

# Student visa guidance for applications made inside the UK

**SOAS Student Advice Service** endeavours to ensure that the information in this guide is accurate but please note that legislation is subject to change at short notice. We recommend always accessing this guide from the following link to ensure you are using the most up to date version of this document: [www.soas.ac.uk/international/entry/applying-for-student-visas/](http://www.soas.ac.uk/international/entry/applying-for-student-visas/)

This guide should be used with the Student route caseworker [guidance](#) and the Financial Requirements caseworker [guidance](#).

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# Who can apply for a Student visa from within the UK?

There are several criteria that you must meet to extend or switch into the Student visa route from within the UK. If you don't meet these criteria, your application will be refused or rejected as invalid depending on your circumstances.

## Your current immigration status

You **cannot** apply in the UK if you hold any of the following types of immigration permission:

- Standard Visitor
- Short-term Student
- Parent of a Child Student
- Seasonal Worker
- Domestic Worker in a private household
- Permission outside the Immigration Rules

You also cannot apply if you're on immigration bail.

It is important that you do not apply in the UK if you hold one of the types of immigration permission listed above because UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) will treat your application as invalid. This means that they will not consider your application and you will have no right of appeal or administrative review against their decision.

## Switching from a Graduate to a Student visa

You cannot enrol at SOAS whilst holding a Graduate visa or whilst you are waiting for a decision on an application to switch from Graduate visa to a Student visa in the UK. Please ensure that you have your Student visa in place by to the latest joining date listed on your CAS or you may need to defer your study to next year.

## 28-day gap

If there's more than 28 days between your current visa expiry date and your course start date listed on your CAS, you **cannot** apply inside the UK as your application will be refused. Instead, you will need to leave the UK and apply from a country where you are legally resident. Read our guidance: [Applying outside the UK](#).

## Academic progression

If you have, or previously had, permission as a Student and are applying for a Student visa from within in the UK, you must be able to meet the 'academic progression' requirements as set out by UKVI. Normally this means that your new programme must be at a higher level than your previous programme and you must have successfully completed your previous programme, unless one of the following exceptions applies:

- you are applying to repeat modules with attendance to complete your current programme, or
- you have previously needed to repeat modules and need additional time to complete your current programme, or
- you require additional time in the UK to complete your PhD studies, or
- you are applying to undertake a role as a Student Union Sabbatical Officer

If you did not successfully complete the programme for which your current Tier 4 or Student visa was granted and are applying for a Student visa for a different programme, UKVI will not consider this 'academic progression' and you will need to apply outside the UK. Read our [guidance: Applying outside the UK](#)

## Evidence of Academic Progression

### Study at a higher level

If you have completed the programme for which your current Tier 4 or Student visa was granted and will now go on to study at a higher level, you will need to provide UKVI with the certificate or transcript to prove this unless you can benefit from the ['differentiation arrangements'](#) or your CAS (issued by SOAS as a track record of compliance sponsor) specifically confirms you have successfully completed your previous course and you will be studying at RQF6 or above.

### Study at the same level

If you have been offered a place on a new programme at the same level as your previous course of UK study (e.g., you're going to study a second UK master's programme), SOAS Admissions and Visa Compliance will assess whether you exceptionally meet the 'academic progression' rules or not. If SOAS agree that you meet this exception, you will be able to apply in the UK and issued a CAS confirming that:

- you have successfully completed your previous course, and
- your new programme is related to your previous programme; or
- the two programmes in combination support your genuine career aspirations

A caseworker may decide to call you for a credibility interview in this situation. If you receive a notification about this, contact the Student Advice Service before your interview for guidance. If SOAS Admissions does not agree that you exceptionally meet this rule, you may still be issued a CAS to study a second master's, but you would be required to leave the UK and apply for your visa from overseas.

