



# 2020/21 TIER 4 GUIDANCE FOR APPLICANTS: FOUNDATION, EXPERIMENTAL & DIPLOMA COVID-19 UPDATE

## IMPORTANT NOTICE

The information found in this version is to be used from **8 July 2020**.

UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI) have introduced a number of policy changes and concessions for visa holders in response to the exceptional circumstances around COVID-19. These measures are under constant review and the government is releasing updated guidance regularly as the situation evolves.

The AA's Compliance Team is continuing to monitor all UKVI updates and review existing CAS processes to ensure that applicants face as few obstacles as possible when preparing to apply for their Tier 4 (General) Student visa.

This guidance document has been updated to include these changes. **COVID-19 related updates will appear throughout the document in a grey box like this.**

### Rules in place in the UK to reduce the spread of COVID-19

On 23 March 2020, the UK government imposed strict measures to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in the UK. You can bookmark the following page to keep up to date on what measures are currently in place in the UK: <https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

## USEFUL CONTACTS

- **AA School Admissions Team**  
Email: [admissions@aschool.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@aschool.ac.uk) or contact your Admissions Coordinator directly.
- **AA School Compliance Team**  
Email: [compliance@aschool.ac.uk](mailto:compliance@aschool.ac.uk)
- **UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA)**  
[Advice for international students coming to the UK](#)
- **UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI)**  
[Contact Information](#) if you have a question about a pending visa application. Please note there is a charge to contact the UKVI by phone or email.
- **UKVI Coronavirus Immigration Help Centre**  
[Contact Information](#) if you have an immigration query related to coronavirus.

# CONTENTS

Click on any section below to be taken to the relevant page:

<b>USEFUL CONTACTS</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION &amp; FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS</b> .....	<b>4</b>
1. What is a Tier 4 (General) visa? .....	4
2. What if I hold a European Union (EU) / European Economic Area (EEA) / Swiss passport? .....	4
3. Am I eligible for a Tier 4 visa? .....	4
4. What is a CAS and when will I receive mine?.....	4
5. When should I plan to arrive in the UK? .....	5
6. When should I apply for my Tier 4 visa? .....	5
7. Where can I apply for my Tier 4 visa?.....	6
8. I already have a Tier 4 visa from my previous institution. Do I need a new CAS / Tier 4 Visa?.....	7
9. I won't get my A Level results until August, will this be a problem?.....	7
10. Should I renew my passport before I apply?.....	8
11. How long will it take for my Tier 4 visa application to be processed? .....	8
12. How much will the Tier 4 (General) visa cost?.....	9
13. Do I need to attend an appointment as part of the visa application process? .....	11
14. What are 'differentiation arrangements'? Am I eligible for them? .....	12
15. What supporting documents do I need? .....	12
16. How much money do I need? .....	12
17. Can I bring my dependants? .....	12
18. What do I do if I have an official financial sponsor?.....	13
19. What do I do if my spouse/partner is funding me?.....	13
20. What do I do if my parents are funding me .....	13
21. Do I need a Police Registration Certificate? .....	13
22. Do I need a Tuberculosis (TB) Test Certificate?.....	14
23. Do I need an ATAS certificate?.....	14
24. What is an Exit Check and do I need one?.....	14
25. Do I need to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS)? .....	14
26. What is a credibility interview? .....	15
27. How can I prepare for the interview? .....	15
28. What happens if I cannot attend the biometric appointment or interview? .....	15
29. I've received my visa. What should I do now? .....	15
30. What happens if my visa application is refused? .....	16
31. Will I need to go somewhere to collect my Biometric Residence Permit (BRP)? .....	16
32. How long will my Tier 4 visa last? .....	17
33. What do I need to do at the border when I arrive in the UK?.....	17
34. What do I do if there is an error on my temporary entry vignette?.....	18
35. What do I do if there is an error on my BRP? .....	18
36. What immigration documents do I need to bring to Registration? .....	18
37. Can I work in the UK? .....	19
38. I have read this Tier 4 Guidance document and I am ready to apply. How do I start my application?.....	19

<b>SECTION 2: WHAT DOCUMENTS DO I NEED TO PROVIDE TO OBTAIN A CAS? .....</b>	<b>20</b>
UNCONDITIONAL OFFER & ADMISSIONS FORM .....	20
MAINTENANCE .....	20
Money that can be used .....	20
Money that can NOT be used .....	20
Tuition Fees ('Course fees') & Deposits .....	21
Living Costs.....	21
Accommodation Fees.....	22
Currency Conversions.....	22
Maintenance Calculator.....	22
SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS .....	23
Acceptable types of documents for financial evidence .....	23
Qualifications.....	25
English Language Evidence.....	26
Document requirements for 'Low risk' or 'differentiation arrangement' nationals .....	26
Translations.....	27
Tuberculosis (TB) Test Certificate .....	27
Applicants aged under 18: Parental Consent Letter.....	27
HOW TO READ YOUR CAS.....	28



## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION & FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. What is a Tier 4 (General) visa?

If you are a citizen of a country that is not in the EU, EEA or Switzerland, a Tier 4 (General) visa gives you permission to study in the UK on a course that lasts longer than 6 months and/or involves a work placement.

This document is a summary of Home Office's [Tier 4 Policy Guidance](#) and **should be used as a guide only**. The Tier 4 Policy Guidance includes full details of all the requirements for making an application, and the responsibilities you will have as a Tier 4 visa holder, so it is important that you familiarise yourself with it as soon as possible.

### 2. What if I hold a European Union (EU) / European Economic Area (EEA) / Swiss passport?

[EU / EEA](#) / Swiss passport holders are currently not required to hold a Tier 4 visa in order to study in the UK **but** please bear in mind that you must enter the UK on this passport. It should preferably be valid for at least the first six months of your course.

The UK left the European Union in January 2020, but EU, EEA and Swiss citizens can apply to the EU Settlement Scheme for [either settled or pre-settled status](#) to continue living and studying in the UK after 30 June 2021.

### 3. Am I eligible for a Tier 4 visa?

In order to be eligible for the Tier 4 visa, you must:

- ✓ have a **unique CAS (Confirmation of Acceptance for Study) number** assigned to you by the AA
- ✓ have **enough money** to support yourself while you are in London; this is also known as "maintenance"
- ✓ be able to **speak, read, write and understand English** to a required level
- ✓ **have acceptable supporting documents** that meet the criteria set out in the Tier 4 Policy Guidance

Please see **Section 2: [What documents do I need to provide to obtain a CAS?](#)** for more information on each of these requirements.

### 4. What is a CAS and when will I receive mine?

Your Tier 4 Sponsor will be the Architectural Association School of Architecture (AA). In order to sponsor your Tier 4 visa, the AA submits an electronic form to the UKVI with details of your passport, course and fees. In return, we receive a unique 'Confirmation of Acceptance to Study' (CAS) number for you. You cannot complete your Tier 4 visa application without entering your unique CAS number.

When you have submitted everything listed in **Section 2: [What documents do I need to provide to obtain a CAS?](#)**, we will send you your CAS as an attachment in an email.

#### COVID-19 UPDATE

##### ***For those applying from OUTSIDE of the UK:***

The UKVI has indicated that CASs should only be assigned to overseas applicants when in-person course delivery is ready to resume. At present, the AA hopes to return to in-person course delivery in Term 2, but this will be contingent on a number of safety factors.

We appreciate that some students may need to arrive in the UK earlier than this (e.g. because it is not possible for them to study online from home). Therefore, in order to remain compliant in our duties to the UKVI and to facilitate an earlier arrival for those who need it, the AA will be taking a more bespoke approach to the CAS and visa process for 2020/21 applicants.

When you become eligible for a CAS (i.e. when you have met all of the conditions of your offer and paid your deposit), we will ask you to submit your supporting documents (please see **Section 2**). We will assess your circumstances and assign your CAS when you are able to complete the visa application process in your home country and travel to the UK with relative safety and ease. Note: it is likely that travel restrictions will be eased and visa application centres will be reopened at different times around the world, so this will be taken into consideration. All applicants will be guided throughout the process so they are aware of when they can expect a CAS based on their circumstances.

**For those applying from WITHIN the UK:**

As in normal circumstances, you must meet all the conditions of your AA offer and provide evidence that you meet the Tier 4 eligibility requirements before a CAS can be assigned to you.

You will be required to submit your Tier 4 application prior to the start of term – 21 September 2020. Please see more information on the expected timeline in FAQ *When should I apply for my Tier 4 visa?* All applicants will be guided throughout the process so they are aware of when they can expect a CAS based on their circumstances.

**5. When should I plan to arrive in the UK?**

Tier 4 visa holders must arrive within the validity dates of their 30 day temporary entry visa (the vignette in the passport). The earliest date you are permitted to arrive in the UK is on the 'valid from' date of your Tier 4 entry visa. This will be no more than one month prior to the course start date listed on your CAS. If you arrive earlier than this, you will not have the correct immigration permission to study in the UK (even if course delivery is still online).

If you are unable to arrive in the UK by the last day of validity (the 'valid to' date), you will need to request a replacement temporary entry visa. Please see COVID-19 Update below as the process for this has changed.

