

Student visa responsibilities as a full-time student

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Introduction

This document explains the responsibilities of a full-time student sponsored by the University of Cambridge for a student visa and provides guidance on protecting your immigration status in the UK. It is important that you understand and comply with the responsibilities of your student visa and cooperate with the University in fulfilling our shared sponsorship duties. Any breach could have serious implications on your studies and continued stay in the UK. In using the University's CAS to apply for your student visa, you agree to the requirements outlined in this document.

If you are a visiting student not affiliated to a College, your host Faculty or Department undertakes the role of the College as described in this document.

Please note that the immigration rules and guidance are liable to change. The most up to date version of this guide is available online at www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk/student-visa-responsibilities.

These responsibilities apply to students who hold a Tier 4 visa, applied for prior to 5 October 2020, or a Student visa issued after this date. The responsibilities attached to these visas are the same and therefore references to 'student visa' in this document cover both.

International Student Office

The International Student Office provides a visa advice service to applicants and students and has a responsibility for ensuring institutional student immigration compliance. They can advise on queries relating to the conditions of a student visa and should be contacted for information on how a change in your circumstances may have implications for your immigration status in the UK. Email international.students@admin.cam.ac.uk.

Your BRP

The Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) is the documentary evidence of your immigration permission in the UK. It is a credit-card sized document and contains your personal and biometric information. It is very important you keep it secure. You must take it with you if you travel overseas as you will require it to re-enter the UK and may need it for flights within the UK. Note that there is no requirement to carry ID in the UK, so it is advisable not to carry your passport/BRP inside the UK other than where necessary for formal identification purposes. EEA and Swiss nationals are not issued with a BRP as outlined in the relevant section below.

Collecting your BRP if you apply for your visa outside the UK

When you receive a successful decision on your visa application, you will be issued a time-limited entry vignette in your passport. You must ensure that you enter the UK within the validity of the vignette. You cannot enter on your student visa before the 'valid from' date on your entry vignette. In addition, you cannot enter the UK earlier as a standard visitor (tourist) and then 'switch' inside the UK to your student immigration permission even if the entry vignette is in your passport. If you enter the UK as a visitor, you will need to leave the Common Travel Area (UK and Ireland) and re-enter to activate your immigration permission as a student. If the vignette expires before you are able to travel, contact the International Student Office for further guidance.

You will need to collect your BRP after arriving in the UK. The collection point will either be the University, if you have used the relevant code in your application, or the Post Office. This will be confirmed in the decision letter you receive after your visa application has been processed. Further information on collecting your BRP is available at www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk/collecting-your-visa-brp.

Receiving your BRP if you apply for your visa inside the UK

If you apply for further leave to remain inside the UK, your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) will be sent to the address you use in the application form. You should check your eligibility to apply in the UK before doing so.

EEA and Swiss nationals

If you applied for your student immigration permission as an EEA or Swiss national, you will not be issued a BRP. You will be granted a digital status which can be verified online. You will be able to enter the UK with your passport having been granted your student immigration permission. When asked to provide evidence of your status, for example by your College, you can obtain a 'share code' at <https://www.gov.uk/view-prove-immigration-status> and provide this to enable verification.

Checking your visa

It is a Home Office requirement to have any errors on your visa corrected.

The duration of immigration permission granted depends on the course. You should check your CAS course end date and ensure you have been granted the correct length of leave:

- the length of the course plus four months for undergraduate and PhD courses;
- the length of the course plus two months for Masters courses of 12 months or less;
- the length of the course plus four months for Masters courses lasting 12 months or more;
- the length of the course plus six months for Masters courses of 13 months or less where the application was made prior to 5 October 2020;
- the length of the course plus two months for other courses lasting less than 12 months, e.g. exchange students.

Your BRP should contain the following information:

- *Type of Permit:* T4 GENERAL STUDENT or STUDENT
- WORK 20HRS MAX IN TERM-TIME
- 4NUV7KB58 (*University of Cambridge sponsor licence number*)

If this information is missing or there are any other errors on your BRP with your name, personal details or the length of permission granted, please contact the International Student Office who will be able to advise you on getting it corrected.

On arrival

If you applied for your student visa from outside the UK

You will need to provide evidence of your immigration status to your College after you arrive in the UK and before you start your studies. You will also need to provide evidence of when you entered the UK, which for many will be the entry stamp marked on the entry vignette in your passport by immigration control. Evidence of your flight (e.g. flight ticket) will be required in the absence of this stamp. Instructions will be sent to you by your College prior to you starting your studies.

