



University of Essex

You, Your Studies and Tier 4

Understanding your responsibilities



As a Tier 4 (General) student there are many important rules and requirements that you must follow during your time studying in the UK. This leaflet forms part of your contract with the University and we hope it will help you to understand your responsibilities as a Tier 4 student.

It is your responsibility to maintain your immigration status in order to complete your studies as planned. Rules are complicated and what you need to do sometimes relates to how you support the University in meeting its obligations as your Tier 4 sponsor.

Failure to manage your immigration status within the rules, may result in withdrawal of our Tier 4 sponsorship and cancellation of your visa by the Home Office.

When applying to start a course for the first time at Essex our Admissions teams will assess your application and ask for information and documentation to ensure that you are eligible to

be sponsored by us under Tier 4 for the course you wish to take. Please be aware that it is not always possible to change your course at a later date because of the Tier 4 rules and requirements, even if it would be allowed on academic grounds. We have specialist advisers in our International Services Team, who offer immigration advice about the student rules and requirements, contact details can be found at the end of this leaflet. You can also seek immigration advice from SU Advice or a qualified immigration lawyer.

By accepting our Tier 4 sponsorship (using our CAS), you will have many responsibilities both to us as your Tier 4 sponsor and to the Home Office.

The University reserves the right to withdraw Tier 4 sponsorship or to refuse to issue a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) to an applicant or student.

Read the immigration area of our website for more information, the 'Your studies and Tier 4' section of our immigration pages gives more guidance about your responsibilities.

Your Tier 4 sponsor

The University of Essex is a Tier 4 (General) sponsor. In order to retain our Tier 4 license, we must comply with all the Home Office requirements as outlined in the Sponsor Guidance. Including:

- Checking your immigration status allows you to study with us.
- Keeping copies of your passport and visa.
- Keeping a record of your UK addresses and contact details.
- Monitoring your attendance and progression.
- Reporting information about you and your studies to the Home Office
- Providing information about you to the Home Office when requested.

You will be required to provide documentation to register and start your course and thereafter, annually and at various other points throughout the year or, when requested by the Registrar or nominee.

The International Services Team are responsible for compliance and official documentation for registered students. If you are contacted by the team please respond to the emails immediately and provide any documents required by any deadline given.

Failure to meet any of these obligations or providing inaccurate/incomplete information to us could result in our refusal to register you or withdrawal from your course. Your Tier 4 sponsorship could be withdrawn and if so, the Home Office will curtail (cut short) your visa.

Your contact details

Keep all your personal information up to date on our systems. Personal information includes telephone number, address, and email. You must update your information as soon as any change occurs.

About your visa and passport

Before applying for your visa, read our immigration web pages and relevant guidance to ensure you are eligible to make a Tier 4 (General) application and you are able to meet all the Tier 4 requirements and provide all the required documents/evidence. A refusal of your application may result in you not being able to start or complete your studies as planned.

When your Tier 4 visa is issued, check it. It must show our Sponsor License Number THHCP1YV6. Your visa must cover the entire period of your course. We will check your visa and passport at registration.

After you have started your course, if you need further Tier 4 leave to finish your course you will be required to make a new Tier 4 application and provide proof that you have maintained your immigration status. When and how you will apply will depend on your circumstances. You will need to request a new CAS, read our immigration web pages and seek advice.

If your Tier 4 application is refused or rejected as invalid you must bring us (or send us if you are overseas) the Home Office letter and seek immigration advice immediately from our International Services Team.

If you are required to collect your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) after arrival in the UK, you must do so within 10 days of arriving or by the date your 30 day entry clearance vignette expires, whichever is later.

If you make an immigration application under another category of the Immigration Rules or your immigration status changes, you must notify us immediately and provide evidence.

If your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) is lost, stolen or damaged you must tell us, report it to the Home Office immediately and apply for a replacement.

If you obtain a new passport after you are registered you must bring this to us for us to keep a copy.

Attendance and progression

Attend all your lectures, classes and seminars as well as all other scheduled events or meetings for your course. Read the University's web information regarding attendance, absence and code of student conduct.

If you are going to be absent or are ill you must report this to your tutors to seek their permission and an authorised absence. Even with permission, if you do not attend the overwhelming majority of your sessions, we may withdraw our Tier 4 sponsorship and you would not be able to complete your course as planned.

Do not ask a friend to sign or swipe into a lecture or other event for you and do not do this for any other student, it is a serious disciplinary matter and Tier 4 sponsorship will be withdrawn from any Tier 4 student involved.