**COVID-19 UPDATE**

The AA advises applicants not to book any flights to the UK at this time. Term 1 will be delivered online, so those who are overseas will not require a Tier 4 visa in order to commence online studies in September. Each applicant's circumstances will be assessed during the CAS process to determine the most suitable time for their CAS to be assigned.

We recommend that you check your government's travel restrictions and advice regarding travelling to the UK regularly. The [Foreign & Commonwealth Office](#) (FCO) is the official source of information for the UK government's current travel advice to its citizens.

For up to date advice on how to find (and when to book) accommodation in London, please check the [University of London Housing Services](#) (ULHS) website. AA offer holders can also book an [appointment for advice](#). You will just need to provide ULHS with a copy of your offer from the AA when making your appointment.

**Replacing a temporary 30-day entry visa**

If your 30 day visa to travel to the UK has expired, or is about to expire, you can request a replacement visa with revised validity dates free of charge until the end of 2020.

Please inform [compliance@aschool.ac.uk](mailto:compliance@aschool.ac.uk) if you need to request a replacement so we can advise you on the process (current advice is subject to change). At present, applicants are being advised to contact the [Coronavirus Immigration Help Centre](#) to request a replacement. Replacement visas will be valid for 90 days and you will not be penalised for being unable collect your BRP while coronavirus measures are in place.

**6. When should I apply for my Tier 4 visa?**

You should begin your application **as soon as possible** after you receive your CAS number, e.g. within a week. The visa application process can often take several weeks to complete.

**COVID-19 UPDATE**

**For those applying from OUTSIDE of the UK:**

As Term 1 of the 2020/21 academic year will commence online, applicants who are overseas will not be required to obtain a Tier 4 visa before registering and commencing online studies. This arrangement can continue for as long as course delivery is online – and the student remains outside the UK. Important: Before travelling to the UK (even if course delivery is still online), it is essential that all applicants obtain the correct immigration permission needed to study. Each applicant's circumstances will be assessed during the CAS process to determine the most suitable time for their CAS to be assigned.

**For those applying from WITHIN the UK:**

Ordinarily, in order to be eligible to apply within the UK to extend your Tier 4 leave, there must be no more than 28 days between your visa expiry date and the start of the new course. The UKVI have announced a temporary concession that they will 'exercise discretion' on this 28-day requirement for those with a visa expiring on or before 31 July 2020. However, this concession is under review and may be extended. The AA will continue to monitor updates to the visa rules and advise applicants based on their circumstances.

**7. Where can I apply for my Tier 4 visa?**

This depends on a number of factors. Only those with certain types of valid UK immigration permission are permitted to apply for their new Tier 4 visa from within the UK. Please see which of the following categories applies to you:

<p><i>I currently hold a valid Tier 4 (General) visa that is sponsored by the AA School</i></p>	<p>You <b>may be able</b> to apply from within the UK, as long as you meet the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Your new course is at a higher level than your previous course (e.g. Bachelors to Masters, etc.); OR</li><li>○ Your new course is at the same level as your previous course (e.g. Masters to Masters, etc.) and <b>academic progression</b> can be justified; AND</li><li>○ There are no more than 28 days between the expiry date of your current visa and the start date of the new course; AND</li><li>○ You are able to submit an application for your new Tier 4 visa:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ before your current visa expires; and</li><li>▪ after you have completed your previous course; and</li><li>▪ before your new course begins (the earliest date you can apply is 3 months before the new course's start date)</li></ul></li></ul> <p>If you do not meet all of these conditions, please read '<i>None of these categories apply to me</i>' below.</p>
<p><i>I currently hold a valid Tier 4 (General) visa that is NOT sponsored by the AA School</i></p>	<p>You <b>may be able</b> to apply from within the UK, as long as you meet the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Your new course is at a higher level than your previous course (e.g. A-Levels to Bachelors, or Bachelors to Masters, etc.); OR</li><li>○ Your new course is at the same level as your previous course (e.g. Masters to Masters, etc.) and <b>academic progression</b> can be justified; AND</li><li>○ There are no more than 28 days between the expiry date of your current visa and the start date of the new course; AND</li><li>○ Your current Tier 4 Sponsor is one of the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ an Higher Education Provider (HEP) with a track record of compliance;</li><li>▪ an overseas Higher Education Institution (HEI);</li><li>▪ an embedded college offering pathway courses; or</li><li>▪ an independent school.</li></ul>If you aren't sure whether your current Tier 4 Sponsor is one of these, please contact <a href="mailto:compliance@aschool.ac.uk">compliance@aschool.ac.uk</a> so we can check for you.</li><li>○ You are able to submit an application for your new Tier 4 visa:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ before your current visa expires; and</li><li>▪ after you have successfully completed your previous course (i.e. achieved the qualification); and</li><li>▪ before your new course begins (the earliest date you can apply is 3 months before the new course's start date)</li></ul></li></ul> <p>If you do not meet all of these conditions, please read '<i>None of these categories apply to me</i>' below</p>

**Table continued on next page**

<b>Table continued:</b>	
<b><i>I currently hold a valid Tier 2 (General) / Tier 2 (Intra-company transfer) / Tier 2 (Minister of religion) / Tier 4 (Child) visa</i></b>	<p>You <b>may be able</b> to apply from within the UK, as long as you meet <b>ALL</b> of the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ There are no more than 28 days between the expiry date of your current visa and the start date of the new course; AND</li> <li>○ You are able to submit an application for your Tier 4 visa: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ before your current visa expires; and</li> <li>▪ before your course begins (the earliest date you can apply is 3 months before the course start date)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>If you do not meet all of these conditions, please read '<i>None of these categories apply to me</i>' below.</p>
<b><i>I do not currently hold a valid UK visa</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ You <b>must</b> make your application from <b>your home country or the country where you are living</b>. In this context, "living" means somewhere where you are residing lawfully for a reason other than a short-term visit.</li> <li>○ You <b>cannot</b> make your application from within a <b>country you are visiting</b>. If you are currently travelling, you must first return home to make your Tier 4 application, before travelling to the UK.</li> <li>○ You <b>cannot</b> apply for a Tier 4 visa from <b>within the UK</b>. This is because you are applying for Tier 4 "entry clearance" meaning that you are asking for permission to "enter" the UK as a Tier 4 student. This also means that you cannot enter the UK as a tourist or "visitor", as you will not have the necessary permission to begin your course.</li> </ul>
<b><i>None of these categories apply to me</i></b>	<p>If you hold a UK visa in any other category than those listed above, you will not be eligible to 'switch' to the Tier 4 (General) visa from within the UK. You will be required to follow the same instructions as '<i>I do not currently hold a valid UK visa</i>' above.</p>
<b>COVID-19 UPDATE</b>	<p>The UKVI has temporary concessions in place for those who cannot leave the UK due to circumstances related to COVID-19.</p> <p>If you are currently in the UK on a visa that is not listed above, or your Tier 4 or Tier 2 visa will expire more than 28 days before the start of the new course, please contact <a href="mailto:compliance@aschool.ac.uk">compliance@aschool.ac.uk</a> for advice on whether you can make an in-country application.</p>

#### **8. I already have a Tier 4 visa from my previous institution. Do I need a new CAS / Tier 4 Visa?**

**Yes.** Tier 4 visas are only valid when you're studying at the institution that assigned your CAS and sponsored your visa. If you are joining the AA from another UK Tier 4 sponsor institution, you will be required to apply for a new Tier 4 visa. Please see FAQ: *Where can I apply for my Tier 4 visa?* for information on where you can submit your application.

**COVID-19 UPDATE**

***For those applying from OUTSIDE of the UK:***  
You will need to submit your new Tier 4 visa application prior to arriving in the UK.

***For those applying from WITHIN the UK:***  
You will need to submit your new Tier 4 visa application prior to registering and commencing online studies in Term 1.

#### **9. I won't get my A Level results until August, will this be a problem?**

We cannot issue your CAS before we receive your A Level results. If you are taking your A Levels exams in the UK in the 2019/20 academic year, you will receive your results on **Thursday, 13 August 2020**.

Therefore, we recommend you prepare all of the other documents required for obtaining the CAS (including financial evidence) as early as possible. We recommend that applicants submit all other CAS documents to the AA around two weeks before A Level Results day so that the CAS can be prepared in advance.

Please see Section 2: **What documents do I need to provide to obtain a CAS?** > [Supporting Documents](#) for information about what you need to do in advance to ensure the AA receives your results as quickly as possible.

**COVID-19 UPDATE**

If the date of your A-Level exams or results are affected by COVID-19, please get in touch with your Admissions Coordinator to let them know as soon as possible. You may need to ask your school to provide written confirmation of a change of arrangements / date of results, etc. Your Admissions Coordinator will guide you on the next steps.

**10. Should I renew my passport before I apply?**

Ideally, your passport should be valid for at least the first 6 months of your Tier 4 visa. If your passport is due to expire, you should renew it before you receive your CAS.

**Please note:** Please let us know immediately if you have renewed or are going to renew your passport after your CAS has been issued. Your passport number is an important detail on your CAS and we will need to amend it if you have a new passport. Your visa application may be refused if your CAS has a different passport number than the one you submit with your application.

