

Immigration Guidance for Students Coming to the UK

Please note that the below is intended as general guidance only and should be read in conjunction with the Tier 4 guidance issued by the UKBA. Please note that the UKBA guidance and procedures often change without notice and that it is your responsibility to check the most current application information (available on the UKBA website - <http://www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/studyingintheuk/>).

Student Visas - Tier 4 (General) Student (Points Based System)

You will need the above type of visa if you:

- a) Are contemplating any kind of paid or unpaid work in the UK
- b) Intend on undertaking an internship (paid or unpaid) or on volunteering.

If you are not working, interning or volunteering in the UK and you hold a US passport then can enter the UK on a Student Visitor Visa, which does not require prior entry clearance.

Tier 4 student visas require prior entry clearance by the UK Border Agency and must be made in advance of your departing the United States. They cannot, under any circumstances, be obtained once you depart the United States. Please leave plenty of time to make your visa application.

In order for a Tier 4 (General) Student Visa to be issued students must meet the full requirements of the UK Immigration Rules. Tier 4 Student visas are part of the points based immigration system and in order to make an application, students must have a total of 40 points awarded to them. Please see table below on how points are awarded.

Points required: 40	
Having a valid Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies from a Tier 4 Sponsor (AIFS)	30 points
Having enough money to cover course fees and monthly living costs (also known as maintenance or funds)	10 points

Obtaining Your Prior Entry Clearance Tier 4 (General) Student Visa

Application Checklist

1. Apply for your passport if you do not already have one
2. Obtain CAS number from AIFS
3. Complete online visa application and make payment for your visa
4. Make appointment for your biometrics data to be taken
5. Have biometrics data taken
6. Complete VAF9 form and submit with your passport and a colour photograph to the relevant British Consulate
7. Confirm to your college and to AIFS once your visa is received

AIFS and your home college cannot apply for your visa for you. Only you can make the visa application. Please follow the guidance below to apply for your visa.

Before you apply for your visa **you need to have a valid current passport**. If you do not have a passport, please apply for one as far in advance as possible. For more information on how to apply, please see http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html

Prior Entry clearance visas cannot be obtained after your departure from the U.S. Instead, you must apply well in advance of your departure (but not outside three months before your departure date) since your actual passport is needed by the British Consulate for processing and you cannot leave the U.S. without your actual passport. Your passport, with your prior entry clearance visa secured inside, will be returned to you by the British Consulate once it has finished processing your application and your entry clearance is granted.

Note: You cannot apply for a prior entry clearance visa until you are within three months of your departure date.

While there are several British Consulates throughout the U.S. and an Embassy in Washington, D.C., only one consulate processes visa/entry clearance applications - the consulate located in New York. You can see information about this consulate at <http://ukinusa.fco.gov.uk/en/>

PLEASE NOTE:

Any applicant who applies to study in the UK under Tier 4 of the points-based system must have a **Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS)** from their prospective sponsor (AIFS is your sponsor and has been rated a Highly Trusted Sponsor –A rating by the UK Border Agency). The CAS replaces the visa letter from sponsors which was previously required. The CAS is a unique application number which must be used when you apply for your visa. As your sponsor AIFS will be applying for a CAS on your behalf. Please note that you **should not submit your visa application until you have received your CAS from AIFS.** You will also receive a CAS statement from AIFS which will contain important information you will need when completing your visa application, please ensure you read this carefully. Your visa application will be denied if you attempt to apply before receiving your CAS.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ONLINE APPLICATION FOR YOUR TIER 4 (GENERAL) STUDENT VISA

Please note that the below is intended as general guidance only and should be read in conjunction with the Tier 4 guidance issued by the UKBA. Please note that the UKBA guidance and procedures often change without notice and **that it is your responsibility to check the most current application information (available on the UKBA website).**

Before making your application, please read the Tier 4(General) Student guidance, available online at <http://www.ukvisas.gov.uk/en/howtoapply/infs/inf29pbsstudent> Please also ensure you read the **Tier 4 policy document** located at <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/applicationforms/pbs/Tier4migrantguidance1.pdf>

