

Dependants

New students who have not studied recently in the UK can have dependants with them only in one of the following situations: 1) you are a government-sponsored student and your course (at any level) is over 6 months long or 2) you are taking a course at postgraduate level that is at least 12 months long at a higher education institution.

Students who have already been studying in the UK must check the guidance to see whether their dependants are eligible to apply. The following website provides further information: www.ukcisa.org.uk/student/info_sheets/your_family.php#ec

Extending Your Stay in the UK

There are specific requirements under Tier 4 for students wishing to extend their stay in the UK. You should always seek advice from one of our International Student Advisers based in The Hub before submitting a visa extension application in the UK or applying to change status, as this may not always be possible. It is important to make your appointment about 3 months in advance of your visa expiry date.

Police Registration

Students (and dependants over the age of sixteen) from certain countries are required to register with the police within seven days of their arrival. The requirement to register will be shown on your visa or

biometric ID card. Police registration takes place at the University in October for those arriving at the start of the academic year.

In order to register, you will need:

- > £34 registration fee
- > Passport/biometric ID card
- > One passport-sized photograph
- > Certificate of Acceptance or student ID card from the University
- > Proof of your Aberdeen address (for example, accommodation contract, tenancy agreement or invoice/bill with your address on).

Report any changes in personal details (for example - your address or a visa extension)

Where Can I Get Further Information?

Student Recruitment and
Admissions Service
University of Aberdeen
University Office
King's College
Aberdeen
AB24 3FX

Tel: +44 (0)1224 272090/91
E-mail: sras@abdn.ac.uk
Web: www.abdn.ac.uk/sras

Or be our friend at
www.facebook.com/universityofaberdeen
www.twitter.com/aberdeenuni

For further details, please visit
www.abdn.ac.uk/international
www.ukvisas.gov.uk
www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk



TIER 4: IMMIGRATION INFORMATION FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS



TIER 4 IMMIGRATION: WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS?

Please note it is your responsibility to check visa requirements and apply for a visa. Any information we provide is for **guidance only**. It is important to check all immigration requirements regularly and **before** travelling, as they can change. Students without the necessary visa will be refused entry to the UK. You should allow plenty of time to organise your visa and ensure you are aware of all your responsibilities under the terms and conditions of your visa. Please note that the advice given below relates primarily to the Tier 4, General Student category of the UK's Points Based Immigration System.

Before You Travel to the UK

The regulations for entry into the UK are constantly changing and so it is essential that you check on the UKVisas website at www.ukvisas.gov.uk and www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/studyingintheuk on a regular basis to ensure you have the most up-to-date and accurate information.

Applying for your Visa

Any international (except European Economic Area and Swiss nationals) student planning to study full-time in the UK for more than six months will need to apply for their visa under Tier 4. The visa application is based on a points based assessment – 40 points are needed to be granted a visa. You score:

- > 30 points for a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS), which is a number generated when a licensed immigration sponsor enters your data into the relevant UKBA electronic system; and
- > 10 points if you can show that you have enough finances to cover your tuition fees for the first 12 months and monthly living expenses for up to 9 months (known as maintenance).

For further information visit www.ukvisas.gov.uk/en/howtoapply/infs/inf29pbsstudent

Who is my Licensed Immigration Sponsor?

All applicants under the Tier 4 (General) Student category need a sponsor – your sponsor will be the University which you are planning to study at therefore, in your case, it will be the University of Aberdeen. The University of Aberdeen is on the 'Register of Sponsors Licensed under the Points Based System'. Our sponsor number is 1GF1B20B2 and we have Highly Trusted Sponsor (HTS) status.

For further information visit: www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/employersandsponsors/pointsbasedsystem/registerofsponsorededucation

What is a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) and How Do I Get This?

