

Applying for a Student Visa in the UK

EU students starting a course in the UK from 1 January 2021:

You will need to [check if you need a UK visa](#)

You can apply for a [Student visa](#) if you are over 16 and plan to start a course with a provider who can act as a [licensed student sponsor](#).

You do not need a visa to study in the UK for courses up to 6 months, as long as you are [studying at an accredited institution](#); this includes English language courses.

You can apply for a [Short-term Study visa](#) if you're studying on an English language course which lasts up to 11 months.

Course fees and funding:

If you secured a place in the 2020/21 academic year, but deferred the start of your course until 2021/22, or if you wish to undertake a separate follow-on course in 2021/22, then the rules governing student support for 2021/22 entry will apply to you.

Who can apply for a Student visa

You can apply for a Student visa to study in the UK if you're 16 or over and you:

- have been offered a place on [a course by a licensed student sponsor](#)
- have enough [money to support yourself and pay for your course](#) - the amount will vary depending on your circumstances
- can [speak, read, write and understand English](#)
- have consent from your parents if you're 16 or 17 - you'll need evidence of this when you apply
- provide the correct [documents](#)

If you're 16 or 17 and you want to study at an independent school in the UK, you may be eligible for a [Child Student visa](#) instead.

This visa has replaced the Tier 4 (General) Student visa.

Applying from outside the UK

The earliest you can apply for a visa is 6 months before you start your course. You'll usually get a decision on your visa within 3 weeks.

Applying from inside the UK

The earliest you can apply is 3 months before your course starts. You must apply before your current visa expires. Your new course must begin within 28 days of your current visa expiring. You'll usually get a decision within 8 weeks.

How long you can stay

If you're 18+ and your course is at degree level, you can usually stay in the UK for up to 5 years. If it's below degree level, you can usually stay in the UK for up to 2 years. [Read the guidance to find out exactly how long you can stay](#). If you wish to stay longer there is the option to:

- [extend your visa](#) if you're eligible, for example to continue your studies in the UK
- [switch to a Student visa](#) from another visa if you're already in the UK

You can travel to the UK

- up to 1 week before, if your course lasts 6 months or less.
- up to 1 month before, if your course lasts more than 6 months.

Fees

- £348 to apply for a Student visa from outside the UK
- £475 to extend or switch to a Student visa from inside the UK

You must pay the visa fee for each person that joins you.

Healthcare surcharge

You'll also have to [pay the healthcare surcharge](#) as part of your application.

[Check how much you'll have to pay](#) before you apply.

You may be able to [bring your partner and children \('dependants'\)](#).

Your course

You must have an unconditional offer of a place on a course with a [licensed student sponsor](#). To prove this, your education provider will send you a reference number (called a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS)) once they've offered you a place on the course. You need a CAS before you can apply for your visa. You must [apply for your visa](#) within 6 months of receiving your CAS.

Courses you can study

You can do one of the following courses:

- a full-time course leading to [a qualification that's below degree level \(RQF level 3, 4 or 5\)](#) with at least 15 hours a week of organised daytime study
- a full-time course leading to [a qualification that's degree level or above \(RQF level 6, 7 or 8\)](#)
- a full-time course [at degree level or above \(RQF level 6,7 or 8\)](#) that's equivalent to a UK higher education course and is being delivered as part of a longer course overseas
- a part-time course leading to [a qualification that's above degree level \(RQF level 7 or above\)](#)
- a recognised foundation programme for postgraduate doctors or dentists
- an English language course at level B2 or above in the [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages](#)

You may also need an [Academic Technology Approval Scheme \(ATAS\) certificate](#) if you're studying or researching sensitive topics at [RQF level 7 or above](#).

Please note that [the qualification levels are different in Scotland](#).

You can also apply for this visa if you're:

- taking up a full-time elected position as a Student Union Sabbatical Officer
- applying to extend your stay on the Doctorate Extension Scheme - you must currently have permission to be in the UK on a Student visa (or a Tier 4 (General) student visa) and your course must lead to a PhD

Postgraduate doctors and dentists

You can apply for this visa if you're sponsored to do a recognised foundation programme and you've:

- finished a recognised UK degree in medicine or dentistry
- received that degree from a [registered student sponsor](#)
- spent your final year and at least 1 other year of studies leading to that degree in the UK