



Home Office

ACCESS UK - Q&A FOR VISIT VISA, SHORT-TERM STUDENT, TIER 4 (STUDENT), TIER 2 (WORK), TIER 5 (WORK) AND POINTS BASED SYSTEM DEPENDENTS

1. What is Access UK?

Access UK is a simple to use online application service for individuals wishing to apply and pay for a visa to visit, study or work in the United Kingdom (UK). It is also available to applicants based in the UK, who wish to extend or change their visa. Customers can apply at:

Tier 2 - <https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/apply-visa-type/tier2>

Tier 4 – <https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/apply-visa-type/tier4>

Tier 5 - <https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/apply-visa-type/tier5>

Short term student - <https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/apply-visa-type/tier4>

Visitor - <https://www.gov.uk/standard-visitor-visa/apply>

PBS dependents - <https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/apply-visa-type/dependant>

2. Why are we introducing Access UK?

The current application process is outdated and requires improvement. Access UK will eventually replace the Visa4UK website for customers outside of the UK and offers a digital alternative to hundreds of paper forms for customers in the UK.

Access UK will provide a number of new benefits for customers:

- The service is available on mobile devices, enabling application forms to be completed on smart phones or tablets, making it more convenient for the customer;
- The application is often more concise and quicker to complete, as questions are only asked when they are relevant to a customer's previous answers;
- Customers can review, edit and download their partially completed application at any point before submission, making it simpler to check, edit and update responses as required;
- The application fee is displayed in the appropriate local currency, making it easier to understand the overall cost; and
- Customers can apply, book their Visa Application Centre (VAC) appointment to give biometrics, and pay for the relevant service standard via Access UK, rather than visiting multiple online sites

3. Is this service available in my country?

Yes, Access UK has been rolled out worldwide.

4. Who can use the Access UK service?

Access UK is now available to customers applying for one of the following visa routes:

- Tier 4 (General) student visa

- Tier 4 (Child) student visa
- Tier 4 (Chevening, Marshall and Commonwealth scholars) student visa
- Short-term student visa
- Short-term student (Child) visa
- Tier 2 General
- Tier 2 Sportsperson
- Tier 2 Minister of Religion
- Tier 2 Intra-company Transfer:
 - Long-term Staff
 - Short-term Staff
 - Graduate Trainee
- Tier 5 (Temporary Worker):
 - Charity Worker
 - Creative and sporting
 - Government Authorised Exchange
 - International Agreement
 - Religious Worker
 - Youth Mobility Scheme
- Points Based System (PBS) dependents:
 - Dependants (a partner or child) of someone that has or is applying for a study (PBS Tier 4) or work (PBS Tier 2 or Tier 5) visa (the dependants will need to submit separate applications, but questions are presented that should allow the main applicant to be more easily identified)

And has been made available to the following visit visa routes since August 2016:

- Visitor (Standard)
 - General & Family
 - Child
 - Business
 - Entrepreneur
 - Religion
 - Sportspersons
 - Creative
 - Private Medical Treatment (6 months)
 - Other: Visitors undertaking the PLAB test, Objective Structured Clinical Examination, Clinical Attachment and Dental Observations
- Visitor (Marriage & Civil Partnership)
- Visitor (Permitted Paid Engagement)

The Visit visa offering on Access UK has also now been extended to more customer groups:

- Visitors requiring private medical treatment for more than 6 months
- Transit and direct airside transit visitors
- Contract seafarers and aircrew joining vessels
- Approved Destination Scheme (ADS) visitors (for Chinese nationals visiting the UK as part of an organised tour)
- Academic visitors – Individuals applying for this visa type are now able to select more specific options for their visit

If your partner or parent holds (or is applying for) a PBS visa as a student (PBS Tier 4) or a worker (PBS Tier 2 or Tier 5) you can now use the Access UK service.