### I do not have my results yet, how can I prove 'academic progression'?

If you have not yet received a result for the programme for which your current Tier 4 or Student visa was granted, you will need to request a letter from your current sponsor. Your current sponsor must be a 'Higher Education Provider with a track record of compliance'. The letter must have the following information:

- confirm they are confident that you are 'highly likely' to complete your programme successfully based on their assessment and your performance throughout your programme
- the date your qualification will be awarded

If the letter and your sponsor type meet these requirements, SOAS will issue your new CAS with wording to this effect. It is important that you check your CAS information carefully before applying for your visa to avoid a refusal. If you do not successfully complete your programme by the expected date in the letter, SOAS will have to report this to UKVI and withdraw sponsorship for your new programme.

If you do not meet the 'academic progression' rules and don't meet any of the exceptions, your application will be refused. Further information about 'academic progression' can be found in the [Student route caseworker guidance](#).

## When can I submit my Student visa application?

The earliest you can apply is **3 months** before your course start date listed on your CAS. You can only submit your visa application once you have [received](#) your Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) email and you meet any of the necessary financial requirements and other criteria outlined in this guidance.

## How can I submit my Student visa application?

Student visa applications made in the UK are submitted to UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) via their online application form. You will also need to confirm your identity. Some applicants will be able to use the 'UK Immigration: ID Check' app on their smartphone to do this and some will need to visit a UKVCAS service centre to provide their biometric information. For guidance through this process please read our [Student visa online application guide](#)

## How much does it cost?

You will need to pay:

- £490 application fee
- If you're required to visit a UK Visas and Citizenship Application Services (UKVCAS) centre to provide biometric information there may be a charge to pay. Free appointments are available but difficult to obtain.
- the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) – see our [IHS guidance](#) for more information.

## How long will it take to process my application?

You'll usually get a decision within 8 weeks. Visit GOV.UK to find out more about [processing times](#) and how to get a [faster decision](#) by paying an additional £500 for 'priority' service.

## Verifying your identity

As part of the application process, you'll need to verify your identity using either the 'UK Immigration: ID Check' app on your smartphone or by booking a biometric appointment with UK Visas and Citizenship Application Service.

The 'UK Immigration: ID Check' app is available to EU, EEA, or Swiss nationals with a biometric passport and those with a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) card, regardless of their nationality. Your smartphone will need to meet certain [technical requirements](#).

All other applicants must verify their identity by providing biometric information (fingerprints and a photograph) at a [UKVCAS service point](#). You will be asked to create a UKVCAS account and book your appointment once you have completed the application form and paid the fees. Free appointments are generally available between 10am and 4pm, Monday to Friday at all service points except Premium Lounges. They are released to the booking system at 9am. If none are available, you may need to keep checking daily to find a free appointment.

## **How do I submit my supporting documents?**

If you're eligible to use 'UK Immigration: ID Check' app, you will be able to upload any required documents to your UKVI account on GOV.UK after confirming your identity, completing your online application form, and paying the application and IHS fees.

If you're required to attend a biometric appointment at a UKVCAS service point, you should upload your documents to your online UKVCAS account prior to your appointment. You will be directed to create the UKVCAS account after you have completed your online application form and paid the application and IHS fees. We advise taking a hard copy of all your original documents to your appointment in case there have been any issues uploading your documents and they need to be uploaded again. If you choose not to upload your documents before your appointment, you will pay a fee to UKVCAS for scanning.

## **Can I travel outside the UK whilst my visa application is being processed?**

You can keep your original documents and passport whilst your application is being processed. However, you should not travel outside the Common Travel Area (UK, Republic of Ireland, and Crown Dependencies) until you receive a decision on your application, or your application will be considered automatically withdrawn.

## **What happens if my current visa expires during the application process?**

If you submit a valid application before your current immigration permission expires, you will be protected by 3C leave after your visa expires. Section 3C of the Immigration Act 1971 protects applicants from becoming overstayers if the Home Office has not decided their application by the time the permission that was endorsed in their passport or biometric residence permit expires. Section 3C leave also extends that permission and the conditions attached to it beyond the date of expiry until a decision has been made on your visa application has been made.

# Receiving a decision on your application

You will be informed of the decision made on your application by email so make sure to check your emails. When you receive your email, read it carefully.