This document gives the policy guidance for students coming to the United Kingdom under Tier 4 of the points based system and should be read with paragraphs 245ZT-245ZY of the Immigration Rules (these can be found at <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/policyandlaw/immigrationlaw/immigrationrules/>

Please note that the information contained on the above website explains what you need to do if you wish to come to the United Kingdom (UK) as an Adult (General) Student under Tier 4 of the Points Based System. It is only a guide but it aims to answer some common questions. There are also notes to help you to complete an application form.

More comprehensive guidance is available on the [UK Border Agency website](http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/studyingintheuk/adult-students/) at <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/studyingintheuk/adult-students/> and is the definitive version.

The answer key below is intended as a general guide only. Please keep in mind, the number of questions and types of questions will vary depending on your yes and no responses within the application.

Go to: <http://www.visa4uk.fco.gov.uk/ApplyNow.aspx>

Click on "New Visa Application"

Application Security – enter your email address and a password

Your Visa Requirements

Enter your current location, State and Country of Nationality

Purpose of application: Select "PBS Tier 4 Student"

Type of application: Select "Tier 4 (General) Student"

Your Visa Appointment Location

You must also book an appointment to submit your biometric data.

Select your State

Select your closest Visa Appointment Centre location

Section 1: About You

1. Given Name: Enter your first name.
2. Family Name or Surname: Enter your current last name.
3. Other Names: List any other legal first or last names you have held.
4. Gender: Select male or female.
5. Date of Birth: Enter your date of birth.

6. Place of Birth: Enter the city and state where you were born.
7. Country of Birth: Select "United States" unless you were not born in the US, in which case you should select your country of birth.
8. Nationality: Select your Nationality.
9. Do you hold any other Nationalities? Select Yes or No
10. What is your Marital Status? Select your marital status. If you are married or have a partner, you may have to enter information for them too.

Section 2: Passport Information

- Current Passport or Travel Document Number: Enter your nine digit passport number.
- Place of Issue: Enter where your passport was issued – i.e., Los Angeles, Chicago, etc.
- Issuing authority: Enter the issuing authority noted in your passport. This may be the "U.S. Dept. of State."
- Date of Issue: Enter the date your passport was issued.
- Date of Expiry: Enter the date your passport expires.
- Is this your first passport? Select yes or no.

Section 3: Your Contact Details

- Apt/Floor/Suite/Room/Street: Enter your complete street address. Do not list a P.O. Box. This must be a physical address.
- City/Town/Village: Enter the town or city in which you live.
- Select the Country: Select the country where your permanent physical address is located.
- Postal Code/ZIP Code: Enter your five digit ZIP code.
- How long have you lived at this address: Enter how long you have lived at the address (in years or months).
- Home (landline) Telephone Number: Enter your permanent home phone number.
- Mobile Telephone Number: Enter your cell phone number.
- Will this be your contact details during
AIFS Student Immigration Regulations – updated 17th August 2011

Enter yes or no.

the application process?

Section 4: Your Family

Do you have any children?	Enter yes or no.
Will any other children be travelling with you?	Enter yes or no.
Father's Given Name:	Enter your father's first name.
Father's Family Name or Surname:	Enter your father's last name.
Father's Date of Birth:	Enter your father's date of birth.
Father's Place and Country of Birth:	Enter his city and country of birth.
Father's Nationality/Nationalities:	Enter his nationality/ies.
Mother's Given Name:	Enter your mother's first name.
Mother's Family Name or Surname:	Enter your mother's last name.
Mother's Date of Birth:	Enter your mother's date of birth.
Mother's Place and Country of Birth:	Enter her city and country of birth.
Mother's Nationality/Nationalities:	Enter her nationality/ies.

