

Part of  
**Study in the UK on a Student visa**  
[\(/study-uk-student-visa\)](/study-uk-student-visa)

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# Student visa

## 1. Overview

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 \(/student-visa/course\)](/student-visa/course)
- have enough [money to support yourself and pay for your course \(/student-visa/money\)](/student-visa/money) - the amount will vary depending on your circumstances
- can [speak, read, write and understand English \(/student-visa/knowledge-of-english\)](/student-visa/knowledge-of-english)
- have consent from your parents if you're 16 or 17 - you'll need evidence of this when you apply

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 \(/child-study-visa\)](/child-study-visa) instead.

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

## When to apply

When you can apply depends on whether you're applying from inside or outside the UK.

### Applying from outside the UK

The earliest you can apply for a visa is 6 months before you start your course.

## 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.

## How long it takes to get a decision

You'll usually get a decision on your visa within:

- 3 weeks, if you're outside the UK
- 8 weeks, if you're inside the UK

You may be able to pay to [get a faster decision \(/faster-decision-visa-settlement/applying-outside-the-uk\)](/faster-decision-visa-settlement/applying-outside-the-uk) - you'll be told if you can when you apply.

## How long you can stay

How long you can stay depends on the length of your course and what study you've already completed in the UK.

If you're 18 or over 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 \(/government/publications/points-based-system-student-route\)](/government/publications/points-based-system-student-route).

## Staying longer in the UK

You may be able to:

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

A Graduate visa will allow you to stay in the UK after successfully completing your course for:

- 2 years if you apply on or before 31 December 2026
- 18 months if you apply on or after 1 January 2027

It will allow you to stay for 3 years if you completed a PhD or other doctoral qualification.

## When you can travel to the UK

You can arrive before your course starts. This can be either:

- 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

You must not travel to the UK before the start date given on your visa, no matter when your course starts.

## Fees

It costs:

- £524 to apply for a Student visa from outside the UK
- £524 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 \(/healthcare-immigration-application\)](/healthcare-immigration-application) as part of your application.

How much you pay depends on how long your visa lasts.

## Your partner and children

You may be able to [bring your partner and children \('dependants'\) \(/student-visa/family-members\)](/student-visa/family-members).

## What you can and cannot do

You can:

- study
- work as a student union sabbatical officer

You may be able to work - how much depends on what you're studying and whether you're working in or out of term-time.

You cannot:

- claim [public funds \(/government/publications/public-funds--2\)](/government/publications/public-funds--2) (benefits) and pensions
- work in certain jobs, for example as a professional sportsperson or sports coach
- be self-employed
- study at an academy or a local authority-funded school (also known as a maintained school)

If your application is successful, you'll be told what you can and cannot do on a Student visa.

## 2. Your course

You must have an unconditional offer of a place on a course with a [licensed student sponsor \(/government/publications/register-of-licensed-sponsors-students\)](/government/publications/register-of-licensed-sponsors-students).

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.

## 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 \(RQF level 3, 4 or 5\) \(/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels\)](/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels) 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 \(RQF level 6, 7 or 8\) \(/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels\)](/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels)
- a full-time course [at degree level or above \(RQF level 6,7 or 8\) \(/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels\)](/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels) 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 \(RQF level 7 or above\)](/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels) (</what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels>)
- an English language course at level B2 or above in the [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages](https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-1-cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-global-scale) (<https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-1-cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-global-scale>)

You can also apply for this visa if you're taking up a full-time elected position as a Student Union Sabbatical Officer.

You may also need an [Academic Technology Approval Scheme \(ATAS\) certificate](/guidance/academic-technology-approval-scheme) (</guidance/academic-technology-approval-scheme>) if you're studying or researching sensitive topics at [RQF level 7 or above](/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels) (</what-different-qualification-levels-mean/list-of-qualification-levels>).

[The qualification levels are different in Scotland](/what-different-qualification-levels-mean/compare-different-qualification-levels) (</what-different-qualification-levels-mean/compare-different-qualification-levels>).

