Welcome

This Guide is designed to help you prepare for your time at the University of Aberdeen.

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Remember to contact your International Officer if you have any questions about your application or arrival in Aberdeen. You can find out your International Officer’s contact details by clicking here.
Most international students require a Tier 4 visa to study in the UK. You can find out more about whether or not you require a visa by visiting the UK Government website.

If you are still unsure, or believe you do not require a visa to enter the UK, please email the International Student Advisers giving your applicant ID, outlining your circumstances and attaching a copy of your current passport and any UK visas.

Preparing for the Visa Application

It is important that you allow enough time for your visa application to be processed before your programme start date. Visa applications can be submitted three months before your start date, not before. If you are due to commence your studies on 21st September 2020, the earliest you can submit your visa application is 29th June 2020.

You should not submit the visa application until you have the required funds in place and all the required documents including a TB Test Certificate and ATAS clearance, if applicable. You can find a list of the required documents by visiting the UK Government website.

Some students may be asked to attend a credibility interview as part of the visa application process. You can find out more information by clicking here.

The following section highlights the most common visa requirements for most students. If you have any queries relating to visa requirements which are not listed here, please email the International Student Advisers.
Step 1: Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS)

Your CAS number is an electronic reference number that you will need before you can apply for a Tier 4 visa. It confirms to UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) that you have met the University’s entry conditions and that you hold an Unconditional Offer of Admission.

To receive your CAS letter, you must have:

> Accepted your offer
> Met all conditions attached to your offer

Before your CAS can be issued, we also need a copy of the passport you plan to use with your visa application and confirmation of how your studies will be funded.

Your CAS letter will confirm your tuition fees for the first 12 months of your studies and sufficient maintenance funds to cover the first 9 months of your studies (based on the rates set by UKVI) in pounds sterling. If your studies are shorter than 12 months you must have the full amount for fees and sufficient maintenance funds for the full duration of your studies. Remember currency fluctuations can have a serious impact on your bank account, which must be kept at the amount equivalent to that required in Sterling.

All funds must have been held in your (or your parent/guardian’s) personal bank account for at least 28 consecutive days. The balance must not fall below the required amount at any point in that 28 day period and the financial evidence to demonstrate that these funds have been held for 28 days or more must be less than 31 days old by the time you submit and pay for your visa application.

If you are not funding your studies from your personal or from your parent/guardian’s personal resources, you must demonstrate that you have official financial sponsorship. Only certain types of organisation will be considered by UKVI as official financial sponsors. These include governments, universities and international organisations. Companies can only qualify if they are classed as international (with a trading office in more than one country).

Evidence of your funds must be presented in a format acceptable to the UK visa authorities. You can find more information by clicking here.

Step 2: Funding

Before submitting a visa application, you must be able to satisfy the UKVI financial requirements, which are as follows:

> You must have sufficient funds to cover your tuition fees for the first 12 months of your studies and sufficient maintenance funds to cover the first 9 months of your studies (based on the rates set by UKVI) in pounds sterling.

> All funds must have been held in your (or your parent/guardian’s) personal bank account for at least 28 consecutive days. The balance must not fall below the required amount at any point in that 28 day period and the financial evidence to demonstrate that these funds have been held for 28 days or more must be less than 31 days old by the time you submit and pay for your visa application.

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Evidence of your funds must be presented in a format acceptable to the UK visa authorities. You can find more information by clicking here.

Step 3: Supporting Documents

Your CAS will also list the qualifications that were used to assess your suitability for your chosen degree programme. You must submit the qualifications listed on your CAS with your visa application. Acceptable documents are the degree certificate/diploma and/or final, official transcript. Any documents not in English, including financial evidence, must have an official translation.

Step 4: English Language Requirements

Please note, unless you are joining an English language course, as stipulated in your Certificate of Acceptance, the University uses its own methods to assess your English language ability. Although you may have submitted an IELTS, PTE Academic, TOEFL, Cambridge Proficiency or Cambridge Advanced test as evidence of your proficiency in English, you are not required to submit that test document with your visa application. Alternatively, if you hold a degree from a majority English-speaking country, or are a national of one of these countries, this will be noted instead.