If you applied for your student visa in the UK

If you currently hold a student visa for a different institution, you cannot use that visa to study at Cambridge. A student visa allows you to study a course with a particular sponsor only. If you wish to make your new student visa application for Cambridge inside the UK, you can only start your course after you have presented either a new BRP showing the University of Cambridge sponsor licence number or having provided evidence of submitting an in-time application for a new student visa for Cambridge.

You can start your studies at your own risk based on evidence of having applied for a new student visa but you will need to keep your College up to date with the progress of your visa application and take your new BRP for copying when received. If your visa application is unsuccessful, you must notify the International Student Office immediately.

If you have completed one course at the University of Cambridge and are continuing to a further degree here, in line with Home Office policy you must apply for a new student visa within six weeks after the new official course start date or before your current permission expires, whichever is earlier. You must provide evidence to your College which confirms you have submitted your new visa application.

Police Registration

Nationals from the following countries are required to register with the police after arrival in the UK: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belarus, Bolivia, Brazil, China, Colombia, Cuba, Egypt, Georgia, Hong Kong, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, North Korea, Oman, Palestine, Peru, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Yemen, Stateless or travelling on a non-national document (i.e. Travel Document).

When you register with the police, you will be issued with a police registration certificate. It is important you keep this document in a safe place. You do not need to carry it around with you in Cambridge.

New to the UK

You will need to book an appointment with the Parkside Police Station in Cambridge after you arrive in the UK. For information on how to book an appointment, check www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk/student-visa-responsibilities/police-registration.

To register you will need your passport, Biometric Residence Permit (or where this is not yet available, the decision letter notifying you of your successful visa application) and two passport size photographs. There is a charge of £34 which must be paid in cash. You will also need to complete the [Registration Form](#) which you should try and complete before registering on the day.

Previously studied in the UK

If you have previously studied in the UK but have changed address and/or obtained a new BRP, you will need to attend Parkside Police Station in Cambridge during office hours to update your details. You will need to take your passport, Certificate of Registration and BRP. You do not need an appointment.

Reporting changes of circumstances to the police

You must also ensure that you update the police within seven days if you: change address during your studies; obtain a new BRP; renew your passport; get married; or if any of the other details on your Police Registration Certificate change.

Contact details

You are required to keep your UK contact details up-to-date on your student record throughout your studies. This includes both your residential address and telephone number. You can update your details via CamSIS self-service or by informing your College of any changes.

Termly registration

You will need to undertake termly registration at your College for the duration of your course*.

This means you must:

- contact your College Tutorial Office within seven working days of the start of each Full Term unless, owing to exceptional circumstances, prior agreement has been given for an alternative registration date;
- confirm that you are engaged with study and are abiding by the terms of your student visa; and
- check that your contact details on your record remain current and that you have informed your College of any changes to your immigration status.

If you fail to make contact as required, and have not been permitted to defer your contact, the University must cease visa sponsorship and report this to the Home Office in accordance with the University's compliance responsibilities. Action will also be considered if it is identified that a student is not engaging with their studies as expected.

If the University formally approves a period of study or research overseas during your course, your visa sponsorship can continue during this period. The termly contact remains a requirement but you will be able to register by email. If you are granted permission to study or undertake research elsewhere in the UK during your course, you will be required to return in person to Cambridge for termly registration at the appropriate time.

If you are a **PhD student** you are considered to be studying throughout your time at Cambridge and must continue to attend termly registrations until you are formally approved for your degree, even after the course end date in your CAS has passed.

If you are a **visiting student**, you must register with your host Faculty or Department upon arrival and then within seven working days of the start of each Full Term for which you are present in Cambridge. Your Faculty or Department will inform you if they have additional requirements or alternative dates.

***Please note students granted a Tier 4 visa for a Masters courses of 13 months or less are exempt from this requirement in the academic year 2020/21 as a concession of the Tier 4 visa pilot. These requirements are to be reviewed for the academic year 2021/22.**

Working

The Home Office **and** the University restrict the number of hours a student can work in the UK and the type of work that can be undertaken. It is very important you understand these working conditions and check with the International Student Office if you are unsure prior to commencing any work, paid or unpaid. If you plan to undertake any work in the UK whilst on your student visa, it is important you read the full information at www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk/student-visa-responsibilities/working-student-visa.

Changes in circumstances

If your circumstances change during your studies, the Home Office may need to be informed and there could be implications for your student visa.

Some changes must be reported by you. You are required to inform the Home Office of the following changes using the change of circumstances form: www.gov.uk/change-circumstances-visa-brp

- contact details
- criminal convictions
- passport number
- dependants' details, for example if the relationship breaks down
- if any children stop living permanently with you.

