

Student Immigration Update – August 2019

30.08.2019

1. Work during and after studies

1.1 Switching from Tier 4 to Tier 2 visa

Tier 4 Master's students with a Tier 2 job offer, and whose course ends in September (with exam board typically taking place in November) previously required a 'course completed pending exam board' letter from the Student Immigration & Compliance team in order to apply for a Tier 2 visa.

From 30 March 2019, they no longer need this letter. Instead, they will need to submit a standard 'student status letter' (this can be self-printed now via [Student Records Online](#)), and the letter must confirm that their course end date is within the next 3 months.

For example, if the course end date is 30 September 2019, then the earliest time students can submit a Tier 2 visa application is 30 June 2019, even if they are still writing dissertation. For more information, please refer to Paragraph 28.8 on the [Tier 2 Sponsor Guidance](#).

Students making a Tier 2 visa application using this route (i.e., before receiving their official degree award), should be reminded that it is up to the Tier 2 sponsor to decide if successful completion of their degree is an employment condition. Furthermore, they cannot start the Tier 2 job until they have received the Tier 2 visa.

If you are considering looking for employment in the UK after studies, please remember that students switching from Tier 4 to Tier 2 in the UK have a number of privileges (for example, they are exempt from the 'residential labour market test'; there is no quota and no Immigration Skills Charge).

1.2 New Start Up visa route for Tier 4 graduates wishing to start a business in the UK

A new 'Start-up' category replaced the Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur Scheme from 29 March 2019. The University will continue to endorse Warwick graduates who are interested in the scheme, which offers a visa valid for 2 years. Applications must be submitted to the Enterprise Team for consideration and will be judged on three core criteria: Innovation, Viability and Scalability. The selection panel also need to be reasonably satisfied that the endorsee will spend the majority of their working time in the UK on developing their business ventures. Once the panel makes a decision to endorse a graduate on this Scheme, the Student Immigration & Compliance team will contact the applicant to check that immigration requirements are met before producing the endorsement letter. Applicants can then make their visa application. More information can be found [online](#).

1.3 How many hours can a Tier 4 student work/do an internship/work placement?

If you are unsure as to how many hours you can work, please check on our [website](#). You can also [request a letter](#) to confirm your permitted working hours if your employer requires one.

2. Tier 4 visa eligibility and application update

2.1 Low risk nationality list update

Brazil, Kazakhstan, Mauritius, Oman, Peru, and Tunisia were added to the 'Low Risk' nationality list from 6 April 2019. This means students holding a passport from one of these countries no longer need to submit/upload the following documents with their Tier 4 visa application (although they still need to prepare them in case of spot-check):

- Evidence of finances,
- Academic qualifications,
- English language certificate (SELT),
- Evidence of academic progression (successful completion of the previous course in the UK while holding a Tier 4 visa)

Argentina, The Maldives, and Trinidad and Tobago have been removed from the list.

More information can be found on our [Low Risk Nationalities](#) webpage.

2.2 Time Limit for studying in the UK (commonly known as '5-year-cap')

From 6 April 2019, when calculating a student's time limit for studying in the UK with a Tier 4 visa, which is usually:

- 2 years for below-degree level study;
- 5 years for undergraduate courses;
- 5 or 6 years for undergraduate and postgraduate taught courses;
- 8 years for anyone who have previously completed a research course which is longer than 13 months)

Any period when the student is under the age of 18 will not be included.

2.3 Original documents no longer required for a Tier 4 visa application

From 5 November 2018, original documents are no longer required to be submitted (uploaded) with a Tier 4 visa application. A good quality scanned copy will need to be uploaded either by students or a staff member in the Visa Application Centre (digital assistance).

2.4 Concerns over appointment availability when applying for a visa in the UK

We are aware of concerns regarding the appointment availability when making a visa application in the UK. Students who have just completed a UK course and are extending their visa in the UK for a further course at Warwick, students who have enrolled on the pre-session English language course and require visa extension in the UK, and non-EEA family members of EEA nationals may be affected. We are monitoring the situation and exploring alternatives, and will contact affected students directly if there are further developments.

Remember, if you are starting a new course at Warwick and are applying for your visa in the UK, you do not need to have obtained a new visa in order to start the course. Please see our [Enrolment FAQ](#).

3. Travelling in and out of the UK

3.1 Landing card abolished for all nationalities

There is no longer a need to fill out a Landing Card before entering the UK. Passenger information will be captured digitally instead.

3.2 Expansion of e-Gate facilities

From 20 May 2019, students from Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea & USA will be directed to use the e-Gate when entering the UK instead of seeing a Border Force officer.

We have produced a [self-assessment tool](#) for you to find out whether you can use the e-Gate and anything that you need to be aware of.

3.3 Travelling in and out of the UK near the course end date

As part of the [Tier 4 Pilot Scheme](#), the Home Office has confirmed that Tier 4 students who intend to travel in and out of the UK:

- Near their course end date, or,
- After their course end date but before visa expiry date

should be able to re-enter the UK using their existing Tier 4 visa, as long as there are legitimate reasons (such as attending graduation, wrap up affairs, look for internship, look for job etc.). Further information can be found [on our website](#).

3.4 Travelling to Schengen countries for University Business

If you are a currently enrolled student who requires a Schengen visa for University business (for example, it is part of your course, or, your academic department is covering the cost of your travel because you are travelling on university business), you may be able to obtain a [University Overseas Business Travel Insurance Certificate](#) for your Schengen visa application. Please refer to our [website](#) for further information.

4. Anything else

From 30 March 2019, holders of Hong Kong passports will no longer require a certificate of sponsorship in order to apply under Tier 5 (Youth Mobility) – see more information on [Tier 5 visa](#).

The Home Office UKVI is looking for participants for their digital research if you are from outside of the UK and may need to make a visa application in the future. Taking part in the research will have no impact on current or future applications to the Home Office and your

personal details will not be shared outside of the research team. Research sessions would normally last one hour, and include you trying out some of their designs and giving your thoughts on these. As a thank you for your time, you will receive 'Compliments' shopping vouchers for taking part in the session, which can be used in various high street shops. If you want to join the panel, fill in the [recruitment survey](#). If you have any questions, please contact them at takepart@digital.homeoffice.gov.uk

If you have any questions about this update, please [contact the Student Immigration & Compliance Team](#) for more information.