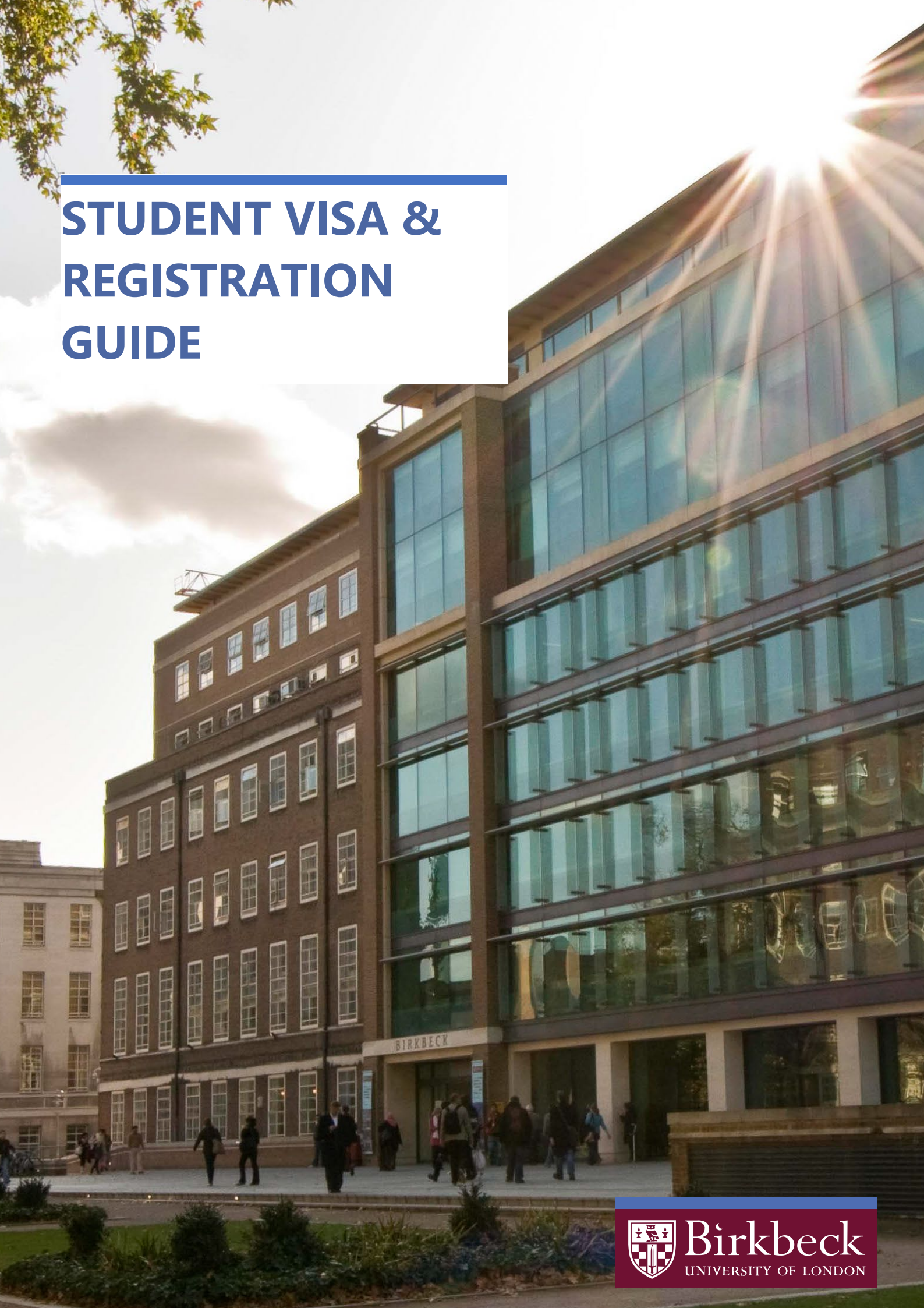


STUDENT VISA & REGISTRATION GUIDE



Birkbeck
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON



DISCLAIMER

Whilst every effort is made by Birkbeck, University of London to ensure the accuracy of the information and advice given, the requirements relating to visas are complex and change frequently.

We cannot therefore accept responsibility for any inaccuracy or error in the information or advice given or for the consequences of any actions taken on the basis of the information provided.

You must verify the information given and check the requirements which apply to you on the Home Office website:

<https://www.gov.uk/student-visa>

If you have any queries relating to the information contained in this document, please contact:

International Student Administration
Registry Services
Birkbeck, University of London
Malet Street, Bloomsbury
London WC1E 7HX

Email: isa@bbk.ac.uk

Phone: +44 (0)20 3926 3100

www.bbk.ac.uk/international



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1. STUDENT VISA

1.1. REQUIREMENTS

Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS)

A Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) is an 'electronic record' (like a database record) which is assigned by Birkbeck University of London to support your Student visa application.

The CAS will contain your personal information, academic programme details and a unique CAS number. This reference number is a mandatory requirement when completing a Student visa application form and is used to determine whether you meet the requirements of the Student route. It is also used to decide on your work rights and ability to bring dependants to the UK with you.

You will be emailed a CAS statement and [Description of CAS statement](#) detailing all the information above.



