

Tier 4 (General) Student Visa: LFS Process for Students

1. Introduction

If you are an international (non-EEA) student coming to the UK for a full-time degree course lasting six months or more, you will need a Tier 4 (General) Student Visa.

The UK Government requires international students to be sponsored by a licensed sponsor such as the London Film School.

Once you have received an unconditional offer, we will contact you about the requirements and steps that need to be completed before we can issue a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) which you will need in order to apply for your Student Visa.

Applicants should note that we have a limited number of CASs available each year. CASs are tentatively allocated to applicants with an unconditional offer on a first-come-first-served basis and firmly allocated to applicants who met the deadlines stated in the offer letter and the requirements outlined in this document.

Please note that this document is not a substitute for the documentation and guidance provided by UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI).

2. Associated Websites and Documents

- Tier 4 (General) student visa
<https://www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa/overview>
- Guidance on application for UK visa as Tier 4 student
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-application-for-uk-visa-as-tier-4-student>
- Application for UK visa under Tier 4 (General): form VAF9 Appendix 8
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/application-for-uk-visa-under-tier-4-general-form-vaf9-appendix-8>
- Immigration Rules Appendix H: Tier 4 documentary requirements
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules/immigration-rules-appendix-h-tier-4-documentary-requirements>

Other important documents are linked to from within the aforementioned documents.

3. Before We Issue Your CAS

3.1. General Stipulations

Before we issue your CAS, we require proof that you are eligible to apply for a Tier 4 (General) Student Visa.

Broadly speaking, UKVI states that you can apply for a Student Visa if:

- You're 16 or over;
- Have been offered a place on a course;
- Can speak, read, write and understand English;
- Have enough money to support yourself and pay for your course - this will vary depending on your circumstances;
- Are from a country that's not in the European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland;
- Meet the other eligibility requirements.

3.2. Other Stipulations

- The time a student can spend studying at degree level or above is limited to five years. If you have previously completed a degree in the UK or are currently enrolled in a degree programme in the UK, we will need to confirm whether you are eligible for a Tier 4 that covers the entire length of the course you applied for;
- International students will not be sent a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) which is necessary to apply for a visa, until they have received and accepted their unconditional offer and paid their deposit;
- Applications for a Tier 4 visa for anyone wanting to study at the London Film School will have to be made from outside the UK;

Please note, we will ask for your consent to request the following information from the Home Office/UK Visas and Immigration:

- Application updates (leave to enter and leave to remain);
- Biometric Enrolment Letter (BEL) queries – if the applicant has not received the letter or if it is delayed (These should be rare now that the letter is printed by the applicant);
- Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) queries – for example delays in receipt of the card;
- Curtailment – to check if leave has been curtailed following a withdrawal of sponsorship;
- Student immigration history check – to request the full immigration history of a prospective student.

Please ensure you check UKVI's website for more detailed and up-to-date information: <https://www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa/overview>

3.3. Knowledge of English

UK Visas and Immigration, part of the Home Office, requires the London Film School (LFS) to check if an applicant's English language ability is at CEFR level B2. Please note that LFS will be unable to assign a CAS until applicants have provided evidence of one of the following:

- That they are from a majority English-speaking country (click here for an up-to-date list of countries); or
- That they have completed an academic qualification at least equivalent to a UK Bachelors degree taught in a majority English-speaking country; or
- That they have passed an English language test from the list of approved tests for Tier 4 that is still within its validity date, and has achieved at least CEFR level B2 in all four components (reading, writing, speaking and listening) unless exempted from sitting a component by a test provider on the basis of your disability. A list of approved tests and providers can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-applying-for-uk-visa-approved-english-language-tests>

Applicants should note that only 'IELTS for UKVI', a government approved Secure English Language Test (SELT), can be used in support of a visa application. More information can be found here: <http://takeielts.britishcouncil.org/ielts-ukvi/what-ielts-ukvi>

Most applicants would be expected to provide proof of proficiency in English in the form an IELTS Test Report with an overall score of 6.0 and a minimum of 5.5 in each component.