You must have your CAS before you can make a visa application. The CAS is an electronic number provided to you by your sponsor. This number cannot be issued by anyone other than your sponsor. The number is generated by your sponsor once you have accepted an *unconditional* offer of a place. The University cannot issue a CAS before this. The number is created when the University enters your details, which would include your name and course of study into the UKBA database. The University of Aberdeen will issue you with a Certificate of Acceptance which will include a note of your CAS number which you will need in order to apply for your visa once you have completed the following:

- > Met any conditions attached to your offer (as detailed in your offer letter)
- > Completed and returned your financial guarantee form (and financial sponsor letter if applicable)

- > You must keep good attendance
- > You must ensure that you have written permission to take any time off from your studies
- > You must keep your address up to date: keep it correct through your Student Portal
- > You must let us know immediately if you shorten the duration of your studies
- > You must not change your status from full-time student to part-time student
- > You must have written permission from your School if you decide to go home to write-up your dissertation or thesis
- > You must not re-take any course module assessment more than 2 times (one original attempt plus two further attempts at the assessment).

It is important that you make every effort to pass each stage of your studies, and progress well. If you need a visa extension because you have spent longer than usual finishing your studies this will be expensive for you and the UKBA may require an explanation as to why you were unable to complete your studies during the expected enrolment period. You must have University support in order to request an extension. In this instance, the University will issue you with a new CAS number so that you can apply for your extension.

If you need to discuss any immigration matter (including your visa extension), please go to our Student Advice and Support Office, based in The Hub, to make an appointment to speak with an International Student Adviser.

You should expect to register in this way at the beginning of each academic term during your studies (in September, January and April each year). It is important that you register promptly each term so that the University knows that you are present and attending otherwise you will be reported to the UKBA.

Will I Be Able to Work with a Tier 4 (General) Student Visa?

Any employment is restricted to part-time work during term time of not more than 20 hours per week and full-time work during vacations. The work you do must not fill a full-time permanent vacancy. You must not be self-employed, employed as a doctor in training (other than on a recognised Foundation Programme) or work as a professional sportsperson (including a sports coach) or as an entertainer. You may only hold a Student Union Sabbatical Officer position for up to two years.

Note: If you are still studying, even if you are not attending classes, this is not a holiday period for you. This means that you should not work full-time, for example postgraduate students over the summer months, until you have submitted your dissertation or thesis and finished your studies.

Please note, there are a number of key exceptions to this rule which relate to students on short-term courses which are below degree level or short English Language programmes. For further information visit www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/studyingintheuk/adult-students/conditions

Other Information European Economic Area (EEA) and Swiss Nationals

EEA and Swiss nationals benefit from the right of free movement within the EEA and do not require permission to enter the UK as a student. Such students may enter using a passport or national identity card and there is no formal time limit placed on their stay.

Future Changes

Please note that the advice above relates to students beginning their studies in September 2012 and January 2013. As stated, you should check on the UKVisas website at www.ukvisas.gov.uk and www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/studyingintheuk on a regular basis to ensure that you understand the visa process at the time that you are applying for a visa so that you have the most up to date and accurate information.

How Will PBS Affect Me When I Arrive in the UK?

Under UK immigration rules all licensed immigration sponsors are required by law to keep the following information on students in possession of a Tier 4 visa:

- > Up to date contact information for all students studying at the University
- > Contact history for all students studying at the University
- > A copy of the passport, including the visa page and the biometric card (if applicable) for all students studying at the University
- > Monitor attendance and progress of all students studying at the University

When you arrive, it is important that you register with the University at the designated time. Registration staff will ensure that you have undertaken electronic registration (eRegistration), that you have entered a term time address (i.e. a local address in Aberdeen) and that you have met with your academic Adviser, or equivalent person. Make sure to take a copy of your passport and your original passport with you to registration. Each copied page will be checked against your original passport. You do not need to photocopy any blank pages of your passport. If all is in order, the copy of your passport will be stamped, dated, signed by the Registry official and retained on file. You will then be issued with

a University ID card (as long as you have previously mailed in your photograph). Under the Points Based Immigration System, the University is obliged to keep copies of your passport and you must ensure that your contact details in the UK are as up-to-date as possible. After you have registered as a student you will be able to update your address details through your Student Portal.

If any of the details on your Tier 4 visa are not correct or you do not hold a Tier 4 visa, you may be referred to our International Student Advisers for further checks.

