

Tier 4 Student Guide 2020-21



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Committee Approval

Committee	Committee Action	Date
SMLT		21 October 2020
	Date in force	

This Tier 4 Student Guide will be reviewed and approved annually by our Senior Management and Leadership Team (SMLT). Any amendments will be subject to approval by the SMLT.

1. General Principles

1.1 What is 'Tier 4'?

Tier 4 applicants are those who need sponsorship to study in the UK by their education provider.

There are 2 student categories in the Tier 4 points based system.

- Tier 4 (General) Student – this category is for applicants who are coming to the UK for post 16 education. You must be over 16 years of age to apply under this category.
- Tier 4 (Child) Student – this category is for children between 4 and 17 years of age who are coming to the UK for their education. Tier 4 (Child) students can only study at independent schools.

Note: Bloomsbury Institute only provides sponsorship under the Tier 4 (General) Students' Category and does not provide sponsorship under the Tier 4 (Child) Students' category.

Points based system (PBS)

To be eligible to study in the UK you must qualify for 40 points as per the table below:

You must obtain a valid Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) from Bloomsbury Institute or another fully licensed Tier 4 sponsor	30 Points
You must have enough money to cover course fees and monthly living costs (also known as maintenance or funds)	10 points

1.2 Risk based approach

The UKVI has an established list of countries it defines as low-risk. Applicants from these countries are covered by differentiation agreements meaning that they are subject to different evidential requirements when applying for Tier 4 leave to study in the UK. Click [here](#) to see the UKVI publication with regards to low-risk countries.

1.3 Applications with inherent risk

Applicants not originating from one of the low-risk countries will be subject to more stringent checks and verification than those from low-risk countries.

If you are from a country in the inherent risk category, we will check and verify your information whenever possible to determine whether you are suitable for sponsorship.

Key considerations for further checking may include, but are not limited to:

- Your previous UK study and immigration history;
- Your English language ability;
- Your qualifications used to support your application;
- Your ability to study;
- Your genuine intention to study; and
- Your suitability as per the UKVI requirements for Tier 4 students

2. Before you arrive

2.1 Receiving your Confirmation of Acceptance for Study (CAS)

To support your Tier 4 (General) visa application, you will need a CAS. UKVI regulations will not allow us to issue the CAS any earlier than 3 months before the start of your course.

2.1.1 Making a CAS application

There are a number of documents that you will need to show to our Compliance Manager to ensure that you have the required documents for a UKVI application for a Tier 4 visa.

Passport

This must be a current passport with an expiry date after your expected course end date and additional months granted leave by UKVI (usually 4 months). For example: If your course ends in September 2021, your visa will usually expire 4 months afterwards (i.e. January 2022).

English Language

If you have not gained your qualifications from a majority English speaking country, you will need to show proof of your English Language ability. The only recognised test for students from overseas is IELTS for UKVI with a **UKVI Verification Number**. You will need to have a minimum score of:

- IELTS 5.5 overall with all components at 5.0 or above (For all 4-year Undergraduate courses)
- IELTS 6.0 overall with all components at 5.5 or above (For all 3 and 2-year Undergraduate courses)
- IELTS 6.5 overall with all components at 5.5 or above (For MBA and MSc Management)
- IELTS 6.5 overall with all components at 6.0 or above (For LLM)

More information regarding IELTS can be found here: <http://takeielts.britishcouncil.org/ielts-ukvi>.

Exceptions to English Language requirements

You do not have to demonstrate English language competence if you:

- Have successfully completed a course of study in the UK as a Tier 4 (Child) student;
- Have successfully obtained an academic qualification (not a professional or vocational qualification) from an educational establishment in the UK, which is a Bachelor's degree or above;
- Have previously completed an academic qualification equivalent to a UK degree which was taught in a "majority English speaking country", (see the table below).

