

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 2023/24 academic year, but deferred the start of your course until 2024/25, or if you wish to undertake a separate follow-on course in 2024/25, then the rules governing student support for 2024/25 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