A printout of CAS statement does not need to be included in your visa application.

When will I receive my CAS?

This will depend on a combination of the following and your personal circumstances:

- the location from where you are intending to make your visa application, i.e., from the UK or your home country
- acceptance of an unconditional offer to study a full-time programme of study
- if you have satisfied all Academic, Non-academic and General Conditions of Entry stated in the offer
- if you are deemed to satisfy the [Student visa requirements](#); and
- if you have [paid a deposit](#).

If you have satisfied all conditions and requirements and plan to apply for a Student visa from your home country, a draft CAS can be issued up to 6 months before the start date of your course.

You will need to check and confirm whether the details in a draft version of your CAS are correct.

Once you have verified this and provided satisfactory supporting documents when requested to [International Student Administration \(ISA\)](#), your CAS statement will normally be issued within 5 working days.

If you are [eligible and intend to make your Student visa application from the UK](#), the CAS process will start 3 - 4 months before the course start date. You will be sent a draft version of your CAS and [referred to Birkbeck's Free Student Visa Application Checking Service process](#). Your CAS will be released via Birkbeck's Student Immigration Advisor if you are deemed to satisfy all conditions to make your application from the UK.

Points required for Student visa

You must score a total of 70 points to be able to apply for a Student visa.

Each of the following characteristics is explained further in [1.2 Supporting documents](#).

- unconditional offer to join an eligible course – valid CAS: 50 points

- speak English at required level – English language requirement: 10 points
- have adequate level of funds – financial requirements: 10 points.

Maximum period of study

The Home Office limits how long you can study under Student visa. This limit includes all previous visa periods, not the course length, in the UK whilst on a Student and Tier 4 (General) visa, and depends on the level of study you undertake.

- 2 years for below degree level
- 5 years for degree-level study (RQF level 6), e.g., Bachelor's degree or Grad Dip
- no limit for above degree-level study (RQF level 7 or above), e.g., Master's or PhD.

Academic progression

Students who wish to extend their current Student visa from the UK to start a new programme of study must show their proposed study represents 'academic progression' from any previous study undertaken in the UK with a Tier 4 (General) or Student visa.

The relevant Home Office guidance states that any new course will normally be at a higher level than those previously studied in the UK.

You will also have successfully completed the previous course by achieving the qualification for which you were granted Tier 4 or Student visa.

If you are applying for an extension of your Student visa from the UK, you must provide official evidence of successful completion of your previous qualification that entailed study under Tier 4 or Student visa. This includes Pre-sessional programmes.

If the final result is not available before the start of your new course, you can submit a letter from your current Student sponsor confirming that you are 'highly likely to complete your course successfully.' If you subsequently fail to complete the previous course successfully, Birkbeck is required to report it to the Home Office and withdraw the sponsorship.

1.2. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

English language proficiency

You must satisfy:

- [Birkbeck's English language requirement](#), and
- [Student visa English language requirement](#).

Schools may accept a wider range of English language qualifications than specified by the Home Office, for the [College's general English language requirement](#) purpose. In this case, you may still be required to satisfy the minimum Student visa English language requirement.

Alternatively, if you have demonstrated the required English language level, i.e., CEFR level B2, through your previous successful immigration application, you do not have to demonstrate it again.

Academic Technology Approval Scheme

Students who are starting on or continuing their study for specific degrees in the physical sciences, computing, or mathematics, must note the requirements of the Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS).

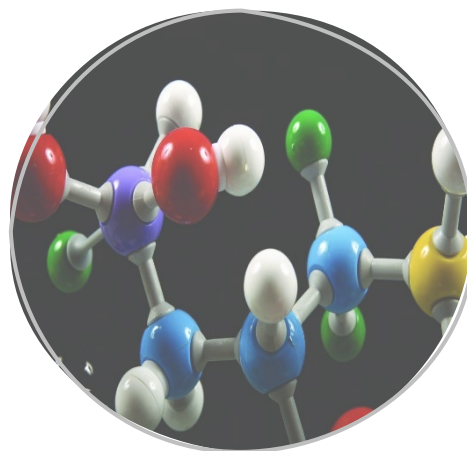
This requirement does not apply to a national of EU/EEA/Swiss and the following countries:

Australia; Canada; Japan; New Zealand;
Singapore; South Korea; United States of
America



An ATAS clearance certificate must be obtained before your CAS can be issued.

You can apply for an ATAS certificate up to 9 months before the starting date of your course, and it is valid for 6 months from date of issue.



The process normally takes a minimum of 20 working days. However, processing times will increase between April and September and can take 30 or more working days to complete.

Therefore, you should submit your [ATAS certificate application](#) as early as possible.

You need the following information from the College before submitting your application:

- your offer email
- CAH3 code of your programme of study (stated in the official offer)
- a brief summary of your research proposal agreed with your potential supervisor ([examples of good and bad research proposals for ATAS](#))



If you change your course, or area of research, you must obtain a new ATAS clearance certificate.

Health screening

[Residents of certain countries](#) applying for a visa to come to the UK for longer than 6 months must obtain a certificate confirming that they are free from infectious Tuberculosis (TB) before applying for a visa.

