



Stratford College London

(DfES Registered Independent School)

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BRITISH HIGH COMMISSION: NEW VISA POLICIES

From 1 April 2009 General Students will need to pass a point's based assessment and score 40 points. Points will be awarded as follow:

- 30 points for visa letter from a licensed sponsor
- 10 Points from "Maintenance"

Licensed Sponsors

All Colleges and universities that want to recruit foreign students need a sponsor license.

You can find out whether your chosen education provider is a registered sponsor by checking on the Tier 4 register of sponsors on our website using the following link;
www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/studyingintheuk/applyingafter-march

Your sponsor is responsible for you whilst you are in the United Kingdom and must tell us if you do not arrive for the start of a course, if you withdraw from the course, if you defer or suspend your studies or if you fail to attend for a significant period of time.

Changing sponsor

If you change your mind about which institute (sponsor) you want to study at either before you travel you will need to obtain a new Visa letter from the different institute and make application and pay the fee again. It is very important that you are sure about where you want to study before you apply.

What is Visa Letter?

A Visa Letter is an offer letter from your education provider who is your immigration sponsor and it will include information about you (the student), your sponsor, the course and your finances.

Find a draft visa letter for general students on:

www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/studyingintheuk/applyingafter-march

Finances (Maintenance)

- What is maintenance (Funds)?
 - Cash in bank account that you (the student) can draw on
 - Official or government sponsorship
- (Other accounts of financial instruments such as shares, bonds, pension funds regardless of notice period **are not** acceptable)

Finances (Maintenance)

Course length	Location	Maintenance required
Under 12 Months	London Based	Fees + £800 for each month of course
Under 12 Months	Outside London	Fees + £600 for each months of course
More than 12 Months	London Based	First year fees + £9,600 to cover the first year in the UK
More than 12 Months	Outside London	First year fees + £7,200 to cover the first year in the UK

How long can you apply to stay?

If you given a general student visa and are studying at degree level or above you will be allowed to stay for the full duration of your course, up to four years.

If you studying below degree, you will be allowed to stay for up to three years.

If you studying above degree level and the course is longer than four years you will need to apply for an extension in order to complete your course.

At the end of your permission to stay you will be given extra time to finalise you affairs and leave UK or make an application for an extension.

What type of study can a general student do?

Full-time study

- A full time UK degree course or above:
- A course of study below UK degree level but at a minimum of level 3 on the NQF involving a minimum of 15 hours per week organised day time study
- A course of study at minimum level NQF which includes a work placement that is no more than 50% of the full course length.

English Language Courses

English language courses must finish with an independent recognised assessment at level A2 of the CEFR

Higher education courses

- If you are on short term study aboard programme as part of an overseas qualification

Work Placements- No more than 50% of the total course length

What documents do I need?

It is up to you to demonstrate that you qualify for a visa.

You **must** have:

- A Complete application form
- Your valid passport or travel documents
- A recent passport photo
- A visa letter from a licensed sponsor
- Documents to show that you have the right finances (Maintenance available)
- Original documents used by your sponsor when they accepted you on the course
- The Visa fee-currently £99- to be paid in local currency.

Can I work?

You may work part-time (no more than 20 hours per week) during term-time while studying and full-time duration vacations.

You must not set up a business or be self- employed or work full-time in a permanent job.

Depending on your studies once qualified you may be eligible to switch in to the post-study worker category of Tier 1.

Dependants

As a Tier 4 general student you are allowed to bring your dependants with you and any adult dependants will be allowed to work in the UK if you are given permission to stay for more than 12 months.

To qualify you will need to show that you have a further £533 (in London) or £400 (outside London) each month for each dependant you bring with you. You will need to show that you have the maintenance available for the first twelve months.

Considering the Visa application

- All application are considered against the UK immigration rules:
- Decisions are made based on the application form and the documents that you submit;
- You must submit all documents at the time that you make your application;
- Points based Tier 4 applications will be assessed and decided without an interview

BUT:

Applications **must** be refused under paragraph 320 (7A) of the immigration rules where:

- False representations have been made (whether or not to your knowledge and whether or not material to the application)
- Material facts have not been disclosed, which would have been relevant to the decision; or
- False documents have been submitted (whether or not to your knowledge and whether or not material to the application)

So your application will be refused if:

- You submit an altered or false education certificate;
- You submit any documents which are false or which have been altered;
- You fail to declare any previous immigration history

**YOU MAY ALSO BE BANNED FROM TRAVELLING TO
THE UK FOR UP TO TEN YEARS**

Summary

Prepare you application thoroughly;

- Apply up to 3 months but at least 2-6 weeks before you want to travel;
- Don't use any false documents to make any false statements;
- There are plenty of sources of information available to you

USE THEM:

www.britishcouncil.org

www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/studyingintheuk/applyingafter-march

www.ukvisa.gov.uk

www.visa4uk.fco.gov.uk