



Foundation for International Education

LONDON VISA GUIDE

You will need to apply for a visa if any of the following statements apply to you:

1. If you will be undertaking an unpaid internship, service learning, or volunteer placement as part of the programme
2. If you will be studying in the UK for 6 months or more
3. If you will be undertaking part-time paid work in your free time

It is important to submit your online application as soon as possible to allow for processing time. Although processing times can vary, it will take an average of **4 weeks** for your visa to be processed once you mail in your application materials (step 6 below) – for this reason we urge you to complete all of the steps in this process as quickly as possible. (You cannot start the application more than 3 months before the start date of your programme.)

If any documents are missing or incorrect, your application will be refused and you will have to go through the entire process again, including a second fee and biometric testing.

This document provides details on the process for obtaining your visa.

It is highly recommended you read the official guide for all Tier 4 Students on the following website:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/applicationforms/pbs/Tier4migrantguidance1.pdf>

FIE will continue to keep abreast of any changes on immigration rules and inform students and coordinators alike accordingly. You as the student are ultimately responsible for visiting the official websites quoted in this document and adhering to the latest rules.

If you don't have a visa in time for your departure from the US, you will not be allowed to participate in an internship in London.

STEP 1 Submit Online Application & Payment and Arrange Biometric Appointment

The very first step has three parts that all occur at once:

- a) Completing and submitting your online visa application via the website below:

Website to make the application: <http://www.visa4uk.fco.gov.uk/ApplyNow.aspx>

From the lists select:

→PBS Tier 4 Student

→ Tier 4 (General) Student

Refer to the following website for guidance on filling this out

<http://www.ukvisas.gov.uk/resources/en/docs/1903073/vaf9guide>

- b) Paying for the visa application – **Fee £199**
c) Arranging your Biometric appointment, where your fingerprints will be taken (more on this in Step 5 below)

Upon completion, you must print out the whole application and a confirmation page with a barcode on it. This confirmation is taken to the biometrics test where the barcode is scanned so the fingerprints, etc. are added to the application details. The confirmation page is then stamped to show biometrics have been taken.

STEP 2 Receive CAS Statement Email from FIE

The Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) takes the form of a unique reference number which FIE generates using the UK government's online system.

The CAS reference number confirms that you are enrolled in a course in the UK at an educational institution, and therefore serves as the core piece of information you need to get approved for a student visa.

FIE will generate your CAS upon receipt of your FIE administration form and send you an email called Your CAS Statement.

- The email will go directly to you, copying the coordinator at your school. You should check that all the personal information listed for you is correct. It will also include:
 - Your CAS number
 - The title of your course of study
 - The method used to assess your application to the programme
 - Your course fees
 - Whether we have received any of your course fees
 - Whether we have received payment of your accommodation fees
- If you do not receive your CAS statement email please contact your coordinator or studyabroad@fie.org.uk

STEP 3 Complete Appendix 8: Tier 4 (General) Student Self-Assessment Form

This form needs to be completed for course details and proof of funds. It is completed in paper copy and sent in with supporting documents (see Step 6 below). This section is unique to the Tier 4 General Student visa application and is essential. Your responses must match the details sent to you by FIE, and **you therefore should not submit this form until you have received your CAS statement from us.**

You can print the form from the website below:

<http://www.ukvisas.gov.uk/resources/en/docs/1903073/PBSappendix8generalstudent>

Please read the official guide for Tier 4 students before completing the form:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/applicationforms/pbs/Tier4migrantguidance1.pdf>

ABOUT THE FORM:

Note that you only need to complete Part 2 if you are under 18 years old.

You may need additional guidance on the following sections of this form:

Part 3

3.1 Give the full name of your sponsor	→ Foundation for International Education
3.2 Give your Sponsor Licence number	→ WRXMF40W2
3.3 Give the full address of your sponsor	→ Foundation for International Education Foundation House 114 Cromwell Road London, SW7 4ES United Kingdom

Part 4

4.1 Give the title of your course of study	→ The name of your home university/college followed by "Study Abroad" e.g. LMU Study Abroad
4.2 Give the academic level of your course	→ E.g. Bachelor's degree
4.4 Give the full address of your primary site of study	→ Use the address of Foundation House as detailed above

Part 5

5.2 Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies Number (CAS)	→ This will be sent to you by FIE
5.4 Original certificates/transcripts	→ You do not need to tick this box (unless you are an independent applicant)
5.5 Assessed by other means	→ Select "Yes" and enter in the space provided: "Assessed by Overseas Higher Education institution as part of a study abroad program."

