

Tier 4 (Child) student visa

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1. Overview

You can apply for the Tier 4 (Child) student visa if you're aged between 4 and 17 and you want to study at an independent school in the UK.

You must also:

- have a place on a course
- have the consent of your parent or guardian
- have enough money to cover your course fees and living costs
- be from a country that's not in the [European Economic Area \(EEA\)](#) or Switzerland
- meet the [eligibility requirements](#)

There will be no change to the [rights and status of EU nationals living in the UK, nor UK nationals living in the EU](#), while the UK remains in the EU.

How long it will take

The earliest you can apply for a visa is 3 months before you start your course.

You'll usually get a decision on your visa within 3 weeks. You can [check visa processing times](#) for your country.

Fees

It costs £335 to apply for a Tier 4 (Child) student visa from outside the UK.

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

Your age and the length of your course of study will affect how long you can stay.

Age when you apply	How long you can stay
Under 16	Course length (up to 6 years) plus 4 months afterwards
16 or 17	Course length (up to 3 years) plus 4 months afterwards

You can arrive in the UK:

- up to 1 week before your course starts if your course lasts 6 months or less
- up to 1 month before your course starts if your course lasts more than 6 months

What you can and can't do

You can:

- study at an independent school
- apply from outside the UK
- [apply to extend your stay](#)

You can also work, if you're 16 or over:

- part-time during term for up to 10 hours per week
- full-time during vacations
- on a work placement as part of your course, (but not for more than 50% of your course time)
- as a student union sabbatical officer for up to 2 years

You can't:

- study at an academy or a local authority-funded school (also known as a maintained school) or further education college
- get [public funds](#)
- take a full-time permanent job or be self-employed
- work as a doctor or dentist in training
- work as a professional sports person (for example a sports coach) or entertainer
- settle in the UK on this visa
- bring in family members ('dependants') - if your parents want to accompany you, they'll need to apply for a [Parent of a Tier 4 \(Child\) visa](#)

Read the [full guidance](#) on the Tier 4 (Child) student visa.

2. Eligibility

You must have:

- an unconditional offer of a place on a course with a [licensed Tier 4 sponsor](#)
- enough money to support yourself and pay for your course - this will vary depending on your circumstances

You should read the [guidance](#) for the full list of documents and how much money you'll need according to your situation.

Your course

You can do a course that's taught in line with:

- the [national curriculum](#)
- the [Regulated Qualifications Framework \(RQF\)](#)
- [independent school education inspection standards](#)

You can also do a course that's accepted as being at the same academic level by:

- [Office for Standards in Education \(Ofsted\)](#)
- [HM Inspectorate of Education \(in Scotland\)](#)
- [Estyn \(in Wales\)](#)
- [Education and Training Inspectorate \(in Northern Ireland\)](#)
- [Independent Schools Inspectorate](#)

You can do a short course to prepare you for your main course, such as pre-sessional study.

You can't do a foundation course that will prepare you for direct entry to a higher education institution.

Confirmation of acceptance for studies

Your education provider will send you a reference number called a confirmation of acceptance for studies (CAS) once they've offered you a place on a course. You'll need to enter this on your application.

Your CAS can cover both the pre-sessional course and your main course of study.

You must [apply for your visa](#) no later than 6 months after you're sent the CAS.

3. Documents you must provide

When you apply you'll need to provide:

- a current passport or other valid travel documentation
- proof that you can support yourself and pay for your course - this will vary depending on your circumstances

- proof of parental or other legal guardian consent
- proof of your relationship with your parent or guardian
- your [tuberculosis \(TB\) test results](#) if you're from a country where you have to take the test

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

Your documents will usually be sent back within 14 days.

Read the [full guidance](#) for the full list of documents and how much money you'll need according to your situation.