

Your responsibilities whilst sponsored for a Tier 4 visa by the University of Cambridge

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Introduction

This guide explains your responsibilities as a student sponsored by the University of Cambridge for a Tier 4 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 co-operate with the University in fulfilling our shared Tier 4 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 Tier 4 student visa, you agree to the requirements outlined in this document.

This guide assumes you are affiliated to a College. If you are not affiliated to a College your host Faculty or Department undertakes the role of the College as described in this document.

International Student Team

The International Student Team provides a visa advice service to applicants and students and has a responsibility for ensuring institutional Tier 4 compliance. The team can advise on queries relating to the conditions of a Tier 4 visa and should be contacted for information on how any changes in your circumstances may have implications for your immigration status in the UK. The team can be contacted by emailing internationalstudents@admin.cam.ac.uk.

On Arrival

Entry clearance (applications submitted overseas)

When you have received a successful decision on your visa application, you will be issued a 30 day entry permit in your passport. You must ensure that you enter the UK during this 30 day period. If the 30 days expire, you will need to apply for a new permit from overseas at additional cost.

You should arrive at Cambridge by the start date of your course, informing your Faculty or Department and College if you are going to be late. Your College and Department will advise as to whether you can arrive late. If you are unable to arrive in Cambridge by the latest date of enrolment, as stated on your CAS, and you are not permitted to start your course late, the University will need to withdraw visa sponsorship. This will result in your visa being curtailed.

You will need to collect your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) within 10 days of arriving in the UK and prior to commencing your course. The BRP is the documentary evidence of your Tier 4 visa and confirms your immigration permission in the UK. Further information for Cambridge students on collecting your BRP is available at www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk/collecting-your-visa-brp

Once you have collected your BRP, and before you start your studies, you will need to report to your College Tutorial Office and:

- present your original passport and BRP¹(for verifying and scanning into your student record);
- sign for your first registration, providing Full Term has started. You will need to return to make your first termly contact in the first week of term if you arrive earlier than this;
- provide your UK contact details – telephone number and residential address.

Leave to remain (applications submitted in the UK)

If you currently hold a Tier 4 visa for a different Tier 4 sponsor, you cannot use that visa to study at Cambridge. A Tier 4 visa allows you to study a particular course at one Tier 4 Sponsor only. If you hold a Tier 4 visa for another institution, you will need to make a new Tier 4 application for Cambridge inside the UK and can only start your course after you have presented either a new Tier 4 visa showing the University of Cambridge Tier 4 Sponsor Licence number or evidence that you have submitted an in-time application for a new Tier 4 visa for Cambridge (application cover sheet / postal receipt or UKVI biometrics invitation letter).

Before you start your studies, you will need to report to your College Tutorial Office and:

- present your original passport and BRP or evidence of having made a Tier 4 visa application for Cambridge¹ (for verifying and scanning into your student record);
- sign for your first registration, providing Full Term has started. You will need to return to make your first termly contact in the first week of term if you arrive earlier than this;
- provide your UK contact details – telephone number and residential address.

If you apply for further leave to remain inside the UK, your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) will be sent to you in the post. You can start your studies at your own risk based on evidence of applying for a new Tier 4 visa for Cambridge 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 is unsuccessful, you must notify the International Student Team immediately.

¹ Students on the ADTIS programme, preparatory economics course and MFin and MBA must present copies of passports and immigration documentation at their course induction.

Checking your visa

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

You will need to check you have been granted the correct length of leave based on the course end date in your CAS. You should receive:

- the length of the course plus four months for courses of twelve months or more;
- the length of the course plus two months for courses between six and twelve months long.

Students starting their studies in Michaelmas 2016 on Masters courses of 13 months or less are entitled to 6 additional months from the course end date as Cambridge is participating in a [Tier 4 Visa Pilot](#).

Your BRP should also confirm the following information:

- *Type of Permit*: T4 GENERAL 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 with the length of your visa, your name or personal details, please contact the International Student Team who will be able to advise you on having the visa corrected.

Keeping your BRP secure

You do not need to carry your BRP around with you in the UK and should keep it safe. You must take it with you if you travel overseas, as you will require it to re-enter the UK, and may need it if you travel by airplane within the UK. If you lose your BRP, you will need to apply for a replacement at an additional cost. The International Student Team can be contacted for further advice in these circumstances.

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).

