

Tier 4 Update

APRIL 2016



In this newsletter we want to highlight a number of important facts about the Tier 4 visa application process. This is intended as an overview – you will find more detailed information on the [University's website](#). We strongly recommend that students read all this information before making a visa application.

Tier 4 Maintenance Requirements

From November 2015 the amount of money Tier 4 applicants need to show when applying for a visa increased. Applicants are now required to show that they hold a minimum of £1,015 per month up to a maximum of 9 months – in most cases a total of £9135 (in addition to their tuition fees).

It is extremely important that applicants provide the correct documentation to demonstrate that they have this funding. Last year we saw an increase in the number of visa refusals. In the majority of cases this was because the financial documents provided did not meet Tier 4 requirements.

Our [Tier 4 Super Guide](#) contains detailed information about Tier 4 maintenance requirements, but there are a few points that we would highlight:

- The required funds must be in the applicant's bank account for 28 days before the date of application. Please note – the date of application is the date that the online visa application is completed. It is not the date of the visa appointment.
- Bank statements – must be originals. They must include the applicant's name, account number and the name and logo of the bank.
- If funds are held in the name of the parent(s) of the applicant, a birth certificate and letter from the parent(s) consenting to the funds being used by their child must be included.



Translations

Applicants who will be using qualifications documents or bank statements which are not in English in their visa application will need to supply a translation of these documents when they apply for their visa. The translations must include the following:

- Confirmation from the translator that it is an accurate translation of the original document
- The date of the translation
- The full name and signature of the translator
- The translator/translation company's contact details
- The translator's credentials

Getting a CAS

All Tier 4 applicants are required to provide a CAS number with their visa application. A CAS is an electronic certificate issued by the University which contains a student's personal details and information on the course that they will be studying.

Students do not need to contact the University to request a CAS – we will contact students once they have firmly accepted the offer of a place (and paid a deposit if applicable). All students are required to complete an online statement confirming that the details in the CAS are correct and that they understand the terms under which a CAS is issued. It is important that students check this information carefully, as any mistakes or omissions will lead to delays or problems further down the line.

The CAS must be used in a visa application within 6 months of the date that it is issued. Students cannot apply for a Tier 4 visa more than three months before the course start date.

Please note – we will record any tuition fee payments that are made to the University on a student's CAS. This can take up to 5 days to process however, so students should not rely on their CAS being updated in time for a visa application appointment if the payment is made close to this date.

More detailed information on our CAS issuing process is available [on our website](#)

Credibility Interviews

All Tier 4 visa applicants are required to attend a 15-20 minute interview, conducted by Skype, as part of the visa application process. The interview is used to ensure that the person making the visa application genuinely intends to come to the UK to study. Applicants should be prepared to answer questions on why they have chosen to study at the University of Exeter, the reasons behind their choice of course and how they will fund their studies.



Biometric Residence Permits (BRPs)

As of last year, any students coming to the UK for more than 6 months are issued with a BRP. The BRP is an identity card and is the document which proves that the student has the right to study in the UK. It is extremely important that students keep their BRP safe and always take it with them when they travel, as it will not be possible to come back in to the UK without it.

When a Tier 4 visa is granted overseas, it is issued in the form of a 30 day entry vignette in the student's passport. This allows the student to enter the UK and collect their BRP. The University of Exeter has been chosen by the Home Office as an Authorised Alternative Collection Location. This means that the Home Office sends BRPs directly to us so that we can distribute them to our students. For this to happen however, students have to select this option in their Tier 4 visa application. To do this, students must enter the following code in the BRP section of the Tier 4 visa application:

Streatham and St Luke's Campuses: 2HE342

Penryn Campus, Cornwall: 2HE347

We strongly recommend that students opt to have their BRPs sent to the University by entering this code in their visa application. If not, the BRP will be sent to a local Post Office where delays may be experienced. It is also more difficult for the University to sort out any problems with the BRP if it is not sent directly to us.

Students are also advised to keep hold of the Tier 4 visa grant letter which they receive when their passport is returned to them after making their visa application, and to bring this with them to the University.

Academic Progression

The Home Office recently changed its guidance on academic progression. Now, students who have already studied in the UK as a Tier 4 student and wish to take a further programme at the same level will only be able to do so if:

- The new programme is related to the previous programme or
- The two programmes, in combination, support the applicants career aspirations

We will contact any applicants who have applied for a further programme of study at the same level for further information about their reasons for doing so.

Any questions?

If applicants require any further advice or information that cannot be found [on our website](#), they should contact our International Student Advisers – sid@exeter.ac.uk.

Any questions related to CAS should be sent to pbsadmissions@exeter.ac.uk

We are here to help and support students and have a lot of expertise in this area, so we encourage students to get in touch if they are unsure or need to discuss their situation. Students should contact us as early as possible, as we get very busy during August and September, so it can take longer to get a response at these times.