



Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

STUDYING IN THE UK – Tier 4 (General)

The Tier 4 (General) category is for adult students (over 16) who want to come to or remain in the UK for their education. The Tier 4 (General) visa is the appropriate visa for Conservatoire students on full-time courses lasting 6 months or longer. It is also the appropriate visa for Conservatoire students on part-time postgraduate courses. If you are coming to the Conservatoire for less than 6 months you should refer to the separate fact sheet – ‘*Studying in the UK – Short Term Student*’. You do not need a visa of any kind if you are a national of an EEA country or Switzerland.

What requirements do I need to apply for a Tier 4 student visa?

A Tier 4 (General) visa is a points-based visa. For your visa application to be considered you need to score 40 out of 40 points. You will need:

1. A valid Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) from The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland = **30 points**
2. Enough money to pay for your first year of tuition and living expenses = **10 points**

What is a Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS)?

It is an official statement from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (who acts as your Tier 4 sponsor) that you have an unconditional offer of a place on a course of study. It has a unique alpha-numeric reference number which you must enter on your Tier 4 (General) visa application and contains information about the course of study for which it has been issued along with your own personal details. Once you have accepted an unconditional offer of a place at the Conservatoire, paid your £1000 deposit and submitted a copy of your current passport, academic qualifications, and English language test certificate (if applicable), the International and Student Experience (I&SE) Team will email your CAS to you. Please note that a CAS cannot be used earlier than three months prior to the start of your course. The I&SE team will therefore begin to email out CASs from the end of June onwards. You are not required to submit the CAS statement as part of your visa application. It is for your information only.

How much money must I prove I have?

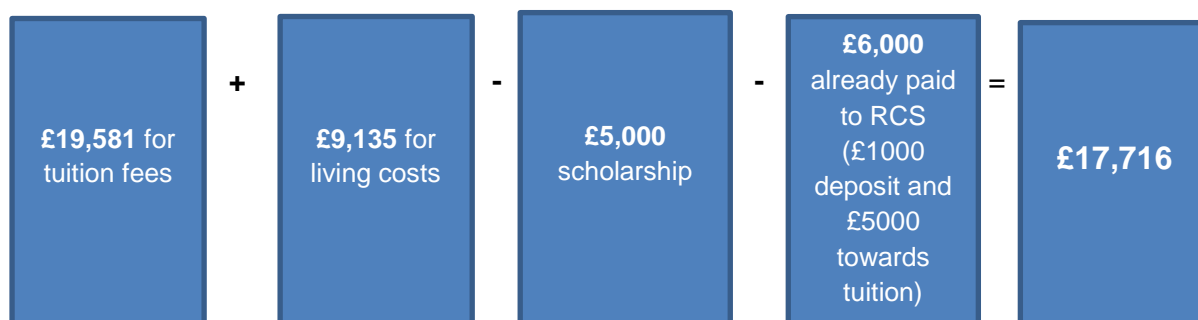
The following information is an overview. Before you submit your visa application you must read the [Tier 4 \(General\) Policy Guidance](#) in detail to ensure that you have met all the requirements and submitted the correct documentation.

Your tuition fees will be listed on your CAS. For the full list of tuition fees please see the [Fees and Funding](#) page on the Conservatoire website. You do not need to evidence funds for tuition for the entire duration of your course, just for the first year. You will also need to have **£9,135** (£1015 for each month of your course, up to a maximum of 9 months) in cash funds for living

expenses (UK Visas and Immigration refers to this as maintenance.) If you have already paid all or some of your tuition fees (including your deposit) to the Conservatoire and/or are receiving a scholarship from us it will be shown on your CAS. This amount can be deducted from the total amount of money you need to show. If the money available to you is held by your parent(s)/legal guardian(s) you will need to show evidence that you are related to them and have their permission to use their money. Please refer to the [Tier 4 \(General\) Policy Guidance](#) for further details.

Calculating the funds required – an example

Joe Smith from the USA has accepted an offer of a place on the MA Classical and Contemporary Text (Acting) programme. He has been awarded a Conservatoire scholarship of £5,000 and has already paid £6,000 to the RCS before his visa application is submitted. For his visa application he therefore needs to show he has **£17,716**.



If you have reserved a room in Liberty House you should **not** factor in any of the money you may have already paid to Liberty House in your visa application. Liberty House is not owned by the Conservatoire therefore you cannot deduct any money already paid to them for housing from the total amount of money you need to evidence.

How do I prove that I have enough money?