## Your Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS)

Once they've offered you a place on the course, your education provider will send you a reference number called a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies.

You must enter this reference number on your visa application.

You must [apply for your visa](/student-visa/apply) (</student-visa/apply>) within 6 months of receiving your CAS.

## 3. Money you need

You must have enough money to pay for your course and support yourself in the UK.

How much money you need depends on your circumstances and what you're applying for.

## Course fee

You need enough money to pay for your course for 1 academic year (up to 9 months). The amount you need to pay will be on your Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS).

If you've been in the UK with a valid visa for at least 12 months, you do not need to prove you have this money for your visa application.

## Money to support yourself ('financial requirement')

You'll need to show you have enough money to support yourself - unless you've been in the UK with a valid visa for at least 12 months on the date of your application.

How much money you need depends on where you will be studying. You'll need either:

- £1,529 per month (for up to 9 months) for courses in London
- £1,171 per month (for up to 9 months) for courses outside London

If you're boarding at a residential independent school, you'll need to pay boarding fees instead. The amount you need to pay will be on your CAS.

London means the City of London and the 32 London boroughs.

You'll need to prove you have [extra money for each family member you bring \(/student-visa/family-members\)](/student-visa/family-members) with you.

You must have this money for at least 28 days in a row. The end date of the 28-day period must be within 31 days of the date you apply for your visa.

### Example

If you submit your application on 1 January, you'd have to show that the funds were in your bank account for at least the 28-day period ending on 1 December.

If you have a student loan or financial sponsorship, you'll need to provide evidence of this from your loan or sponsorship company.

[Read the guidance on finances for student applications for more information about the money you need \(/guidance/financial-evidence-for-student-and-child-](/guidance/financial-evidence-for-student-and-child-)

[student-route-applicants](#)) and how to prove it.

## When you do not need to prove you have money to support yourself

You do not need to prove that you meet the financial requirement if either:

- you've been living in the UK with a visa for at least 12 months prior to the date of your Student visa application
- you're applying as a student union sabbatical officer

## If you're from a country listed under the 'differential evidence requirement'

You do not need to prove you have enough money to support yourself if you're a [British national overseas \(/types-of-british-nationality/british-national-overseas\)](#) or from one of the following countries or territories:

- Australia
- Austria
- Bahrain
- Barbados
- Belgium
- Botswana
- Brazil
- Brunei
- Bulgaria
- Cambodia
- Canada
- Chile
- China
- Croatia
- Republic of Cyprus
- Czechia
- Denmark

- The Dominican Republic
- Estonia
- Finland
- France
- Germany
- Greece
- Hong Kong
- Hungary
- Iceland
- Indonesia
- Ireland
- Italy
- Japan
- Kazakhstan
- Kuwait
- Latvia
- Liechtenstein
- Lithuania
- Luxembourg
- Macao
- Malaysia
- Malta
- Mauritius
- Mexico
- Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Norway
- Oman
- Peru
- Poland
- Portugal

- Qatar
- Romania
- Serbia
- Singapore
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- South Korea
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Taiwan
- Thailand
- Tunisia
- United Arab Emirates
- United States of America

However, you might be asked to provide this evidence before you get a decision on your application.

If you do need to provide it, you'll be contacted by UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) after you've submitted your application.

[Read the guidance on finances for student applications for more information about the money you need \(/guidance/financial-evidence-for-student-and-child-student-route-applicants\)](#) and how to prove it.

## 4. Knowledge of English

You'll usually need to prove your knowledge of the English language when you apply.