## Visa refusals and rejections

If you've received a decision notice stating that your visa application has been refused or rejected as invalid, you will need to inform the Student Visa Compliance team immediately ([compliance@soas.ac.uk](mailto:compliance@soas.ac.uk)), including a copy of the decision notice and the visa supporting documents you provided. You will then be referred to Student Advice Service for advice on your refusal, and whether you have grounds for an Administrative Review.

## Receiving your digital visa status

Successful applicants who are eligible to use the 'UK Immigration: ID Check' app will receive a digital immigration status. If you're a [Visa national](#), you will also receive a physical Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) card. Your email notification confirming the decision on your visa application has information about when your visa is valid and the conditions of your visa. This is an important email so make sure to read it carefully and check all the information is correct.

If there are any errors such as the number of hours, you can work or the [visa expiry](#) date, please contact Student Advice Service for assistance as soon as possible. The email also has information on how to sign into your UKVI account to use the [View and Prove](#) service on GOV.UK. This is where you can check your immigration status, update your details, and generate a 'share code' if you need to prove your immigration status to anyone such as SOAS, your employer or landlord. **You must keep your details in your UKVI account [up to date](#) including your passport details to avoid having difficulties accessing and proving your immigration status.**

## Receiving your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP)

If your visa application is successful, you will receive a physical BRP card in the following circumstances only:

- you're a [visa national](#) and you used the 'UK Immigration: ID Check' app, or
- you attended a UKVCAS service point to enrol biometrics, regardless of your nationality.

Your BRP will be delivered by the courier TNT to the address entered into your visa application form and should arrive within 10 working days of receiving your 'decision' email. If you need to update your address or your BRP has not arrived, follow the instructions on [GOV.UK](#).

Your BRP will also show the date your visa expires; confirm how many hours you are allowed to work and your entitlement to NHS (National Health Service) healthcare. You should check all details are correct and [report any errors](#) within 10 days of collecting your BRP. If you need help with reporting an error, please email the Student Advice Service.

## Visa expiry dates

Your visa should expire according to the course dates on your CAS, please check this when you receive your BRP or digital visa. If you're returning to your course after a leave of absence, the caseworker should use your original course start date listed in the CAS in when calculating when your visa should expire:

Course duration	Visa expiry date
12 months or more	4 months after your course end date
6 months or more but less than 12 months	2 months after your course end date
Less than 6 months (pre-sessional course)	1 month after your course end date
Less than 6 months (not a pre-sessional course)	7 days after your course end date

## BRP expiring 31 December 2024

If you have been issued a BRP that expires on 31 December 2024 but your decision notice confirms that your immigration permission extends beyond this date, you do not need to report this as an error. [GOV.UK](#) states they will update their information on how to update your BRP in 2024.

## Providing your new visa details to SOAS

As part of the visa sponsor duties, SOAS must keep up to date immigration records for all students enrolled at the School. Visit [the enrolment pages](#) to find out which documents you need to upload and how to upload them.

## Student visa requirements and evidence

You must meet all the Student visa requirements and be able to provide evidence in the required format to make a successful visa application.

## Differentiation arrangements for 'low risk' nationals

You can qualify for Student visa differentiation arrangements because you are a national of one of the 'low risk' countries or hold certain type of passport listed in [ST 22.1](#) (Eligibility requirements section) of the Immigration Rules. If your nationality or passport is listed in [ST22.1](#) (Eligibility requirements section), you do not need to include the following documents with your visa application. However, as part of your Student visa application you will need to sign a declaration confirming that you have these documents.

- Evidence of qualifications listed on your CAS in the 'Evidence used to obtain offer' section
- Proof of meeting the financial requirements
- Evidence of meeting the English language requirements
- Proof that you successfully completed you're the course that your current visa was issued for

UK Visas and Immigration can contact you during their decision-making process to ask you to provide your qualifications and financial documents. If you cannot provide them by the deadline that you are given, then your Student visa application will be refused. We would therefore recommend



that you prepare the documents anyway so that you will have them ready if UK Visas and Immigration ask for them.