3.4. Money You Will Need

UK Visas and Immigration requires you to have a minimum level of funds to cover both your course fees and living costs.

You will need to prove that you have:

- Enough money to pay for your course fees for the first year of your course (the details can be found below in sections 3.4.1 and 3.4.2); and
- £1,265 per month for living costs (up to a maximum of 9 months), i.e. a total of £11,385.
- Since the London Film School does not offer accommodation, none of this money (“living costs”) should be paid to us in advance.

In your self-assessment form, you will need to include the fees for the first year of the course. Those are included in our offer letter and it is important that you use the exact amount in your form. Before we can issue you CAS, you are required to pay the first term’s fees as per the offer letter. This should also be included in your self-assessment form.

You must be able to demonstrate that you have had the total amount, minus any money already paid to us, in your bank account for 28 consecutive days ending no more than 1 month prior to the date of your application.

You may be able to use your parents or legal guardian’s bank account to demonstrate that you meet this requirement, but additional documentation will be required.

If you are in receipt of financial sponsorship, you can provide an official headed letter of confirmation bearing the organisation's official stamp as evidence of money you have. Please note that there are restrictions on what organisations can be considered official sponsors.

You should also note that rules may vary depending on your nationality as outlined in UKVI’s Tier 4 guidance.

Please check the Tier 4 Sponsor Guidance carefully for more detailed information. This includes information on Official Financial Sponsorship and its impact on your application.

3.4.1. Minimum Level of Funds: MA Filmmaking

You will need to prove that you have the following:

1 st Year Tuition Fees, MA Filmmaking	£	27,896.00
Living Costs, 9 months	£	11,385.00
Minus Deposit	£	9,632.00
Total	£	29,649.00

3.4.2. Minimum Level of Funds: MA Screenwriting

You will need to prove that you have the following:

1 st Year Tuition Fees, MA Screenwriting	£	14,041.00
Living Costs, 9 months	£	11,385.00
Minus Deposit	£	5,013.67
Total	£	20,412.33

4. LFS Document Check

Prior to issuing a CAS, a member of staff from the London Film School will check key documents needed for your Tier 4 visa application.

This includes:

- Proof of funding (see section 0)
- Please note that we will request proof in the same format as required by UKVI.
- A tuberculosis test if you are a resident in any of the listed countries (<https://www.gov.uk/tb-test-visa/overview>)
- Certified copies of your education certificates

Any documents which are not in English must be accompanied by full translations as per UK Visas and Immigration guidance:

“The original translation must contain confirmation from the translator/translation company that it is an accurate translation of the original document, the date of the translation, the translator/an authorised official of the translation company’s full name and signature, and the translator/translation company’s contact details.”

5. Overseas Currencies

As per UKVI’s guidance, you are expected to show your closing balance in Pounds Sterling. For any currency conversions, UKVI will use the official exchange rate OANDA website, which can be found at www.oanda.com/convert/classic. We will conduct our checks using the same website.

6. Version Control

Version Number	Changes	Author, Title	Date
0.1	-	Philip Ramge, Academic Registrar	08/06/2015
0.2	Comments from Shirley Streete-Bharath, Head of Operations added; Associated Documents added; details on overseas currencies added;	Philip Ramge, Academic Registrar	23/06/2015
1.0	Approved by Academic Registrar	Philip Ramge, Academic Registrar	23/06/2015
1.1	Section 3.3: maintenance funds requirements updated	Philip Ramge, Academic Registrar	08/01/2016
1.2	Section 3.2: expanded details on SELT requirements	Philip Ramge, Academic Registrar	13/09/2016
1.3	Section 1: statement about CAS allocation added Section 3.3: statement about parent legal guardian's bank account added Minor corrections	Philip Ramge, Academic Registrar	04/10/2017
1.4	Section 3.2 added; section 3.4 updated to reflect the latest LFS Tuition Fees Policy; section 6 (Reference Points) removed	Philip Ramge, Academic Registrar	08/03/2018