### Who does not need to prove their knowledge of English

You do not need to prove your knowledge of English if you're from one of the following countries or territories, or you've completed a qualification equivalent to a UK degree in one of them:

- Antigua and Barbuda
- Australia

- the Bahamas
- Barbados
- Belize
- the British overseas territories
- Dominica
- Grenada
- Guyana
- Ireland
- Jamaica
- Malta
- New Zealand
- St Kitts and Nevis
- St Lucia
- St Vincent and the Grenadines
- Trinidad and Tobago
- UK
- USA

You also do not need to prove your knowledge of English if one of the following applies:

- you're a national of Canada
- you're applying to come to the UK for a study abroad programme as part of a university degree course in the USA
- you proved your level of English in a previous visa application

## **How to prove your knowledge of English**

You can prove it in one of the following ways:

- having a UK school qualification
- having a degree from a UK institution
- having a degree from an institution that was outside the UK and taught in English
- passing an English test from an approved provider

## If you have a UK school qualification

You can prove your knowledge of English if you have a qualification from a UK school that you began when you were under 18. You must have one of the following qualifications:

- a GCSE
- an A level
- Scottish National Qualification level 4 or 5
- Scottish Higher or Advanced Higher in English

## If you have a degree from a UK institution

You can prove your knowledge of English if you have a degree-level qualification that was both:

- taught in English
- awarded by a UK institution, even if you studied outside the UK

## If you have a degree from an institution outside the UK

If your degree was taught in English and was not awarded by a UK institution, you'll need to [apply for an assessment from Ecctis \(https://qls.ecctis.com/\)](https://qls.ecctis.com/).

Ecctis will give you a code to confirm that your qualification is equivalent to a UK bachelor's degree or higher and was taught in English.

## Passing an English test

If you do not have any qualifications that prove your knowledge of English, you will need to [pass a Secure English Language Test \(SELT\) \(/guidance/prove-your-english-language-abilities-with-a-secure-english-language-test-selt\)](/guidance/prove-your-english-language-abilities-with-a-secure-english-language-test-selt) from an approved provider.

You must prove you can read, write, speak and understand English to a certain level on the [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages \(CEFR\) scale \(https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-1-cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-global-scale\)](https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-1-cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-global-scale).

## What you're studying    Level

Degree level or above	Equivalent to CEFR level B2
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Below degree level	CEFR level B1
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### If you're studying with a Higher Education Provider

If you're studying at degree level or above, your Higher Education Provider (HEP) can assess your level of English themselves. This means they may ask you to do a different test.

This must still be equivalent to a CEFR level B2.

## 5. Documents you'll need to apply

When you apply for your Student visa you must provide:

- a current passport or other valid travel documentation
- a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) from your course provider

You may also need to provide:

- proof you have enough money to support yourself and pay for your course - this will vary depending on your circumstances
- a valid [ATAS certificate \(/guidance/academic-technology-approval-scheme\)](/guidance/academic-technology-approval-scheme) if your course and nationality require it
- proof of parental or other legal guardian consent if you're under 18
- proof of your relationship to your parent or guardian if you're under 18
- your [tuberculosis test results \(/tb-test-visa\)](/tb-test-visa)
- written consent for your application from your financial sponsor if you've received sponsorship for your course fees and living costs in the last 12 months

You may need to provide additional documents depending on your circumstances. [Read the guidance for the full list of documents you'll need to provide \(/government/publications/points-based-system-student-route\)](/government/publications/points-based-system-student-route).

### If you're under 18

If you're under 18 you'll need written consent from both parents or legal guardians (or one parent if they have sole responsibility).

This must include their consent for:

- your visa application
- your living and care arrangements in the UK
- your travel to the UK

You'll also need to provide a copy of your birth certificate (or another government issued document) that shows the names of your parents.

## 6. Apply online

You must apply online for a Student visa.

Check which [documents you'll need to apply \(/student-visa/documents-you-must-provide\)](/student-visa/documents-you-must-provide).

## Apply outside the UK

As part of your application, you'll need to prove your identity. How you do this depends on where you're from and what type of passport you have.

You'll either:

- use the 'UK Immigration: ID Check' app to scan your identity document - you'll also create or sign into your UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) account
- have your fingerprints and photo (biometric information) taken at a [visa application centre \(/find-a-visa-application-centre\)](/find-a-visa-application-centre)

You'll be told what you need to do when you apply.