## Translations

Any document provided to support your application that is not in English, or Welsh must be translated into English to the requirements detailed in the [Student route caseworker guidance](#).

## Qualifications used to obtain offer

When you applied to study at SOAS, you needed to provide proof of your qualifications to obtain your unconditional offer, e.g., proof of your undergraduate degree qualification to study on a masters. Refer to your CAS which will list these documents in the '*Evidence used to obtain offer*' section.

If your CAS states that you will be studying on a degree level course (RQF 6) or above, you do **not** need to provide evidence of these qualifications to UKVI as SOAS is a HEI sponsor with a track record of compliance.

If you will study on a course at RQF 5 or below, you **must** provide a certificate or transcript of your results for each qualification listed unless you can apply under the '[differentiation arrangements](#)'.

## Academic Progression evidence

See [previous section](#).

## Financial requirements

A common reason for Student visa refusals is a problem with financial documents or an incorrect amount of funds being shown. If you can apply under the '[differentiation arrangements](#)', you must meet the financial requirements but do not need to provide the evidence. See example documents at the end of this guide.

If your course is 9 months or more in length, you will need to show that you have first year/current year's tuition fees plus £12,006 for maintenance costs.

If the course you will be studying is less than 9 months duration, or you're extending your visa to continue the same course and the course dates on the CAS are less than 9 months duration, you will need £1,334 for each whole or partial month you will be studying for. For instance, if your course is 6 months and 17 days long you will need to show enough money for 7 months = £9,338.

If you have paid fees to SOAS before you apply for your Student visa and this amount is shown as paid on your CAS statement, you can deduct the amount from the total you need in your bank account. If you have any queries about the fees shown as paid on your CAS, reply to your CAS email.

As SOAS and University of London student halls of residence are provided by third-party organisations, you do not pay hall fees directly to SOAS and therefore this money cannot be considered in your application.

## Automatically meeting the financial requirements

If you're making your application in the UK, you will automatically meet the financial requirements if you have been living in the UK with valid immigration permission for at least 12 months, counting backwards from the date of your Student visa application. If you don't meet these criteria, you will need to meet the financial requirements and provide evidence if you don't benefit from the ['differentiation arrangements'](#). [UKVI caseworker guidance](#) states that absences from the UK for holidays and short periods do not break the 12-month period, however, "if an applicant has not been based in the UK for a significant part of the 12 months, for example for at least 3 months, they will not meet the requirement."

Caseworker guidance also states that if you had 3C leave or exceptional assurance (during the Covid pandemic) during the 12 months, that time should be counted as a time during which you had permission.

## Bank accounts

If using a bank account, it must be a personal account in the name of one of the following:

- your name, either alone or as a joint account holder
- your parent or legal guardian\*, joint accounts are acceptable where the account is in the names of both your parents only.
- your partner, if your partner has valid UK immigration permission or is applying at the same time as the you. Not all students can bring partners to the UK, refer to the [Dependent](#) section of this guide or contact us for guidance. Partners are defined as:
  - Your spouse
  - Your civil partner
  - Your unmarried partner if you have been living together in a relationship similar to marriage for at least two years before the application, evidence of this will be required.

\*For applications made on or after 6 June 2024, the definition of parent excludes step-parents. This new definition will restrict the definition of a parent to biological parents, legal parents, and adoptive parents. If in doubt, contact our team for guidance.

## Types of funds:

- Funds must be in a personal (not business) account and available for use.
- Funds held in a type of account where the funds cannot be accessed immediately or financial instruments such as shares, bonds, credit cards will not be accepted as evidence.

You must show that you have had the total amount of money in cash funds in your bank account for a 28-day period. The document you provide to evidence your funds in the bank account must not be older than 31 days.

Funds must not drop below the required amount throughout the whole 28-day period, or your visa application will be refused. The required funds must remain in the bank account until you have submitted your visa application and ideally until you receive your visa decision. If your funds fall below the required amount after you have submitted your visa application, the UKVI caseworker must be satisfied that you have spent these funds to pay outstanding tuition fees, accommodation or other costs associated with your proposed course of study in the UK. You should keep receipts or evidence to prove that you have spent the funds in the bank account on this type of expenditure.