**11. How long will it take for my Tier 4 visa application to be processed?**

For those applying from OUTSIDE of the UK:	For those applying from WITHIN the UK:
<p>Once you have attended your biometric appointment, a decision will usually be made within the following timescales:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standard application processing service (included in application fee): 15 working days</li> <li>• Priority application processing service (<a href="#">additional cost varies by country</a>): 5 working days</li> <li>• Super Priority / Premium application processing service (<a href="#">additional cost varies by country</a>): 1-2 working days</li> </ul> <p>Bear in mind that, after you have received a decision, you will need to wait for the visa vignette to be printed and your passport to be returned to you.</p>	<p>Once you have attended your biometric appointment, a decision will usually be made within the following timescales:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standard application processing service (included in application fee): 8 weeks</li> <li>• Priority application processing service (application fee plus £500): 5 working days</li> <li>• Super Priority application processing service (application fee plus £800): 1-2 working days</li> </ul> <p>Bear in mind that, after you have received a decision, you will need to wait for the BRP to be printed and sent to you.</p>
<p><b>COVID-19 UPDATE</b></p> <p>Some Visa Application Centres (VACs) are beginning a phased reopening from June 2020, subject to local restrictions. For updates to the status of VACs in your country, contact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">TLS contact</a> if you're in Europe, Africa and parts of the Middle East</li> <li>• <a href="#">VFS global</a> for all other countries</li> </ul> <p>Ongoing global restrictions mean some UKVI services will remain closed. Where services are resuming, applicants with pending appointments will be prioritised. <b>It is likely that some priority services will not be available and processing times will be significantly impacted.</b></p>	<p><b>COVID-19 UPDATE</b></p> <p>UKVCAS Centres in the UK are beginning a phased reopening from June 2020, but severe delays are expected as the backlog of application is dealt with. For up-to-date information on appointments, please see the <a href="#">UKVCAS website</a>.</p> <p><b>It is likely that some priority services will not be available and processing times will be significantly impacted.</b></p>



## 12. How much will the Tier 4 (General) visa cost?

This will depend on several factors. Please see the following tables:

*Note: This pricing information is correct as of July 2020*

	For those applying from OUTSIDE of the UK:	For those applying from WITHIN the UK:
<b>Application fee</b>	£348 GBP  To find the fee in your local currency, please see the <a href="#">UKVI visa fee list</a>	£475 GBP
<b>Expedited Processing Services</b>	The application fee above covers the <a href="#">standard processing times</a> , but expedited services are also offered in most countries, if you wish to use them.  Please check the <a href="#">application process</a> in your home country for details of the services offered there.	The application fee above covers the standard processing time (8 weeks), but expedited services are also offered if you wish to use them.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Priority application processing service (5 working days): Application fee plus £500 GBP</li> <li>• Super Priority application processing service (1-2 working days): Application fee plus £800 GBP</li> </ul>
<b>COVID-19 UPDATE</b> As services recommence, it is likely that some priority services will not be available. When you complete your online visa application, the service options available at that time should be displayed to you at the payment stage.		
<b>Biometric Enrolment</b>	Your biometric enrolment fee will be included in the cost of whichever application processing service you choose.	£19.20 GBP, paid as part of your visa application.
<b>Appointment</b>	Your appointment fee is usually included in the cost of whichever application processing service you choose, but some Visa Application Centres (VACs) offer walk-in appointments at an additional cost.  Please check the <a href="#">application process</a> in your home country for details of the services offered there.  Make sure you also factor in the cost of travel to / from your appointment.	Free appointment slots should be available at one of the <b>6 'core' service points</b> located in Croydon (closest to the AA), Belfast, Birmingham, Cardiff, Glasgow and Manchester.  However, if you wish to make an appointment at one of the <b>50 'enhanced' or 'premium' service points</b> , or you wish to have a next day / same day / out of hours appointment, you will need to pay an <a href="#">additional fee</a> .  <b>See COVID-19 note in FAQ: <i>Do I need to attend an appointment as part of the visa application process?</i> below</b>
<b>Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS)</b>	If the total length of your course is longer than 6 months, you will be required to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) as part of your visa application.  Students are currently required to <b>pay £300 per year</b> of their visa at the point of application. More information on the IHS can be found <a href="#">here</a> .	

<i>Table continued:</i>	For those applying from OUTSIDE of the UK:	For those applying from WITHIN the UK:
<b>Maintenance</b>	<p>You must be able to provide financial evidence that you have enough money to cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the <b>full tuition fee</b> for the first year of your course; PLUS</li> <li>• at least <b>£1,265 per month</b> of your course, for at least the first 9 months (i.e. £11,385 minimum). This is for living costs or “maintenance” as the UKVI refers to it. You are required to have these funds even if you have already paid for your term-time accommodation.</li> </ul> <p>Please see <b><i>What documents do I need to provide to obtain a CAS?</i></b> &gt; <a href="#">Maintenance</a> for more details on accepted types of financial documents. Always use <a href="#">OANDA</a> when checking currency exchange rates.</p>	
<b>Tuberculosis (TB) Test</b>	<p>You will need a tuberculosis (TB) Test if you're resident in any of these <a href="#">listed countries</a>.</p> <p>You will not need a TB test if you lived for at least 6 months in a country where TB screening is not required, and you've been away from that country for no more than 6 months.</p> <p>You must be tested at a clinic that has been approved by the Home Office. The cost of the test varies by country.</p> <p>For more information please check the <a href="#">gov.uk website</a>.</p>	<p>You will not need a TB test if you lived in the UK for at least the last 6 months (where TB screening is not required).</p> <p>For full information on exemptions, please check the <a href="#">gov.uk website</a>.</p>
<b>Official Translations</b>	<p>If any of your required supporting documents are not in English, you will be required to have them officially translated by a certified translator. Please see <b><i>What documents do I need to provide to obtain a CAS?</i></b> &gt; <a href="#">Supporting Documents</a> for more details.</p>	

**13. Do I need to attend an appointment as part of the visa application process?**

**Yes.** All students must attend an in-person biometric appointment in order to have their fingerprints and photograph taken. This is known as 'biometric information'.

For those applying from OUTSIDE of the UK:	For those applying from WITHIN the UK:
<p>As part of the online application, you will book a biometric appointment at a Visa Application Centre (VAC) near you. You cannot complete the application process without first attending your biometric appointment. Please check the <a href="#">application process</a> in your home country for a list of locations of Visa Application Centres (VACs).</p> <p>Be aware that you may also need to undertake a short 'credibility interview' during your appointment. Please see FAQ: <i>What is a credibility interview?</i></p>	<p>As part of the online application, you will book a biometric appointment at a UK Visa and Citizenship Application Service (<a href="#">UKVCAS</a>) <a href="#">service point</a>. The fee for enrolling your biometric information is £19.20 GBP and is paid as part of your visa application.</p> <p>There are different types of UKVCAS service points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 'core' service points, which should have some appointment slots available at no additional cost to the biometric enrolment fee. <b>Note:</b> Even the 'core' service points charge extra for appointments at certain times, so check all of your potential options before selecting an appointment slot.</li> <li>• 50 'enhanced' or 'premium' service points, which will always charge an additional fee for an appointment.</li> </ul>
<p><b>COVID-19 UPDATE</b></p> <p>Some Visa Application Centres (VACs) are beginning a phased reopening from June 2020, subject to local restrictions. For updates to the status of VACs in your country, contact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">TLS contact</a> if you're in Europe, Africa and parts of the Middle East</li> <li>• <a href="#">VFS global</a> for all other countries</li> </ul> <p>Ongoing global restrictions mean some UKVI services will remain closed. Where services are resuming, applicants with pending appointments will be prioritised.</p> <p><b>It is likely that some priority services will not be available and processing times will be significantly impacted.</b></p>	<p><b>COVID-19 UPDATE</b></p> <p>Some UKVCAS service points in the UK are beginning a phased reopening from June 2020, but severe delays are expected as the backlog of application is dealt with. For up-to-date information on appointments, please see the <a href="#">UKVCAS website</a>.</p> <p><b>It is likely that some priority services will not be available and processing times will be significantly impacted.</b></p>

#### 14. What are 'differentiation arrangements'? Am I eligible for them?

The Home Office considers some countries 'low risk' in terms of instances of visa fraud; these countries have 'differentiation arrangements'. This means that citizens of those countries can submit fewer supporting documents with their application, i.e. evidence of qualifications (e.g. academic transcript) and finances (e.g. bank statement).

**However, ALL STUDENTS must still have these original documents available to them before they apply.** The UKVI reserves the right to request any or all of these documents at short notice if they require any additional information, and they will refuse your application if you do not provide them by the date stated in their request (usually less than a week). If you are eligible, you will be asked 'Do you want to submit your application under the differentiation arrangement?' when filling in the application form. You should answer **Yes**. This means you are confirming that you have the funds and you can provide an accepted type of documents if requested at short notice.