Table 1

A – H	I - P	Q - Z
Antigua and Barbuda Australia The Bahamas Barbados Belize Dominica Grenada Guyana	Ireland Jamaica New Zealand	St Kitts and Nevis St Lucia St Vincent and the Grenadines Trinidad and Tobago United States of America

- Are a national from a "majority English Speaking" country, (see table below)

Table 2

A – H	I - P	Q - Z
Antigua and Barbuda Australia The Bahamas Barbados Belize Dominica Grenada Canada* Guyana	Jamaica New Zealand	St Kitts and Nevis St Lucia St Vincent and the Grenadines Trinidad and Tobago United States of America

To assess the equivalency of an overseas qualification, we will carry out a UK NARIC check. We may still require you to take an IELTS test.

*If you are a Canadian national you will not need to prove English language to UKVI.

Health Requirements

Depending on the country from which you are applying, you may need to have an approved health check-up such as for Tuberculosis (TB). You can check whether you need to provide a TB certificate from this website: <https://www.gov.uk/tb-test-visa/countries-where-you-need-a-tb-test-to-enter-the-uk>.

Finance Deposit

Before we can issue you with a CAS, you will need to make a minimum payment of 50% towards the cost of your course tuition fees. You can make a payment via our website here: <https://www.bil.ac.uk/courses/fees/make-a-payment/>

Please ensure that for any payment your 'full name' is referenced for payment identification purposes.

Maintenance

There is a UKVI requirement for you to evidence (through a required balance for living expenses) how you will be able to afford to live in the UK during your studies. The UKVI rules and regulations state that for any course 9 months and over, you will need £1,265 per month. Therefore, you will need to show a minimum of £11,385 plus any outstanding fees on your bank statement. The minimum requirement of funds must be held in your account for 28 consecutive days and be no older than 30 days prior to an application being submitted to UKVI. It is important to note you can only show either a current account or savings account for proof of maintenance. The information needed below can be shown as either a statement or a letter. If using a bank letter, it must state that the money has been in the account for 28 consecutive days from the date on the letter stamped. Where the funds shown are in your local currency, UKVI use OANADA to check the exchange rate to British Sterling (GBP) using this website: <https://www.oanda.com/currency/converter/>.

Applicants applying from certain regions need to ensure that they are providing maintenance from an approved UKVI financial institution. This can be checked from the site below:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules/immigration-rules-appendix-p-lists-of-financial-institutions>.

There are two ways in which you can show maintenance:

- Personal bank statement
 - This must have your name
 - Account number
 - Date of the statement
 - Financial institution's name and logo
 - The amount of money available
- Parent(s) or legal guardian(s) bank statement

- This must have their name
- Account number
- Date of the statement
- Financial institution's name and logo
- The amount of money available
- A letter of parental or guardianship permission for the money in their name to be used for the applicants' studies in the UK.

In addition to what is required above you will also need to provide **one** of the below - either an original or notarised copy:

- Applicant's birth certificate which proves relationship with parent(s) or guardian(s) or
- A certificate of adoption showing the applicant's and the parent(s) name or
- A court document stating legal guardianship or
- Government-issued household register.

2.1.2 Making a UKVI application

Once all the above criteria have been met and a CAS has been issued, it is important to make a visa application as soon as possible to ensure that you are granted a visa in enough time prior to the start of the course. It would be useful to read the Home Office UKVI rules and regulations prior to making an application by reading the [Tier 4 of the Points Based System – Policy Guidance](#)

Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS)

In a recent update to UKVI rules all students are required to pay an NHS surcharge at the time of applying for the visa. More information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/healthcare-immigration-application/overview>. The amount of the IHS to be paid will be based on the length of leave granted to a visitor and will be calculated automatically during the application process. The charge is £470 from 1 October 2020.

It is recommended that you pay this charge prior to making an application to ensure your application will be processed. The surcharge is calculated on the full length of the visa and not the length of the course. To calculate how much you will need to pay, please click here: <https://www.immigration-health-surcharge.service.gov.uk/checker/Type>.

Biometric Residence Permit (BRP)

For anyone applying for a VISA to come to the UK for more than 6 months, you would be required as part of the process to provide biometric information. For more information on biometric residence permits such as what information is required, click here: <https://www.gov.uk/biometric-residence-permits>. On arrival in the UK you will need to collect your (BRP) card within ten days from a Post Office nearest to the UK address entered on your visa application and bring it to the Compliance Manager for a copy to be taken.