UK Visas or UKVI considers certain countries to be majority English speaking and nationals of these countries are exempt from taking a language test. The list of English speaking countries is available by visiting the UK Government website.

If you are joining an Academic English or an English Pre-sessional course your CAS will include details of your IELTS Academic for UKVI test results. In this case you MUST submit the original IELTS Academic for UKVI Test Report Form with your visa application.
Step 5: Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS)

Some Science and Technology programmes require an Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) certificate. Your offer letter will confirm whether or not you need one of these. If you do not require ATAS clearance, you can skip to the next section.

You can apply for ATAS clearance 6 months before your programme start date. The ATAS certificate must be valid when you submit the visa application. When applying for ATAS clearance, you must use the same passport that you intend to use when you apply for a visa. The details on your ATAS certificate must be the same as the details on your CAS.

- It’s free to apply for your ATAS certificate, and you must have one before you submit a visa application.
- If your programme requires ATAS clearance, please note that you can apply for clearance before your CAS has been issued.
- You can apply for clearance before you have accepted your offer.
- You can apply for clearance if your offer is still conditional.

If you submit a visa application before you receive the ATAS clearance certificate, your visa application will be refused. In addition, the University will not allow you to register if you don’t have valid ATAS clearance.

You can find more information on ATAS certificates within the ATAS section of the UK Government’s website by clicking here.

Step 6: Tuberculosis (TB) Certificate

You’ll need to have a tuberculosis (TB) test if you’re coming to the UK for more than 6 months and are resident in any of the countries listed on the UK Government’s website, please click here.

If your test shows that you don’t have TB, you’ll be given a certificate which is valid for six (6) months. You must include this certificate with your visa application.

Step 7: Credibility Interview

Credibility interviews have been introduced by the UKVI as part of the Tier 4 visa application process to ensure that only genuine students are coming to study in the UK. Information to help you prepare for the Credibility Interview can be found on our website by clicking here.

Step 8: Healthcare Surcharge

As part of your Tier 4 visa application, you will be required to pay a Healthcare Surcharge. This will give you access to the NHS (National Health Service) but you may still be required to pay for some services. The amount you need to pay will be calculated as part of the online visa application process. The payment then has to be made before you can complete the final steps of your visa application. More information can be found on the UK Government’s healthcare webpages by clicking here.

Step 9: Accommodation

We recommend that you arrange accommodation before you arrive in Aberdeen. We suggest that you wait until your visa has been issued before you accept an offer of accommodation. We recommend you use the University’s address on your visa application in the meantime. Information on University accommodation, including how to apply, can be found on our website by clicking here.

There is more information on accommodation within section 3 of this guide.

Remember, when booking accommodation, that you are entering into a contract. Please read the contract carefully and make sure that you understand it before accepting the offer of accommodation.
Travelling to the UK

Arriving in Aberdeen

Aberdeen is a well-connected city, with daily flights to and from major international airports such as Amsterdam, Paris and London.

There is also a central bus and train station which provides easy access to our beautiful campus. You’ll be well placed to make your way to your accommodation with ease.

To find out more click here.

Please check our website by clicking here for up to date information on transport options, including making your way to campus and accommodation.
What to pack

Pack

Remember to check if you require any of the following, and pack them in your hand luggage

- **Travel documents**
  for advice on important documents to pack, you can find out more by clicking [here](#)

- **Electrical adaptor**
  to turn your plug into a British electrical plug

- **UK currency**
  for initial costs (please do not carry large amounts of cash)

- **Travel insurance**
  for your journey to the UK

- **Any prescription medicine**
  and a letter from your doctor in English explaining any pre-existing medical conditions

- **Warm clothes**
  and an umbrella or waterproof coat
  and winter footwear/shoes

- **Toothbrush & small toiletries kit**

Remember to check the weight restrictions for your hold luggage and current restrictions on bringing liquids with your airline.

