances)
3. What are your plans after completing your course? (Education history, plans for study and after study)
4. Do you have any dependants joining you in the UK? (What will your dependant be doing whilst you are studying?)

You will need to demonstrate that you have a good knowledge about the course and the University. This needs to be accurate and genuine. You will need to show how you are funding the course and be able to talk about your plans after you have completed your course. Please check the [British Council webiste](#) which will help you prepare for coming to the UK. Another useful tool to prepare to study in the UK is: [Prepare for Success](#).

Once a decision has been made and your visa has been granted you will receive a vignette (sticker) in your passport and you will be provided with details about how to access your eVisa with a share code. If your course is for six months or less, then your vignette is valid for your whole stay in the UK. However, if you are on a course of more than 6 months, the vignette is valid for 90 days to allow you to travel to the UK and you can enter the UK one month before your course starts.

Please note, if UKVI refuse your visa application on the basis of the submission of fraudulent or falsified documentation, UWS will not refund your tuition fee deposit.

Step 3

Make sure you have sufficient funds

The Home Office/UKVI specifies how much money you need for your course fees and living costs while you are in the UK. This is referred to as financial requirements by the Home Office. You will also need to pay a Student application fee and the Immigration Health Surcharge. **From 2 January 2025, there is an increase in maintenance requirements as set out below and the dependants' maintenance is currently under review.**

Scottish Campus

Student – £10,224 (based on £1,136 per month for a period of 9 months)

Dependant – £6,120 (based on £680 per month for a period of 9 months)

London Campus

Student – £13,347 (based on £1,483 per month for a period of 9 months)

Dependant – £7,605 (based on £845 per month, for a period of 9 months)

You must also have enough money to pay for the course fees for the first year of your course, or the entire course if it is less than 1 year long. Your CAS will state the fees that you will be required to pay or, if you are receiving a scholarship and only require to pay a certain amount of the fees, this will be stated in your CAS (see 'Step 7').

The relevant amount (living costs for you and any dependants plus fees still to be paid) must be in the bank/building society for **28 consecutive days**. Please note that the date of the final transaction on your account is considered as the last day of this 28 day period. The statement used as evidence of funds must be dated within 1 month of the date you submit your visa application. For example, if you submit your application on 28 September, the statement used in support of your application must not be dated any earlier than 28 August. The money must be in your account in full on each and **every day** of the 28 day period. If your account balance drops below the required amount, even for 1 single day or by as little as 1 pence, your application would be refused.

The statement used as evidence must show your name, your account number, the date the statement was produced, the financial institution's name and contact details (such as a website, phone number, address or branch code) and the amount of funds available. Bank statements should be printed on official bank stationery or as an official electronic record. Mini-statements from cash points are not accepted. If possible, ensure that you have the required amount in a single account only rather than in multiple accounts.

A Certificate of Deposit is a certificate issued by a bank to confirm that a named person has deposited or invested a specific amount of money. They are only accepted as evidence of funds if they have been issued within 31 days of the date of application AND at least 28 days must have elapsed between the date of the deposit and the date of issue of the certificate.

When using money from a non-UK bank account, please ensure that you include a screenshot/print out from [oanda](#) of the currency converted into GBP on the day you submit your application. It is very important that your funds do not drop below the required amount when converted into GBP on the day of submitting your application.

To check how the financial requirements must be met, please see the Appendix Finance: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules/appendix-finance>. If you are unsure how much money you need, or types of acceptable loans, more information can be found on the [UKCISA website](#).

Differential Evidence Requirement

Certain nationalities are considered, by the Home Office/UKVI, to be “low risk”, also called “differentiation arrangements.” Low risk nationals are not required to provide evidence of qualifications or financial evidence when applying for a student visa. You can check the requirements for your nationality by looking at the “differential evidence requirement” in the Student rules on the [Home Office website](#).