Section 5: Immigration History

Have you ever travelled outside of your country or residence in the last 10 years?	Select yes or no.
Have you ever travelled to the U.K. in the last 10 years?	Select yes or no.
Have you ever been refused a U.K. visa?	Select yes or no.
Have you ever been refused a visa for any country?	Select yes or no.
Have you been granted a visa in the last 10 years?	Select yes or no.
Have you ever been refused entry on arrival to the U.K. in the last 10 years?	Select yes or no.
Have you ever been deported, removed or otherwise required to leave the U.K.?	Select yes or no.
Have you ever been deported, removed or otherwise required to leave another country?	Select yes or no.
Have you made an application to the Home Office to remain in the UK in the last 10 years?	Select yes or no.

Do you have a UK National Insurance Number? Select yes or no.

Do you have any criminal convictions in any country? Select yes or no.

Have you ever been charged in any country for an offence for which you have not yet been tried in court? Select yes or no.

In times of either peace or war have you ever been involved in, or suspected of involvement in, war crimes, crimes against humanity or genocide? Select yes or no.

Have you ever been involved in, supported or encouraged terrorist activity in any country? Select yes or no.

Have you ever expressed views that justify or glorify terrorist violence? Select yes or no.

Have you engaged in any other activities that might indicate you might not be a person of good character? Select yes or no.

Section 6: Additional Information

Is there any other information you wish to be considered as part of your application? Enter yes or no.

When do you wish to travel to the UK? Enter date of arrival (please note that you cannot arrive **more than 7 days before** the start of a course of 6 months or less)

After you have answered all questions, you will be given an opportunity to review your answers. Once you have done so, click next to "Electronically sign your online visa application." Once you have signed your electronic signature, you will not be able to change or modify your answers. If you have not fully completed your form but saved it please note that the application **can only be saved for 7 days if not submitted.**

*You should print the completed application and keep it in a safe place. At the end of the application you will get a 'visa application reference number'.

You will then need to submit your payment information. The current fee for the visa (as of July 2011) is £255 GBP pounds.

After you have done this, you will be prompted to make an appointment to have your biometric data (10 finger scans and a digital photograph) taken. This is a mandatory part of

the application process and will involve visiting one of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services Application Support Centers. A list of Application Support Centers is available on the USCIS website at www.uscis.gov. The biometric appointment is invalid unless the application is submitted.

PBS APPENDIX 8 FORM (VAF9) Tier 4 (General) Student Self Assessment

In addition to making your online application, you will also need to print and complete a hard copy of the following form:

Points Based System Form (VAF9) **Appendix 8: Tier 4 (General) Student Self Assessment form** – ensure it is this version (for CAS assigned on or after 21 April 2011) that you use.

<http://www.ukvisas.gov.uk/resources/en/docs/1903073/PBSappendix8generalstudent1>

It is very important that you read the Points Based System Tier 4 General and Child Student (INF29) guidance before completing this section, available online at

<http://www.ukvisas.gov.uk/en/howtoapply/infs/>

The PBS Appendix 8 form (VAF9) must be completed by a Tier 4 (General) Student visa applicant in addition to the online application and submitted with the supporting documentation. Answers to questions on this form must agree with information provided in the CAS statement issued by AIFS where applicable.

Please ensure you complete all the necessary sections. Below is guidance on completing the VAF9 form. Please note that we have only included information on completing certain sections of the form that we think you may need assistance with.

***Please note that the below is intended as general guidance only and should be read in conjunction with the Tier 4 guidance issued by the UKBA. Please note that the UKBA guidance and procedures often change without notice and that it is your responsibility to check the most current application information (available on the UKBA website)**

Part 1: First and Middle legal names to be written in 1.1 and Family name in 1.2

Part 2: No questions need to be answered in this section

Part 3: Questions 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3

3.1 Full name of sponsor: American Institute for Foreign Study.

3.2 Sponsor Licence Number: 586CGV044.

3.3 Full address of your Tier 4 Sponsor: AIFS, Dilke House, 1 Malet Street, London WC1E 7JN, UK.

Part 4: Questions 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5

4.1: Title of your course of study: e.g. Santa Barbara City College London Study Abroad.