If you do need an appointment:

- you'll need to take your passport with you to the centre (you'll be able to collect it on the day)
- you may have to travel to get to your nearest visa application centre (this could be in another country)

Once you've started your application, you can save your form and complete it later.

[Start now](#)

## How long it takes to get a decision

You'll usually get a decision within 3 weeks.

You may be able to pay to [get a faster decision \(/faster-decision-visa-settlement/applying-outside-the-uk\)](/faster-decision-visa-settlement/applying-outside-the-uk).

## Apply inside the UK

You may be able to apply to:

- [extend your Student visa \(/student-visa/extend-your-visa\)](/student-visa/extend-your-visa)
- [switch to a Student visa \(/student-visa/switch-to-this-visa\)](/student-visa/switch-to-this-visa) from another type of visa

## How long it takes to get a decision

You'll usually get a decision within 8 weeks.

You may be able to pay to [get a faster decision \(/faster-decision-visa-settlement/applying-outside-the-uk\)](/faster-decision-visa-settlement/applying-outside-the-uk).

## After you apply

You'll be contacted if your application is complex and will take longer, for example because:

- your supporting documents need to be verified
- you need to attend an interview
- of your personal circumstances (for example if you have a criminal conviction)

If you need to change something in your application after you've sent it [contact UK Visas and Immigration \(UKVI\) \(/contact-ukvi-inside-outside-uk\)](/contact-ukvi-inside-outside-uk).

You can ask to [withdraw your application \(/cancel-visa\)](/cancel-visa) by contacting UKVI. Your fee will only be refunded if UKVI has not started processing your application.

## If your application is successful

You'll get an eVisa (a digital record of your identity and immigration status).

Your decision email or letter will tell you how to [get access to your eVisa \(/get-access-evisa\)](/get-access-evisa). You'll need to create a UKVI account.

## 7. Your partner and children

Your partner and children ('dependants') may be able to apply to come to the UK or stay longer in the UK.

You must be one of the following:

- a government-sponsored student starting a course that lasts longer than 6 months
- a full-time student on a [postgraduate level course \(RQF level 7 or above\) \(/find-a-regulated-qualification\)](/find-a-regulated-qualification) that lasts 9 months or longer

If your postgraduate level course starts on or after 1 January 2024, it must be either:

- a PhD or other doctorate (RQF level 8)
- a research-based higher degree

## Your dependants

A dependant partner or child is one of the following:

- your husband, wife or civil partner
- your unmarried partner
- your child under 18 years old - including if they were born in the UK during your stay

You'll need to provide evidence of your relationship when you apply, for example:

- a marriage or civil partnership certificate for your partner
- a birth certificate for your child

[Find out what other documents you can use to prove your relationship \(/government/publications/points-based-system-student-route\).](#)

## Your child

You'll need to prove that your child is both:

- not married or in a civil partnership
- living with you, unless they're living away from home in full-time education - for example, at boarding school or university

You'll need to provide 2 of the following documents confirming their address:

- a bank statement
- credit card bills
- driving licence
- NHS registration document
- an official letter from their university or college

If your child pays you rent or upkeep, you'll need to give details.

## Money they need to support themselves

Your partner and child must each have a certain amount of money available to them. This is in addition to the money you must have to support yourself.

How much money they need depends on where you will be studying. They must have either:

- £845 a month (for up to 9 months) for courses in London
- £680 a month (for up to 9 months) for courses outside London

If you're applying at the same time as your partner or child (you're applying together as a family), you'll need to prove you have both [money to pay for your course and to support yourself \(/student-visa/money\)](#) and additional money for each of them.

If your partner or child is applying at a different time to you (they're applying separately) they only need to prove they have money to support themselves.

You (or your partner or child) must have this money for at least 28 consecutive days. The end date of the 28 day period must be within 31 days of the date they apply for their visa.

If you have a student loan or financial sponsorship, you'll need to provide evidence of this from your loan or sponsorship company. If your loan does not cover your partner or child, you'll need to prove you have money to support them instead.