New to the UK

For students new to the UK starting their studies in Michaelmas Term, police registration is available in the University Centre at the start of term on certain days but appointments must be [booked in advance](#). If you do not have an appointment for police registration at the University or you are starting in Lent or Easter term, you will need to book an appointment with the Parkside Police Station in Cambridge. You must book an appointment in advance by emailing OVRD@cambs.pnn.police.uk

To register you will need your passport, Biometric Residence Permit (BRP), 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, you will need to attend Parkside Police Station in Cambridge 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

You must also ensure that you update the police within seven days if you change address during your studies; extend your Tier 4 leave; renew your passport; get married; or if any of the other details on your Police Registration Certificate change.

Termly Registration and Contact Details

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

This means you must:

- report to 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;
- sign against your name, confirming that you are engaged with study and are abiding by the terms of your Tier 4 visa; and
- check that your contact details remain current and that you have informed your College of any changes to your immigration status.

If you fail to register as required, and do not have strong justification for requesting a deferred contact, the University must cease Tier 4 sponsorship and report this to the Home Office; this is in line with the University's Tier 4 compliance responsibilities.

If the University approves a period of study or research overseas during your course, you can continue to be sponsored under Tier 4 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 outside of Cambridge but within the UK during your course, you will be required to return in person to Cambridge for termly registration.

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.

If you are a **visiting student**, you must register with your host Faculty or Department 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.

Contact Details

You are required to keep your UK contact details up-to-date. 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.

The Home Office restricts the number of hours a student can work in the UK on a Tier 4 visa and the type of work that can be undertaken. It is very important you understand the working conditions on Tier 4 and check with the International Student Team if you are unsure prior to commencing any work.

University's working restrictions

The University imposes tighter restrictions on work and you are expected to abide by the University regulations:

- Undergraduate students and graduate students taking a course of 12 months or less are not expected to work during [term-time](#).
- Graduate research students (PhD and Master's level) on courses of more than 12 months may, with University permission, work ten hours per week in work related to studies or career. The University does not usually allow work outside of College or University.
- Visiting students are not expected to work.

You should adhere to the University restrictions on working during your studies.

Working restrictions on Tier 4

A Tier 4 visa allows you to work for up to 20 hours per week during term-time and full-time during official vacation periods. This includes paid and unpaid work. A 'week' is defined by the Home Office as any 7 day period and not as running from Monday to Sunday or from any other specific day. The University's restrictions are greater as outlined in the section above.

Term and vacation dates differ depending on your level of study:

- Undergraduate term and vacation dates are outlined at www.cam.ac.uk/about-the-university/term-dates-and-calendars
- Taught Masters students should consult with their Faculty or Department on vacation dates for their specific course. These are likely to be limited to short breaks between terms with continuous study during the summer until the end of the course.
- Graduate research students are expected to study full-time throughout the duration of their course. It is therefore not possible, for example, for a graduate research student to undertake full-time work during the summer period. Whilst breaks for holidays are permitted, at times agreed with your supervisor, these are not periods that would permit full-time work. A work placement or internship is only possible while being sponsored under Tier 4 where it will directly contribute to your research and is approved through the [Leave to Work Away](#) application procedures. The number of hours you can working after submission of your soft-bound thesis differs depending on what stage you are at in the examination process as outlined at www.internationalstudents.cam.ac.uk/studying/working-and-studying

There are also restrictions on the type of work that can be undertaken on a Tier 4 visa. You must not:

- be self-employed;
- engage in business activity;
- take a permanent full-time job;
- be employed as a professional sportsperson including as a sports coach;
- be employed as an entertainer;
- work as a doctor or dentist in training, unless you are on the foundation programme.

Self-employment

A Tier 4 visa does not allow you to be self-employed. Self-employment includes activities such as freelance writing, private tutoring or selling goods or services directly to an end customer. If tax will not be deducted automatically from your wages, it is likely the work being offered is on a self-employed basis.

This means in order to undertake work you should be given a formal document by the employer such as a 'contract of employment' or a 'worker's agreement' or some other written statement confirming your employment status. This includes where you will be undertaking work for one or more of the Colleges, or for the University. Please note you may find that other students (who are not on a Tier 4 visa) may not need to have the same documentation in place.