Online application

An overview of the requirements for an application can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa>.

It is important to know where your local visa application centre is in your country of application and this can be checked here: <https://www.gov.uk/find-a-visa-application-centre>. If you would like to check the processing times from the region where you will be making a VISA application, please check here: <https://www.gov.uk/visa-processing-times>.

After you have read the required information you can apply for a Tier 4 (General) visa at <https://www.visa4uk.fco.gov.uk/home/welcome>. You need to register an account and it is important to use the information from your CAS and documents supplied to the Compliance Manager when making the application. Where a Tier 4 visa has been granted they will only give an entry date up to one month before the start of your course and so it is important that you are aware of this when planning for your stay within the UK.

Key VISA application information

- There are two price options to pay for the application. The standard application service which takes 5 - 15 working days or a premium service which takes 5 working days.
- When you select the country of your application please be aware that you can **only** apply within a country of your nationality or country of residence.
- For Visa type, choose 'study' and then 'PBS Tier 4 Student.' Then choose either 'Tier 4 (General) student' if you are self-funding either by yourself or parent(s)/Guardian(s) OR 'Tier 4 (General) (Sponsored) student' if you have an official sponsor e.g. your government.
- When stating length of stay, you must insert the course end date that is on the CAS document.
- If UKVI request to interview you, we advise you select 'English' as your language to be interviewed in.
- The 'application date' is the date of application payment confirmation **not** when you attend the appointment. This is important when assessing the validity of your maintenance statement.
- Do make sure you have checked all data fields and submitted all information and requirements from the Tier 4 Guidance. If you have any queries on any of the questions, please email Visa.Compliance@bil.ac.uk.

2.1.3 Visa application management

It is important that there is a continual line of communication between you and the Compliance Manager. It is important to let us know when you have made an application and if there are any delays. It is also important to let us know **immediately** if your visa application has been refused and provide us with the refusal notification. The visa refusal information should be emailed to Visa.Compliance@bil.ac.uk. The reason can be cross checked by the Compliance Manager to assess the issue and advise on your options. If there is a belief that a refusal decision is wrong, there is a process in which we can contact UKVI to check the decision and in other cases create an administrative review. If you are refused a visa there is no guarantee that we will be able to allocate you an additional CAS to enable you to make another application. It is therefore important that you correctly input all data into the application and address any queries or concerns before submitting the application, ensuring that you bring the correct documentation to the application centre.

2.1.4 Visa refusal

The Immigration Rules include provision for an application to be refused under the 'general grounds for refusal'. The Home Office has detailed **internal guidance on the general grounds for refusing**, with separate guidance for **applications in your home country (entry clearance) or applications in the UK (leave to remain)**. The guidance for leave to remain applications summarises that Home Office staff should be checking applications for:

"...evidence of any adverse

- behaviour (using deception including false representation, fraud, forgery, non-disclosure of material facts or failure to cooperate)

- character, conduct or associations (criminal history, deportation order, travel ban, exclusion, non-conducive to public good, national security)
- immigration history (breaching conditions, using deception in an application).”

The Home Office can also refuse your application if you have an outstanding debt for NHS treatment of £500 or more – UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) publishes useful information on this topic, you can find more information through their link, **Health and Healthcare** for information about receiving NHS treatment in the UK.

Other general grounds for refusal include staying in the UK beyond the end of your immigration permission (being an overstayer); health issues; not attending an interview if you are asked to do so; breach of conditions, which means doing something your immigration permission does not permit you to do, for example working more hours than allowed. The application form has questions about these matters and it is very important to answer them honestly, as not doing so can have very serious consequences including accusations of deception and the refusal of any future, as well as this, application.