[Caseworker guidance](#) also states that your funds will not be accepted if they are held by a financial institution and any of the following apply:

- the decision maker is unable to make satisfactory verification checks; or
- the financial institution is not regulated by the appropriate regulatory body for the country in which that institution is operating; or
- the financial institution does not use electronic record keeping.

### **Using parents' or partners' bank account**

If you're providing your parent's or partner bank statement for your visa application, it should meet all the requirements outlined in this section. You must also provide evidence of your relationship and a letter of consent.

For applications made on or after 6 June 2024, the definition of parent excludes step-parents. This new definition will restrict the definition of a parent to biological parents, legal parents, and adoptive parents. If in doubt, contact our team for guidance.

If using parents' account:

- your birth certificate confirming your relationship or,
- a certificate of adoption showing your name and the name of the parent who holds the funds, or
- a court document stating that your legal guardian is the person who holds the funds, or
- a government-issued household register, **and**
- a letter of consent giving permission for this money to be used for your studies in the UK.

If using partner's account:

- proof of your marriage or civil partnership e.g., marriage or civil partnership certificate, or
- evidence of co-habiting for two years if not married or in a civil partnership with your partner, **and**
- a letter of consent giving permission for this money to be used for your studies in the UK.

### **Bank statement**

You can provide original or electronic bank statements. The caseworker will count back 28 days from the closing balance date on the statement and check the balance in the account on each day.

Your bank statement must not be older than 31 days on the date of your visa application. The document should include all the following:

- Be on official bank stationary or an electronic record
- Your name or your parents(s)/legal guardian's name
- Account number
- Date of the statement
- Financial institution's name and contact details
- Amount of money available over a 28-day period

### **Bank letter**

If using a letter from the bank (with the details listed above included) it must also include confirmation of the lowest balance held over the 28-day period preceding the date of the letter. Your letter should not be older than 31 days on the date of your visa application.

### **Certificates of deposit**

Certificates of deposit are documents issued by a bank which confirm an individual has deposited or invested a sum of money. To be acceptable as evidence:

- the certificate of deposit must have been issued within 31 days of the date of application
- at least 28 days must have elapsed between the date of the deposit and the date of issue of the certificate
- confirms you can access the money at any time

### **Student Loans**

Acceptable loan providers are:

- 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 purpose of issuing student loans in the country in which the financial institution is located and where the money is held

You must be able to provide a letter from your lender which includes the following:

- be dated no more than 6 months before the date of application; and
- confirms the loan is a student loan provided to you by either the relevant government or a government sponsored student loan company or an academic or educational loans scheme; and
- confirms there are no conditions on release of the loan funds other than a successful application to study in the UK as a Student and
- confirms the amount of the loan and that the loan is in your name
- confirm the funds will be:
  - available to you before you travel to the UK; or

- paid directly to SOAS before you travel to the UK, with any living cost part of the loan being made available to you by the time you arrive in the UK; or
- available before you begin your course if the loan is provided by your national government.

## **Official Financial Sponsorship e.g. scholarships**

The following providers are recognised as official financial sponsors:

- His Majesty's Government sponsored programmes
- your national government
- the British Council
- an international organisation
- an international company
- a university
- an independent school

You must provide a letter from your sponsor confirming:

- your name and that you are the recipient of the sponsorship
- the amount of the sponsorship, or confirmation that the financial sponsor will cover all course and living costs required by the applicant
- the date of the sponsorship and duration
- the name and contact details of the official financial sponsor

If you're financially sponsored by SOAS, your CAS statement must show this information including the amount of scholarship you will receive. If your financial sponsor is only covering some of your course fees or living costs, you must show that you have the rest of the money needed from other acceptable sources.

## **Funds not in Pounds Sterling**

If the funds are in your local currency, UK Visas and Immigration advise that you convert the closing balance to Pounds Sterling (GBP) using the [OANDA website](#). Use the conversion rate for the date you pay for your visa application fee. Write the converted figure next to the closing balance. For applications made on or after 4 April 2024, where OANDA cannot be used to convert a currency into GBP (i.e., Syrian Pounds and Iranian Rials), the [FCDO Consular Exchange Rate](#) can be used for appropriate exchange rate on the date of application.