5. Should you use Access UK or Visa4UK?

The Access UK service is currently offered in parallel with Visa4UK. Customers who can apply for their visa through Access UK should use the new service, rather than Visa4UK. Customers wishing to apply for visa routes not yet supported by Access UK should continue to use Visa4UK until Access UK becomes available.

If your partner or parent holds (or is applying for) a visa under PBS Tier 1 you should use the existing visa4uk service. Applications for PBS Tier 1 visas will be available later this year on the new service.

Some application routes do not allow dependants to join or accompany them. Guidance on who cannot apply is available online (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-dependants-of-uk-visa-applicants-tiers-1-2-4-5>).

6. When will all visa routes be available through Access UK?

Remaining visa routes are being developed for overseas customers and will be added to Access UK throughout 2018.

7. Will the current application web site www.Visa4UK be shut down?

In the short term the Visa4UK website will continue to be available to customers who wish to apply for visas to come to the UK. Over time, all customers applying for visas to come to the UK will be re-directed to Access UK, but Visa4UK will still continue to exist as an application service until all types of visa are available on Access UK.

8. When the new service becomes available, what will happen if you have already started/ submitted a visa application on Visa4UK?

The new service is currently available in parallel with Visa4UK, so customers can continue to use Visa4UK to make a visa application. However, for many customers the application process and experience will be improved if they use the new Access UK service. There is no change to Visa4UK applications and these will continue to be processed as normal. The schedule and plan for turning off Visa4UK is still being determined. However it is likely that a cut off date will be agreed for new applications and in progress applications made on Visa4UK will be completed using this existing system.

9. When will Visa4UK be turned off and how will I know about it?

The schedule and plan for turning off Visa4UK is still being determined. There will be further communications when this has been decided.

10. Where can you access Access UK?

Customers can apply at:

Tier 2 - <https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/apply-visa-type/tier2>

Tier 4 – <https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/apply-visa-type/tier4>

Tier 5 - <https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/apply-visa-type/tier5>

Short term student - <https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/apply-visa-type/tier4>

Visitor - <https://www.gov.uk/standard-visitor-visa/apply>

PBS dependents - <https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/apply-visa-type/dependant>

11. What happens if you have a problem with your application form or Access UK isn't working?

Customers can contact UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) from inside or outside the UK if they have a problem with your application via: www.gov.uk/contact-ukvi-inside-outside-uk. Contact Centre staff cannot provide advice about personal circumstances.

12. Can you pay online through Access UK?

Yes, the service takes payment online for the visa fee and (where appropriate) the Immigration Health Surcharge as part of the application process. Some countries cannot accept online payments for visa applications, and this is clearly shown on the payment pages of Access UK. If this is the case, you will make the payment for your visa application at your Visa Application Centre (VAC) appointment – some of these accept card payment and others are cash only.

13. Can you book appointments through the new service?

Yes, where relevant, Access UK allows customers to book appointments at their local Visa Application Centre to record their biometrics.

14. Can you pay for additional services – such as the 24 hour Super Priority service and the 5 day Priority service through GOV.UK?

Yes, Access UK allows customers to pay for additional services such as priority and super-priority, where applicable, as part of the application process. The currency that customers will pay in is clearly displayed during the payment process and depends on the country they are applying from.

15. Are all questions on the visa application form translated?

The visit visa application form questions are available in 19 languages. However, questions on the Short-term student, Tier 2, Tier 4 and Tier 5 applications are currently only available in English.

For customers applying for a Visit visa, questions on Access UK are available in 19 languages:

- English
- Simplified Chinese
- Russian
- French
- Spanish
- Arabic
- Turkish
- Thai
- Hindi
- Indonesian
- Urdu
- Bengali
- Tamil
- Gujarati
- Japanese
- Sinhalese
- Korean

- Portuguese
- Vietnamese

Where the customer makes the relevant selection, questions on Access UK are translated into the language they have selected. Radio buttons, drop down lists, help text and customer emails are also translated into the chosen language.

16. Can you answer questions in your own language?

No, questions on Access UK must be completed in English. Where translations are provided, these are to help clarify the questions.