4.2: BA

4.3: Give the start and end dates of your course of study: Enter program dates shown in CAS statement from AIFS which are; Start date: **10th September 2011, End date: 9th December 2011.**

4.4: Full address of primary site of study: AIFS, Dilke House, 1 Malet Street, London WC1E 7JN, UK.

4.5: Have you already started studying this course? Please check NO box and go to Part 5.

Part 5: Questions 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, 5.8, 5.9, 5.10, and 5.14.

5.1: Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS). Enter a cross in the box to confirm you are claiming points for having a valid Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies.

5.2: Put your Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) number in the box. You will have received this number from AIFS.

5.3: Confirm which of the following options applies: Enter a cross in box 'Studying' then go to question 5.4.

5.4: Original certificates of qualifications: As you are not a first semester freshman and are therefore participating on the study abroad as part of an ongoing degree course **do NOT** check this box.

5.5: Have you been assessed by your sponsor by other means: Check box YES and in the box below you should write "Part of a study abroad programme. My suitability was assessed on the progress I have made so far on my existing course.

5.6: Please check 'National of a majority English speaking country' and go to question 5.7

5.7: Give your nationality in the box provided, United States of America, if applicable and then go to questions 5.14.

5.14: Please check box NO and go to PART 6

Part 6: 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.7, 6.12, 6.13, 6.14, 6.15, 6.16, 6.17, 6.18,

6.1: Give the fees for your course of study as stated in the CAS statement received from AIFS, this will be 0.

6.2: Please put a cross (X) in the box Yes –Paid to Overseas Higher Education Institution, the amount of course fees paid in pounds, stated in the CAS statement received from AIFS will be 0.

6.3: Evidence of payment – check box that states 'shown in the CAS'

6.4: Put a cross (X) in the box

6.5: Check box 'Initial application'

6.6: Please cross "Inside the Inner London Boroughs".

6.7: Study in Central London £800 GBP per month – please refer to Tier 4 Policy Guidance for a full explanation of maintenance charges. You will need to put £3200 GBP in the box. Go to question 6.12

6.12: Check Yes –Paid to UK Education Provider and give the amount of accommodation fees paid as stated in the CAS statement received from AIFS. It will be **£2220.65 GBP if an apartment student – please make sure you enter the correct amount.**

6.13: Evidence –please cross (X) box 'shown in the CAS'.

6.14: Check box NO and go to question 6.17

6.17: Outstanding fees/maintenance, please cross (X) box NO and go to PART 7.

Part 7:

Please put 30 points in box provided 'Possession of a CAS'. Please note that AIFS (your Tier 4 Sponsor) have already included details of the money paid to them on the student's Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS), therefore no further documents are required to show that this money has been paid (see page 17 of Tier 4 Policy Guidance). Please put 10 in the Maintenance (Funds) box and in the space provided put 'Financial guarantee letter from the University of St Thomas.

The UK Border Agency wants to see evidence that all visa applicants have sufficient money available to them for education and living expenses while in the United Kingdom. Hence,

you must be able to demonstrate that you have the tuition fees and funds available to support yourself. For courses of up to 9 months duration you will be required to show that you have the full tuition fee plus the appropriate monthly amount for **each** month you intend to be in the UK available to you. This amount is calculated at £800 per month if you intend to study in Inner London. In addition, the amounts listed above **must** be held in your personal bank account, or a parent or legal guardians account for a minimum period of 28 days. The evidence produced from the bank must show that during the 28 days leading up to the date the evidence is generated, the balance has never dropped below the right amount. Dropping below the amount even for one day will be seen by the UK Border Agency as evidence that the student does not meet the financial requirements and their application will be refused. The end of that 28 day period must not be more than one month before the date of your application, for which you must show bank statements/other evidence. Bank statements must not be more than one month old. More information about this is available in section 11 of the Tier 4 guidance.