You must be tested at a [clinic that has been approved by the Home Office](#).

Please note that you will not need a TB test if

- you are applying from the UK, or
- you lived for at least 6 months in a country where TB screening is not required by the UK, and you've been away from that country for no more than 6 months.

Financial evidence

In order to make a successful application, you must provide evidence that you have sufficient funds to cover:

- your tuition fee balance for the first year of study, and



- maintenance (living costs).

If you meet the following conditions, you will automatically meet the financial requirement:

- you are applying for a Student visa from the UK, and
- you have been living in the UK for at least 12 months with a valid visa on the date of your application. Holidays and short absences from the UK do not break the 12 month period. However, if you haven't been based in the UK for a significant part of the 12 months you will have to show satisfactory financial evidence.

DIFFERENTIAL EVIDENCE REQUIREMENT FOR A STUDENT

If you are a national of the countries listed below, you do not need to submit evidence of funds with your Student visa application:

Australia; Austria; Bahrain; Barbados; Belgium; Botswana; Brazil; Brunei; Bulgaria; Cambodia; Canada; Chile; China; Croatia; Republic of Cyprus; Czech Republic; Denmark; The Dominican Republic; Estonia; Finland; France; Germany; Greece; Hungary; Iceland; Indonesia; Ireland; Italy; Japan; Kazakhstan; Kuwait; Latvia; Liechtenstein; Lithuania; Luxembourg; Malaysia; Malta; Mauritius; Mexico; Netherlands; New Zealand; Norway; Oman; Peru; Poland; Portugal; Qatar; Romania; Serbia; Singapore; Slovakia; Slovenia; South Korea; Spain; Sweden; Switzerland; Thailand; Tunisia; United Arab Emirates; United States of America.



You are required to meet the financial requirements at the time of your application and provide evidence when requested by the decision maker. If you do not provide the required evidence, your application will be refused. Therefore, it is important to have funds and evidence of them prepared.



You can use our [Student visa financial requirements guidance tool](#) to check if you will be required to submit your financial evidence as part of your Student visa application.

ACCEPTABLE TYPES OF FUNDS

For funds to be acceptable, all the following must be met:

- held in a financial institution that uses electronic record keeping, which is regulated by the appropriate regulatory body for the country it is operating in and where UKVI is able to make verification checks
- held in an account belonging to the applicant, or their partner (who is applying for their UK dependant visa at the same time or has been granted UK visa), or a parent or legal guardian (except for dependant partners)
- held in a personal bank or building society account (including current, deposit, savings, pensions from which the funds can be withdrawn, or an investment account) from which the funds can be accessed immediately.



Other accounts (including pension funds) where the funds cannot be accessed immediately or financial instruments such as shares, bonds, overdraft and credit cards are not acceptable.



A business account is not acceptable as your financial evidence, even if the business is owned by you or your family or your legal guardian.

THE MINIMUM REQUIRED AMOUNT OF MONEY

The maintenance requirement for Birkbeck is £1,334 per month because we are located in inner-London for the purpose of Student visa application. You must show that you have money for your living costs for each month of your course, up to 9 months.

Therefore, the maximum amount is set at £12,006 (£1,334 x 9 months), which will apply to the most of our students.

If you paid a deposit, it will be stated in your CAS as part of your tuition fee payment and will be deducted from the total amount you need to show.

For example, if you will be studying a 12-month MSc Management at Birkbeck and have paid a deposit of £5,000, you will need to show a minimum of £28,126 (Tuition fee £21,120 – Deposit paid £5,000 + Maintenance £12,006) in eligible bank accounts.



Payment towards your accommodation provider, including the University of London Intercollegiate Halls of Residence, will not be included in your CAS because it is not a payment made to Birkbeck.

EVIDENCE OF FUNDS

Using your own funds

You need to provide your bank statement(s) that indicate you have held the required amount of money in your account for a minimum of 28 consecutive days (finishing on the date of the closing balance day) ending no more than 31 days before your visa application date¹ ([see an example of a bank statement](#)).

Using parent(s) or legal guardian(s)'s funds

You need to provide your parent(s) or legal guardian(s)'s bank statement in accordance with the description above.

You must also provide all the following:

- official evidence of relationship (e.g., birth certificate, certificate of adoption, or court document²); and
- a letter from your parent(s) or legal guardian(s) confirming that they will financially sponsor your studies ([an example letter](#)).

Using your partner's funds

If you and your partner are applying for visas at the same time or your partner has already been granted with a visa, funds held by your partner can be used.



You can use multiple bank accounts and one or more foreign currencies. This will be converted into pound sterling (£) using the spot exchange rate which appears on www.oanda.com for the date of the application.

¹ Immigration rules define "date of application" as "the date of payment of the relevant fee", i.e., visa application fee.

² Affidavit or sworn statement put in writing is not an acceptable document to confirm the legal guardianship.

OFFICIAL FINANCIAL SPONSORSHIP

Official sponsors can be one of the following:

- the UK government
- your national government
- the British Council or any international organisation
- international company
- a university
- an independent school.

The list of acceptable official financial sponsors includes an 'international company.' The Home Office has not defined this, but it means a company with a trading presence (a physical office) in more than one country.