However, the Home Office/UKVI may ask you to provide this evidence after you have submitted your visa application. If you are asked to provide this evidence you must provide it quickly, so have your evidence prepared and ready. The Home Office/UKVI will refuse your visa application if you do not provide your financial or qualification evidence.



Step 4

Check if you need an Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) certificate

Students on certain postgraduate courses leading to a **Masters** or **Doctorate** level qualification will need an ATAS certificate to study in the UK. Nationals from Australia, Canada, Iceland, Japan, Lichtenstein, New Zealand, Norway, Singapore, South Korea, the USA, EU, EEA and Switzerland are exempt and do not need to obtain an ATAS certificate

If you are a new or continuing postgraduate research student, contact the Doctoral College to confirm your course CAH code, then check the Foreign and Commonwealth (FCO) website www.gov.uk/academic-technology-approval-scheme to determine if you need to apply for an ATAS Certificate.

If you are required to obtain an ATAS certificate, you must apply for this online and it will be stated on your CAS. It can take 4 -6 weeks for your ATAS application to be processed, so apply early. The ATAS certificate will be sent to you by e-mail. Chinese students using email servers 126.com, 163.com, sina.cn and qq.com may have difficulty receiving email messages from the ATAS team. If you use one of these email providers and are still awaiting a decision on an ATAS application submitted, contact the ATAS team at: ATAS@fco.gov.uk. Students should also consider using Yahoo, Gmail, Hotmail or similar commercial email providers, if possible.

Step 5

Check if you need English Language Qualifications

If you live in a majority English speaking country, you do not need to provide an English language qualification. If you have a degree from a majority English speaking country (including the UK) AND this degree certificate/transcript is listed on your CAS, you must provide this degree certificate/transcript with your visa application.

Please check the [English language requirements on the UK gov website](#).

Most students will need to take a Home Office approved Secure English Language Test (SELT) as evidence of your English language ability (e.g. IELTS). Once you have sat your SELT, you don't need to submit any evidence of your English language ability with your Student application, instead you must provide your test reference number on your Student application form so that the Home Office can verify your SELT results online.

A list of approved providers can be found on the [Home Office website](#).

If your CAS confirms that UWS has assessed your English language ability to be at a minimum of CEFR level B2 in each of the four components, your CAS must also state the method of assessment that your Student sponsor used. If a SELT was used to determine your English language ability, enter the test reference number on your Student application form so that the Home Office can verify your SELT results online.

Please remember, when you enter (or re-enter) the UK with Student leave, the Immigration Officer will expect to communicate with you in English without needing an interpreter.

Step 6

Check if you need a tuberculosis certificate

If you are applying for a course that is longer than six months, it is necessary to have a test at an approved clinic to show that you do not have active pulmonary tuberculosis (TB) if you are a resident of certain specified countries listed here on the [UKVI website](#).

You need to submit the TB certificate with your immigration application. For this reason, your TB certificate is required for your CAS to be processed. This information should be stated in your offer letter.

Step 7

Obtain a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS)

To apply for a Student visa, you will need a CAS (an electronic document) which is issued by the University.

The CAS is produced once the unconditional offer to study at UWS has been officially accepted and the relevant documents in support of the CAS have been received.

Once you are in receipt of an unconditional offer and have accepted this, the University will be in contact with you regarding the UKVI requirements you have to meet before being issued with your CAS. All steps below must be completed before you will be issued with a CAS

If you are providing overseas qualifications, these will be assessed as part of your application for admission. Ecctis (formerly UK NARIC) will be used to check for equivalency to UK qualifications and suitability for our programmes. Applicants do not have to submit a statement from Ecctis regarding their equivalency with their visa application as UK Visas & Immigration are aware Universities carry out this check.

