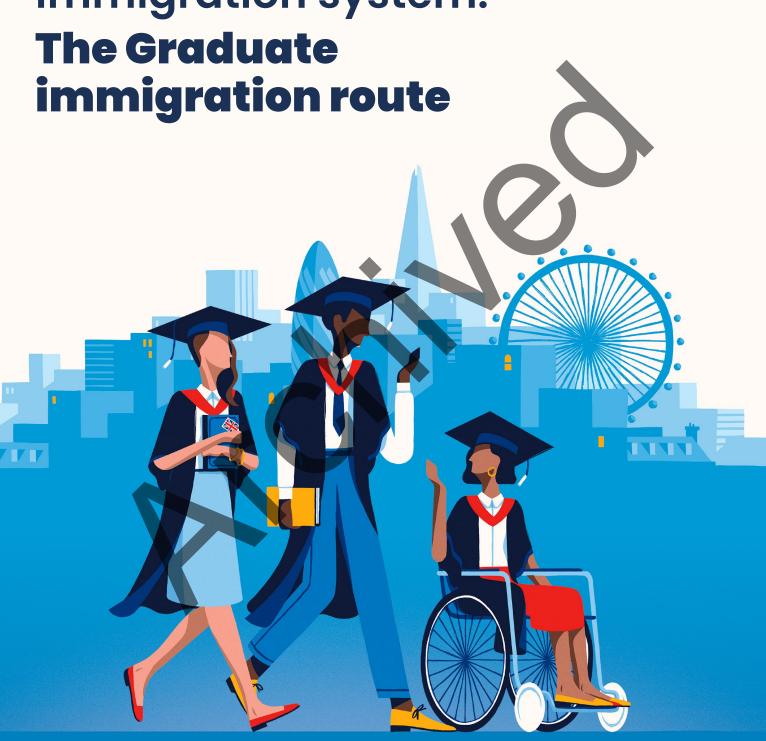# This publication was archived on 15 April 2024.

This publication is no longer current and is not being updated.

The points-based immigration system:
The Graduate immigration route

The UK has a world-leading education sector and welcomes talented and high potential students to universities, further education and English language colleges every year.

The Graduate route provides an opportunity for international students who have been awarded their degree to stay in the UK and work, or look for work, at any skill level for two years, or three years for doctoral students.

The Graduate route is an unsponsored route, meaning you do not need a job offer to apply for the route. You will be able to work flexibly, switch jobs and develop your career in the UK as required.

Who is eligible to apply?

The Graduate route is available to international students, who have completed a degree at undergraduate level or above (or one of the **limited number of professional qualifications at degree level or above**) at a **Higher Education Provider with a track record of compliance**, and who have a valid Tier 4 or Student visa at the time of application.

You will need to have completed the entirety of your course in the UK as a student, apart from permitted study abroad programmes or remote study due to COVID-19, for which **specific concessions have been agreed**.

The route does not require you to show funds or finance, and you do not need to demonstrate English language ability when applying, as you will have already proved English language ability by successfully completing your degree at a UK university.

You must have completed the qualification that was named on the Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) associated with your Student (or Tier 4) visa, or following a change of course which was allowed without applying for further permission.

Fees

The cost to apply to the Graduate route is £700 (for both two and three-year Graduate route applications) and you will also need to pay the **Immigration Health Surcharge** as part of your application. This gives you access to the UK's National Health Service on generally the same basis as a UK permanent resident. The Immigration Health Surcharge costs £624 per year and the full amount needs to be paid when applying.

Dependants will also be required to pay the application fee of £700, as well as the Immigration Health Surcharge.

When should I apply to the Graduate route?

You can apply to the Graduate route once your university has sent you your final course results, but not before this. Your university also needs to tell us that you have successfully completed your course before we can consider your application. You do not have to wait until you have graduated to apply.

You must be in the UK when you apply. Those who apply from outside of the UK will be rejected and refused entry to the UK and could lose their eligibility to apply for the Graduate route as a whole. In addition, application fees may not be refunded.

You should not leave the UK or **Common Travel Area** whilst you are waiting for a decision on your application. Doing so may affect your eligibility for the Graduate route and result in you being unable to re-enter the UK.

If your visa expires after you have applied to the Graduate route, you will be permitted to remain in the UK whilst your application is being considered.

How do I apply to the Graduate route?

The application process will be slightly different to what you experienced when you first applied to study in the UK.

For the vast majority of applicants, the process will be entirely digital, and if your application is successful, you will be issued with an eVisa. You will start your application at GOV.UK where you will create a UK Visas and Immigration account and use the 'UK Immigration ID Check' app to verify your identity. To do this, you will need your Biometric Residence Card or Permit (BRC/P) if you were given one when you were granted your Student (or Tier 4) visa, or if you are an EU, EEA or Swiss national, you can use your biometric passport to verify your identity on the app. Once you've successfully applied, you will be granted an eVisa. If you are a **citizen of any of these countries** listed on GOV.UK, you will also be issued with a BRP for use when travelling in and out of the UK.

The app is free and is compatible with Android phones and iPhone 7 or newer models. If you do not own a compatible phone, you can use the app from a family or friend's mobile phone. No information is stored on the phone or app after you close it.

Those unable to use the 'UK Immigration: ID Check' app, will need to visit a **UK Visas and Citizenship Application Services** centre (UKVCAS) to complete the application process. You'll be told how to book this when you apply.