3. During your studies

3.1 Enrolment

Once your visa application has been accepted by UKVI with the entry clearance (vignette) in your passport, you need to upload a scanned copy of this to your Self Service Centre (SSC) where you made your application for the course. Once you have uploaded this, you will be permitted to enrol provisionally online to the course once enrolment opens. Your enrolment will remain provisional until you have arrived in the UK and had a face-to-face enrolment meeting at which you will need to provide all the following documents:

- Original documentation supplied at the admissions stage
- Copy of Biometric Residence Permit (BRP)
- Signed Tuition Fee Payment Plan (TPP) (only if you have outstanding fees)
- Proof of address (if not already provided)

Provisional enrolment allows you to get assigned a student number which will help you access your timetable, course materials on Canvas (our Virtual Learning Environment), and Student Self-service Portal (SSP) where you communicate with the Registry Division for letters and institution emails. It will also mean that your ID card will be printed prior to your arrival and given to you at your enrolment in the UK.

3.2 Police registration

It may be a requirement for you to register with the police within 7 days of arriving in the UK. Please check your entry clearance (vignette) which will state if you need to register with the police. For more information regarding police registration, please check here: <https://www.gov.uk/register-with-the-police/overview>. If you do require a police registration, we will require a copy for record keeping purposes. You must also tell the police if any of the information you gave them has changed.

3.3 Work rights

All international students who enrol with us are **not allowed** to work during their studies in the UK and this will be stated on your visa. In cases where your Biometric Residence Permit incorrectly states you have ‘work rights’, you will need to have your BRP corrected by reporting a problem here: <https://www.gov.uk/biometric-residence-permits/report-problem>.

3.4 Attendance monitoring

Our engagement ethos is that students should attend all classes as this is the best way to succeed in your studies. In line with UKVI regulators, we are required to monitor attendance and there may be serious implications if you do not attend classes. Your attendance will be monitored from the beginning of the academic year and you will be contacted if you repeatedly miss classes or certain days. Your student ID card is also your attendance card and you **must** swipe into each class on your timetable.

UKVI state that an international student should not miss ten consecutive visa contact points during an academic year. We define a visa contact point as a day of scheduled classes. If you consecutively miss ten visa contact points (ten days), then your sponsorship may be withdrawn, and you will be required to leave the UK.

3.5 Extensions of visa

As a private institution, we are unable to extend international visas if you need to retake an examination or coursework. Therefore, it is important that you submit your work on time and alert us of any problems during your course immediately via our academic administration team through academic.admin@bil.ac.uk.

Updating contact details

It is very important that we have up-to-date contact information, while you are studying in the UK. You can update your contact details via your Student Self-service Portal (SSP). Contact details include:

- UK Address
- UK Mobile number
- Email address

Reporting to the Home Office

Students as part of their visa conditions are responsible for updating their contact details directly to the Home Office. If you change UK address, you can update the Home Office without having to apply for a new Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) card. However, if you change one of the following, you must apply for a new BRP within 3 months.

- Name, date of birth (if incorrect), gender, nationality or facial appearance

For more information regarding updating the Home Office and other changes that must be reported, please check here: <https://www.gov.uk/change-circumstances-visa-brp>.

Enrolment status changes

Non-enrolment

Once a CAS is issued, you will have a deadline to arrive in the UK and enrol on your prospective course. On the CAS, this is called 'last date a student can be accepted on to the course.' International students must enrol by the end of this date or they will have their UKVI visa withdrawn as 'failure to enrol.' If there are any delays to your arrival to the UK, you must alert the Compliance Manager **immediately**.

Withdrawal

There are three ways in which a student can be withdrawn from their course that would result in a withdrawal of sponsorship from UKVI.

- Self-withdrawal – is when a student requests to leave their course. As a Tier 4 student, you are recommended to meet with the Compliance Manager before commencing withdrawal. The student would need to contact the academic administration via academic.admin@bil.ac.uk and then fill in a withdrawal form. As a part of this activity, you could be asked to meet with the Compliance Manager unless this has already happened. Please note that once a withdrawal form is signed and processed the Compliance Manager will be informed and your visa sponsorship will be withdrawn.

- Lack of engagement – throughout your studies you will have your attendance monitored. If you are not attending your course and reach ten consecutive contact points you may be withdrawn from the course and have your sponsorship withdrawn.
- Academic failure – at the end of each year you will have an examination board that ratifies your grades for the academic year. If you have failed most of your course resulting in accumulated failure, you will not be able to progress to the next year. Therefore, you will be withdrawn from the course and have your sponsorship withdrawn.