Your official financial sponsor must have the funds to support you financially whilst you are studying in the UK and have the capacity to move, or have experience of moving, funds across international borders.

You must include the sponsorship letter. The letter must show:

- your name
- the name and contact details of your official financial sponsor
- the date of the letter
- the length of your sponsorship; and
- the amount of money the sponsor is giving to you, or a statement that your official financial sponsor will cover all your fees and living costs.



If you received financial sponsorship from a government or international scholarship agency, which ended within the last 12 months, you must provide a consent letter from your sponsor permitting you to stay in or re-enter the UK for an unlimited time.

FINANCIAL AID FOR AMERICAN STUDENTS

If you are using US Federal loans, you may need to submit a 'Notification of Student Loan.' There is no requirement to maintain the funds for 28 consecutive days because the loans will be paid directly to Birkbeck. The living costs portion of the loan will be released to you in instalments after you have started the course.

You can find some further information from [our website](#).

STUDENT OR EDUCATIONAL LOANS

The student loan must be provided to you, not to your partner, parents or legal guardian, even if the loan is for study purposes.

The student loan letter must confirm that the provider of the loan is one of the following providers:

- a government
- a government sponsored student loan company
- an academic or educational loans scheme which is provided by a financial institution regulated for the purpose of issuing student loans by either the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) or the Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA) or, in the case of an overseas loan, the official regulatory body for the purpose of issuing student loans in the country in which the financial institution is located and where the money is held.



If your financial sponsorship or loans cover some of your course fee or living costs, you must show that you have the rest of the money needed.

Academic qualifications

Your previous academic qualifications, normally the final transcript or certificate/diploma, will have been submitted as part of your course application.

As Birkbeck is a higher education provider (HEP) with a track record of compliance, you do not need to provide academic qualifications with your Student visa application.

Official English translation

If any of your documents are not in English, you must provide a fully certified translation from a professional translator or translation company that can be independently verified by the Home Office. The translation must include all the following information:

- confirmation that it is an accurate translation of the original document
- the date of translation
- the full name and signature of the translator or an official of the translation company
- the translator or translation company's contact details.



If your financial documents are not in English, they must be submitted with an official English translation.

Letter of parental consent (under-18)

If you will be under the age of 18 when you submit your visa application, you will require the consent of your parent(s), or legal guardian(s).

The consent letter must confirm:

- the relationship between you and your parent(s) or legal guardian(s)
- that your parent(s) or legal guardian(s) have given their consent to your application
- that your parent(s) or legal guardian(s) have given their consent to you living independently in the UK; and
- that your parent(s) and legal guardian(s) have given their consent to your independent travel to the UK.

The letter must be signed by each parent or legal guardian unless your parent or legal guardian has legal custody or sole responsibility for you.

Passport

Any passports you are submitting with your visa application must have been signed where appropriate.

If you are applying from outside the UK, your current passport must have at least one blank page for endorsement of your Entry Clearance.

Additional documents

If you are applying from the UK, the following documents may also need to be submitted:

- previous passport if your visa is in your old passport
- [Biometric Residence Permit \(BRP\)](#) if it was issued.

1.3. STUDENT VISA APPLICATION PROCESS

When and where to apply

APPLYING FROM OUTSIDE THE UK

You must make your Student visa application from the country in which you are living with a valid immigration permission, or from the country of your nationality.

It is not possible to make a Student visa application from a third country where you are visiting, unless there is no Visa Application Centre (VAC) in the country where you live.



'Country of residence' might not be the same as your country of origin and it refers to wherever you have permission to live, for example for work or study purposes.

Once you have been given a CAS, you can make your application up to 6 months before the start date of your course.



[Click here for the application link.](#)

APPLYING FROM THE UK

You may be able to apply from inside the UK to extend or switch to a Student visa to start your new course.

To be eligible to apply within the UK, the start date of your new programme of study on your CAS must be no more than 28 days after the end of your current visa. You also need to meet further conditions as described below:

For extending Student visa, you must

- be in the UK on a Student or Tier 4 (General) student visa, and
- satisfy the [academic progression requirement](#).



[Click here for the application link.](#)

For switching to Student visa, you must

be in the UK under immigration permission that is not one of the following:

- 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.



[Click here for the application link.](#)



Once you respond to a draft CAS indicating your intention to make your visa application from the UK, you will be referred to [Birkbeck's Free Student Visa Application Checking Service](#). Our experienced immigration advisor will provide advice and guidance on your Student visa application. Your CAS will normally be released to you only after:

- you have provided all requested supporting documents satisfying the Student visa requirements, and
- your drafted visa application is checked and is deemed to be satisfactory.



It is particularly important to make a valid application before your current visa expires.

You must not start your new course until a Student visa is granted.

However, the Home Office permits you to start your new study while waiting for a decision if your existing visa at the time of making your Student visa application from the UK has no restriction on study. For example, if your current visa is Graduate route visa, you must have been granted Student visa before you are permitted to study.

Furthermore, you must also meet all of the following:

- you applied for your Student visa before starting the new course
- your Student visa application was made before your existing visa expires, and
- you have provided evidence of the above to Birkbeck.



You do this at your own risk as it is possible that your application can be refused.