You are eligible for 'differentiation arrangements' if you hold one of the following passports:

- Australia
- Bahrain
- Barbados
- Botswana
- Brazil
- British National (Overseas)\*
- Brunei
- Cambodia
- Canada
- Chile
- China
- The Dominican Republic
- Hong Kong\*
- Indonesia
- Japan
- Kazakhstan
- Kuwait
- Macau SAR\*
- Malaysia
- Mauritius
- Mexico
- New Zealand
- Oman
- Peru
- Qatar
- Serbia
- Singapore
- South Korea
- Taiwan\*\*
- Thailand
- Tunisia
- United Arab Emirates
- United States of America

*\*where an applicant is the rightful holder of a passport issued by a relevant competent authority*

*\*\*those who hold a passport issued by Taiwan that includes the number of the identification card issued by the competent authority in Taiwan*

Where an applicant is a dual national and only one of their nationalities is listed above, they will be able to apply using the 'differentiation arrangements', provided they are applying from within their country of nationality or their country of residency. [This list](#) is correct as of February 2020.

#### 15. What supporting documents do I need?

Please see **What documents do I need to provide to obtain a CAS?** > [Supporting Documents](#) for details of which supporting documents you will need for your Tier 4 application.

#### 16. How much money do I need?

After paying your deposit, you must be able to provide evidence that you have enough money to cover:

- the full tuition fee for the first year of your course; PLUS
- at least £1,265 per month of your course, for at least the first 9 months.

In addition to this, you must be able to cover the costs of the visa application itself.

Please see **What documents do I need to provide to obtain a CAS?** > [MAINTENANCE](#) for details of how much money you must have available to you (and how long that balance must have been held/maintained) before you can submit your visa application.

#### 17. Can I bring my dependants?

You are only permitted to bring your partner and/or children (also known as dependants) to the UK as Tier 4 Dependants if:

- Your course at the AA School is at RQF level 7 or above\* and lasts at least 9 months; OR
- You are being sponsored by your government to join a full-time course at the AA School that lasts at least 6 months.

*\*RQF level 7 is equivalent to Masters level so only applicants to the Diploma programme will meet this requirement. The Foundation programme is RQF level 4 and the Experimental programme is RQF level 6.*

**Note:** If you are eligible to bring dependants and they are intending to make their Tier 4 Dependant application at the same time as your application, you will need to hold additional funds for maintenance. For more information, please see the [gov.uk guidance for Tier 4 Dependants](#).

### 18. What do I do if I have an official financial sponsor?

The UKVI's definition of an 'official financial sponsor' (who is covering your costs in the form of a scholarship or grant) can ONLY be one of the following:

- a university
- your home government
- an international organisation or company
- the UK government
- the British Council
- an independent school in the UK

No one else will count as a UKVI official financial sponsor, including a family member or any other private sponsor.

Please see *What documents do I need to provide to obtain a CAS?* > [Supporting Documents](#) for details of the documents you will need to show evidence of having an official financial sponsor.

### 19. What do I do if my spouse/partner is funding me?

Tier 4 applicants can only provide financial evidence in their name, or that of a parent or legal guardian. Unfortunately, you cannot show funds in a spouse/partner's name so you will need to make arrangements for

- a) your spouse/partner to transfer funds to your account at least one month before you need the CAS; or
- b) your spouse/partner to add you as a joint named account holder at least one month before you need the CAS.

### 20. What do I do if my parents are funding me?

If your parent or legal guardian is funding your studies, you can provide financial evidence in their name. However, you will also be required to provide additional supporting evidence.

Please see *What documents do I need to provide to obtain a CAS?* > [Supporting Documents](#) for details of the documents you will need to show evidence of your parent/legal guardian funding your studies.

### 21. Do I need a Police Registration Certificate?

#### For those applying from OUTSIDE of the UK:

If you **have not** previously held a UK Police Registration Certificate or Tier 4 visa, there is nothing you need to do regarding Police Registration before you arrive in the UK, or as part of the visa application process.

If you are a citizen of one of the countries [listed here](#) and you are coming to the UK to study for more than 6 months, you will need to [register with the police](#) shortly after arriving in the UK (within 7 days of collecting your BRP). Your 30-day temporary entry visa 'vignette' should have 'Police registration' or 'Register with police in 7 days of entry' on it.

If you **have** previously held a UK Police Registration Certificate, you may be asked to provide it as a supporting document with your visa application. You will be [required to update it](#) with details of your new visa once it is granted.

#### For those applying from WITHIN the UK:

If you have previously held a UK Police Registration Certificate, you may be asked to provide it as a supporting document with your visa application. Always ensure that your certificate is [kept up to date](#).

## 22. Do I need a Tuberculosis (TB) Test Certificate?

For those applying from OUTSIDE of the UK:	For those applying from WITHIN the UK:
<p>You will need a tuberculosis (TB) Test if you are resident in any of these <a href="#">listed countries</a>.</p> <p>You will not need a TB test if you lived for at least 6 months in a country where TB screening is not required (including the UK), and you've been away from that country for no more than 6 months. However, you may be requested to provide proof of this prior to receiving a CAS.</p> <p>You must be tested at a clinic that has been approved by the Home Office. For more information please check the <a href="#">gov.uk website</a>.</p>	<p>If you have been living in the UK for at least 6 months prior to your new Tier 4 application, it is likely that you will not need a TB test certificate. However, you may be requested to provide proof of this prior to receiving a CAS.</p> <p>For full information on exemptions, please check the <a href="#">gov.uk website</a>.</p>

## 23. Do I need an ATAS certificate?

**No.** The Academic Technology Approval Scheme ([ATAS](#)) is designed to check and approve students who are planning to undertake postgraduate study or research in certain **science and technology** subjects. This does not apply to the courses offered by the AA School.

## 24. What is an Exit Check and do I need one?

If you are currently (or have recently been) in the UK, but you are not eligible to apply for your Tier 4 visa from within the UK, we may ask you for an 'exit check' before we assign your CAS. This is evidence that you are no longer in the UK and evidence can be in the form of an entry stamp in your passport or confirmed flight details, etc.

### COVID-19 UPDATE

The UKVI has temporary concessions in place for those who cannot leave the UK due to circumstances related to COVID-19. Please see FAQ: *Where can I apply for my Tier 4 visa?* Contact [compliance@aschool.ac.uk](mailto:compliance@aschool.ac.uk) for advice on whether you are eligible to make an in-country application.

## 25. Do I need to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS)?

The Immigration Health Surcharge is a financial contribution to the UK's National Health Service. If the total length of your course is longer than 6 months, you will be required to pay the IHS as part of your online visa application. Students are currently charged £300 per year of their visa. Any additional period under 6 months is charged at half the yearly fee - £150. For example:

If your course is 3 years long, your Tier 4 visa will be granted for the duration of your course plus your 4 month 'wrap-up' period:

3 years (£300 x 3):		£900
4 month 'wrap-up' period:	+	£150
<b>Total</b>	=	£1050

If your course is 9 months long, your Tier 4 visa will be granted for the duration of your course plus your 2 month 'wrap-up' period:

9 months:		£300
2 month 'wrap-up' period:	+	£150
<b>Total</b>	=	£450

*Note: This pricing information is correct as of July 2020.*

To check how much you are likely to pay, please use the course dates listed on your CAS, and the [IHS Surcharge Calculator](#). More information on this IHS can be found [here](#).

## 26. What is a credibility interview?

As part of the visa application process, the UKVI may invite you to attend a credibility interview. The interview is intended to assess two things:

- To check that you are a genuine student whose main purpose in coming to the UK is to study the course you have been offered by AA
- To check that your English language skills are at the level required to study in the UK on a Tier 4 visa

The onus is on the applicant to prove the above on the balance of probabilities. This means that it is up to you to show the interviewer that you are a genuine student and that your English is good enough to study in the UK.

If you are applying overseas, the interview will take place at a Visa Application Centre (VAC) specified by the UKVI. It will be conducted via video link with a member of the UKVI team in Sheffield, UK and should last between 15-30 minutes. It will not be recorded, but what you say is written down by the interviewer in a report. The report will be sent to the Entry Clearance Officer (ECO) making the decision on your Tier 4 Visa application. They will assess the interview report along with the other supporting documents you have submitted.

The ECO may contact you for a second interview if they have additional questions before they can make a decision on your application. If you are requested to attend a second interview, notification will be sent to the email address you provided on your online application form.

**IMPORTANT:** Check your emails regularly, including your 'junk' folder. Failure to attend an interview when invited is likely to result in your visa application being refused.

## 27. How can I prepare for the interview?

There is no need to be worried about your interview as long as you prepare and answer truthfully. If you do not understand a question, you can ask the interviewer to repeat it. Remain calm and speak slowly and clearly so the interviewer can understand you.

If there are technical problems with the video link and you cannot hear properly, please make sure you point this out to the interviewer.

You should also re-read your personal statement and the prospectus, as this will help you answer questions. The kinds of questions you'll be asked will include:

- Why do you want to study in the UK? Did you consider studying in other countries?
- Why did you choose the AA? Did you consider any other UK institutions?
- Where do you plan to live while you're studying?
- How much do you plan to pay for accommodation and travel?
- How will you pay for your tuition fees / living costs?
- Do you plan to work in the UK?
- Why did you choose this course? / Did you consider applying to any other courses?
- How long does the course last?
- How is your course assessed? / What level is your course?
- What do you plan to do after graduation? What are your career plans?
- How will completing this course help you with those plans?