You will need the Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) number from your current Student (or Tier 4) visa to apply under this route so make sure you have this to hand. If you do not know your CAS number, contact your university. You do not need a new CAS to apply, you should use your existing one.

If you are experiencing problems with the application process, you can **contact UK Visas and Immigration**.

Receiving your decision and accessing your eVisa

The **processing times for applications** vary depending on how you applied. If you prove your identity using the app, the processing time starts when your documents are uploaded. If you attend a UKVCAS centre, the processing time starts after you have attended. Most people receive a decision within 8 weeks.

If you have applied using the digital route, as soon as you get notification of the decision on your Graduate route application, you will be able to view your immigration status digitally (eVisa) and prove your rights in the UK.

You will use your UKVI account credentials to sign into the online **View and Prove service** on GOV.UK, which is where you can access your eVisa.

To sign in to view your eVisa, you'll need:

- Details of your passport or BRC/P you used to apply
- Your date of birth
- Access to the mobile number or email address you used when you applied - you'll then be sent a code for signing in.

If you have updated your identity document or sign in details (email address or phone number) in your account since applying, you will need to use the updated details to sign in instead.

You can view your eVisa on any device, such as a mobile, tablet or laptop.

Signing into the View and Prove service allows you to:

- View your eVisa and check what rights you have in the UK, for example the right to work
- Prove your status to others, such as employers, landlords or education providers, by generating a 'share code' which gives them time limited access to relevant data
- Update some of your personal details, for example your passport number or email address.

If you used your previous BRC/P to set up your UKVI account you will need to use this document to sign in to your account, however as that document is now invalid, we would advise that you change this to your current passport or travel document to ensure you can continue to access your UKVI account easily. Adding your current passport or travel document to your account will also ensure that you avoid unnecessary delays when travelling in and out of the UK.

You can update your details through the **'update your UK Visas and Immigration account details'** service or by using the 'update details' function in the View and Prove service.

If you are unable to apply using the app and have to visit a UKVCAS to apply to the Graduate route, you cannot currently create a UKVI account. If this applies to you and you are given or continue to hold a BRC/P, you will still be able to use some online services to evidence your rights, rather than having to rely on your physical document. You can choose to use the **online right to work service** to prove your right to work in the UK to an employer. You can also use the **online right to rent service** to prove your right to rent in England. In the future, everyone will be able to register for a UKVI account.

Where we provide automatic access to your immigration status

As part of our wider reform of the immigration system, we are increasingly enabling some Government departments and public authorities to be able to automatically access immigration status information, in order to provide services. For example, NHS England and Wales.

Where this is the case, you do not need to share your immigration status. Organisations will confirm your identity and then be able to access the information directly. If the organisation does need to see your status, they will inform you and you'll be able to use the View and Prove service to share your immigration status information with them.

The **Borders, immigration and citizenship privacy notice** provides information about how we share data with other Government departments.

Travelling in and out of the UK

If you are a **citizen of any of these countries** listed on GOV.UK, you should always carry your current BRP when travelling, as you will need to show this to the carrier you are travelling with and may be asked to present it at the UK border.

When crossing the UK border, information will be checked digitally on arrival, and those with a UKVI account will not routinely need to prove their status. To prevent unnecessary delays at the border, it is important to ensure the document you travel on is registered to your account. You can update your details to register a new document if you intend to travel on a different document to the one you applied with (for example, a new passport). When you use the update details service to tell us of a new document your old document will remain linked to your account, and where still valid you can use either document to travel. If you have told us of a new document but are still awaiting confirmation that your account has been updated, where possible you should carry your old document as well.

If you need help accessing or using the online immigration status services, you can contact the **UKVI Resolution Centre.**

Further information on **viewing and proving your immigration status** is available on GOV.UK

What are the conditions of the Graduate route?

Under the Graduate route, you are allowed to take up extra study, but you cannot study with a student sponsor on a course which would meet the requirements of a Student visa, and you cannot study at a state school.

You are not allowed to bring new dependants. Dependants already in the UK as a Student dependant may apply as a dependant of a Graduate at the same time the Graduate applies to the route.

The Graduate route is non-extendable and does not count towards settlement. However, if you find suitable employment, you will be able to switch into various work routes from the Graduate route.

Can I switch into the Skilled Worker Route?

From the Graduate route, you may be able to switch to the Skilled Worker route if you meet the relevant requirements, which allows you to stay in the UK to do an eligible job with an approved employer. It is for a maximum of five years, and contributes to settlement rights – meaning you may be able to apply to live permanently in the UK. The Graduate route does not count towards settlement rights.

To be eligible for the Skilled Worker route, you must demonstrate:

- you have a job offer from a Home Office-licensed sponsor at the required skill level
- you will be paid the relevant minimum salary threshold by your sponsor (normally £25,600 or the going rate for that particular job, whichever is higher)
- you can speak English at the intermediate level at B1 (on the Common European Framework of Reference for languages).

Find out more information on the **Skilled Worker route** on GOV.UK.

You may also be able to switch into various other work routes including the Global Talent and Innovator routes, **more information can be found on GOV.UK.**

> **Find out more about the Graduate route and apply on GOV.UK**

If you have not yet began your studies in the UK, find out more about applying for a Student visa on GOV.UK.