Immigration Health Surcharge

Since 6 April 2015, most Student visa applicants need to pay a [healthcare surcharge](#) as part of their immigration application. You will then be able to use [the National Health Service \(NHS\)](#).



[You will still need to pay for certain types of services.](#)

The rate for a student and student dependant is £470³ per person for each year of their visa. If the visa includes part of a year that is less than 6 months, the charge will be £235 for this period.

For example, if you will be applying for a 12-month Master's degree programme starting 2 October 2023, your Student visa should be valid until 02 February 2025 (course end date + 4 months wrap-up period). Therefore, you will be expected to pay £705 (£470 x 1.5 years) as part of your visa application.

Visa application fee

If you are applying from outside the UK, the standard visa application fee is £490. You should get a decision on your visa application within 3 weeks once you either attend your appointment at the visa application centre or use the ID Check app.

If you want to get a faster decision, you may be able to pay more at the time of your application. It is not possible to change the type of service after submitting your visa application.

If you are applying from the UK, the standard visa application fee is £490. You will usually get a decision within 8 weeks. You can [pay to get a faster decision](#) at the time of your visa application.



If your Student visa application is made from the UK before your previous UK visa is expired, you can remain in the UK while waiting for a decision on your Student visa application. You must remain in the UK, Ireland, the Channel Islands, or the Isle of Man until you get a decision. Your application will be withdrawn if you do not.

Biometrics

APPLYING FROM OUTSIDE THE UK

³ It is correct at the time of publishing. The UK government announced their plan to increase it in 2024.



EU/EEA national



If your passport has a biometric chip and you can use [the UK Immigration ID check app](#) to scan and upload your passport and a photo, you will not be required make a biometric appointment.

- for android use, go to [Google Play](#)
- for iOS user, go to [Apple Store](#)

All other nationals

You must give your biometrics at an appointment. You will be instructed to book an appointment once you have completed your application form. At this appointment you will be required to provide your biometrics (your facial photograph and fingerprints) and [attend a short interview](#).

APPLYING FROM THE UK

You will 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; or
- give your fingerprints and a photograph (biometric information) at a [UK Visa and Citizenship Application Services \(UKVCAS\)](#) service point - this is to get a biometric residence permit.

You will be told what you need to do when you apply.



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

Visa interviews

APPLYING FROM OUTSIDE THE UK

You will attend a short interview through video conferencing when you attend the visa centre to submit your application and biometric information.

You may then be required to attend a further interview as part of your visa application, either in person or on the telephone, or when you arrive in the UK (for example at the airport) to satisfy you are a genuine student.

If you are required to attend an interview:

- you will need to demonstrate your English language ability without the assistance of an interpreter, and
- provide basic knowledge about your study in the UK (e.g., length of course, subjects of study).

If you do not attend this interview when requested without adequate reasons, your visa application may get refused.

APPLYING FROM THE UK

You may be asked to attend an interview by the caseworker. They will normally email to notify if you are required to attend an interview. Interviews are usually done by phone or in some cases face-to-face. If you do not attend the interview without reasonable reasons, your visa application could be refused.

[Find more about the visa interview process and our guide to credibility interviews.](#)

Dependants

You can bring your partner or children to the UK as your 'dependants,' if you are either:

- government-sponsored and your course is over 6 months long, or
- studying for a postgraduate level full-time course of 9 months or longer.

If your course start date is **on or after 1 January 2024**, you can only have dependants in the UK if your course is a PhD, other doctoral qualification, or a research-based higher degree.



If your child is applying to come to the UK as your dependant, they must be less than 18 years old and normally both of the child's parents must be coming to the UK.

[The UK Council for International Student Affairs \(UKCISA\) has written a comprehensive information guide](#) which you should read carefully before applying for a visa for your family.

Grant of Student visa

APPLYING FROM OUTSIDE THE UK

If your application is successful, you will normally be issued with a 90-day Entry Clearance vignette sticker in your passport - see Figure 1 for example - and a decision notification.

The vignette is proof only of your permission to enter the UK from its valid from date and before its expiry. If you do not travel within that 90-day period, you will have to apply for another vignette.



You should wait until you have obtained an Entry Clearance vignette before you book any non-refundable travel tickets.



Figure 1 Example of Entry Clearance vignette

If you are an EEA or Swiss national and use the [IDV mobile app](#) to verify your identity, you will receive a visa decision by email and will only be issued with a digital status.

If you travel before the start date of your Entry Clearance vignette or digital status, you may be refused entry to the UK if you are a visa national, or permitted to enter as a visitor. If you enter the UK as a visitor, you will need to leave the Common Travel Area (UK and Ireland) and re-enter the UK to validate your Student visa.

You will need to arrive and collect your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) – see figure 2 & 3 for examples - by the expiry date of your vignette. Your decision letter will state from which Post office branch you can collect your BRP.

Please take the following original documents:

- your passport containing the 90-day vignette
- decision notification.

If you are under 18 years old, you will need to [nominate a responsible adult](#) to accompany you to collect your BRP from a Post Office.



