

Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) visa

1. Overview

You can apply for a Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) visa if you:

- are a graduate who has been officially endorsed as having a genuine and credible business idea
- are from outside the [European Economic Area \(EEA\)](#) and Switzerland
- meet the other [eligibility](#) criteria

Getting endorsed

You must be endorsed by either:

- the Department for International Trade (DIT) as part of the [elite global graduate entrepreneur programme \(Sirius\)](#)
- a UK higher education institution (HEI) if it's an [authorised endorsing body](#)

How long it will take

How long it takes depends on how you've been endorsed.

DIT endorsement

You should get a decision on your visa within 3 weeks if you've been endorsed by DIT. The earliest you can apply is 3 months before you travel.

You can check the [guide processing times](#) to find out how long getting a visa might take in your country.

UK HEI endorsement

You'll usually get a decision on your visa within 8 weeks if you've been endorsed by a UK higher education institution. The earliest you can apply is 3 months before you travel.

Fees

How much you pay for a Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) visa depends on your situation, where you are and how you apply.

Who you're applying for	Apply (outside the UK)	Extend or switch by post in the UK
Yourself	£349	£474
If you're a citizen of Turkey or Macedonia	£294	£419
All dependants	£349 each person	£474 each person

You'll also have [to pay the healthcare surcharge](#) as part of your application. Check how much you'll have to pay [before you apply](#).

How long you can stay

You can stay in the UK for one year on a Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) visa.

You can apply to [extend this visa](#) for one more year.

What you can and can't do

You can:

- bring [family members](#) with you
- extend your stay in the UK using this visa

- switch into this visa from some other visa categories

You can't:

- get [public funds](#)
- work as a doctor or dentist in training
- work as a professional sportsperson, for example a sports coach
- settle in the UK on this visa

2. Eligibility

The eligibility requirements for this visa depend on who is endorsing you.

Endorsement by a UK higher education institution (HEI)

You need all of the following to be eligible:

- a UK-recognised bachelor's degree, master's degree or PhD awarded before your date of endorsement
- endorsement from an [authorised UK higher education institution](#) issued in the past 3 months
- £945 in savings if applying from inside the UK, or £1,890 if applying from outside the UK - this is to prove you can support yourself and you must have had this in your bank account for 90 days before you apply
- to meet the [English language requirement](#)
- permission to remain in the UK from your financial sponsor if they're a government or an international scholarship agency and have paid your course fees and living costs in the past 12 months

You can't apply with any of the following:

- foundation degrees
- honorary degrees
- qualifications awarded in the UK by overseas awarding bodies
- qualifications undertaken at overseas campuses of UK institutions

- professional and vocational qualifications
- postgraduate certificates or diplomas

Endorsement by the Department for International Trade (DIT)

You need all of the following to be eligible:

- a degree qualification that's recognised as being equal to a UK bachelor's degree
- [criteria set by DIT](#)
- endorsement from DIT issued in the past 3 months
- £945 in savings if applying from inside the UK or £1,890 if applying from outside the UK - this is to prove you can support yourself and you must have had this in your bank account for 90 days before you apply
- to meet the [English language requirement](#)

You don't have to provide evidence that you have sufficient savings to support yourself if you have an endorsement from DIT stating you've been awarded funding to cover your maintenance.

Contact [UK NARIC](#) to find out if you can use your qualification for this visa.

Read the [Tier 1 \(Graduate Entrepreneur\) guidance](#) when you apply for a visa.

3. Knowledge of English

You may need to prove your knowledge of the English language when you apply.

You can prove your knowledge of English by either:

- passing an [approved English language test](#) with at least CEFR level B1 in reading, writing, speaking and listening

- having an academic qualification that was taught in English and is recognised by [UK NARIC](#) as being equivalent to a UK bachelor's degree, master's degree or PhD

You may be able to meet the English language requirement in other ways. Check the [full visa guidance](#) for detailed information.

Exceptions

You won't need to prove your knowledge of English if you're a national of one of the following countries:

- Antigua and Barbuda
- Australia
- the Bahamas
- Barbados
- Belize
- Canada
- Dominica
- Grenada
- Guyana
- Jamaica
- New Zealand
- St Kitts and Nevis
- St Lucia
- St Vincent and the Grenadines
- Trinidad and Tobago
- USA

You also may not have to prove your knowledge of English in other circumstances - check the [visa guidance](#).

4. Documents you must provide

The documents you need to provide depend on how you're being endorsed.

Endorsed by a UK higher education institution (HEI)

When you apply you'll need to provide:

- a current passport or other valid travel identification
- a letter of endorsement from your UK HEI
- bank statements showing you've had at least £945 in savings if applying from inside the UK or £1,890 if applying from outside the UK - you must have had this in your bank account for 90 days before you apply
- your [tuberculosis test results](#) if you're from a country where you have to take the test

You'll also need to provide the following if your degree was awarded by a different UK HEI than the one providing your endorsement:

- an original certificate of your qualification or an [accepted alternative](#)
- proof that you have [knowledge of the English language](#)

You need a page in your passport that's blank on both sides for your visa.

Endorsed by the Department for International Trade (DIT)

When you apply you'll need to provide:

- a current passport or other valid travel identification
- a letter of endorsement from DIT
- an original certificate of your academic qualification or an alternative from the [documents guide](#)
- previous passports
- a residence permit, 'green card' or valid visa if you're not a national of the country from where you're applying
- proof that you meet the [English language requirement](#)

- bank statements showing you've had at least £945 in savings if applying from inside the UK or £1,890 if applying from outside the UK - you must have had this in your bank account for 90 days before you apply
- your [tuberculosis test results](#) if you're from a country where you have to take the test
- a letter from NARIC that proves you can use your qualification to apply for this visa

You'll need to have a blank page in your passport on which to put the visa.

You'll need to provide a [certified translation](#) of any documents that aren't in English or Welsh.

Read the [documents guide](#) for a detailed list of the documents you can provide.

You may need to provide additional documents depending on your circumstances.