Evidence that can be used	The evidence should contain <u>all</u> of the following...	Duration that the money must be held for...
Personal bank or building society statements (both current/checking and savings accounts are acceptable)	Your name or the name of your parent(s)/legal guardian(s) The account number The date of the statement The financial institution's name and logo The amount of money available	You must have the correct amount of money available to you for at least 28 consecutive days . The financial evidence must end no more than 31 days before the date of application. The balance must not fall below the required amount at any point during the 28-day period – if it does your visa application will be refused and you will have to submit

<p>Building society pass book</p>	<p>Your name or the name of your parent(s)/legal guardian(s)</p> <p>The account number</p> <p>The financial institution's name and logo</p> <p>The amount of money available</p>	<p>and pay for a new application.</p>
<p>Letter from your bank confirming funds have been held</p>	<p>Your name or your parents(s)/legal guardians name;</p> <p>The account number</p> <p>The date of the letter</p> <p>The financial institution's name and logo</p> <p>The money in your account</p> <p>That there is enough money in the account (to cover your course fees and living costs)</p>	
<p>Letter from a financial institution regulated by either the Financial Conduct Authority, the Prudential Regulatory Authority or, in the case of overseas accounts, the home regulator (official regulatory body for the country the institution is in and where the money is held) for the purpose of personal savings accounts</p>	<p>Your name or your parents(s)/legal guardians name</p> <p>The account number</p> <p>The date of the letter</p> <p>The financial institution's name and logo</p> <p>The money in your account</p>	
<p>Letter from a regulated financial institution confirming a loan provided by your national government, their state or regional government, a</p>	<p>Your name</p> <p>The date of the letter</p> <p>The financial institution's name and logo</p>	<p>The loan letter(s) must be dated no more than 6 months before the date of your application and must be the original (not a copy).</p>

government sponsored student loan company or is part of an academic or educational loans scheme	The money available as a loan	There must be no conditions placed on the release of the loan funds to you, other than your Tier 4 application being successful.
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The following are **NOT** acceptable as evidence:

- Personal bank loans, shares, stocks, bonds, overdrafts, credit cards, and other non-cash funds such as salary, government pension schemes and property value. UK Visas and Immigration will expect you to show the closing balance in pounds sterling. If your funds are not in Sterling please use the official exchange rate on the [OANDA](#) website to ensure that you have the correct amount of money.
- Cash funds held by anyone other than you, your parent(s) or legal guardian(s).
- Loans held in the name of your parent(s) or legal guardian(s) as evidence of money held by you

You **can** use cash funds in the name of your parent(s) or legal guardian(s) but you must provide your original birth certificate (professionally translated if not in English), adoption certificate, official court documentation confirming legal guardian status and a signed letter from your parent(s)/legal guardian(s) confirming that you can use their money for your education in the UK.

What documents are required for a Tier 4 application?

All applicants should submit their application through the [Visa4UK website](#)

When you submit your documentation you should include (originals only):

1. Academic qualification or transcript of results (whatever is listed on your CAS)*
2. Financial documentation that evidences funds available to you for tuition fees and maintenance*
3. Passport
4. Two passport-sized [photographs](#).

** Students who are classed as 'low-risk' under the differentiation arrangements should not submit these documents – see below*

You will also need to:

1. Submit a Tuberculosis certificate (if appropriate);
2. Pay the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) and receive a reference number;
3. Submit your biometric data;
4. Attend a Credibility Interview (if requested to do so).

You **do not** need to submit your IELTS certificate with your visa application.

How much is the Tier 4 application fee?

The fee for applying outside of the UK is currently **£335** paid as the equivalent in your local currency and is paid at the end of the online Visa4UK application form or when you submit the completed application form to the Visa Application Centre (VAC). Some VACs charge an additional 'User Pays Fee' of £55. This is to allow smaller VACs to remain open. If you do not wish to pay this additional fee then you should attend a different VAC, if possible.

In some countries it is possible to pay an additional 'priority fee' of £184 or in some cases an additional 'super priority fee' of £919 to have your application processed more quickly. Some VACs also offer a 'passport passback' service; this costs an additional £51 and allows you to keep your passport for longer during the application process.

Where can I find my nearest Visa Application Centre (VAC)?

A list of Centres is available [here](#).

Am I low-risk?

If you are a national from one of the following countries **and** you submit your Tier 4 application from that country then you will be classed as 'low-risk'. UK Visas and Immigration no longer use the term 'low-risk' but instead refer to those who qualify as 'low-risk applicants' under the 'differentiation arrangements'. This means you aren't required to include your qualification certificates or bank statements with your visa application. Doing so when not required could slow down the processing of your application. Nevertheless, you must confirm on your application form that you meet all the requirements of Tier 4, and that you hold the evidence in the manner stipulated. If you state on your visa application that you have the funds in place but you do not have them you are committing fraud. UK Visas and Immigration reserves the right to ask low-risk applicants to submit the evidence at any stage of the process if they wish to.

Argentina	Australia	Barbados
Botswana	Brunei	BNO (British National Overseas)
Canada	Chile	Hong Kong (HKSAR 'Blue' Passport)
Japan	Malaysia	New Zealand
Oman	Qatar	Singapore
South Korea	Taiwan (ROC) (those who hold a passport issued by Taiwan that includes the number of the ID card issued by the competent authority of Taiwan in it)	Trinidad and Tobago
United Arab Emirates	United States of America	

Do I need to take a Tuberculosis (TB) test?