Figure 2 Example of BRP front



Figure 3 Example of BRP back

[Further information on BRP is available at GOV.UK.](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/bring-your-personal-vehicle-to-the-uk)

APPLYING FROM THE UK

The Home Office will confirm their decision by email. It will confirm the grant of your Student visa and all conditions.

If your Student visa application is submitted from the UK and the [IDV mobile app](#) is used to verify your identity, you will receive a visa decision by email and will be

issued with a digital status. Additionally, if you are [a visa national](#), a BRP will be issued and posted to your contact address.

CHECK YOUR VISA DETAILS

Carefully check your decision notification, vignette and BRP as soon as you receive them, and contact ISA immediately if there is any error. Only a limited time is allowed to submit an error correction request.

The duration of your visa depends on the length of your course, which is calculated on the basis of the course start and end dates stated on your CAS.

- if the total length of the course is 12 months or longer, add 4 months to the course end date
- if the total length of the course is less than 12 months but longer than 6 months, add 2 months to the course end date
- if the total length of the course is less than 6 months (calculated as 180 days), add 7 days to the course end date

Your [vignette](#) and [BRP](#) should state the following information:

- type of permit: STUDENT LEAVE TO ENTER (or LEAVE TO REMAIN)
- WORK 20 HRS MAX IN TERM-TIME
- 9NKX7B8M9 (sponsor licence number for Birkbeck University of London)

Incorrect decision or Unsuccessful

APPLYING FROM OUTSIDE THE UK

If your Student visa application is refused, a notice of immigration decision will be sent to you along with supporting documents that you submitted. Please email a scanned image of the notification to [ISA](#) for further assistance.

If there is any reason to believe your application was incorrectly refused, you can ask for an [Administrative Review](#). This must be submitted within 28 days of getting the decision.

A fee of £80 applies and it will be refunded if your application is either successful or rejected as invalid. The Home Office website states that the current processing time for Administrative Review is 6 months or more.

Your request for an administrative review will be withdrawn (cancelled) if you make any other immigration or visa application.

APPLYING FROM THE UK

If your Student visa application is refused or it's granted with an incorrect length, you can ask for an [Administrative Review](#). This must be submitted within 14 days of getting the decision.

Your refusal letter will tell you how to apply online.

A fee of £80 applies and it will be refunded if your application is either successful or rejected as invalid. The Home Office website states that the current processing time for Administrative Review is 6 months or more.

Your request for an administrative review will be withdrawn (cancelled) if you:

- make any other immigration or visa application
- ask for your passport back so you can travel
- leave the UK.

If your visa application is unsuccessful, please forward your decision notification to [ISA](#) for further assistance.

1.4. STUDENT VISA CONDITIONS

Study

You are sponsored for a Student visa to study a full-time programme of study at Birkbeck University of London.

Every time you enter or re-enter the UK you must intend to study at Birkbeck (your Student visa sponsor).

You must complete the enrolment and registration by the set deadline.

If you fail to complete the enrolment and registration by the set deadline, or if you decide to discontinue with your studies, Birkbeck must report this to the Home Office and withdraw the visa sponsorship.

Work conditions

As a Student visa holder, you are permitted to work – paid or unpaid – a limited number of hours per week during term time, depending on your level of study:

- Bachelor's degree level or above: maximum 20 hours per week⁴
- Below Bachelor's degree level: maximum 10 hours per week

Details of your entitlement will be stated on your visa. However, you must not:

- be self-employed or engage in business activity
- be employed as a professional sportsperson or sports coach
- be employed as an entertainer, e.g., actors, musicians, dancers and other performers
- take a permanent full-time job; or
- work as a doctor or dentist in training



[Work placement](#) element included as part of your course will not be affected by this restriction.

[Term-time](#) is any period when you are supposed to be doing academic work. For example, when you should be attending lectures, preparing examinations or viva, doing coursework, and writing essays, a dissertation or thesis.

⁴ A week is defined "a period of 7 days beginning with a Monday", i.e., Monday to Sunday.

Vacation is normally around Christmas and Easter holidays and during summer after completing all your examinations and/or submission of your dissertation if you are studying an undergraduate degree or Graduate Diploma course.

Most postgraduate students – those taking a full-time Master's degree (including MRes), Research degree (i.e., MPhil/PhD) and some Postgraduate Diplomas – are required to study for the full calendar year and so are [exempt from term dates](#).



Postgraduate students are therefore normally permitted to work a maximum of 20 hours per week during summer, i.e., until the end of September.

Volunteering

Students can volunteer while they are studying. Voluntary work (unpaid employment) is distinct from volunteering.

A Student can do voluntary work if they are permitted to work, but this work will count towards the maximum number of hours you are permitted to work. You should always check with the organisation offering the volunteering opportunity whether it can be regarded as unpaid employment.

Factors to consider when considering whether a particular activity constitutes voluntary work or volunteering are:

- voluntary workers will usually have contractual obligations to perform the work (for example to attend at particular times and carry out specific tasks) with the employer being contractually required to provide the work – the contract does not have to be written - the worker is usually remunerated in kind
- volunteers do not have a contract - they must not be a substitute for an employee, and they must not be doing unpaid work – for example, receiving



payment in kind (although they are sometimes reimbursed for reasonable travel and subsistence expenses)

- volunteers usually help a charity or voluntary or public sector organisation.