What not to pack

Don’t Pack

- **Milk and meat products**
  There are strict rules governing the import of milk and meat products from non-European countries

- **Other food items**
  including fish, shellfish, honey, eggs, and certain types of fruit and vegetables - there are strict limits that will depend on the country you are travelling from

- **Pepper spray/mace**
  Anyone found with illegal products in their possession when they are entering the UK could be fined or receive a prison sentence. If you are unsure what you cannot bring in to the UK, you can find out more by visiting the [UK Government’s website](#)

- **Most kitchen and bedroom items**
  you can buy cheaply at local homeware stores here, so please do not bring pots, pans, knives, plates, sheets, pillows, or duvets.
Arriving at University

Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) Collection

If you are studying in the UK for six months or longer and have applied for a Tier 4 visa, you will be issued with a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP). This is a small, credit-card sized card, which details the validity of your Tier 4 visa and your visa conditions.

Details of where to collect the BRP should be detailed on the decision letter you will receive from UKVI once your Tier 4 visa has been granted.

You should collect your BRP within 10 days of arriving in the UK as it will allow you to register at the University. Please check carefully and see an International Student Adviser if you think there is a mistake on your BRP.

Check out our BRP collection guide by clicking here.

On-line Registration

To become a fully registered student here at the University of Aberdeen, you need to complete on-line registration. This can begin before you arrive.

Follow the step by step guide in the New Student Guide by clicking here.

Accommodation

Living on campus is truly part of the University and Student Life experience. We have an impressive range of accommodation (both standard and en-suite) to meet all your requirements and budget. With a guarantee of an offer of accommodation you are only one click away from reserving your room. Bringing your family? There are limited choices on or near campus. The accommodation team will be happy to help. For further information please visit the accommodation section of our website by clicking here.

Police Registration

The requirement to register with the police should be noted on either your visa vignette, BRP or decision letter from UK Visas.

Further information can be found on our website by clicking here.

Payment of Tuition Fees

To make things easier for you, the University of Aberdeen offers a variety of ways you can pay your tuition fees, including: up front & online, via bank transfer, through a sponsor, or by payment plans. Please click here or speak to a member of the InfoHub team on arrival or please email to get more information on the way you would like to make payment.

Check out the New Students section of our website by clicking here.
Settling in & starting your programme

Induction and Orientation
To help you prepare for the year ahead there are a number of important information sessions focusing on your academic studies and wider university life. Keep an eye out for the new student emails for details or visit the new student website by clicking here.

Get Connected
For up-to-date information about University life connect with us on social media
@studentlifeUOA
@studentlifeuoa
uniofaberdeen

Attendance Monitoring
The Immigration Authorities expect you to meet various responsibilities under the terms of your Tier 4 visa. If you fail to maintain a strong attendance record, the University will be legally obliged to stop sponsoring your visa. Please ensure you keep in touch with your School to let them know of any absences you expect to have and use our Student Hub to update any changes to your address or other contact details. If you have any questions about attendance monitoring, please email the immigration compliance team.

New Student Guide
We know there is lots to do and think about before you arrive but don’t worry, we are here to help. This guide will help you settle into your student life. Follow the step by step guide to on-line registration and find out about our meet and greet service, welcome week activity and making the most of your first few weeks in Aberdeen. To find out more click here.
Settling in

We understand that moving to a new country can come with its challenges, which is why we have created plenty of resources to help you settle in.

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**Student Support Services**

If you have questions about your visa, concerns about your course, or need advice on any issues, our Student Advisers are on hand to help. We also offer a free and confidential counselling service all year round.

To find out more click [here](#).

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**AUSA**

AUSA is a student-led organisation, here to support, empower and represent students.

With over 55+ clubs and 150+ societies to join there is something for everyone.

To find out more click [here](#).

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**Student Learning Service**

Offering ‘studying in the UK’ sessions, the SLS is designed to help all students achieve their full potential. The SLS offers free of charge workshops throughout the year as well as individual study advice sessions.

To find out more click [here](#).
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Email: study@abdn.ac.uk
Web: www.abdn.ac.uk/international

The information in this guide was correct at the time of producing this digital publication, May 2020, and relates to September 2020 entry only. It does not apply to anything beyond this entry date. The information in this guide focuses on international students who are classified as overseas fees.

The University of Aberdeen is a charity registered in Scotland, No: SC013683