

United Kingdom Student Visa & Immigration Guide

For applicants from **India** applying to a **Doctorate (PhD / Research)** programme.

Issuing authority	UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI), Home Office
Visa route	Student visa (Route SW)
Apply from	India
Apply before course start	Up to 6 months (UK)

Verify current details before you apply. This guide was compiled in July 2026 from publicly available official guidance. Visa rules, financial thresholds, fees and processing times change frequently. Always confirm the current requirements on the official department portal:

- **Official department:** UK Visas and Immigration on gov.uk — <https://www.gov.uk/student-visa>
- **British High Commission, New Delhi:** <https://www.gov.uk/world/organisations/british-high-commission-new-delhi>
- **Visa Application Centre:** <https://www.vfsglobal.co.uk/india/>

1. Overview

This guide summarises the UK Student visa (formerly Tier 4 General) requirements set by UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) for Indian students applying to a full-time doctorate (phd / research) programme in the United Kingdom. It reflects publicly available UKVI guidance and is intended as an orientation document — always cross-check the official rules on gov.uk before you apply.

2. Who this guide is for

- Applicant nationality: India
- Programme level: Doctorate (PhD / Research) (RQF level 4 or above)
- Course length longer than 6 months
- Full-time study with a UKVI-licensed Student sponsor
- Valid Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) issued by the sponsor within the last 6 months

3. Financial requirements

You must show that you can pay your course fees and support yourself in the UK without recourse to public funds.

How much you must show

You must show **tuition for the first year** (or the full course if shorter than 9 months) plus **monthly living costs** covering the first 9 months of the course: **£1,483 per month in London (£13,347 in total)** or **£1,136 per month outside London (£10,224 in total)**. Deduct any tuition or accommodation already paid to the sponsor (a maximum of £1,483 of accommodation can be deducted).

Indicative tuition band

PhD tuition typically ranges £20,000 – £32,000 per year for international students. Many PhD candidates hold a partial or full fee waiver via a UKRI studentship, CSC, Commonwealth or institutional award.

Bank-statement period: 28 consecutive days

- Bank statements or a bank letter showing the required amount held for at least **28 consecutive days**, ending no more than **31 days** before you apply online.
- The document must show the applicant's name (or the parent/legal guardian's name if using their funds), the account number, the date, the financial institution's name and logo, and the closing balance for the 28-day period.
- If a parent or legal guardian is funding you: their bank documents plus your birth certificate (or adoption/guardianship papers) and a signed letter giving permission to use their funds.
- Loan letters from a UK-recognised lender (including scheduled banks in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh) are accepted if the funds are available before travel and the letter is dated within 6 months of application.
- Official financial-sponsor letters (e.g. CSC, HEC, government of Bangladesh, employer sponsorship) are accepted in place of personal funds — must state name, contact details, sponsorship duration and amount.
- Doctoral studentship / stipend award letters from the UK sponsor count as financial sponsorship — attach the award letter and the payment schedule.

4. Required documents

- Current passport (or other valid travel document), with a blank page for the visa vignette.
- Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) reference number issued by the UK sponsor — you must apply within 6 months of the CAS being assigned.
- Original academic qualifications listed on the CAS (degree certificates, transcripts, professional certificates).
- English-language evidence as listed on the CAS: an approved Secure English Language Test (SELT) such as IELTS UKVI, or the sponsor's own assessment for HEP-tier universities.
- Tuberculosis (TB) test certificate from a UKVI-approved clinic in India — **mandatory** for all applicants from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh for stays longer than 6 months. Certificate is valid for 6 months from the date of the test.
- ATAS certificate from the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office if your course and nationality are on the ATAS-controlled list (mainly certain STEM postgraduate research and taught programmes).
- Parental / legal-guardian consent letter and proof of relationship if you are under 18 or funded by a parent.
- Translated copies of any documents not already in English or Welsh — translations must be certified.
- Research proposal or PhD project outline as agreed with the supervisor — the sponsor references this on the CAS.