## **Consent from your current or previous financial sponsor**

If all the following are true, you will need to provide a letter of consent from your financial sponsor:

- you have completed a course of studies in the UK within the 12 months prior to your Student visa application date, and
- you were awarded a scholarship or official financial sponsorship for that course, covering both fees, and living costs, and
- the scholarship or financial sponsor was a government or international scholarship agency.

Your application will be invalid if you don't provide this letter and is required even if you benefit from the [differentiation arrangements](#). If you're applying for further immigration permission to continue your current programme, we recommend contacting the Student Advice Service for guidance on this letter before submitting your application.

## Consent from parent(s)/guardians if under 18 years old

If you submit your visa application when you're under 18, you must provide a letter of consent from your parents, legal guardian or one parent if they have sole responsibility for you. You should also provide evidence of your relationship to them such as a birth certificate. For applications made on or after 6 June 2024, the definition of parent excludes step-parents. This new definition will restrict the definition of a parent to biological parents, legal parents, and adoptive parents. If in doubt, contact our team for guidance.

The letter should confirm the following:

- confirm their relationship to you
- consent to your Student visa application
- consent to your living and care arrangements in the UK
- consent to your travel arrangements to the UK and reception on arrival

## English Language Requirements

As your Student visa sponsor, SOAS are required by UK Visas and Immigration to confirm that you have met a minimum level of acceptable English to be able to enrol on a course in the UK. If you hold an unconditional offer from SOAS you will already have met these language requirements as part of the course application process. If you can apply under the ['differentiation arrangements'](#), you do not need to provide evidence of how you meet the English language requirements.

To understand what evidence, you may need to provide to UKVI to prove your English language ability, please check what your CAS states in the English language qualification section.

### English language qualification

Is SELT required?

Reason not required:

If your CAS states 'Y' for the question '*Is SELT required?*', you need to enter your [SELT test](#) number on your visa application form. It's valid for 2 years only

If your CAS states 'N' for the question '*Is SELT required?*', your CAS will state the reason a SELT is not required. Check below what evidence (if any) you need to submit with your visa application:

- [Migrant has met required English level in a previous successful visa application](#)

**Evidence:** Although the guidance does not specify how this will be checked, confirmation on the CAS and on the visa application should be sufficient.

- [Higher Education Institute \(HEI\) sponsor has made assessment](#)

**Evidence:** confirmed on the CAS no other evidence required

- National of a majority English-speaking country

**Evidence:** your passport

- Migrant holds degree from majority English speaking country

**Evidence:** transcript or certificate plus if the qualification was awarded outside the UK, you will also require an [Ecctis](#) (formerly UK NARIC) Visa and Nationality Statement (English proficiency).

## Summary of documents to be submitted:

Depending on how you apply online, you will upload scans of these documents to your UKVI account after submitting your visa application online or to your UKVCAS account before attending your biometric appointment. Our other guide explains how to apply online, [Student visa application form guide](#).

Document	Low risk applicant, see <a href="#">ST 21.2</a> *	Other applicants
Passport	Yes	Yes
Biometric Residence Permit or visa vignette if immigration permission is less than 6 months	Yes	Yes
<a href="#">Evidence</a> of Academic Progression if an <a href="#">exception</a> doesn't apply.	No, if your CAS confirms successful completion of previous course.*	No, if your CAS confirms successful completion of previous course as SOAS is a HEP with a track record of compliance
Qualifications listed on CAS in 'Evidence used to obtain offer' section.	No*	Yes, if you will study a course <b>below</b> RQF 6.
English language assessment (see CAS)	No*	Yes, unless 'HEI sponsor has made assessment' or 'met in a previous successful application' is listed on CAS
Financial documents (automatically met if you're applying <b>inside</b> the UK <b>and</b> have lived in the UK with valid immigration permission for 12 months prior to visa application)	No*	Yes
If using parent or partner account, proof of relationship, plus letter of consent (automatically met if you're applying <b>inside</b> the UK <b>and</b> have lived in the UK with valid immigration permission for 12 months prior to visa application)	No*	Yes
Letter of parental consent to application if under 18-years old, plus proof of relationship	Yes	Yes
Letter of consent from your Official Financial Sponsor (required in some <a href="#">circumstances</a> )	Yes	Yes
Translations of any submitted documents not in English or Welsh	Yes	Yes
Consent to verification checks signed form - Only if available to download from your online application portal.	Yes	Yes