## 28. What happens if I cannot attend the biometric appointment or interview?

Attendance is mandatory. If you do not attend without a satisfactory explanation your visa application will be automatically refused. You may be able to reschedule your appointment in advance, but not if you have missed it.

## 29. I've received my visa. What should I do now?

We will need to check the details of your visa are correct. If you receive a granted decision, you must email the following to [admissions@aschool.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@aschool.ac.uk) immediately:

1. A clear photograph or scan of your temporary entry vignette (outside of the UK) or both sides of the BRP (within the UK)
2. A clear photograph or scan of your Home Office decision letter

### 30. What happens if my visa application is refused?

If you receive a refusal decision, you must email the following to [compliance@aschool.ac.uk](mailto:compliance@aschool.ac.uk) immediately:

3. A clear photograph or scan of EACH page of your visa refusal letter
4. Copies of your application form and all supporting documents you submitted.

Once we have this information, we will review and advise you on the next steps. Depending on the nature of the refusal, if we feel that you would be successful in a second visa application, we may consider assigning another CAS or if we identify any points that we feel would support you in an [Administrative Review](#), we will aim to send these to you within 5 working days.

**Please note:** Although the AA will check your documents as far as possible before assigning your CAS, it is your responsibility to ensure you supply the correct documents required for visa processing. The AA holds only a limited amount of CAS numbers, and may not be able to assign a new CAS if your application is refused.

#### COVID-19 UPDATE

Students who have commenced online studies but whose visa application is subsequently refused will be guided on submitting an application for an Administrative Review or making a fresh visa application by the AA Compliance Team. However, if the Home Office ultimately refuses the application, the AA will be required to withdraw visa sponsorship.

### 31. Will I need to go somewhere to collect my Biometric Residence Permit (BRP)?

#### For those applying from OUTSIDE of the UK:

**Yes.** You will initially receive a paper visa (vignette) in your passport that only lasts 30 days. This is a “temporary entry” visa. You must travel to the UK within the validity dates of your temporary entry visa.

Once you are in the UK, you must collect your Tier 4 visa (in the form of a BRP) from your designated ‘BRP Collection Location’ (a branch of the Post Office). This location and the date of collection will be confirmed on the Tier 4 Decision Letter you will receive once your visa has been granted.

The ‘BRP Collection Location’ you are allocated is linked to the UK postcode you submitted in your visa application. If you do not yet have a UK address at the point of application, please use the AA’s address: 36 Bedford Square, London, WC1B 3ES.

The closest participating Post Office to the AA is: Great Portland Street Post Office, 54 - 56 Great Portland St, Fitzrovia, London, W1W 7NE.

#### COVID-19 UPDATE

While coronavirus measures are in place, you will not be penalised for being unable to collect your BRP by the date specified in your decision letter. If you are unable to collect your BRP, please inform [compliance@aschool.ac.uk](mailto:compliance@aschool.ac.uk) so we can advise you on what to do next, based on the guidance at that time.

#### For those applying from WITHIN the UK:

**No.** Within a week or two of the decision, your BRP will be sent by courier directly to you at the address you specified in your visa application.



### 32. How long will my Tier 4 visa last?

#### For those applying from OUTSIDE of the UK:

Your temporary entry vignette will usually become valid on the date you listed in your application as your 'intended date of travel' to the UK (as long as this is less than 1 month before the start of the course).

**Note:** You will only be able to arrive in the UK **on or after the 'valid from' date** on your temporary entry vignette. If you attempt to arrive before your visa becomes valid, you may be refused entry at the UK border, or you will be landed as a Visitor which will not give you the correct immigration permission to begin your course.

Your visa expiry date depends on the length of your course:

- If the Tier 4 leave you need to complete your course is **more than 12 months** long, the period of entry clearance granted after the course end date (as listed on the CAS) is **4 months**
- If the Tier 4 leave you need to complete your course is **more than 6 months, but less than 12 months** long, the period of entry clearance usually granted after the course end date (as listed on the CAS) is **2 months**

#### For those applying from WITHIN the UK:

Your BRP's 'valid from' date will be the date the Home Office granted your Tier 4 leave to remain. **Note:** your BRP is usually sent to you by courier 1-2 weeks after this.

Your visa expiry date depends on the length of your course:

- If the Tier 4 leave you need to complete your course is **more than 12 months** long, the period of entry clearance granted after the course end date (as listed on the CAS) is **4 months**
- If the Tier 4 leave you need to complete your course is **more than 6 months, but less than 12 months** long, the period of entry clearance usually granted after the course end date (as listed on the CAS) is **2 months**

### 33. What do I need to do at the border when I arrive in the UK?

#### **For those applying from OUTSIDE of the UK:**

Expect the Border Force Officer (BFO) to ask simple questions about your stay in the UK when you arrive at passport control. Carry the following documents in your hand luggage, as you may need to present them to the BFO if asked:

- Your CAS Statement from the AA will confirm that you will be a student in the UK and provide details of your course. This letter can be presented to a Border Force Officer if they ask for information about your studies.
- Your AA unconditional offer letter, recent bank statements and the address of your UK accommodation.

If you are a citizen of Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea or the USA, you may be guided towards an **eGate** when you arrive at passport control. If at all possible, you should **avoid eGates** as it means you will not encounter a BFO and your temporary entry vignette will not be stamped with your date of entry to the UK. Without this, you will be required to retain evidence of your date of entry (e.g. boarding pass) in order to complete registration at the AA.

#### COVID-19 UPDATE

As of 8 June 2020, there are rules in place for some travellers entering the UK to self-isolate for 14 days. To check details of current border requirements, please see: <https://www.gov.uk/uk-border-control>

### 34. What do I do if there is an error on my temporary entry vignette?

#### **For those applying from OUTSIDE of the UK:**

As soon as your passport is back, please check the details on your vignette carefully. It should state your name and date of birth correctly, the dates of validity (note that dates are in UK date format DD/MM/YYYY) and the AA's Tier 4 Sponsor Licence no: 66RH3QNT0.

If you find a mistake, it is important to have it corrected before you travel to the UK. As a matter of urgency, please contact:

- [compliance@aschool.ac.uk](mailto:compliance@aschool.ac.uk) with a clear scan of your vignette and details of the error; and
- your Visa Application Centre; if you cannot contact them, [contact the UKVI](#)

### 35. What do I do if there is an error on my BRP?

As soon as you receive your BRP, check that all the information on it is correct:

- your name and date of birth
- that you are a Tier 4 (General) student
- the Sponsor Licence Number of the AA: 66RH3QNT0
- that the start and end dates of the permission are correct (note that dates are in UK date format DD/MM/YYYY)
- whether you [can work](#)
- whether you need to [register with the police](#)

#### **For those who applied from OUTSIDE of the UK:**

If you find an error on your BRP after you have collected it, contact the [AA Compliance Officer](#) immediately for help to get it corrected. Errors **must be reported within 10 days** of collecting your BRP and the AA must also report the error to the UKVI. Once the UKVI responds, you must post your BRP card to the UKVI so it can be replaced; the AA Compliance Officer will help you do this.

#### **For those who applied from WITHIN the UK:**

##### **Identity errors**

If your BRP card contains an error with your name, date of birth, nationality or sponsor licence number, contact the [AA Compliance Officer](#) immediately for help to get it corrected. Errors **must be reported within 10 days** of receiving your BRP and the AA must also report the error to the UKVI. Once the UKVI responds, you must post your BRP card to the UKVI so it can be replaced; the AA Compliance Officer will help you do this.

##### **Visa condition errors**

If your BRP card contains an error with the visa conditions or dates of validity, you will need to apply for an Administrative Review. Contact the [AA Compliance Officer](#) immediately for help with this process.

Administrative Reviews **must be made within 14 days** of receiving your BRP and the AA must also report the error to the UKVI. The Administrative Review requires you to complete an online application form and pay a fee of £80. If the UKVI agrees that an error has been made they will refund the fee and replace your BRP.

### 36. What immigration documents do I need to bring to Registration?

#### **COVID-19 UPDATE**

From Monday, 21 September 2020, Introduction Week will commence online during which all students will be required to complete online registration. Prior to Introduction Week, detailed instructions and a checklist of documents required for completing registration will be made available.

### 37. Can I work in the UK?

Tier 4 students who are sponsored by the AA on or after 1 August 2019 should have the following work conditions:

- Students on the **Experimental and Diploma** programmes: up to **20 hours a week** during term
- Students on the **Foundation** programme: up to **10 hours a week** during term time
- All students can work full time in the following periods:
  - outside of term-time (AA School holiday / vacation periods)
  - on AA School-arranged work placements (if applicable)
  - after your course has ended (the course end date listed on your CAS) and before your Tier 4 visa expires

For more information, please see [UKCISA's information](#) on working as a Tier 4 (General) Student.