You are required to apply for a new BRP if any of the following change:

- name, e.g. if you have got married
- nationality
- gender
- facial appearance
- date of birth

Other changes, such as intermission or course changes, may need to be reported by the University as your visa sponsor and could have implications for your student visa and/or continued studies. Detailed

information on these changes in circumstance and the implications is outlined on our webpages at www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk/changes-circumstances.

If you encounter a change in circumstances during your studies, or think this might be likely, you should check if there are any implications for your student visa by contacting the International Student Office.

Changes to research for ATAS clearance

Students undertaking a PhD-level research degree, Masters course or four-year undergraduate degree in certain science and technology subjects require an ATAS (Academic Technology Approval Scheme) clearance certificate. You would have been informed if you had to apply for an ATAS certificate for your course prior to applying for your visa; certain nationalities are exempt from the requirement. You are required to apply for a new certificate:

- if there are any changes to the course content or research proposal. Changes are those other than minor changes to the areas of research or the use of any new research technique;
- if your course end date is postponed by more than 3 calendar months;
- if you wish to change to a new course that requires ATAS clearance.

If any of these apply to you, you should contact the International Student Office to request updated guidance to be able to apply to the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office for a new ATAS certificate.

Changes to immigration documentation during studies

If you obtain a new passport or BRP during your studies, you are required to provide this to your College for scanning and uploading onto your record.

If you lose your visa/BRP, or it is stolen, you are required by the Home Office to apply for a replacement at an additional cost if it is valid for 3 months or more, or if it is valid for less than 3 months and you plan to travel overseas and re-enter the UK on your student immigration permission. The International Student Office can be contacted for further guidance in these circumstances.

If you switch to another visa category during your studies or change citizenship and wish to reside in the UK on the basis of the new citizenship, you must notify your College within 7 working days of the change and provide your updated visa documentation, share code or passport/national identity card. The University is required to report this change to the Home Office and cease visa sponsorship.

Completing your studies

If you complete your course on or after the expected date as stated on your CAS, then your visa expiry date does not change.

Completion means unconditional approval of your degree.

Completing early

If you complete your course earlier than the date stated on your CAS, the University is required to report this to the Home Office. The Home Office will curtail your immigration permission to the normal entitlement period following a course end date. If you leave the UK after your permission has been curtailed, or you are overseas at the point of curtailment action, you may not be permitted re-entry to the UK on your student visa.

Visa expiry and 'overstaying'

You must leave the UK by the expiry date of your visa unless you have submitted a visa application to extend your permission in the UK. There is no 'grace period' following the expiry date of your visa. You will become an 'overstayer' if you are in the UK the day after your visa expires without having submitted a valid application for further leave or having obtained other valid immigration permission. This is the case even if you are able to enter the UK as a visitor without a visa. You cannot switch from your student immigration permission to visitor status automatically from within the UK. You would need to leave the UK and re-enter as a visitor. Entry to the UK is at the discretion of Border Force officials.

The University will not allow you to continue your studies as an 'overstayer'. You would also need to declare any periods of overstay on future visa applications to the UK and many other countries.

Post-study visa options

Information on post-study visa options is outlined at www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk/visas-after-studying.

Protecting your immigration status: Checklist

This section provides a summary of what you need to do to adhere to the University's sponsor licence responsibilities, your visa conditions and other considerations.

Visa sponsorship responsibilities

- Enrol by the course dates specified in your CAS.
- Before starting your studies, present your passport and immigration documentation to your College.
- Check your BRP and contact the International Student Office if there are any errors as they will need to be corrected.
- Keep your UK contact details on your student record up to date throughout your studies. This includes residential address, telephone number and email address.
- Continue to engage with your studies.

- Undertake termly registration with your College within seven days of the start of each [Full Term](#) for the duration of your course, unless you are a Masters student with a Tier 4 visa on a course of 13 months or less.
- Check with the International Student Office how changes to your studies may have implications for your visa.
- Complete your course on time, and within the time limits imposed by your visa. If your visa is expiring and you need more time to complete your studies, and the University has approved an extension, contact the [International Student Office](#) to discuss your options.
- If you obtain a new passport or BRP during your studies, present this to your College.
- Inform your College if you switch to another immigration category.

Adhere to your student visa conditions

- If required, register with the police, keep your police registration certificate safe and update the police with any changes (e.g. change of address).
- Only work within the conditions set by the Home Office for a student visa, and the greater restrictions set by the University.
- Do not attempt to apply for 'public funds', including welfare and local authority housing benefits.
- Report any relevant changes of circumstance to the Home Office.
- Apply for a new BRP if your personal details change. Such changes include name and nationality.
- Apply for a replacement if your BRP, or visa in your passport, is lost or stolen.
- Make sure you leave the UK prior to your visa expiring unless you obtain further leave or have submitted a valid visa application to extend your permission in the UK.