Submit all coursework on time and in line with University regulations for late submission.

You should attend any meeting with an official of the University regarding your Tier 4 status and/or follow any instruction by that official.

For research students, you must actively engage with your studies on campus as a full time student, any periods of absence away from campus must be agreed with your supervisor and associated work-plans developed. Your supervisor approves academic decisions; however, you must continue to maintain your immigration status.

If you need more time to complete your course because of academic failure or, want to add a work placement or, year abroad or, want to switch to a different course than the one you have Tier 4 permission for this may not be possible. The Tier 4 rules on academic progression will not necessarily allow you to do what you would like and there is a maximum length of time you can spend in the UK as a Tier 4 student. Seek advice from our International Services Team if you want to change your course or need more time to complete your course.

Fees and debt to the University

Pay your tuition fees on time. If you don't pay them by the deadline you will be withdrawn from your course. This will be reported to the Home Office who will curtail (cut short) your visa.

As a Tier 4 migrant to the UK you will have demonstrated that you have the required funds to pay your tuition fees and living expenses when you made your visa application. These funds must remain available to you for that purpose. If you need to apply for further leave to continue to study with us, a CAS cannot be issued if you are in debt to us.

Your immigration conditions and responsibilities to the Home Office

The Tier 4 Immigration Rules include conditions of your immigration status. Breaching (breaking) these conditions is a criminal offence and can lead to prosecution and removal from the UK and future immigration applications may be refused.

Study the course with the institution that issued the CAS you used to obtain your Tier 4 visa.

No recourse to public funds, this means you cannot claim state benefits or social housing. Please do not make an application even if someone tells you to do so.

Working, If you are allowed to work you must only work the hours stated on your visa. You cannot exceed the weekly hours in any 7 day rolling period. In your vacations you can work longer hours but must check what term time means for you. Postgraduate students do not have standard University vacations and can usually only work part-time. You cannot be a professional sports person, coach or entertainer, be self-employed or engage in business activity, work as a doctor in training or fulfil a full-time permanent vacancy. Your employer will need a letter from the University confirming your student status and terms. Read the information in the 'Arriving and living in the UK' area of our immigration pages before you start working.

Register with the Police, if you are required to. You must register with the Police within 7 days of arriving in the UK and/or; collecting your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) in the UK, if you have to do so. Once you are registered if any of your personal details change such as, your address or you extend your visa, you must update your Police Registration Certificate within 7 days of the change. (Not all students will have this condition).

You must report certain changes in your studies and your personal circumstances to the Home Office.

Your visa also shows the expiry date, you must either leave the UK by this date or make a valid application for further leave to remain. If your visa does not cover the duration of your course contact the International Services Team immediately.

Advice, Guidance and Information

Academic advice should be drawn from your academic department, tutors and lecturers.

If your studies are not progressing as planned, whatever the reason, it is likely to affect your visa status and you should seek immigration advice. Immigration advice and services are regulated by the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) in the UK.

Seek advice from a qualified immigration lawyer or specialist. Check they are registered with the OISC. At the University we have two services that offer immigration advice about student immigration law, the International Services Team and SU Advice, who you should contact will depend what your query is about.

Please do not take advice from friends, family or other students. Immigration rules and requirements change regularly and one individual's circumstances can be very different to the next.

Keep all immigration documents including all letters and emails from the Home Office and

your Police Registration Certificate (if applicable). We also recommend keeping a copy of your passport and visa. This leaflet is not exhaustive, it is important you read it in conjunction with the Immigration Rules and Tier 4 Policy Guidance.

Ask us a question

Firstly, we recommend reading the immigration area of our website:

www.essex.ac.uk/immigration/default.aspx

University Immigration Advice and Services – find out which service to contact and how:

www.essex.ac.uk/immigration/enquiry/default.aspx

Alternative services:

www.essex.ac.uk/immigration/advice/alternative.aspx

Immigration Rules and Guidance:

www.essex.ac.uk/immigration/apply_for_a_visa/tier4/ukba.aspx

UKCISA guidance:

www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Visas-and-Immigration/Protecting-your-Tier-4-status

University's information on attendance, absence, code of student conduct:

www.essex.ac.uk/students/course-admin/attendance.aspx

University Regulations, especially relating to immigration status:

www.essex.ac.uk/about/governance/regulations/general.aspx

Keep up to date with the Immigration rules and regulations. It is your responsibility to maintain your immigration status and support the University in fulfilling its obligations as a Tier 4 sponsor.

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Helping you to protect your Tier 4 immigration status so you can complete your studies as planned