Part 6 requires different information depending on whether you are living in FIE housing, and whether you pay your fees to your home institution or directly to FIE. Please follow the guidance in the appropriate column for your situation; check with your Study Abroad Office if you are unsure which applies to you.

Part 6	For students living in FIE accommodation and paying fees to their home institution	For students living in FIE accommodation and paying FIE directly	For students not living in FIE accommodation and paying fees to their home institution
6.1 Course fees	→ This figure is £0.00 as your fees will be paid to your home institution.	→ This figure is whatever has been listed on your CAS statement sent to you by FIE.	→ This figure is £0.00 as your fees will be paid to your home institution.
6.2 Have any course fees been paid	→ Tick "Yes, paid to Overseas Higher Education Institution"	→ Tick "Yes, paid to UK Education Provider. Enter the amount listed as paid in your CAS statement sent to you by FIE."	→ Tick "Yes, paid to Overseas Higher Education Institution"
6.3 Evidence of payment	→ Tick "Shown in CAS"	→ Tick "Shown in CAS"	→ Tick "Shown in CAS"
6.6 Initial application	→ You will be within the Inner London Boroughs		
6.7 Maintenance fees	→ The UK requires you to have at least £800 (about \$1,125 US Dollars) for every month that you will be in the UK – this is referred to as Maintenance Funds. For example for a programme running from 3 rd September until 19 th December you will need £3,200 in your account for the 4 month semester.		
6.12 Accommodation fees	→ Tick "Yes, paid to Overseas Higher Education Institution."	→ Tick "Yes, paid to UK Education Provider. Enter the amount listed as paid in your CAS statement sent to you by FIE."	→ Tick "No"
6.13 Proof of payment	→ Tick "Shown in CAS"	→ Tick "Shown in CAS"	Non applicable
6.14 – 6.16 Official financial sponsor	→ This can include financial aid from your home institution. You only need provide details of this if you are relying on financial aid to prove that you have available funds for your course or maintenance fees.		
6.17 Fees and maintenance still due	→ Tick "Yes" Course fees = £0 Maintenance fees = total maintenance fees minus the amount of accommodation fees listed as paid on your CAS statement. → If accommodation fees paid (see 6.12) is greater than maintenance fees required (see 6.7), Tick "No" and move on to Part 7.	→ Tick "Yes" Course fees = total amount on FIE invoice minus the amount of course fees listed as paid on your CAS statement Maintenance fees = total amount minus the amount of accommodation fees listed as paid on your CAS statement	→ Tick "Yes" Course fees = £0 Maintenance fees = full amount e.g. £3,200 for a four month semester

STEP 4 Begin collecting “Supporting Documents” for your visa application

The following documents may take longer to obtain so make sure you request these from the relevant officials ASAP.

- a) An official original transcript (for independent applicants only i.e. if your home institution does not have a partnership with FIE).
- b) Proof of Funds:
 - In Step 6 you will be required to mail in a bank statement that supports your online application. The purpose of this statement is to prove that you have sufficient funds to cover your expenses while in the UK.
 - The UK requires you to have **at least £800** (about \$1,125 US Dollars) for every month that you will be in the UK – this is referred to as Maintenance Funds. For example for the Fall semester you will need £3,200 in your account for the 4 month semester.
 - i. If you are living in FIE accommodation and your CAS statement sent to you by FIE states you have already paid some of your accommodation fees then you can deduct this figure from the maintenance funds. E.g. if you have paid £3,000 accommodation fees then you will only need to show the equivalent in dollars of £200 as available in a bank account.
 - ii. **If the accommodation fees you have paid are greater than maintenance fees required, you do not need to show proof of funds therefore you do not need to send in any bank statements or letters.**
 - **The funds must have been in your account for at least 28 days prior to your application being made.**
 - Bank statements or letters should be **originals, in your name** and should be **dated not more than one month before your biometrics appointment**. If you use a print out of an electronic statement you must ensure that the bank stamps each and every page.
 - You can use bank statements in your parent’s name. If parent(s)/guardian(s) are providing the proof of funds, they must give the student documentation to submit with the visa application. This includes:
 - i. Original or notarised copy of the document confirming the relationship (birth certificate, certificate of adoption, or court document confirming guardian status)
AND
 - ii. Original signed and dated letter from the parent(s)/guardian(s), confirming the relationship to the student applicant, the funds available, and consent to make the funds available to the student applicant.