### 38. I have read this Tier 4 Guidance document and I am ready to apply. How do I start my application?

For those applying from OUTSIDE of the UK:	For those applying from WITHIN the UK:
<p>You can begin your online Tier 4 entry clearance application here:  <a href="https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/apply-visa-type/tier4">https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/apply-visa-type/tier4</a></p> <p><b>CONFIRM YOUR VISA TYPE:</b>            Select: <b>Tier 4 (General) student visa</b>            Unless you hold a Chevening, Marshall or Commonwealth Scholarship, be careful not to select another Tier 4 sub-category.</p> <p><b>SELECT YOUR LOCATION:</b>            Enter the country in which you are making your application. This <b>must</b> be your home country or a country in which you have valid residency.</p> <p><b>APPLY FOR A UK VISA – [COUNTRY]</b>            You must be able to attend an in-person appointment. Before you continue, make sure you check the available biometric enrolment locations for your country as you cannot change your application after this page. If there are no visa application centres in your country, you will be shown your closest options.</p> <p><b>REGISTER YOUR EMAIL:</b>            Enter a valid email address (that you regularly check). Throughout your application, you can select the option to 'Return to this application later' in order to re-send the link to your latest saved version. <b>Make a note of your email and password and keep them safe!</b></p>	<p>You can begin your online Tier 4 leave to remain application here:  <a href="https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/product/tier-4-student">https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/product/tier-4-student</a></p> <p><b>CONFIRM YOUR LOCATION:</b>            You must be in the UK</p> <p><b>CONFIRM ANY OTHER PENDING HOME OFFICE APPLICATIONS:</b>            Submitting this application will invalidate any other application still awaiting a decision</p> <p><b>REGISTER YOUR EMAIL:</b>            Enter a valid email address (that you regularly check). Throughout your application, you can select the option to 'Return to this application later' in order to re-send the link to your latest saved version. <b>Make a note of your email and password and keep them safe!</b></p> <p><b>CONFIRM YOUR IMMIGRATION ADVISOR:</b>            If you are using the services of a <a href="#">regulated immigration advisor</a> to help you make your application, enter their details here. Please note, it is not mandatory to have one.</p>



## SECTION 2: WHAT DOCUMENTS DO I NEED TO PROVIDE TO OBTAIN A CAS?

### UNCONDITIONAL OFFER & ADMISSIONS FORM

Before a CAS can be assigned to you, you must:

1. Hold an **unconditional offer** for the AA. This means that you have met the entry requirements of your course and the conditions of your offer, e.g.:
  - a. Provided your qualification(s) in an acceptable format
  - b. Provided your English language test / qualification
2. Sign and submit your Admissions Form to [admissions@aa-school.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@aa-school.ac.uk)
3. Provide confirmation that you have paid (at least) the initial tuition fee deposit
4. Provide a clear scan of the passport you will be using to submit your Tier 4 visa application
5. Provide clear scans of every UK visa you have held
6. Provide financial evidence in an acceptable format
7. Provide a letter of parental consent if you will be under 18 years old when submitting your visa application
8. Provide a clear scan of your TB Test certificate (if applicable)
9. Update the AA of any changes to your contact details (address / telephone / email etc.) and any changes or updates to your passport or visa status.

Please read this entire **Section 2** carefully, as it describes the requirements your documents must meet in order to be accepted.

**Please provide all evidence / scans in PDF format.** You will need to keep the originals safe as you may need to submit them with your visa application. Remember to include your name and AA membership number in all emails to [admissions@aa-school.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@aa-school.ac.uk).

### MAINTENANCE

The UKVI requires that **ALL STUDENTS** possess sufficient funds (“maintenance”) to cover the duration of their studies. The minimum amount of maintenance you are required to have will depend on your course fees and the length of your course.

#### Money that can be used

The money that you use must be:

- cash funds in a bank account in your name or in the name of a parent or legal guardian (e.g. savings accounts and current/checking accounts); or
- a loan (the loan must be provided by your national, state or regional government, or by a government sponsored student loan company or be part of an academic or educational loans scheme); or
- official financial sponsorship

The money you show must be for your use for studying and living in the UK and it must continue to be available to you after your Tier 4 application is made.

Please see [Supporting Documents](#) > **Acceptable types of documents for financial evidence**

#### Money that can NOT be used

- Other accounts or financial instruments such as **shares, bonds, overdrafts, credit cards and pension funds** are not acceptable, regardless of notice period.
- Funds must be held in your name or by your parent/legal guardian or an official sponsor. Money held by any other third party or private sponsor will not be accepted, including a grandparent, spouse or friend. If they do not meet the definition of an ‘official financial sponsor’ they should pay you well in advance so the money is in your account for the required period. Alternatively, they could pay your tuition fees directly to the AA so evidence of the tuition fees already paid would be demonstrated on your CAS; you would then not need to show these funds in your account.
- A loan, unless it has been provided by:
  - your national government, state or regional government
  - a government sponsored student loan company
  - an academic or educational loans scheme

- Loans held in the name your parent or legal guardian cannot be used as evidence, even if the loan is for study purposes.
- You must be able to show that your funds are held in a financial institution with which the Home Office is able to make satisfactory verification checks. A **list of financial institutions which do not satisfactorily verify financial statements** is published on [Home Office pages](#) at the GOV.UK website.

### Tuition Fees ('Course fees') & Deposits

The application form will ask you how much your course fees are and if you have already paid them.

#### **Will my deposit payment be reflected in the CAS?**

Yes. The AA cannot issue a CAS until we have received your tuition fee deposit in full.

The deposit always covers the final term of the final year of your course, so the amount displayed in your CAS under 'Course fees charged for first year of the course' will vary depending on the length of your course:

- **If your course fee covers one academic year of your programme (as is the case for Experimental Year 1, Experimental Year 2 and Diploma)**, the deposit is not included in the first year's tuition fee, so the amount shown will be the 2020/21 course fee PLUS the deposit.
- **If your course fee covers the full duration of your programme (as is the case for Foundation and Experimental Year 3)**, the deposit is included in the one year's tuition fee, so the amount shown will be the 2020/21 course fee.

#### **Will additional payments towards my tuition fees be reflected in the CAS?**

**Yes.** Any tuition fee paid to the AA (prior to the CAS being assigned) that is over and above the deposit amount will be reflected on the CAS and can therefore be deducted from the overall amount you need to show the UKVI.

If possible, we recommend that you pay the tuition fee for one full academic year or for Term 1, prior to requesting a CAS. This strengthens the visa application and reduces the amount you need to maintain and show to the UKVI.

#### **Will my scholarship / bursary be reflected in the CAS?**

If you are in receipt of an AA scholarship or bursary, this amount will be deducted from the course fee listed on your CAS and therefore from the total you will be required to show.

**Please note:** you MUST refer to your CAS Statement when filling in this section, as the details you enter must match your CAS. Please contact [admissions@aschool.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@aschool.ac.uk) immediately if you think there is a mistake with the tuition fee information listed on your CAS.

### Living Costs

Living costs or 'maintenance' funds refer to the money that you will need to support yourself while living in the UK. The amount required depends on the length of your course.

- As the AA is located within inner London, the UKVI requires you to show that you have **£1,265 per month** of your course
- If your course is longer than 9 months, you need to show that you have enough money for at least the first 9 months of your course. For example:

Duration of course		Minimum required living costs
9 months (or longer)	X £1,265	= £ 11,385*
6 months	X £1,265	= £ 7,590*

**\*Please note:**

- **The AA may require that you have more than the minimum amount** if the currency exchange rate is likely to fluctuate. This is to prevent your visa application being refused due to a drop in the exchange rate and the value of your funds decreasing.
- If your course includes a part of a month, the UKVI will round the time up to the next month when calculating maintenance funds. For example, if your course is 2 months and 5 days, you are required to have maintenance for 3 months.

If you have dependants and they are applying for their visa at the same time as you are, you will need additional funds for their living costs. For more information, please see the: [UKVI's guidance](#) for Dependant applications

### Accommodation Fees

As the AA does not offer its own student accommodation, the sections about accommodation payments on the Tier 4 visa application will not apply to you. These sections are only relevant to students who have made payments to their Tier 4 sponsor institution for student accommodation. They do NOT apply when:

- You are living in private rented accommodation
- You are living in property you own
- You are living with family or friends, even if you do not have to pay for your accommodation

### Currency Conversions

The UKVI uses the official exchange rate on the [OANDA website](#). Always use this when calculating your funds in an overseas currency.

**Please note: the AA may require that you have more than the minimum amount** if your currency exchange rate is likely to fluctuate. This is to prevent your visa application being refused due to a drop in the exchange rate and the value of your funds decreasing.