5. Attestation & verification of academic documents

All Indian academic certificates and transcripts should be attested end-to-end: (a) issuing university / board, (b) State HRD / Home Department (or the Ministry of HRD for autonomous institutions), and (c) the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) via CSC / Bharamaans-listed collection points. For institutions that require it, further evaluation by WES, ECE or the college's chosen credential-evaluation service may be needed.

6. Step-by-step application process

- 1 Apply online at www.gov.uk/student-visa/apply — you can apply up to 6 months before the course start date.
- 2 Pay the visa fee and the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) online.

- 3 Book an appointment at the UK Visa Application Centre in India run by VFS Global and attend in person to submit biometrics and documents.
- 4 You may be interviewed (a short credibility interview by video or in person).
- 5 Track the application through the UKVI online account and the VAC's online tracker.

7. Visa fees

Item	Amount
Student visa application (from outside the UK)	£524
Priority service (5 working-day decision, where available)	£500 on top of the visa fee
Super Priority service (next working day, where available)	£1,000 on top of the visa fee
Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) — Student rate	£776 per year of leave (a 4-year PhD typically pays £3,104 in total)
TB test (indicative)	£65–£85 in local currency equivalent
VAC service fees (VFS Global, indicative)	£40–£75 local currency

Fees are set by the issuing authority and change annually — always confirm the current amount on the official portal before paying.

8. Processing time

UKVI publishes visa-processing service standards for India. As a planning figure, standard Student visa applications from South Asia are decided within **3 weeks (15 working days)** of the biometric appointment. Priority and Super Priority services, where available, reduce this to 5 working days or next working day respectively. Apply at least **6 to 8 weeks** before your course start date so you have time to travel, arrange the BRP/eVisa and register with the university.

9. Where to apply — Embassy / High Commission & VAC

British High Commission, New Delhi

Shantipath, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi – 110 021, India

Phone: +91 11 2419 2100

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/world/organisations/british-high-commission-new-delhi>

Visa Application Centre (biometrics & document submission)

Biometrics and document submission take place at VFS Global UK Visa Application Centres in New Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, Chandigarh, Cochin, Pune, Jalandhar, Goa, Puducherry and Thiruvananthapuram.

Book / track: <https://www.vfsglobal.co.uk/india/>

10. Checking your visa outcome

- Sign in to your UKVI online account to see the current status of the application.
- Track the physical file with the VAC reference on the VFS Global tracking page.
- Approved: you receive a vignette in your passport (valid 90 days) plus either a Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) collectable in the UK, or a fully digital eVisa linked to your UKVI account — you must set up UKVI View & Prove access before travel.
- Refused: the refusal notice sets out the reasons. Student visa decisions carry no full right of appeal — the routes are (a) Administrative Review within 28 days for a case-working error, or (b) a fresh application correcting the deficiency.

11. Useful official links

UK Student visa — official guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/student-visa>

UK Student visa — Apply: <https://www.gov.uk/student-visa/apply>

Immigration Health Surcharge: <https://www.gov.uk/healthcare-immigration-application>

UK Visa Application Centres — India: <https://www.vfsglobal.co.uk/india/>

British High Commission, New Delhi website:

<https://www.gov.uk/world/organisations/british-high-commission-new-delhi>

UKVI-approved TB test clinics — India: <https://www.gov.uk/tb-test-visa>

ATAS — Academic Technology Approval Scheme:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/academic-technology-approval-scheme>

Disclaimer — This guide is compiled from publicly available guidance published by UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI), Home Office and is provided for orientation only. Rules, fees, financial thresholds and processing times change frequently. AIMarketer.ie is not an immigration adviser; always confirm the current requirements on the official portal and, where needed, consult a regulated immigration solicitor or your sponsoring university before you apply. Compiled July 2026.