Document Checklist (not available or required for those who use UK Immigration: ID Check app to verify identity) Available to download from your application portal once you pay the application fee.	Yes	Yes
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\*Low risk applicants do not have to submit some documents, but they must still meet the requirements of the Student visa application. UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) can contact you during their decision-making process to ask you to provide your qualifications and financial documents. If you cannot provide them by the deadline that you are given, then your Student visa application will be refused. We would therefore recommend that you prepare the documents, so you are ready to submit them if a UKVI caseworker contacts you.

## Dependants

### Which students can bring dependants?

You can only bring dependants with you to the UK when studying at SOAS if:

- you're studying a full-time PhD programme of 9 months or more in duration, or
- you're receiving a scholarship or financial sponsorship from your national government or His Majesty's government and are studying a programme of 6 months or more in duration.

Our MRes degrees do not meet the requirements to be eligible to bring dependants unless you meet bullet point two above.

Your dependants visa should expire on the same date as your Student visa.

### Who are considered dependants?

- your spouse
- your civil partner
- your unmarried partner if you have been in a 'durable' relationship similar to marriage for at least two years before the application, evidence of this will be required.
- Your child or children (under 18 years if coming to the UK for the first time as your dependant). Both child's parents must be in the UK or coming to the UK with the child unless exemptions apply. Please see the [UKCISA](#) website for further details or contact our team.

Other family members who wish to join you in the UK must apply for a Standard Visitor visa (see [GOV.UK](#) or more details).

### Application costs

- £490 application fee per dependant
- the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) – see our [IHS guidance](#) for more information
- Required documents

Evidence is set out in the [Relationship with a partner: caseworker guidance](#) which is subject to change at any time.

You will need to provide the following documents:

- proof of your marriage or civil partnership e.g., marriage or civil partnership certificate\*
- evidence of co-habiting for two years if not married or in a civil partnership with your partner or evidence to explain why you don't live together\*
- child applicants need evidence of the relationship between parent/legal guardian and the child e.g., birth certificate\*
- child applicants need a letter from both parents/legal guardians confirming all the following:
  - Their relationship to the child.
  - Whether both or one parent/legal guardian has legal responsibility for the child.
  - They consent to the child's Dependant visa application.
  - They consent to the living arrangements in the UK and the address the child will be staying.
- evidence of meeting the dependent financial requirements

\*These are not required if they were already submitted in a previous successful Student dependant application but sometimes caseworkers still ask to see them. However, you will need to show evidence that you and your spouse, civil partner or unmarried partner are still in a relationship since the last visa was granted by including evidence such as a recent utility bill, council tax bill or bank statement in both your names.

If your child's other parent is not coming to the UK, you will need to show evidence that you meet an exemption for not requiring both parents come to the UK. Please see the [UKCISA](#) website for further details or contact Student Advice Service.

## What are the financial requirements for dependants?

Dependants will need to show that they have £845 per month of immigration permission they will be granted (if successful), up to a maximum of 9 months. Dependant visas will expire on the same date as your Student visa, and you can check when your Student visa will expire in the [visa expiry](#) date section of this guide.

### Example 1

You're studying on a Masters' course that is 12 months or longer, your Student visa (and your spouse's Dependant visa) will expire 4 months after the course end date on the CAS. If your spouse is applying to enter the UK at the same time as you, they will need £845 per month up to a maximum of 9 months - £7,605.