3.6 Additional Information

The section provides useful information for an international student living in the UK that will support the successful and pleasant stay for the student throughout your studies.

Letters

Enrolment Letter

As a student, there may be times when you need to provide written evidence that you are a student in the UK. You can do this by raising a request on your Student Self-service Portal (SSP) and requesting an enrolment letter which will provide details of your student status with us.

Banking

For those who may not have a bank in the UK, you may wish to open a bank account within the UK for the duration of the course. You can do this by submitting a request on your Student Self-service Portal (SSP) for a bank letter. Please clearly state in the request that the letter is required to open a bank account, and write the name of the bank you wish to open an account with. It can take up to 5 working days for letters at the beginning of the academic year, so please allow yourself enough funds for this period.

Council Tax

Council Tax is a tax paid on a property for those living in a property either as owners of the property or as a renting tenant. All international students do not have to pay council tax while a student with us. To confirm your exemption from Council Tax, you will need to request a Council Tax Exemption letter from your Student Self-service Portal (SSP). You should then proceed to provide this evidence to your **Local Borough Council** which is stated at the top of the letter who should exempt you from this tax.

Schengen Visa

While studying in the UK, you may wish to travel to Europe outside of teaching in your breaks. To travel to other countries in Europe you will need to apply for a Schengen Visa which permits you to travel to countries. You can do this by raising a request on your Student Self-service Portal (SSP) for a visa letter. In your request, you should state the country(s) and the dates of travel.

Emergencies and medical information

In the event of an emergency, call **999** and request the service you require: Police, Ambulance or the Fire Brigade. Please note that this service should only be used in an emergency where you need immediate assistance and is free to call.

Registering with a doctor

International students are entitled to register with a local General Practitioner (GP) for medical check-ups with the NHS. You will need a letter proving your enrolment as a student to register with a GP practice in your local area. The service is free, but you will need to pay for any prescriptions from the doctor. To find your local services please click here: <http://www.nhs.uk/pages/home.aspx>.

Dentist

International students at Bloomsbury Institute are entitled to register with a local dentist and charges will depend on the medical treatment. Please check the NHS website for more information <http://www.nhs.uk>.

Other

Insurance

International students are advised to apply for insurance whilst in the UK. It should cover your personal belongings. There are options to have medical insurance while in the UK and travel insurance for your initial trip to the UK in case of loss of belongings. Please speak to the Compliance Manager who may be able to advise you further and provide some options.

Accommodation

While we do not have accommodation, there are many places around London where you can book a space for the academic years you are student with us. Urbanest has a range of rooms in several locations and more information can be found on their website: <http://uk.urbanest.com/>.

How to get from the airport

One thing to ensure is when you are coming to the UK you know how to get from the airport into the city of London. You can find the many options to get from Heathrow or Gatwick Airport, our main international airports, from the sites below:

<http://www.heathrow.com/transport-and-directions/getting-to-central-london>
<https://www.gatwickairport.com/to-and-from/gatwick-to-london>

Once you arrive in London there are a range of transport options to get you around the city from buses, trains and the London tube. For more information including how to plan your journey to your accommodation and to Bloomsbury Institute, please check Transport for London (TFL) here: <https://tfl.gov.uk/plan-a-journey/>.

4. Useful Contacts

Compliance Manager

Email: visa.compliance@bil.ac.uk
Telephone: +44(0)20 7078 8840

Admissions

Email: Admissions@bil.ac.uk
Telephone: +44(0)20 7078 8840

Academic Administration

Log a request via the Student Self-service Portal (SSP)
Email : academic.admin@bil.ac.uk
Telephone: +44(0)20 7078 8840

Related Documents

Internal documents

- Tier 4 Policy and Compliance Procedures
- Admissions Policy
- Student Records Policy

External documents

- Tier 4 Guidance for Sponsors Document 2: Sponsorship Duties
- Tier 4 Guidance for Sponsors Document 3: Tier 4 Compliance

- Immigration Rules Appendix P: list of financial institutions