Full details of what counts as proof of funds are listed on pages 17 - 20 of the policy guidance:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/applicationforms/pbs/Tier4migrantguidance1.pdf>

STEP 5 Attend Biometric Appointment

The biometric appointment is where your fingerprints and a photo will be taken. These are security measures for the UK that all visa candidates must fulfill. You will have to physically travel to the

biometric center in person to complete this step. You will select the date, time and location of your appointment when you apply for your visa online:

- You will select the state that you live in, and from there you will automatically be given location options.
- Once you choose the location you prefer you will then choose an available date and time for your appointment. You will want to write this information down.
- Locations: Fortunately there are many biometric appointment centers around the country. A list can be seen via the following link, however remember that you will select your appointment location during the online visa application process. Enter your zip code towards the bottom of this page to see where the centers are:
https://egov.uscis.gov/crisgwi/go?action=offices.type&OfficeLocator.office_type=ASC
- You will need to bring with you your passport and a printout of the whole online application including the confirmation page with a barcode on it.

DO NOT FORGET PASSPORT & APPLICATION PRINTOUT

If you forget to bring either of these things to your appointment, you will have to start the entire process over again by submitting a new online application and paying the application fee again.

STEP 6 Mail application materials to British Consulate

Once you have submitted and paid for your online application, attended your biometric appointment and received your visa sponsorship letter from FIE, the next step is for you to mail your application materials to a British Consulate.

What to Mail:

1. **Passport** --- IMPORTANT --- Your passport must be mailed. Many students forget to include the passport but it is important to remember this because your visa will actually be pasted *into your passport*.
2. **Photo: Two** recent passport-sized (45mm x 35mm), color photograph of yourself.
This should be:
 - a) taken against a light-colored background
 - b) clear and of good quality, and not framed or backed
 - c) printed on normal photographic paper, and
 - d) full face and without sunglasses, hat or other head covering unless you wear this for cultural or religious reasons (but the face must not be covered).
3. Proof of funds e.g. **bank statement**
4. Evidence of government **sponsorship or financial aid** (if appropriate). If you are privately sponsored (for example, by a college in the UK) a letter from your sponsor giving details of how they will support you during your studies, and evidence that they can do so.
5. Official **transcript** (independent applicants only).
6. Stamped confirmation page from **biometric appointment**.
7. The printed version of your **online application form** showing online visa payment and return postage fees paid.
8. The printed version of your **Appendix 8: Tier 4 (General) Student Self-Assessment Form**:
<http://www.ukvisas.gov.uk/resources/en/docs/1903073/PBSappendix8generalstudent>

Where to Mail:

Documents are mailed to one of three locations based on which state you live in. The address is given once the application form is completed.

When to mail:

Everything must be mailed within 2 weeks of completing your biometric appointment. You should mail as soon as you've completed your biometric appointment and collected supporting documents.

How to mail:

There are three different services for visa application processing:

Regular Processing

- Additional UK service fee: \$0
- Processing time: 5-15+ business days
- Means of submission: applicant mails in documents
- You can still use an expediting agency to review documents prior to submission.

It is strongly recommended that you mail your documents using a registered service that gives you a tracking number. UPS, FedEx or USPS registered mail are recommended.

Priority Processing

- Additional UK service fee: \$150 plus tax
- Processing time: typically 48 hours
- Means of submission: applicant mails in documents and Priority Processing receipt OR the expediting agency submits documents in person at consulate

Premium Processing

- Additional UK service fee: \$100 plus tax
- Processing time: typically same day as interview
- Means of submission: applicant has an in-person interview at the consulate
- You can still use an expediting agency to review documents prior to submission.

Applicants can choose to have an expediting agency review their documents, no matter which processing service they want to use. The main differences between the three types of processing are the processing times and means of submission. It is important to reiterate that once an applicant has been refused a UK visa they can no longer expedite any other visa application to the UK. This makes the processing of reviewing the application prior to submission even more important.

Below are a few agencies that offer **expediting services** for a fee:

<http://www.abriggs.com/>

<http://www.globalvipsservices.com/>

<http://visasasap.net/>

You must include ALL listed supporting documents in original including your **passport**. Remember to make copies of everything before they are mailed.

STEP 7 Receive visa in mail

The visa is a page pasted into the passport. That is why you are required to mail in your actual passport with your application.

It takes an average of 4 weeks to receive your visa back from the date you mail it. For this reason it is crucial to complete all of the steps above as quickly as possible.

You will only be able to travel into the UK from the start date on you issued visa. This is normally one week before the start of your programme.

When travelling you should make sure you carry a letter with you from your home university confirming that you are a student in the UK and giving details of your programme. Even though you will have a visa in your passport, UK airport officials do occasionally ask for additional proof.