Engaging in Business Activity

A Tier 4 visa does not allow you to engage in business activity. The Home Office defines this as working for a business in a capacity other than an employee in which you have a financial or other significant beneficial interest. You would not be permitted, for example, to set up a business that is trading or has a trading presence, be employed by a company in which you hold shares of 10% or more or work for a company where you hold a statutory role, such as a director. This is not an exhaustive list but provides examples of the types of circumstance in which you would be considered to be engaged in business activity.

Course completion

Once you have completed your course until your visa remains valid, the Home Office allows you to work full-time but the restrictions on the type of work, as outlined above, continue to apply. For PhD students, course completion means receiving the official notification of unconditional approval of degree. For Masters and undergraduate students, course completion means the course end date as stated on your CAS as long as you have completed all required assessment by this date.

No recourse to public funds

On a Tier 4 visa you are not eligible to claim access to public funds, this includes local authority housing benefits and welfare benefits.

Changes of Circumstances

The following changes of circumstances are likely to have implications for your Tier 4 visa:

Changing your course

Your Tier 4 visa only permits you to change course if you fulfil all of the following requirements:

- the new course is at the same or a higher level as the course for which your visa was granted;
- the course can be completed within the existing validity of your current visa;
- if you have previously studied in the UK, the new course fulfils Tier 4 academic progression requirements.

If the University approves a change of course, and the new course meets the conditions outlined above, this will be reported to the Home Office. If the new course is shorter than the original one, you must also inform the Home Office by e-mailing [MigrantReporting@Home Office.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:MigrantReporting@HomeOffice.gsi.gov.uk)

If your new course is at a lower level or your visa expires prior to the new course completion date, you will need to apply for a new visa for the new course from outside the UK. You will not be able to change courses until you have obtained the new visa. Tier 4 academic progression rules do not permit you to apply for the visa for the new course from inside the UK so you will need to return overseas to apply for this.

ATAS

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. 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 start a new course that requires ATAS clearance.

Deferring your studies (intermission)

A deferral of studies or a period of intermission is likely to have significant implications for a Tier 4 visa.

Undergraduate and taught graduate students

An undergraduate student who makes a successful application to the Applications Committee for a deferral in study is normally given leave for a complete academic year. On approval of this deferral (disregarding of terms) the University is required to cease Tier 4 sponsorship and report the change in circumstances to the Home Office. The student's visa will subsequently be curtailed to sixty days within which time the student must leave the UK. Once return to study has been approved by the Applications Committee, the University is able to issue the student with a new CAS in order to make a fresh visa application from overseas to cover the remainder of the course.

Graduate research students

For graduate research students, the implications of intermission, medical or non-medical, on a Tier 4 visa will depend on the length of time the intermission has been approved for:

- If an intermission is granted for more than sixty days, the University is required to cease Tier 4 sponsorship and report the change of circumstances to the Home Office. The Home Office will subsequently curtail the visa to sixty days within which time the student must leave the UK. The University will be able to re-sponsor and issue a new CAS to support a fresh visa application to return to studies at the end of the intermission period, subject to approval of return if required.
- For a period of intermission of sixty days, the University is able to continue sponsorship for a Tier 4 visa providing the student can still complete their course within the validity of their existing visa. If the sponsored student does not return to studies after this intermission, the University is required to cease sponsorship in line with the above.
- In exceptional circumstances, such as serious illness or injury, Tier 4 sponsorship can be continued for an intermission providing the student can still complete their course within their existing visa expiry. The maximum period of continued sponsorship would be four months. This must be justified and occurrences are rare. Any previous intermission will be taken into account when considering whether Tier 4 sponsorship can be continued.

Discontinuing studies

If you intend to discontinue your studies at Cambridge, you must inform your College/Department of the date when you will cease your studies and follow the formal application process to have this withdrawal from the University approved. The University is required to report this change in circumstances to the Home Office. The Home Office will subsequently curtail your visa to 60 days within which time you will be required to leave the UK or apply for a new visa.

Additional time required

The University expects you to complete your course according to the date provided in your CAS. If you are approved to have more time to complete your studies and are unable to complete within the validity of your visa, whether you can apply to extend your visa in the UK depends on your level of study:

- A PhD student can extend their Tier 4 visa in the UK. You will be required to make a new Tier 4 visa application prior to your current visa expiring. Contact the International Student Team at least three months ahead of your visa expiring. You will need to provide evidence – in the form of the application coversheet / postal receipt or UKVI biometrics invitation letter - that you have submitted your new visa application. This should be provided to your College and you will need to keep them updated with the progress of the application.
- A student studying an undergraduate or Masters course would be required to apply for a new visa from outside the UK, in their country of residence, as they would not meet Tier 4 academic progression requirements.