## **When they do not need to prove they have money to support themselves**

Your partner or child does not need to prove they have this money if they've been in the UK with a valid visa for at least 12 months.

[If you and your partner or child are from a country listed under the 'differential evidence requirement' \(/student-visa/money\)](#) and you're applying at the same time, they do not need to prove they have money to support themselves.

However, they might be asked to provide this evidence before they get a decision on their application.

If they do need to provide it, they'll be contacted by UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) after they've submitted their application.

## **Apply outside the UK**

Your partner and children must either:

- [apply online as your partner outside the UK \(https://apply-to-visit-or-stay-in-the-uk.homeoffice.gov.uk/sort/start/pbs\\_dependant\\_partner\\_out\\_uk\)](https://apply-to-visit-or-stay-in-the-uk.homeoffice.gov.uk/sort/start/pbs_dependant_partner_out_uk)
- [apply online as your child outside the UK \(https://apply-to-visit-or-stay-in-the-uk.homeoffice.gov.uk/sort/start/pbs\\_dependant\\_child\\_out\\_uk\)](https://apply-to-visit-or-stay-in-the-uk.homeoffice.gov.uk/sort/start/pbs_dependant_child_out_uk)

They'll need your application number - you get it when you apply. This number is called a Global Web Form (GWF) or a Unique Application Number (UAN). You'll find it on emails and letters from the Home Office about your application.

## **Proving their identity**

As part of their application, your partner and children will need to prove their identity.

They'll either:

- use the 'UK Immigration: ID Check' app to scan their identity document - they'll also create or sign into their UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) account
- have their fingerprints and photo (biometric information) taken at a visa application centre

They'll be told what they need to do when they apply.

If they need an appointment:

- they'll need to take their passport with them to the visa application centre (they'll be able to collect it on the day)
- they may have to travel to get to their nearest centre (this could be in another country)

They may be able to pay to get their visa faster or use other services depending on which country they're in - check with the visa application centre.

## How long they can stay

If their application is successful, their visa will end on the same date as yours.

## Apply inside the UK to extend or switch

Your partner or child can apply to extend or switch their visa either:

- at the same time as you [apply to extend \(/student-visa/extend-your-visa\)](/student-visa/extend-your-visa) or [switch your own visa \(/student-visa/switch-to-this-visa\)](/student-visa/switch-to-this-visa)
- at any time before their current visa expires

This includes children who have turned 18 during your stay.

Your partner or child cannot apply to switch in the UK if they have one of the following visas:

- a visit visa
- a short-term student visa
- a Parent of a Child Student visa
- a seasonal worker visa
- a domestic worker in a private household visa

## Fees

Each person will need to pay:

- £524 for the visa
- [the healthcare surcharge \(/healthcare-immigration-application\)](/healthcare-immigration-application)

They'll need to have their fingerprints and a photo (biometric information) taken - there's no fee for this.

## How to apply

Your partner and child must apply online. They must either:

- [apply online as your partner inside the UK \(https://apply-to-visit-or-stay-in-the-uk.homeoffice.gov.uk/sort/start/brp\\_reuse\\_pbs\\_dependant\\_partner\\_in\\_uk\)](https://apply-to-visit-or-stay-in-the-uk.homeoffice.gov.uk/sort/start/brp_reuse_pbs_dependant_partner_in_uk)
- [apply online as your child inside the UK \(https://apply-to-visit-or-stay-in-the-uk.homeoffice.gov.uk/sort/start/brp\\_reuse\\_pbs\\_dependant\\_child\\_in\\_uk\)](https://apply-to-visit-or-stay-in-the-uk.homeoffice.gov.uk/sort/start/brp_reuse_pbs_dependant_child_in_uk)

They'll need your application number - you get it when you apply. This number is called a Global Web Form (GWF) or a Unique Application Number (UAN). You'll find it on emails and letters from the Home Office about your application.