If you fail to register with the University during the normal registration period, as stated on your Certificate of Acceptance or if you are found not to be at the address you have provided, we are obliged to report you to the UK immigration authorities – UKBA.

You should expect to register in this way at the beginning of each academic term during your studies (in September, January and April each year). It is important that you register promptly each term so that the University knows that you are present and attending otherwise you will be reported to the UKBA.

How Will PBS Affect Me During My Studies?

The immigration authorities require the University to report you to them if you do not comply with the terms of your student visa. To avoid us having to do this:

- > You must let the Admissions Office know if you are deferring the start date of your studies
- > You must inform the Admissions Office if you want to transfer your studies to another university or, if you have started your studies, you must formally withdraw by reporting to the InfoHub and completing the appropriate Withdrawal Form

- > Completed and returned your acceptance form
- > Returned a copy of your passport
- > Paid any deposit if applicable (this will be detailed in your offer letter)
- > Completed and returned your deposit agreement if applicable (this will be detailed in your offer letter)

Please note if you have not completed any of the steps listed you will not be issued with a CAS or Certificate of Acceptance. Your Certificate of Acceptance will be sent to you by email as a PDF.

When applying for your visa you will need to quote your CAS number and in addition, you will need to provide evidence of the reasons you have been given an offer as laid out in your Certificate of Acceptance e.g. by submitting your *original* degree certificate / transcripts and English Language qualifications. Do not provide certificates not mentioned on your CAS.

If you had deferred your offer you must *NOT* use the old documentation supplied to you by the University as the CAS and Certificate of Acceptance must be issued no more than six months before the date of the visa application. Any visa application submitted using old documentation or without a CAS will be automatically refused.

You may obtain several CAS numbers from different licensed sponsors, if you are applying to other institutions as well as the University of Aberdeen but you should only apply for entry clearance – a visa - with the CAS from your chosen institution. Your visa will then be linked to your immigration sponsor, therefore if you are studying at the University of Aberdeen, your visa will be granted to study at the University of Aberdeen only. It is important that you make this decision carefully. If you change your mind after receiving your visa, you will need to apply for a new visa and your new institution may not allow you to register

which may have implications for your ability to register for your chosen degree programme in time for the start of the course.

How much Money Do I Need to Have?

At the time of writing, the finances you need in order to pass the points based assessment if you are coming to study at the University of Aberdeen are:

LENGTH OF COURSE	WHERE YOU WILL STUDY?	MAINTENANCE (FUNDS) NEEDED
9 months or less	Outside London	Course fees plus £800 for each calendar month of the course
More than 9 months	Outside London	First year of fees plus £7,200 to cover nine months of living costs in the United Kingdom

You must show that you have held the required amount of money in your bank account for a consecutive 28-day period. This period should finish on the date of the closing balance (as shown on your bank statement) which should be no more than 31 days before the date of your application.

Students who have recently completed a course of study in the UK which lasted at least 6 months may qualify to show a reduced level of maintenance (£800 for a period of two months – that is £1,800), but please check before submitting your visa application.

For information on tuition fees please visit: www.abdn.ac.uk/international/finance.php

The Certificate of Acceptance will state the amount of tuition fees that you are required to pay for your first year.

How Do I Apply for a Visa?

To apply for your visa, once you have received your CAS, you should complete the application form VAF9 with your personal details. In some countries this can be done online. You will also need to complete Appendix 8 for (General) Student. This is only available as a PDF document and must be completed manually and sent to the visa application centre with your supporting documents. For further information visit www.ukvisas.gov.uk/en/howtoapply/infos/inf29pbsstudent

It is essential that you complete all of the required fields in the application form. Please note, the University of Aberdeen cannot provide individual advice on completing the visa application form and you should refer to the UKVisas website should you have any questions regarding the visa application form. In addition to the application form and PBS Appendix 8, you will need to submit the following:

- > Your passport or travel document
- > Your CAS number as provided by a licensed sponsor (you will need to write this in the relevant section of the application form)
- > The fee as published at www.ukvisas.gov.uk/en/howtoapply/visafees/ This cannot be refunded and you must pay in local currency
- > Your biometric details
- > A recent passport sized photograph. Please note - photographs should measure 45mm x 35mm and be:
 - in colour taken against a light grey or cream background
 - clear and of good quality and not framed or backed
 - printed on normal photographic paper
 - full face and without sunglasses, hat or head covering (unless it is worn for cultural or religious reasons but the face must not be covered).
- > All documents as specified in the Tier 4 Guidance. This would include documentation to prove you meet the

maintenance requirements. You should also provide original certificates of qualification and/or original transcripts that are detailed in your Certificate of Acceptance under the section entitled 'Documents Used to Make the Offer':

- Evidence 1, Academic Standing (e.g. academic transcript & degree certificate)
- Evidence 2, English Language (e.g. TOEFL/IELTS score)

Those applying from within the UK should complete the Tier 4 (General) application form and submit the necessary documents as shown on the UKBA website. The form is available at: www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/studyingintheuk/adult-students/applyng-inside-uk/

Please refer to UKBA guidance for up-to-date information on what needs to be included. If you do not submit relevant documents, your application is likely to be refused so it is very important that you are confident at the point of submission that you have checked you have completed all the required documents and included the necessary evidence to support your application in accordance with UKBA guidelines.

Visas expiring more than one month before the start of the next course: If you are already in the UK and your current visa expires more than one month before the start date of your next course of study, you will be expected to go home and apply from outside the UK. If you apply from inside the United Kingdom, your visa application will be refused.

ATAS - Academic Technology Approval Scheme

Postgraduate students studying on some taught Masters degree courses, some Masters by research and some PhD programmes are required to obtain an ATAS certificate before being able to apply for a

visa. It generally affects students who are undertaking research in science, engineering or technology disciplines or taught Masters in materials science, materials technology, aerospace engineering, mechanical engineering or physics (including nuclear physics). To check whether you have to do this, you will need the JACS code for your course of study which will be noted on your offer letter. You will also be issued with an ATAS statement by our Postgraduate Admissions Office. Further details can be found at: www.fco.gov.uk/atas

Please note, if you need an ATAS certificate and you do not have one, your entry clearance (visa) application will be refused.

What are my Biometric Details?

Biometric details are scans of all 10 fingers and a full-face digital photograph. You will need to provide your biometric details in person and your visa application will not be processed until you have met this requirement. More information about biometrics is available at www.ukvisas.gov.uk/en/howtoapply/biometricvisa/

Other Students

A: Study Abroad and Exchange Students

All international (except European Economic Area and Swiss nationals) students will be required to apply for entry clearance. If you are studying for less than 6 months you can either apply for 'Student Visitor' entry clearance, which is aimed at those short term students who wish to undertake a short course of up to six months and have no interest in full student visa entitlements (i.e. the ability to work part-time, extend their stay whilst in the UK, or provide the opportunity for multiple entry) or for a full student visa under Tier 4. Please note it is important that you

understand the requirements for your own nationality as there is some variance between Non-Visa nationals and Visa nationals. For more details including eligibility and restrictions please see the Student Visitor pages of the UKBA website: www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/studyingintheuk/student-visitors

The University would recommend any international student coming on a Study Abroad or Exchange programme to apply for the full student visa under Tier 4.

B: Students on English Language Programmes

If you have an unconditional offer: If you have an unconditional offer for your degree programme, you can apply for one visa for both your pre-session English course and your degree course provided that you are studying at the same institution and your degree course starts no later than one month after your pre-session course ends.

If you have an offer which is conditional on completing an English Language course: If you have a conditional offer to do your full-time degree programme, and are first planning on studying one of the English Language Summer School options at the University, you will need to apply for a visa to do the Summer School course first. If you successfully finish that course, as long as you had a student visa under Tier 4, you can apply for a visa extension from within the UK to continue with your full-time degree course.

Academic English Preparation

Programme: You are advised to apply for a full student visa under Tier 4. When you have successfully completed your Academic English Preparation Programme, you can then apply for a visa from within the UK to do a full-time degree course, provided your degree begins within one month of the completion of the programme.