CAS Process

- Ensure that you have sufficient money for living costs plus your tuition fees, as specified by the Home Office/UKVI.
- If you have dependants (including low risk nationals) who are planning on going to the UK with you, you will also need to ensure that you have sufficient money for living costs for each of your dependants.
- Bank statements in spouse's name will only be accepted if they have the applicant as a named joint account holder on the account.
- Submit evidence of birth certificate and parental letter confirming use of bank statements if you are using your parent's bank account as evidence of your funds.
- Pay the required tuition fee deposit and keep the receipt.
- Submit documentary evidence of your finances and confirmation that you have paid your tuition fee deposit (your receipt).
- Submit evidence of your ATAS if required.
- Submit Tuberculosis certificate if required.
- Students under the age of 18 must provide a letter from their parents or legal guardian confirming (consenting to) the arrangements for the student's application, travel, reception and care arrangements in the UK.

CAS Process - Continuing Existing Course

If you are already a student and you are continuing on an existing course of study, please request a CAS by following the steps below

- Ensure that you have sufficient money for living costs plus your tuition fees.
- If you have dependants you will also need to ensure that you have sufficient money for living costs for each of your dependants.
- Submit evidence of birth certificate and parental letter confirming use of bank statements if you are using your parent's bank account as evidence of your funds.
- Contact your Programme Leader for confirmation that you are making satisfactory academic progress and that they support you in applying for another visa. If you are a PhD/DBA student you must contact your Lead Supervisor for a Statement of Academic Progress (SoAP).

Pay the CAS admin fee (£25) at the [UWS Online Store](#).

- Once you have completed the steps above, undergraduate and postgraduate taught students should request a CAS by emailing the Admissions Team (casrequest@uws.ac.uk). **PhD/DBA** students should request a CAS by emailing the Doctoral College (pgr@uws.ac.uk). All students should attach a receipt for the CAS admin fee, confirmation of academic progress, copy of current passport and visa, financial evidence (if required) and ATAS certificate (if required).



Step 8

Apply for your visa online

****The guidance below is specific to UWS students****

Go to the [Home Office website](#) and where it says '**Apply outside the UK**' – click on the green button '**Start now**'. You then need to enter the country you are applying from and confirm that you are able to travel to an available biometric enrolment location in your selected country. Read the guidance carefully and click 'Apply now' to complete the online application. You cannot add family members ('dependants') to this application. You must complete a [separate form](#) for each dependant applying with you.

The application is divided into 6 parts:

- 1. Start** – create your account, set your password and activate your account.
- 2. Application** – enter your personal information (this can be edited at any stage).
- 3. Documents** – confirm documents (can be edited).
- 4. Declaration** – confirm everything in the form is accurate. Do not do this if you still wish to edit the form and have it checked by an International Student Adviser.
- 5. Pay** – pay for the immigration health surcharge and your application with a debit or credit card.
- 6. Further actions** – upload documents and biometrics

You will be asked to register your email address and create a password. This automatically generates an email confirmation to your email address with log in details of your Student visa application. Keep a note of your password so that you can log in again anytime later.

Once registered, you will be asked to provide your **CAS number** which you should have received from UWS Admissions' Team. You will then be asked a series of Personal Information questions including: your name, address (where you are currently living), telephone number, date of birth, nationality. Answer these as accurately as possible and write down names exactly as stated on your passport. Fill out your passport details as stated in your passport. Ensure your passport number matches the passport number on your CAS.

You will be asked if you have another passport or travel document. Complete appropriately. If you have a National Identity card, fill out the details as requested but you do not need to submit this with your visa application unless requested.

The questions about **English language assessment** should be entered in accordance with your CAS. Unless you have previously applied for a visa for the UK, and you provided evidence of English language requirements with that application, you should select "No". Select your language preference. You can choose English or other. We would advise you to select English as your academic studies will be conducted in English. Unless you have an English language qualification from a UK School, you should select "No".

Tick 'Yes' if your English language has been assessed as CEFR B2 (on your CAS) or tick 'No' if you are providing English language qualifications such as an IELTS – this information should be displayed on your CAS. Please note, if you are required to have a SELTS, your IELTS test must have been taken within the last 2 years and have a UKVI reference number, see Step 5.