As part of their application, they'll need to have their fingerprints and photo (biometric information) taken at a [UK Visa and Citizenship Application Services \(UKVCAS\) \(/ukvcas\)](/ukvcas) service point.

They'll also need to submit their supporting documents. They can:

- upload them into the online service
- have them scanned at their UKVCAS appointment

They must not travel outside of the UK, Ireland, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man until they get a decision. Their application will be withdrawn if they do.

They may be able to [pay to get a faster decision \(/faster-decision-visa-settlement\)](/faster-decision-visa-settlement) - they'll be told if they can when they apply.

## If their application is successful

They'll get an eVisa (a digital record of their identity and immigration status).

Their decision email or letter will tell them what to do next and how to get access to their eVisa.

They'll need to create a UKVI account to access their eVisa if they do not already have one.

## Children born in the UK

If you have a child while you're in the UK, they do not automatically [become a British citizen \(/british-citizenship\)](#).

You must apply for your child's dependant visa if you want to travel in and out of the UK with them.

The form you fill in depends on whether your child is inside or outside the UK. Your child must either:

- [apply online as your child inside the UK \(https://apply-to-visit-or-stay-in-the-uk.homeoffice.gov.uk/sort/start/brp\\_reuse\\_pbs\\_dependant\\_child\\_in\\_uk\)](https://apply-to-visit-or-stay-in-the-uk.homeoffice.gov.uk/sort/start/brp_reuse_pbs_dependant_child_in_uk)
- [apply online as your child outside the UK \(https://apply-to-visit-or-stay-in-the-uk.homeoffice.gov.uk/sort/start/pbs\\_dependant\\_child\\_out\\_uk\)](https://apply-to-visit-or-stay-in-the-uk.homeoffice.gov.uk/sort/start/pbs_dependant_child_out_uk)

You'll need to provide a full UK birth certificate for each child, showing the names of both parents.

You must apply for their dependant visa before they turn 18 if they want to stay in the UK.

## 8. Extend your visa

You may be able to extend your Student visa to stay longer and continue your course or study a new course. This includes if you currently have a Tier 4 (General) student visa.

To extend your visa you must:

- be in the UK on a Student visa or a Tier 4 (General) student visa
- have an [unconditional offer of a place on a course \(/student-visa/course\)](#) with a licensed student sponsor - shown by your Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS)

- show that your studies are at a higher academic level than your current course (called the 'academic progress requirement') - there are some exceptions

If you've been in the UK with a valid visa for less than 12 months, you'll need to [prove you have enough money to support yourself in the UK \(/student-visa/money\)](/student-visa/money).

Your [partner or children \(/student-visa/family-members\)](/student-visa/family-members) will need to apply separately to extend their visa. They can either apply at the same time as you, or at any time before their current visa expires.

You can also [switch to a Graduate visa \(/graduate-visa\)](/graduate-visa). This will allow you to stay in the UK after successfully completing your course for:

- 2 years if you apply on or before 31 December 2026
- 18 months if you apply on or after 1 January 2027

It will allow you to stay for 3 years if you completed a PhD or other doctoral qualification.

## Showing academic progress

If you're currently studying in the UK, you'll usually need to show your studies will be at a higher academic level than your current course.

Your new course must be one of the following:

- at a higher academic level than your current course
- at the same level and related to your previous course or career aspirations - it must be degree level or above at a Higher Education Provider (HEP)
- intercalated to a medicine, dentistry or medical science course you started studying under your Student visa (including a Tier 4 (General) student visa)

You do not need to show your studies are at a higher level if you're doing one of the following:

- resitting exams or repeating modules
- applying for the first time to a new institution to complete a course you started at an institution that lost its student sponsorship licence
- applying after working as a student union sabbatical officer to complete a qualification you started studying under your last Student visa (including a

## Tier 4 (General) student visa)

- completing a PhD or other doctorate that you started studying under your last Student visa (including a Tier 4 (General) student visa)
- continuing your medical, dentistry or medical science degree after completing an intercalated course
- applying to extend your stay to complete your studies because you've done (or want to do) a work placement or study abroad programme

[Read the guidance for more information about when you need to prove your studies are at a higher level \(/government/publications/points-based-system-student-route\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/points-based-system-student-route).