### Maintenance Calculator

Below is a table to help you calculate your minimum required maintenance:

<b>2020/21 full tuition fee</b> <i>The 2020/21 fee list can be <a href="#">found here</a></i>		£
<b>AA tuition fee scholarship / bursary</b> <i>If applicable</i>	- (minus)	£
<b>Deposit already paid to the AA</b> <i>Only deduct this if the course fee covers the full duration of your programme (i.e. you are entering the Foundation or Experimental Year 3).</i>	- (minus)	£
<b>Tier 4 Policy minimum required living costs</b> <i>Applicants are required to show at least £11,385 GBP (£1,265 per month x 9 months)</i>	+ (plus)	£
<b>Total</b> <i>This is the balance that you will need to provide evidence of maintaining. Your financial evidence must be in one of the acceptable formats listed in this guide.</i>	= (equals)	£

## SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

### Acceptable types of documents for financial evidence

#### a. Funds from an account in your name (Bank/Building Society Statement or Bank/Building Society Letter):

You can submit a statement or letter from your bank confirming that you hold the required funds in a bank account in your own name. The statement(s) or letter must show:

- That you have had the required minimum funds **in your account for at least 28 consecutive days**. The last day of this period **cannot be more than 31 days before** the date you submit your visa application.
- That the account balance has not dropped below the minimum required amount at any point during the consecutive 28-day period, even by a small amount. **Please note:** The day that your balance goes above the minimum amount required (e.g. if funds have been transferred to you) should NOT be counted as the first day of the 28-day period; the following day will be counted as the first day you have maintained the required balance.
- The bank statement or bank letter must also include:
  - The date the bank statement or letter was issued
  - Your name, the account number and the financial institution's name and logo
  - The account type. The funds must be cash funds, held in a regular current account or a savings account. Stocks, shares, portfolios, property value or other non-cash assets are not acceptable.
  - Bank letters quoting an average balance are not acceptable.
- We recommend that you submit your statement no more than 7 days after it was issued, to allow time for your CAS to be assigned and your visa application to be submitted before the statement expires.
- You can use two consecutive bank statements from the same account, as long as the closing balance on the most recent statement meets the minimum amount and the balance has not dropped below the minimum at any point in at least 28 consecutive days.

**Please note:** You can contact [admissions@aschool.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@aschool.ac.uk) if you wish to request a **bank letter template**.

#### b. Funds from an account in your name (Certificate of Deposit):

A certificate of deposit is a document issued by a bank that confirms an individual has deposited or invested a sum of money. This is an acceptable form of evidence as long as:

- the certificate of deposit is issued no **more than 31 days before** the date you submit your visa application
- **at least 28 days must have elapsed** between the date of the deposit and the date the certificate was issued
- The certificate should also include your name, the account number and the financial institution's name and logo

#### c. Funds from an account in your parent/guardian's name (Bank Statement, Bank Letter, Certificate of Deposit):

You can submit a bank statement, bank letter or certificate of deposit from your parent/legal guardian's bank confirming all of the criteria in a) or b) above.

#### d. Funds from an account in your parent/guardian's name (Additional required documents):

In addition to c) above, you must submit the following:

- Your birth certificate, adoption certificate or court document confirming legal guardian status (the document must state your name and your parent/guardian's name); AND
- A signed and dated letter from the parent/guardian, confirming your relationship to them, the funds available, and that they give their consent for you to use these funds to study in the UK.

**Please note:** You can contact [admissions@aschool.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@aschool.ac.uk) if you wish to request a **parental consent letter template**.

### e. Official Financial Sponsorship

The UKVI's definition of an 'official financial sponsor' (who is covering your costs in the form of a scholarship or grant) can ONLY be one of the following: a university, your home government, an international organisation or company, the UK government, the British Council or an independent school in the UK. No one else will count as a UKVI official financial sponsor, including a family member or any other private sponsor.

If you have an official financial sponsor, you will need to submit a letter of confirmation from your sponsor stating the following:

- Your name
- The name and contact details of the sponsor
- The date of the letter
- The length of the sponsorship
- The amount of money your sponsor is giving to you, or a statement that they will cover all of your fees and/or living costs.

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 to meet the total tuition fee and living cost requirements.

### f. Student Loans

The only loans permitted for evidence of Tier 4 funds are:

- provided by your national, state or regional government; or
- provided by a government sponsored student loan company; or
- part of an Educational Loan Scheme (from a regulated financial institution with which the Home Office is able to make satisfactory verification checks. A list of financial institutions which do not satisfactorily verify financial statements is published on [Home Office pages](#) at the GOV.UK website)

Any other type of loan will not meet the Tier 4 requirements.

**Please note:** If you wish to use money from any other type of loan, you need to transfer the funds to a bank account in your name (or a parent's name) and use one of the other forms of evidence listed above. A general personal bank loan that you happen to be using to pay for your studies is not acceptable, even if the bank explains this in their letter. You cannot use a loan letter to show funds for your dependant.

The loan letter should be dated no more than 6 months before the date you submit your visa application.

It must contain the following details:

- your name; (you cannot use a loan in the name of your parents)
- the date of the letter
- the financial institution's name and logo
- the money available as a loan
- confirmation that the loan is provided by your national government, their state or regional government, a government sponsored student loan company or is part of an academic or educational loans scheme.
- confirmation that there are no conditions placed on the release of the funds other than your Tier 4 application being successful, and that the money will be available before you travel to the UK unless:
  - the loan is an academic or student loan from your country's national government and it will be released on arrival in the UK, or
  - the loan funds will be paid directly to the AA and the living costs portion of the loan will be released to you on your arrival in the UK



### COVID-19 UPDATE

If the date of your qualification award or results is affected by COVID-19, please get in touch with your Admissions Coordinator to let them know as soon as possible. You may need to ask your school to provide written confirmation of a change of arrangements / date of results, etc. Your Admissions Coordinator will guide you on the next steps.

#### a. Document requirements

All official qualification certificates or academic transcripts must clearly show:

- your name
- the name of the academic institution
- the title of your qualification
- the date of the qualification (certificate) or course dates (transcript)

#### b. A Level students

We cannot issue your CAS before we receive your A Level results. If you are taking your A Levels exams in the UK in the 2019/20 academic year, you will receive your results on **Thursday, 13 August 2020**.

At this stage, you will receive a results slip as your official certificates will not yet be available. In order for the AA School to be able to accept your results, you must do one of the following:

- Ask your school's Registry Office to stamp each of the results slips with the official school stamp. You can then email clear scans of the stamped results slips to [admissions@aschool.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@aschool.ac.uk)  
**OR**
- Ask your school to confirm your results by sending an email directly to [admissions@aschool.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@aschool.ac.uk) **Please note:** the email must come from the official school email address of a suitable member of staff, e.g. Head of Year or School Registrar. We cannot accept emails from personal email addresses or forwarded emails from your account.

You must keep the originals safe as you may need to provide them as supporting documents for your visa application.

If you took your A Level exams prior to the 2019/20 academic year, you will be required to provide your official, full A Level certificates; results slips or email confirmation will not suffice.

#### c. International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme (DP) students

We cannot issue your CAS before we receive your IB Diploma results. If you are completing your IB Diploma in the 2019/20 academic year, you will receive your results on **Monday, 6 July 2020**.

At this stage, your official transcripts and certificate will not yet be available. In order for the AA School to be able to accept your results, you must ensure that you have selected the AA as an institution that has permission to access and verify your results online, via the official IB website.

The AA will note on your CAS that your IB results have been verified online. When submitting the supporting documents for your visa application, please include a print-out from the IB Diploma online checking service, so the UKVI have evidence of your results.

If you completed your IB prior to the 2019/20 academic year, you will be required to provide your official transcripts and certificate.

#### d. HEAR statements

If your degree academic transcript is in the form of a HEAR statement, it should hold the university watermark.

#### e. Academic Progression

If you have previously held a Tier 4 (General) Student visa in the UK, the AA will need to assess whether you meet the 'academic progression' rules of the Tier 4 visa before we can assign a CAS for a new course.

If you do not meet the academic progression requirement of the Tier 4 visa, we will not normally be able to assign a CAS for you. In exceptional circumstances, you will be assigned a CAS on the condition that you apply for your new Tier 4 visa from overseas (as you will not meet the eligibility requirements to apply from within the UK).

To meet the academic progression requirement, your new course must normally be at a **higher level** than the previous course for which you were given Tier 4 leave, (e.g. Bachelors to Masters, etc.) and you must have successfully completed the previous course (meaning you have achieved the qualification).

If your course is at the **same level** we may be able to offer you a CAS, but only if your new course is related to your previous course (e.g. part of the same subject area or involves deeper specialisation), and these two courses combined support your career aspirations. This exemption is granted under exceptional circumstances only, as the AA is required to provide strong justification for cases where students are studying at the same level.

If your new course is at a **lower level** than your previous course, it will not represent academic progression.

### English Language Evidence

If it is a condition of your offer, you must complete your English language test or assessment as early as possible. This is an integral part of your eligibility for the Tier 4 visa and we cannot issue your CAS until you have met the AA's English language entry criteria. The AA's English language requirements, and acceptable exemptions, are listed on the AA School website's Admissions pages.

If you are evidencing your English language proficiency through an overseas academic qualification that was taught in English, the AA reserves the right to request that you submit a [NARIC Statement of Comparability](#) and/or [NARIC English Language Assessment](#). Please note that NARIC charges a fee for these documents.

**Please note:** When you receive your CAS, it will state whether or not the AA assessed your English language using a [UKVI-approved SELT](#) (secure English language test). If you have been assessed using a SELT, you must have your SELT certificate ready to submit with your application if needed. If the AA assessed you by other means (including an IELTS Academic exam that was not specifically an IELTS for UKVI exam), you do not have to submit any evidence of English language skills with your visa application.