Confirm if there is any person who is financially dependant on you. Please provide details for both your parents. You will be asked to give details of any family member who currently lives in the UK. Confirm if you will be travelling as part of an organised group or with another person.

Give details of the address you will live in the UK. If you have not yet arranged an address yet, then use the campus address of your main place of study as listed below.

Ayr Campus, University Avenue, Ayr KA8 0SX; tel: +44 1292 886 000

Dumfries Campus, Dudgeon House, Dumfries DG1 4ZN; tel: +44 1387 345 800

Lanarkshire Campus Hamilton International Technology Park, G72 0LH; tel: +44 1698 283 100

London Campus, Import Building, 2 Clove Crescent E14 2BE; tel: +44 0141 848 3047

Paisley Campus, High Street, Paisley PA1 2BE; tel: +44 141 848 3000

You will be asked a series of questions about whether you have previously travelled to the UK or elsewhere overseas.

In the 'Your Planned Travel Information' section you will be asked 'Date you plan to arrive in the UK'? **Provide the date you plan to travel to the UK.** If you are on a course of 6 months or less you can travel to the UK up to 7 days before the start date of the course. If you are on a course of 6 months or more you can travel up to 1 month before the start date of your course.

You will also be asked if you have previously experienced issues with an immigration application to the UK and/or other countries. If you answer yes, explain what these issues were and the outcome of the previous immigration application. Answer appropriately and with as much detail as relevant. You will be asked a series of questions regarding possible criminal or civil penalties against you in the UK or any other country. You will then be asked a series of questions regarding war crimes and terrorist activities. Make sure you read all these questions carefully and answer appropriately, providing details where necessary. You will be asked to declare if you have worked for particular organisations such as the Armed Forces, Government, Media, Security, and Judiciary. Tick any option that is relevant to you.

In the Sponsor details section, you will be asked for your **Sponsor's licence number** – the Sponsor licence number for UWS is 79R4D5EH1. All UWS students should complete 'Sponsor's address' EXACTLY as below, even if you will not study at Paisley Campus:

Address: University of the West of Scotland
Paisley Campus, High Street
Town or city: Paisley
Postcode: PA1 2BE

All students studying at UWS must select '**Yes**' to studying with a **Higher Education Provider** with a track record of compliance. If you will study at a different campus, enter your campus address under 'Primary site of study' as shown on your CAS

UCAS is the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service. Answer 'Yes' or 'No' to whether you have applied through this organisation.

Your CAS will indicate whether or not you require an ATAS certificate. If you have an ATAS certificate, you will be given a reference number which you need to provide. See Step 4 for further information and answer appropriately.

Official Financial Sponsor. If you are being financially sponsored by an education institution, international company, UK Government or overseas Government select "Yes" to the question about 'financial sponsor'. You must provide a scholarship letter with your visa application which provides details of this sponsorship. The details should also be noted on your CAS.

In **'Course Information'**, to answer the question 'Course name' and 'Qualification you will get', copy the details exactly from your CAS. The qualification is on your CAS as 'SCQF' plus a number. Copy your course start date and end date exactly as stated on your CAS.

Accommodation payments. If your CAS states that you have paid accommodation fees (for University accommodation) and it states the amount, you can answer 'yes'. Otherwise answer 'no' to paying your sponsor for accommodation.

Refer to your CAS for the amount of course fees. If you have paid any fees, you should enter the amount, **exactly as shown on your CAS**.

You will be asked if you have enough maintenance funds for this application. Please refer to Step 3 to ensure you have the correct funds available before answering this. As your bank statements will be checked by the Admissions Team before issuing your CAS, where possible, submit the same bank statements as evidence (the statement used as evidence of funds must be dated within 1 month of the date you submit your visa application). The date you submit your visa application is the date you submit online and pay the IHS and application fee.