ATAS

If you were required to obtain [an Academic Technology Approval Scheme \(ATAS\)](#) for your programme, you must apply for a new ATAS certificate within 28 days, if your course

- content or research proposal changes; and/or
- completion date (as stated on your CAS) is postponed by more than 3 calendar months.

Report changes of circumstances

You must report any changes in your circumstances if you are in the UK and have either:

- obtained a visa or biometric residence permit (BRP), or
- applied for a BRP but have not had a decision yet.

For change of your address, you need to update it via My Birkbeck and complete one of the following to notify the Home Office:

- [report a change of address online](#)
- [fill in the change of circumstances form](#) and send it to the address on the form.

You must apply for a new BRP straight away if any of the following change:

- name, for example if you have got married
- nationality
- facial appearance
- date of birth, for example if it was wrong
- gender.



[Click here to apply for a replacement BRP online.](#)

If you get a new BRP, you must report it to ISA for the Registration.

2. STUDENTS WITH NON-STUDENT VISA

If you are in the UK with immigration permission other than Student visa, you may be allowed to undertake a programme of study at Birkbeck. However, this might affect your immigration status.



It is your responsibility to ensure that you are complying with the conditions of your immigration permission.

If your current visa does not cover the duration of your full-time programme of study, you may be required to return to your country of residence before your current visa expires, in order to apply for a Student visa. This may cause some disruption to your study; therefore you are strongly advised to check when your current visa expires and plan early to apply for your visa during one [of the College closure periods](#) (e.g. over Christmas and Easter) to minimise impact on your study and attendance.

Please note that if you hold a work-related visa, this would have been granted on the condition that you intend to work. Therefore, you should be aware that immigration officials you encounter, for example if you leave the UK and re-enter at any point during your study, might consider that your circumstances have changed since you applied for immigration permission in a work category and might cancel or curtail that visa on the basis that you are now studying and should be in the UK with Student visa. This is only a risk for those who are not actually undertaking or seeking any employment while under a work-related immigration permission.

If you hold a [Graduate visa](#) or [High Potential Individual visa](#), you cannot study any programmes in theory that can be sponsored for Student visa. Therefore, you can take only the following types of courses at Birkbeck:

- part-time undergraduate degree courses
- below degree-level modular courses



3. ENROLMENT

What is enrolment?

You will be invited to complete online [enrolment to study at Birkbeck](#) if you have accepted our unconditional offer. By enrolling, you officially become a student of Birkbeck.

During the enrolment process you will need to

- accept the [Terms and Conditions of Study](#)
- confirm your personal details; and
- pay or arrange to pay your tuition fees

If you require a Student visa, you will receive an invitation to enrol after your [CAS](#) has been issued.

In addition to enrolment, you must [formally register at Birkbeck](#). You will receive a Registration instruction email after your CAS has been issued.

What happens after the enrolment?

The Faculty or School that organises your course will provide you with information on your programme of study near to the start date of your course. This may include:

- preliminary reading lists
- details of any special arrangements about the first meeting of your course

Orientation

Once you have your place at Birkbeck, you will receive an invitation to [the Welcome to Birkbeck orientation Moodle module](#), and receive information for your programme including online sessions.



Moodle is where you find the available study resources for each of your modules, including (as appropriate) things like handouts, reading lists, lecture recordings, quizzes and discussion forums. It is also the place to submit your coursework.

The orientation will be divided into themes with short bite-sized content to introduce students to our services. Students with less digital confidence will be able to access both a video and written guidance with a step-by-step guide on how to access the orientation information and use it effectively.



4. STUDENT VISA REGISTRATION

First registration for new students

As part of your formal registration with Birkbeck, under the University of London's regulations and Home Office's requirements outlined in the Student visa policy guidance, you are required to present the following documents:

- passport
- Student visa, i.e., vignette, Biometric Residence Permit (BRP), decision notification, digital immigration status
- travel ticket to the UK or boarding card if Student visa vignette is not stamped (only applicable to a student who obtained their visa from outside the UK)
- certificate/diploma or transcript of qualifications listed on your CAS statement (in original language)
- official English translation of your academic qualifications if not in English.

You also need to provide your UK contact details, i.e., your residential address, phone number and email address.

If you applied to extend your stay in the UK before you register at Birkbeck and your application is still under consideration, you will need to show all the following:

- passport
- your UK visa valid at the time of submitting your Student visa application; and
- evidence of submitting a valid and in-time Student visa application from the UK.

You also need to agree to update us on the progress of your application regularly.

You are required to provide digital images of all required documents by the 'latest arrival date' indicated on your CAS. All presented documents will be kept on file by Birkbeck as part of the requirements for Student visa sponsors. Full details on how to do this will be sent to you after your CAS has been issued.



Students who fail to complete the required registration and enrolment formalities by the set deadlines will not be permitted to study and their student record will be cancelled.

These students will then be reported to the Home Office within 10 working days, who will then cancel their Student visa. Therefore, it is extremely important that you complete all formalities by the set deadline.



Students are only permitted to attend Birkbeck upon completion of their enrolment and registration.