* Please note that the UKBA have recently compiled a list of countries that they consider as having 'low risk applicants', the USA is considered one of them. Applicants from 'low risk' countries may not need to submit bank documents or evidence of funds with their visa application, however the UKBA does reserve the right to request that documents be submitted if they deem it necessary. Please ensure you read the policy guidance at <http://www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/applicationforms/pbs/Tier4migrantguidance1.pdf> - **please read it.**

For information on supporting documentation please see <http://www.ukvisas.gov.uk/resources/en/docs/1903073/supportdocstier4genstudent>

Part of the fee you have paid to AIFS includes an accommodation (homestay/apartment) fee. The money paid for accommodation can be deducted from the £800/month, meaning the amount you have to prove you have available will be considerably less. The accommodation amount will be shown on the CAS statement sent to you by AIFS – please study this carefully and work out the amount you do need to prove you have available. The CAS statement from AIFS will also detail the course fees that you have paid to us in advance

Once completed, you will need to send this form, along with your passport, a recent colour passport sized photograph (45mm x 35mm) to the relevant British Consulate (New York). Please read the photograph guidance at <http://www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/applicationforms/flr/photoguidance0409.pdf> Failure to submit required evidence and documentation is likely to lead to a refusal of the application.

How long will it take to get my Tier 4 (General) Student entry clearance once I have submitted a complete application to my consulate?

The answer to this question varies depending on the time of year which you apply and your consulate. According to the British Embassy website, processing takes five business days excluding mail time (passports are returned to you from the consulate using Federal Express), but you should give your consulate as much time as possible to process your entry clearance application – which means submitting your completed application as soon as possible. In reality, processing may take several weeks – we cannot say for sure, and your consulate may not have a definite answer for you either. Please also bear in mind that if your application contains errors it will be rejected, meaning more time will be needed for your visa to be obtained.

You may wish to use an express couriers if you feel you don't have enough time to submit your entry clearance application to the consulate and get it processed and returned to you in time to make your departure for the U.K. AIFS cannot recommend any courier service above any other – you must take responsibility for doing your homework in terms of choosing an express courier service if you feel this service is necessary.

Helpful Hints...

Please make sure your Tier 4 (General) Student visa application is complete according to your consulate's instructions and sent in one package with a tracking number. If anything is missing or incorrect, the consulate may return the entire application to you and ask you to start over. This takes time and may jeopardize your ability to obtain a prior entry clearance visa in time for departure. You need your prior entry clearance visa and passport in hand before boarding your plane.

Please be sure when sending any visa documents by mail, including your passport, you send these materials registered mail, return receipt requested, or you use a service with a tracking number so you can be sure your documents have arrived at the consulate safely. We also suggest keeping photocopies of the originals.

Since the British Consulate **needs your actual passport as part of your visa application, please don't plan any personal or family travel requiring a passport until you have received your passport and visa back from the consulate.** The consulate does not honor requests to expedite the issuance of your visa even if you are willing to pay for faster processing, although if you have planned travel, you may wish to look into a courier service.

If you are submitting your supporting documentation in person to your consulate, please be sure you make an appointment first. Appointments can be made at <http://ukinusa.fco.gov.uk/en/about-us/>

You should also be able to find your consulate's office hours on this website. Be advised, consulates are extremely strict about appointments and office hours. Even if you have been waiting in line, once they close, they can and will turn you away. As always, don't be late for your appointment!

Remember: it is your sole responsibility to obtain your Tier 4 (General) Student visa before departure from the U.S. Failure to obtain the appropriate travel documentation for your study abroad program **is not grounds for a refund.** Please also remember that a Tier 4 (General) Student visa does not give you automatic right of entry to the UK – admission is at the discretion of the border and immigration officials.