17. Has there been any feedback from customers and staff?

Examples of feedback received from Access UK applicants and UKVI staff:

Access UK applicants

- "Payment process for actual visa fee for a standard application is straightforward"
- "It was easy to understand the visa fee payment to be made"
- "The order was clear – there was a logical flow"
- "I like that you can save your application and come back to it another time"
- "The FAQs are comprehensive"
- "That's it, that's all we need to know, simple!" (referring to the level of information presented on the first page of the application)
- "The website is clear, accessible, easy to read."
- "In general the Access UK website is quite speedy."
- "Access UK provides a specific list of evidence documents required – unlike V4UK which only provides a generic list."
- "It is easy to connect to the IHS payment website and return to the application."

Staff

- "Access UK provides a much more streamlined process and a lot of the most essential information is on the front page, which is very helpful"
- "We have had many positive comments about the new online application process being easy to understand and more customer friendly, etc"

18. Can you make changes to the form during your application?

Yes, customers can edit the information on the application form before they book their appointment and make their payment. Once an appointment is booked, no further changes can be made to their application.

19. Will all application questions remain the same for the Tier 4 application form?

No, certain questions have changed:

- The Visa4UK 'Points Claimed' application questions have been removed from Access UK, in order to simplify the process. Access UK is a dynamic form, meaning that customers will only be presented with relevant questions
- Customers are asked to enter their Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) number and will not be able to proceed the application if this is not entered in the correct format. This is a 14 digit alpha-numeric reference number that you must obtain before applying for

your study visa

20. Will you receive help to select the correct visa application service on Access UK?

Additional guidance has been added, encouraging customers to proactively check that they are applying/selecting the correct form or service. Customers will be responsible for ensuring their selection is correct.

An example is: *'Make sure you can use the Priority service in the country you're applying from, and for the type of visa you're applying for. You can find information here or from our commercial partners.'*

The additional text will appear on the following application pages:

- Priority Visa/Super Priority Visa on the Service Options Selection page
- Premium Lounge on the VAC Selection page (only for VACs providing Premium Lounge)
- Prime Time on the Calendar page (only for VACs providing Prime Time)

21. Can you apply for a Tier 4 visa without entering a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) number?

Yes, customers can apply without a CAS. However, customers applying for the Tier 4 route are required to be sponsored by a licensed educational provider to apply to study in the UK. This sponsor will issue a CAS to the customer. Customers applying for the Tier 4 route are required to enter their CAS number at the start of the application form if they have one, and are warned that their application is likely to be refused if they do not enter a CAS. If they do enter a CAS, it must be entered in the correct format to progress the application.

22. Can you apply for a Tier 2 visa without entering a Certificate for Sponsorship (CoS) number?

Yes, customers can apply without a CoS. However, customers applying for the Tier 2 route are required to be employed by a licensed sponsor (or to have been offered employment by a licensed sponsor) to apply to work in the UK. The sponsor will issue a CoS to the customer. Customers are required to enter their CoS at the start the application form if they have one, and will be warned that their application is likely to be refused if they do not enter a CoS. If they do enter a CoS, it must be entered in the correct format to progress the application.

23. Do I have to complete a separate form for me or any dependant children?

Yes, each person applying needs to complete a separate form.

24. Can I apply at a different time to my partner or parent?

To make a successful application your partner or parent has to either have permission from UKVI to be a student or worker in the UK, or be applying for a visa to come to the UK to be a student or worker. You can apply at the same time as your partner or parent, or you can apply after they have had their permission to study or work in the UK granted by UKVI. You must complete a separate application form – you cannot be added on to the application form of your partner or parent.

25. Do I need to print my application form?

No, you do not need to print your application form. A copy of your form is sent to the case working system directly, and you do not need to take it with you to your appointment at the Visa Application Centre. You can download a copy of the completed application form to keep for your

records by returning to your application on Access UK. This copy is available for 70 days after you have completed and paid for your application.