You will need to provide your new visa to your College for verifying and scanning to your student record.

Change of immigration status

If you switch to another visa category, you must notify your College within seven working days of the change. The University must report this change to the Home Office.

Change of sponsor

If you wish to change to another education provider you must receive a CAS from that institution and make a new Tier 4 application before starting your studies with them. Depending on the circumstances, you may need to return to your home country to make this application. The University must report this change to the Home Office.

Reporting other changes of circumstance to the Home Office

You should update the Home Office of a change in address by using an online form:

<https://eforms.homeoffice.gov.uk/outreach/AddressUpdate.ofml>

If you have a BRP you are required to apply for a new BRP in the following circumstances:

- Change of name, e.g. if you have got married
- Change of nationality
- Change of gender
- Change of appearance

If you have a visa vignette in your passport, you will need to update the Home Office on these changes using the change of circumstances form: www.gov.uk/change-circumstances-visa-brp/youre-in-the-uk-and-dont-have-a-brp

Whether you have a BRP or visa in your passport, you are required to report the following changes to the Home Office using the change of circumstances form: www.gov.uk/change-circumstances-visa-brp

- Criminal convictions
- Passport number
- Dependants' details, for example if the relationship breaks down

Completing your studies

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

Completing early

If you complete your course earlier than stated on your CAS, the University is required to report this to the Home Office. The Home Office will curtail your leave to remain in the UK to the normal entitlement period following a course end date, i.e. four months for courses twelve months or longer and two months for courses less than twelve months. If you leave the UK after your visa has been curtailed, you may not be permitted re-entry to the UK on your Tier 4 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 Tier 4 to visitor status automatically from within the UK. You would need to leave the UK and 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 this on any future visa application 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

Continuing to a further degree at Cambridge

In line with Tier 4 policy, students continuing to a further course at Cambridge, having successfully completed one course, must apply for a new Tier 4 visa within six weeks of your new course start date or before your leave expires, whichever is earlier. If you start your course after 1 November 2016, you will need to make a new visa application prior to starting your next course even if your current Tier 4 visa is valid after this date.

If you are in the UK on Tier 4, you can only apply to extend your visa from inside the UK if you have obtained the qualification for which your current immigration permission was granted. If you have not obtained the qualification, you will need to apply for your new visa from outside the UK.

You are required to provide evidence which confirms you have submitted your new visa application. This should be presented to your College and would include your application cover sheet / postal receipt or UKVI biometrics invitation letter.

You can only submit your application inside the UK if your new course start date is less than 28 days after your current visa expiry date. For instance, if your visa for your Master's course ends on 30 August, and you are starting a PhD which begins on 1 October, this gap exceeds 28 days and you will need to submit your new visa application in your home country.

Protecting your immigration status: Checklist

This checklist summarises what you need to do to adhere to the University's Tier 4 sponsor licence responsibilities, your Tier 4 conditions and other considerations. The page number refers to where in this guidance you can find further information.

Adhere to Tier 4 sponsorship responsibilities	Page
Enrol by the course dates specified in your CAS.	2
Before starting your studies, present your passport and visa to your College.	2
Check your visa and contact the International Student Team if there are any errors as they will need to be corrected.	3
Keep your UK contact details in CamSIS self-service or with your College up-to-date. This includes a telephone number and email address.	4
Continually engage in your studies and re-register with College within seven days of the start of each Full Term for the duration of your course.	4
Check with the International Student Team how changes to your studies may have implications for your visa.	6 - 8
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 Team to discuss your options.	8
Inform your College if you are switching out of Tier 4 and present your new immigration documents.	8
Adhere to your Tier 4 conditions	
If required, register with the police and notify them of any changes (e.g. change of address).	3
Only work within the conditions set by the Home Office for a Tier 4 visa, and the greater restrictions set by the University.	5 - 6

Do not attempt to apply for 'public funds', including welfare and local authority housing benefits.	6
Report any relevant changes of circumstance to the Home Office.	8 - 9
If you hold a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) apply and pay for a new BRP if your personal details change. Such changes include name and nationality.	8
Apply for a replacement if your BRP or visa in your passport is lost or stolen.	3
Make sure you leave the UK prior to your visa expiring unless you obtain further valid leave.	9