If your dependants will apply to come to the UK later than you, please contact our team for help in calculating how many months they will need to show finance for. See also page 102 of the [guidance](#) dated 06 April 2021.

### Example 2

If you're applying for a visa for an additional 3 months to finish your PhD, your dependants will need to show 7 months x £845 (£5,915) as your visa (and their visa) will expire 4 months after the new 'course end' date on your CAS. You will only need to show 3 months of finance for your own

Student visa due to the difference in maintenance requirements between the Student and Dependant visas.

## Financial Evidence

The required funds can be held in the same way as for Student visa applications however please note the following exceptions:

- Dependants cannot use bank accounts held by the Student's parents'
- Dependants cannot use an educational loan whether in their own name or the Student's name
- Dependants who are studying in the UK with their own official financial sponsor cannot use a letter from their sponsor to meet their financial requirements of the Dependant visa application. However, if the Student's official financial sponsor is willing to confirm that they are covering the dependant's maintenance, they can use that letter if they are named on it.

The funds held by dependents must be in addition to the funds required by the Student applicant. UKVI caseworkers can check bank statements for evidence that the same funds are being used for both applications.

Since 6 April 2021 family members who are 'low risk' applicants can benefit from the [differentiation arrangements](#) and do not need to provide evidence of funds. However, they will still need to have the funds in the required format as the caseworker can request evidence of them.

To qualify under these arrangements your dependant(s) must be applying from their country of nationality or residence, and at the same time and location as you. Both you and your dependant(s) must be holders of a 'low-risk' nationality, as listed in [Appendix Student ST 22.1\(b\)](#) of the Immigration Rules.

For more information about dependant applications please see the Student and Child Student policy [guidance](#). [UKCISA](#) also has useful guidance for Dependant applications.

## Further help

If you need further immigration advice after reading this guidance, please email the Student Advice Service with your full name, nationality, name of the country in which you are making your Student visa application and SOAS student ID (if issued).

Email: [adviceservice@soas.ac.uk](mailto:adviceservice@soas.ac.uk)

[UK Council for International Student Affairs](#) (UKCISA) has lots of helpful resources on student immigration and living in the UK as an international student.

## Example bank letter



Bank logo

*Date*

To whom it may concern,

We confirm that *[your name/parents name]*, *account number*, is holding a bank account with us.

The total amount held *[on date]* of the letter is [XX XXX]. The lowest amount held over the previous 28 consecutive days was [XX XXX ].

Yours sincerely

*[Bank name and signature  
Contact details for verification]*

## Example of bank statement



Bank logo

Date of statement:

Account number: *[include full account number]*

Account name: *[your name or your parents name]*

Bank contact details: *[include phone number or email address so UKVI can make contact for verification checks.]*

Date	Transaction	Debit (£)	Credit (£)	Balance (£)
27 Jul 2023	Transfer		35,000	37,000
30 Jul 2023	Clothes	200		36,800
2 Aug 2023	Salary		500	37,300
13 Aug 2023	Rent	750		36,550
19 Aug 2023	lunch	10		36,540
4 Sep 2023	books	15		36,525
10 Sep 2023	Closing balance			36,525

Step 1. Count backwards from the closing balance to find your 28-day period.

Step 2, Check closing balance date is not more than 31 days ago on the date you pay the visa application fee.

Step 3. Ensure you have the required amount of funds on each date during the 28-day period. Funds cannot drop below the required amount on any single day.

## Example of consent letter if using parents bank account

*Date*

Dear UKVI

I confirm that I am the parent of *[your name]*. I give permission for the funds in my bank account to be used by *[your name]* for their studies in the UK.

Yours sincerely

*[Your parent's name and signature]*

*(If using a bank account in both parent's name, submit a letter from each parent)*

## Example of letter of consent for under 18s

*Date*

Dear UKVI

We confirm that we are the parents of *[your name]*. I give consent to *[your name]* making the Student visa application, their living and care arrangements in the UK as well as their travel to and reception on arrival to the UK.

Yours sincerely

*[Your parent's name and signature]*

*(signed by both parents or legal guardians, or just one parent or guardian if they have sole responsibility for you)*