### Document requirements for 'Low risk' or 'differentiation arrangement' nationals

All Tier 4 applicants must have the required maintenance funds for their studies. Whether or not you need to include financial or qualification supporting documents when you submit your application depends on whether you are eligible for differentiation arrangements.

<p>Students eligible for <a href="#">differentiation arrangements</a></p>	<p>Even though you do not need to submit evidence of your finances or qualifications with your application in the first instance, you still need to have evidence that meets the requirements listed above. This is because the UKVI may request that you provide additional evidence while your application is being processed; your application will be refused if you cannot provide it at very short notice.</p> <p>When filling in the online visa application, you will be asked '<i>Do you want to submit your application under the differentiation arrangement?</i>' You should answer <b>Yes</b>.</p> <p>This means you are confirming that you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have funds and you can provide an accepted type of financial document if requested at short notice; and</li> <li>• have proof of the qualification(s) listed on your CAS in acceptable formats and can provide this if requested at short notice</li> </ul>
<p>Students NOT eligible for <a href="#">differentiation arrangements</a></p>	<p>You must submit evidence of your finances or qualifications that meets the requirements listed above with your application, or it will be refused.</p> <p>The only exception is your portfolio, which you are not required to submit.</p>

## Translations

**ALL** supporting documents that are not in English must be officially translated by a certified translator. You must submit the original documents as well as the certified translation with your application. Translations must include the following:

- That it is an accurate translation of the original document
- The date of the translation
- The translator's full name and signature
- The translator's contact details

## Tuberculosis (TB) Test Certificate

Please see [Do I need a Tuberculosis Test Certificate](#) for information on how to check if you are required to take a TB test certificate before obtaining your CAS.

For information on how to apply, please see the [GOV.UK website](#).

## Applicants aged under 18: Parental Consent Letter

If you will be under 18 years old on the date you submit your visa application, you are required to submit a letter of consent from your parent(s)/legal guardian(s). This signed letter must confirm:

- their relationship to you;
- that they give their consent to your application;
- that they consent to your living arrangements in the UK;
- that they agree to the arrangements made for your travel to the UK
- whether your parent or legal guardian has legal custody or sole responsibility for you; If they do not, the letter must confirm that each parent or legal guardian agrees to the contents of the letter and it must be signed by each parent or legal guardian.

You must also provide evidence of your relationship with your parent(s) or legal guardian. Acceptable evidence includes one of the following documents:

- your birth certificate showing the names of your parent (s);
- your certificate of adoption showing the name(s) of your parent(s) or legal guardian;
- a court document naming your legal guardian.

When it is ready, the CAS statement will be generated and emailed to you as a pdf. Your CAS statement gives the UKVI information about the following:

- your personal details;
- the title, level and length of your chosen programme of study;
- the tuition fees you need to pay for the first year of your programme;
- the qualification(s) you have achieved in order to meet the academic entry criteria for your new programme of study at the AA;
- your level of English language proficiency

**You must refer to this information when completing your visa application form to ensure the data matches. If you require changes to the information on your CAS then we may charge for the replacement (current cost is £21).**

## HOW TO READ YOUR CAS

Please take time to check your CAS Statement information. Please ensure all the details are correct before applying for a visa.

- If there are any errors in the CAS Statement please email [admissions@aschool.ac.uk](mailto:admissions@aschool.ac.uk) and we will aim to resolve any problems as soon as possible.
- Please refer to the information contained in your CAS Statement when making your student visa application under Tier 4 (General) of the Points Based Immigration System. **The sections you will need to refer to when completing your visa application are highlighted in yellow.**
- Please **ensure you use the exact wording as set out on the CAS form issued by the AA** otherwise you risk making a mistake that could lead to a refusal.

CAS details	
Sponsor licence number:	<b>66RH3QNT0</b>
Sponsor name:	<b>Architectural Association School of Architecture</b>
CAS Number:	<b>Your unique CAS number: Enter this in your visa application</b>
CAS status:	<i>Current status of your CAS</i>
Current CAS status date:	<i>Date the information in your CAS was last updated</i>
Date assigned:	<i>Date your CAS was assigned</i>
Expiry date (use by):	<i>Date your CAS expires (if not withdrawn or used)</i>
Sponsorship withdrawn:	N
Sponsor note:	<i>If the information in your CAS needs to be clarified or corrected after your CAS is assigned, the AA School will add a note here for the UKVI case worker assessing your application. It will be blank if all information in the CAS is correct and up to date.</i>
Migrant application status:	<i>Usually left blank – please disregard</i>

Student details	
Family name:	<b>As it appears in your passport – please check this is correct</b>
Given name(s):	<b>As it appears in your passport – please check this is correct</b>
Other names:	<i>If applicable</i>
Date of birth:	<b>DD/MM/YYYY (UK date format) - please check this is correct</b>
Gender:	<b>As it appears in your passport – please check this is correct</b>
Nationality:	<b>As it appears in your passport – please check this is correct</b>
Place of birth:	<i>As it appears in your passport (if applicable). May be left blank if not</i>
Country of birth:	<b>As it appears in your passport – please check this is correct</b>
Passport number:	<b>As it appears in your passport – please check this is correct</b>
Sponsor's system unique ID for a student:	<i>Your unique AA applicant/student number</i>
UCAS ID number:	<i>Left blank – please disregard</i>

Offer details	
Course details	
Application Number:	<i>Your unique AA applicant/student number</i>
Course title:	<b>Enter answer exactly as listed in your CAS Statement</b>
Course ID:	<i>Left blank – please disregard</i>
Course level:	<b>Enter answer exactly as listed in your CAS Statement</b>
Secondary course level:	<i>Not required in your application - please disregard</i>
Course start date:	<b>Enter answer exactly as listed in your CAS Statement</b>
Course end date:	<b>Enter answer exactly as listed in your CAS Statement</b>
Latest date a student can be accepted on to the course:	<i>Not required for your application, but please note: you are expected to register <b>on time</b> to start your course. In exceptional circumstances, you may be permitted to register up until this date, but you must make every effort to arrive on time.</i>
Tick if the course is full time:	<i>Not required in your application - please disregard</i>
Hours per week:	<i>Not required in your application - please disregard</i>
Tick if the course requires an Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) certificate:	<b>N: not applicable to the subject area of Architecture</b>

Main study address in the United Kingdom	
Address:	<b>36 Bedford Square</b>
City or town:	<b>London</b>
County, area district or province:	<b>London</b>
Postcode:	<b>WC1B 3ES</b>

<b>Evidence Provided</b>	
<b>English language qualification</b>	
Is SELT required?	<b>Y / N: Enter answer exactly as listed in your CAS</b>
Reason not required:	<b>If N: Enter answer exactly as listed in your CAS</b> <i>If your CAS states: HEI has made own assessment, select 'YES' to the following question in your visa application:</i>  <b>Does your Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) statement indicate that your English language ability was assessed by your institution or that you are a 'gifted' student?</b>
English language level attained:	<b>If Y: Enter answer exactly as listed in your CAS</b>
SELT - speaking:	<b>If Y: Enter answer exactly as listed in your CAS</b>
SELT - listening:	<b>If Y: Enter answer exactly as listed in your CAS</b>
SELT - reading:	<b>If Y: Enter answer exactly as listed in your CAS</b>
SELT - writing:	<b>If Y: Enter answer exactly as listed in your CAS</b>
English language test provider:	<b>If Y: Enter answer exactly as listed in your CAS</b>
<b>Progression details</b>	
Previous UK student?	<b>Enter answer exactly as listed in your CAS</b>
Previous course level:	<b>Enter answer exactly as listed in your CAS</b>
Is current course higher, lower or at the same level as the previous course?	<i>Not required in your application - please disregard</i>
If the same or lower supply justification text	<i>Not required in your application - please disregard</i>
<b>Other Evidence</b>	
Evidence used to obtain offer:	<b>The documents listed here should be submitted as supporting documents with your Tier 4 visa application.</b>

<b>Accommodation and fees</b>	
Tick if you will be providing accommodation or leave blank if unknown:	<i>Not required in your application - please disregard</i>
Tick if the course fee for the first year includes accommodation or boarding costs:	<i>Not required in your application - please disregard</i>
Course fees charged for first year of the course (in pounds sterling):	<b>Please check this is correct. If so, enter exactly as listed in your CAS</b>
Course fees paid to date (in pounds sterling):	<b>Please check this is correct. If so, enter exactly as listed in your CAS</b>
Boarding or accommodation fees charged for the first year (in pounds sterling):	<i>Not required in your application - please disregard</i>
Accommodation fees paid to date (in pounds sterling):	<i>Not required in your application - please disregard</i>
Boarding fees paid to date (in pounds sterling):	<i>Not required in your application - please disregard</i>
Fees last updated:	<i>Date fee information last updated on CAS</i>

<b>Work placement details</b>	
Tick if the applicant is undertaking a work placement as part of the course:	<i>Not required in your application - please disregard</i>
Percentage of course undertaken as work placement:	<i>Not required in your application - please disregard</i>
If the percentage of work is more than the permitted level then supply justification text:	<i>Not required in your application - please disregard</i>
Partner institution details (if applicable)	<i>If applicable</i>
Overseas institution details (if applicable)	<i>If applicable</i>