Registration for students who extended or switched to Student visa

If you have extended or switched to Student visa, you must provide evidence of making a valid and in-time visa application.

You will need to update ISA on the progress of your application regularly and your new immigration status document in due course.

5. ATTENDANCE

Responsibilities of Student visa holder and Student route sponsor

Student visa sets out responsibilities and obligations of student and Student route sponsor, i.e., Birkbeck, that must be complied to for the individual and sponsor to maintain their visa and sponsorship licence, respectively.

The summary of these details is available in [Responsibilities of Student visa](#).

The following section will highlight academic engagement related responsibilities.

Academic engagement

Students are required to engage with all mandatory teaching sessions and comply with assessment requirements throughout the duration of their programme of study.

You will also be expected to complete and submit the assessed work on time and undertake any further reading or preparation outside the classroom deemed necessary by the lecturer.

It is your responsibility to make sure to touch your [Student ID](#) for [eRegisters](#) or sign the class register as appropriate at each teaching event you attend.

If you are unable to engage with any scheduled academic contacts, including supervisory sessions, due to illness or other personal reasons, you should request permission before the absence occurs, or as soon as possible after it began. This should be done by contacting your Faculty in writing with reasons, duration of your absence and supporting evidence.

You should read the College's [Student Engagement and Attendance Policy](#).

Further details of attendance requirements relating to your course will be provided by your Faculty.

Off-campus Study

If you are a research student, i.e., MPhil/PhD student, and need to be away from Birkbeck for study purposes, such as research field trip or data collection, and would like to retain your Student visa, it is your responsibility to obtain the permission from Birkbeck before your planned trip.

You should discuss your planned trips with your research supervisor and submit an Off-campus Study request for approval via [ASK](#).

Please note that the [Student visa responsibilities](#) including attendance requirement will continue regardless of your proposed Off-Campus Study period.

If you do not obtain the relevant permission prior to your planned trips, it may not be possible for Birkbeck to continue your visa sponsorship.

You will also need to report your return to Birkbeck at the end of your agreed period.

Failure to adhere to the agreement may jeopardise your student status and your Student visa.

Work Placement

Some degree programmes may offer Work Placement as an assessed part of the programme. If your programme offers it and you wish to take it up, you must discuss this with your Faculty.

A completed Work Placement Agreement form (available from your Faculty or via the International Student Area of Moodle) must be submitted to your Faculty for approval. If it gets approved, the Home Office will be informed. You must not start your work placement until it is approved by Birkbeck.

If you take a teaching module in parallel with the approved work placement, you must attend the teaching module as normal. Being on the work placement does not exempt you from the attendance requirements.

Change of programme

If you wish to change your programme of study part way through, you must first discuss with your Faculty whether it is possible academically.

If they provisionally approves your request, you will then need to contact ISA to enquire if the Student visa rules would permit you to take up the new programme of study without having to apply for a new Student visa from your home country or an [ATAS certificate](#).

Unsatisfactory engagement / Interruption / Withdrawal

Birkbeck is required to report to the Home Office any Student visa holder whose level of academic engagement is unsatisfactory, or who interrupts or withdraws from their studies. The Home Office will then normally curtail the relevant student's visa to 60 days, unless you have less than 60 days leave remaining.

It is therefore especially important that you maintain academic engagement and inform your Faculty of any possible absences, or when difficulties arose.

Repeat studies

If you are required to repeat part of your course but no attendance is required, you will be required to return home. Birkbeck is required to report such cases to the Home Office, who will then curtail your Student visa. If you need to progress to the subsequent year following successful completion of the repeat period, you will have to apply for a new Student visa from your home country.

If you need to return to the UK to re-sit an examination or access the College facilities for example, you can use [a Standard visitor visa](#) to do so. Alternatively, you can [contact the Examinations Office to enquire the possibility to do so from abroad](#).

Successfully completed early

Birkbeck is required to report to the Home Office any Student visa holder who successfully completes their studies earlier than the date stated on CAS.

The Home Office will then curtail the relevant student's visa so that they have an appropriate wrap-up period after the new course end date. [The wrap-up period](#) is granted depending on the level and total length of your course.

Unsuccessfully completed early

If you conclude your programme of study unsuccessfully earlier than the course end date stated on your CAS, Birkbeck is required to report it to the Home Office.

The Home Office will curtail your permission to stay to 60 days, unless you have less than 60 days leave remaining. If you are outside the UK when the curtailment notification is issued, you must consider your visa is cancelled with an immediate effect and do not attempt to use the visa to re-enter the UK.

Completed in time

If you complete your programme of study on track, i.e. by the end date stated on your CAS, you can arrange your departure from the UK, \extend your Student visa if you'll be pursuing further studies in the UK, or switch to a different immigration status, such as [Graduate route visa](#) or [Skilled Worker visa](#), before your current Student visa expires.

You must ensure not to stay beyond your visa expiry date.

If more time is required to complete

It may be possible to extend your Student visa to enable you to complete your programme of study if your Faculty confirms the continued engagement including attendance is essential. However, such extension applications may need to be made from abroad, rather than from the UK.

You should submit a completed [CAS request form](#) (access via M365 student account) at least 8 weeks before you intend to make your new visa application.