There is a text box for 'Additional information about your application'. You can insert extra information if there is anything relevant you wish to add here, otherwise leave this blank.

Check all your answers before you continue to the next section.

DOCUMENTS

Please check the supporting documents carefully and make sure you send all the documents that are requested. If you do not provide all mandatory information your application will be rejected.

If you are not ready to submit your application, it will be saved and you can return to it later. You can still edit your application at this stage. Once you are ready to submit, select the green 'Save and continue' button.

DECLARATION

**** Only proceed with this section once you are ready to submit your application. You cannot change your answers after the declaration stage.****

Tick the box to confirm you agree to the declaration and you will be redirected to the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) website where you will now be required to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge. Once you have paid this, you will then be returned to the application form to complete the payment of the Student application fee. In some countries you can pay an additional 'priority fee' or an additional 'super priority fee' to have your application processed more quickly.

Step 9

Student visa application fee and Immigration Health Surcharge

The Student application fee is £524, paid as the equivalent in your local currency. If you are applying for a course that is more than 6 months long, you will be charged an additional sum known as the Immigration Health Surcharge which will entitle you to receive health care under the National Health Service (NHS). For Student route applications, and dependant applications, the IHS fee is £776 per applicant, per year of permission applied for. If your visa includes part of a year that is six months or less you will be charged an additional £388. Each Student dependant applying will also be charged this amount. You can use the Immigration Health Charge tool on the <https://www.gov.uk/healthcare-immigration-application/how-much-pay> to check how much you will be charged. <https://www.gov.uk/student-visa>

Check the current fees on the [UKVI website](#).

Submit your application online and upload your documents to UKVI, pay the immigration health surcharge fee and the application fee. You should not travel overseas until you receive your new visa.

Other resources

For more practical advice on planning your travel to the UK, please visit the [British Council and Education UK](#) website which has practical information such as 'Essential Checklists' and 'Pre-Departure' briefings.

In addition, there are some useful videos you can watch on YouTube – just search for 'We are international'

Who to contact

For enquiries regarding your visa application, contact the International Student Support Team at hub@uws.ac.uk.

For information regarding your course application or your CAS, please contact: casrequest@uws.ac.uk

Supporting Student Documents Checklist

- ☐ Valid Passport
- ☐ Academic qualifications obtained as stated on your CAS
- ☐ English language test results – if stated on your CAS
- ☐ Evidence of your funds (maintenance and living costs) – see step 3 (page 5)
- ☐ Birth certificate and letter from your parents giving you permission to use their funds (only if you are using your parents' bank statement as evidence of your funds)
- ☐ Letter from your official financial sponsor (e.g. a government or official body)
- ☐ Tuberculosis Certificate – if applicable
- ☐ ATAS certificate – if applicable
- ☐ If you are applying for a dependant visa for your spouse/partner, you must provide a marriage/civil partnership certificate (for your spouse/civil partner) or evidence of having lived together for 2 years (for your partner) plus evidence of a genuine and subsisting relationship
- ☐ If you are applying for a dependant visa for your child(ren) you must provide a birth certificate

Please note: The information in this document is correct at the time of going to print. You are strongly advised to check the [Home Office/UKVI website](#) for the latest information. Every effort is made to provide accurate information and UWS cannot accept responsibility for applications that are returned as invalid or are refused.

International Student Support Team.

International Student Support Team Contact Details

Contact our team through the Student Hub team at: <https://www.uws.ac.uk/current-students/supporting-your-health-wellbeing/the-hub/> or email: hub@uws.ac.uk

If you need urgent advice and the International Student Support team are not available, visit the UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) website – www.ukcisa.org.uk.

Alternatively, you can call the UKCISA Student Advice Line on 0207 788 9214. The line is open from 1-4pm Monday-Friday. The service is free – you only pay for the call.



Student
Services

International Student Support