Only nationals from certain countries are required to submit a TB test with their application. A list of these countries can be seen [here](#).

What is the Immigration Health Surcharge?

All non-EEA nationals applying for a visa to come to the UK for more than 6 months will be required to pay a charge to cover National Health Service (NHS) healthcare in the UK. The payment will go directly into the NHS and applicants will be entitled to receive the same cover as a permanent UK resident. Each student will have to pay a fee when they apply for their first visa at home or when they extend their current Tier 4 visa in the UK.

Are any non-EEA nationals exempt from the Immigration Health Surcharge?

Only nationals of Australia and New Zealand as well as British Overseas Territory citizens who live in the Falkland Islands do not have to pay the surcharge, due to reciprocal agreements; however, they must still complete the IHS portal and obtain a reference number.

How much is the Immigration Health Surcharge?

The surcharge is calculated as £150 per year for each year of your visa. If your visa includes part of a year that is six months or less you will be charged an additional £75 for this period. If your visa includes part of a year that is more than six months, you will have to pay £150 for this period. The charge also covers the period of extra leave that is “built in” at the end of your studies (see below).

Immigration Health Surcharge – examples

- Students on a one-year programme (e.g. September to September) are likely to pay £225
- Students on a two year programme are likely to pay £375
- Students on a three year programme are likely to pay £525
- Students on a four year programme are likely to pay £675

When do I have to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge?

The Tier 4 application on Visa4UK will direct you to create an account on the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) portal and pay the required charge. Once you have done this you will be given a reference number which you must write on the front of your Tier 4 application form. You must pay the charge for the full period at the time of application. If you have only made part-payment your visa application will be refused.

What biometric data do I have to give?

You are required to provide your facial photograph and fingerprints at your appointment at the Visa Application Centre (VAC).

What is a Credibility Interview?

You may have to sit a short interview when you attend the Visa Application Centre to submit your application and biometric information. The interview will focus on your reasons for coming to the UK. A report of the interview will be sent to the visa officer who will consider it alongside your visa application and supporting documents. You may be called for a further interview if the visa officer needs more information. The interviews are not meant to deter students but to support the decision-making of UK visa officers. The credibility interview process has been put in place to enable UK Visas and Immigration officials to ascertain that you are a genuine applicant and that you have the English language proficiency stated in your CAS.

Students who are 16 or 17 years old

If you are 16 or 17 years of age prior to your arrival in the UK then you should apply for a Tier 4 (General) visa. We do not issue CASs for Tier 4 (Child) visas. With your application you should include a letter from your parent(s)/legal guardian(s) that confirms their responsibility for you. You must also submit this letter to the Conservatoire. For more information about the required contents of the letter please see page 49 of the [Tier 4 Policy Guidance](#)

How long will it take to get my visa?

Visa processing times can be viewed on the UKVI website [here](#) and can be searched for by Visa Application Centre. Please be aware that this site is for information only and does not guarantee that you will receive your application outcome in the timeframes stated.

How long will my visa be valid for?

Course Duration	Example courses at the Conservatoire	Length of Visa
6-11 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MA Classical and Contemporary Text• MA Musical Theatre• Master of Arts Music	The full length of the course plus 2 months following the course end date stated on the CAS
12 months +	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• All undergraduate courses• Master of Music• All full-time research programmes	The full length of the course plus 4 months following the course end date stated on the CAS

Do I need an ATAS certificate?

No – students' at the Conservatoire do not require an Academic Technology Approval Scheme certificate.

Bringing dependants

If you are doing a full-time postgraduate level course of 12 months or longer at the Conservatoire you can bring dependants with you. A dependant is your partner (husband, wife, civil partner, unmarried partner or same-sex partner) or child/children. If you wish to bring your unmarried partner or same-sex partner you need to have been living together in a relationship similar to marriage or civil partnership for a period of at least two years. You need to provide evidence of this. There are also strict financial requirements for dependants. Please see the [UKCISA Dependants](#) page for further information.

If you're on a part-time postgraduate course you will not be able to bring any family members with you to the UK.

Important information for part-time postgraduate students

Those on part-time postgraduate courses are able to apply under Tier 4 but they will not be permitted to work in the UK (this includes on a work placement). They will also be unable to extend their Tier 4 visa from within the UK and will not be eligible to switch into other

immigration categories permitting work after completing the course. They cannot bring family members with them to the UK.

What happens if my visa application is refused?

Please contact the International and Student Experience team at international@rcs.ac.uk as soon as possible to notify them of UKVI's decision and to request further guidance. In your email you should include a copy of your refusal notice.

Where can I get further information about making a Tier 4 application?

Alongside the information on the Conservatoire's website and the Tier 4 Policy Guidance on the UKVI website you should read the [UKCISA](#) website in full. UKCISA is an invaluable resource for international students coming to the UK.