17th May 2011

CAS STATEMENT – AIFS (AS YOUR SPONSOR) WILL HAVE ENTERED THE INFORMATION BELOW INTO THE UK BORDER AGENCY ONLINE SPONSORSHIP MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN ORDER TO GENERATE A CAS REFERENCE NUMBER FOR YOU. THIS DOCUMENT IS FOR REFERENCE ONLY

*PLEASE ENSURE YOU USE THE HIGHLIGHTED INFORMATION BELOW WHEN COMPLETING YOUR APPENDIX 8 FORM (VAF9). THE INFORMATION YOU WRITE ON YOUR FORM MUST CORRESPOND WITH THE INFORMATION LISTED BELOW. PLEASE NOTE THAT NOT ALL THE INFORMATION SUPPLIED BELOW WILL BE REQUIRED ON YOUR APPENDIX 8 FORM (VAF9). PLEASE ENSURE YOU READ THE TIER 4 GUIDANCE NOTES VERY CAREFULLY BEFORE AND DURING COMPLETION OF YOUR APPLICATION.

Route	Tier 4 General Student
Given name(s)	Your name as it appears on your passport e.g. Joe Adam
Family name	Name as it appears on your passport
Date of birth	Please list as Day/Month/Year, e.g. 06/September/1989
Gender	Male/Female
Student Nationality	Please list your nationality, e.g. United States
Place of birth	Please list your place of birth, e.g. Minneapolis, Minnesota
Country of birth	Please list your country of birth, e.g. United States. If other please state.
Student Passport Number	Please list your passport number
Course Title (question 4.1 on Appendix 8 form)	London Business Semester Study Abroad
Course Level (question 4.2 on Appendix 8 form)	BA
Course start date (question 4.3 on Appendix 8 form)	6 September 2011
Course end date (question 4.3 on Appendix 8 form)	18 December 2011
Full time course (not required on Appendix 8 form)	I have checked box on SMS
Hours per week (not required on Appendix 8 form)	I have entered 0 on SMS
Main study address in the United Kingdom (question 4.4 on Appendix 8 form)	AIFS, Dilke House, 1 Malet Street, London WC1E 7JN, UK
Evidence provided/Evidence used to obtain offer (question 5.5 on Appendix 8 form)	Please state “Part of a study abroad program. My suitability was assessed on the progress I have made so far on my existing course”
English Language courses- question 5.6	Check ‘National of a majority English speaking country’ and go to PART 6

Accommodation provided	I have checked box on SMS
Course fees for first year includes accommodation or boarding costs	I have checked box on SMS
Course fees charged for the first year of the course (in pounds sterling) (question 6.1 on Appendix 8 form)	I have entered 0 and stated in Evidence box that course and accommodation fees have been paid in full to the overseas higher education institution. You will need to enter 0 in the box provided (please note it is a numerical zero and not the letter zero)
Course fees paid to date (question 6.2 on Appendix 8 form)	Have entered 0 (please note it is a numerical zero and not the letter zero) and stated in Evidence box that course and accommodation fees have been paid in full to the overseas higher education institution. You will need to check box 'Yes – Paid to Overseas Higher Education Institution' and go to questions 6.3
Boarding or accommodation fees charged for the first year (in pounds sterling) (question 6.12 on Appendix 8 form)	£ (\$@£1.61/£1) (www.oanda.com)17th May 2011. Please check box 'Yes –paid to UK Education Provider and enter the above amount, £ in the box below
Accommodation /or boarding fees paid to date(in pounds sterling) (not required on Appendix 8 form)	Have entered 0
Tick if applicant is undertaking a work placement as part of the course (not required on Appendix 8 form)	Have checked box
Address of organization offering placement (not required on Appendix 8 form)	A work placement is being arranged. Details are not yet confirmed
Overseas institution details (not required on Appendix 8 form)	University of St Thomas, 2115 Summit Avenue, St Paul, Minnesota 55105, USA
Sponsor Licence Number	586CGV044
Sponsor Contact Details	Sinead Sheehan (Authorising Officer, Level 1 User, Contact Person)
Sponsor Address	American Institute for Foreign Study, Dilke House, 1 Malet Street, London WC1E 7JN, UK.

Sincerely,

Sinéad Sheehan
Authorising Officer