## If you're applying to work in the UK

You can get a CAS if you're applying to work as a student union sabbatical officer.

## When to apply

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.

For example, if your visa expires on 1 December, you must apply for a new visa before 1 December. Your new course must begin by 29 December.

You must also apply within 6 months of getting a [Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies \(CAS\) \(/student-visa/course\)](https://www.gov.uk/student-visa/course).

You can stay in the UK until you get your decision.

If you applied for an [administrative review \(/ask-for-a-visa-administrative-review/if-youre-in-the-uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/ask-for-a-visa-administrative-review/if-youre-in-the-uk) because your application was refused, you can stay in the UK until you get your review decision.

## Fees

For each person, you'll need to pay:

- £524 to extend this visa

- [the healthcare surcharge \(/healthcare-immigration-application\)](/healthcare-immigration-application)

You'll need to have your fingerprints and a photo (biometric information) taken - there's no fee for this.

## Apply

You must apply online.

As part of your application you'll need to prove your identity. How you do this depends on where you're from and the type of passport or resident permit you have.

You'll either:

- use the 'UK Immigration: ID Check' app to scan your identity document - you'll also create or sign in to your UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) account
- have your fingerprints and photo (biometric information) taken at a [UK Visa and Citizenship Application Services \(UKVCAS\) \(/ukvcas\)](#) service point

You'll be told what you need to do when you apply.

Start now

You must not travel outside of the UK, Ireland, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man until you get a decision. Your application will be withdrawn if you do.

## How long it takes to get a decision

A decision will usually be made within 8 weeks.

You may be able to [pay to get a faster decision \(/faster-decision-visa-settlement\)](/faster-decision-visa-settlement) - you'll be told if you can when you apply.

## After you apply

You'll be contacted if your application is complex and will take longer, for example because:

- your supporting documents need to be verified
- you need to attend an interview
- of your personal circumstances (for example if you have a criminal conviction)

If you need to change something in your application after you've sent it [contact UK Visas and Immigration \(UKVI\) \(/contact-ukvi-inside-outside-uk\)](/contact-ukvi-inside-outside-uk).

You can ask to [withdraw your application \(/cancel-visa\)](/cancel-visa) by contacting UKVI. Your fee will only be refunded if UKVI has not started processing your application.

### **If your application is successful**

You'll get an eVisa (a digital record of your identity and immigration status).

Your decision email or letter will tell you how to [get access to your eVisa \(/get-access-evisa\)](/get-access-evisa). You'll need to create a UKVI account.

## **9. Switch to this visa**

You may be able to switch to a Student visa if you already have permission to be in the UK.

You cannot switch to this visa if you have one of the following visas:

- a visit visa
- a short-term student visa
- a Parent of a Child Student visa
- a seasonal worker visa
- a domestic worker in a private household visa
- leave outside the immigration rules

If you have settled or pre-settled status under the EU Settlement Scheme, you do not need to apply for a visa.

## **Eligibility**

To switch to a Student visa you must:

- be in the UK
- have an [unconditional offer of a place on a course \(/student-visa/course\)](/student-visa/course) with a licensed student sponsor - shown by your Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS)

If you've been in the UK with a valid visa for less than 12 months, you'll need to [prove you have enough money to support yourself in the UK \(/student-visa/money\)](/student-visa/money).

Your [partner or children \(/student-visa/family-members\)](/student-visa/family-members) will need to apply separately to switch their visa. They can either apply at the same time as you, or at any time before their current visa expires.

## When to apply

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You must apply before your current visa expires. Your new course must begin within 28 days of your current visa expiring.

For example, if your visa expires on 1 December, you must apply for a new visa before 1 December. Your new course must begin by 29 December.

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