



# PGR Visa Information Webinar

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[www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/immigration-and-visas](http://www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/immigration-and-visas)

# Session Outline

- Student visa responsibilities
- Attendance and engagement
- Fieldwork / change of study location
- Work conditions
- Writing up / Submission Pending Location
- Programme changes
- ATAS
- Breaks in study (interruptions and annual leave)
- Maternity leave
- Early Completion
- Post-study visas (Graduate and Skilled Worker visas)

# Student Immigration Team (SIT)

- Our team is responsible for providing immigration advice as well fulfilling the University's compliance obligations as a Student route sponsor to **UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI)**.
- We are the only team at the university that is qualified to provide immigration advice, and we are regulated by the **Immigration Advice Authority** to be able to do so.
- We run a face-to-face advice drop-in from the ground floor of the Main Library on **Mondays, Wednesday** and **Fridays** between **11:00 & 13:00**. No appointment necessary to attend.

# Student visa responsibilities

As Student visa holders sponsored by the University, you have several responsibilities you must continue to comply with for the duration of your studies to protect your immigration status.

- Attendance and engagement
- Working conditions
- Changes in your personal or contact details
- Changes in your circumstances
- Changes in your immigration status (provide share codes if you have not already done so)
- ATAS

# Attendance and engagement

- Student visa holders are required to maintain regular engagement with on-campus study and research in order to meet your visa's study conditions.
- You should be having in-person meetings with your supervisory team regularly and working towards the completion of your eProg milestones.
- Remote study is generally not permitted under the Student route except for formally authorised fieldwork and placements which are **integral** to your research. **This activity must be authorised and recorded by the Doctoral Academy and not just your supervisor** so that the information can be reported to the Home Office.

# Fieldwork and changes in study location

- The University is required to inform the Home Office of a change in study location where you will be studying away from campus for more than **two weeks**.
- This activity must be requested via MyPlacement and authorised before you make any travel arrangements and before you start the activity.
- You need to provide the address details of where you will be based and for how long. If your fieldwork includes multiple locations, then we will need you to confirm the address details for each one.

# Working whilst studying

- Student visa holders have limited working rights and can only work up to **20 hours per week** outside of the 32 working days of annual leave PGRs can take each academic year, as agreed by your supervisor. The only other time you will be considered outside of term-time is after you have submitted the final copy of your thesis online post viva.
- A week is defined by UKVI as a 7-day period starting on a Monday and ending on the following Sunday, and your weekly limit includes any **paid work, unpaid work, voluntary work and internships**.
- Outside of the periods above, full-time internships/placements cannot be undertaken in the UK if it will not form **an assessed and integral part of your course**.
- You **cannot** interrupt your studies to undertake a non-integral UK internship/placement.

# Writing Up (Submission Pending)

- The university is still in the process of updating its position on submission pending.
- The new policy should permit PGRs who have entered submission pending status to write up from outside the UK, provided this is requested and approved by the Doctoral Academy, and they confirm their location and the date they intend to return **before** their current visa expiry date.
- For the time being, we can only maintain Student visa sponsorship whilst you are studying on campus. PGRs who still decide to leave are liable to have their visa sponsorship withdrawn.

# Programme Changes

- Depending on the type of change, a new visa and/or ATAS may be required.
- Downgrading from a PhD to an MPhil or transferring from an MPhil to a PhD without being awarded an MPhil both require a new Student visa and the application can only be made **outside the UK**. You cannot change courses until you have obtained your new visa and provided evidence to the Student Immigration Team.
- Where a new Student visa is required, you will need to request a continuer CAS and complete and return a **Continuer CAS Request Form (CCR1)** to the Doctoral Academy for this to be completed and sent over to our team for processing.
- Our course change guide is the best place to refer to in the first instance (<https://documents.manchester.ac.uk/display.aspx?DocID=37044>)

# Programme Extensions

- If you require more time to complete your programme (e.g. after receiving your corrections post-viva) then you should be eligible to apply for an extension of your Student visa to cover the additional period of study.
- PhD students are eligible to apply for a Student visa extension in the UK to continue the same programme. Research masters students need to leave the UK to make a new visa application if they require more time.
- Due to UKVI restrictions, you can only apply for a visa extension for the same programme no more than 3 months before your current visa expires.
- You can request a **Continuer CAS Request Form (CCR1)** from your Doctoral Academy once your visa expiry is less than three months away. You will need to have obtained a new ATAS certificate before you can be issued with a new CAS if your course requires clearance.

# Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS)

- If you are currently studying on a course which requires ATAS and the **content, direction** or **scope of your research changes**, you will need to obtain new ATAS before the change can be permitted.
- You will also need to apply for new clearance if your **main supervisor changes**, your studies are extended by **more than three months** beyond the expected end date on your CAS or you transfer to a new course i.e. PhD to MPhil or MPhil to PhD.
- Visa extensions for courses requiring ATAS will also require you to have obtained a new ATAS certificate before you will be able to request a continuer CAS.

**Note:** The requirement for ATAS and is not just limited to Student visa holders and is also applicable to other time-limited visa categories (Skilled Workers, Dependents etc.)

# ATAS – When to apply

- You should apply for ATAS clearance as soon as you know that you require an extension to your course.
- Current ATAS application processing times are **at least** 30 working days (6 weeks).
- The processing clock starts when an application has been assessed as 'complete'. Editing an application or being required by the ATAS team to provide additional information will reset the clock – there is no advantage to applying early with incomplete or incorrect information!
- If you make an error in your ATAS application, you will need to withdraw it and submit a new one as the ATAS Team can only amend your passport number if you obtain a new one. They cannot amend any other errors in your application.

# Breaks in study

- The University is generally required to report to UKVI that we are no longer sponsoring your Student visa if you interrupt your studies for more than 60 calendar days (excl. maternity leave).
- This applies to any combined period of formal interruption (Leave of Absence) and annual leave (i.e. you cannot use AL to extend an interruption and avoid being reported and vice versa).
- Following an update to the PGR Annual Leave policy, no period of annual leave can exceed **four weeks** in length. Absences greater than four weeks will require a formal interruption request.

# Maternity Leave

- You are entitled to take a study break of up to 12 months following the birth of your baby. However, as there is no specific "maternity leave" provision within the Student visa rules, the length of leave you take can have implications for your visa.
- We can maintain sponsorship of your Student visa for a period of maternity leave taken in the UK or overseas that does not exceed **4 months**, as UKVI already add on 4 months to the course duration set out in your CAS.
- Maternity absences longer than 4 months will require us to withdraw sponsorship, which leads to the curtailment and early expiry of a Student visa. If you intend to do so, contact the Student Immigration Team for advice first.

# Early Completion

- If you complete your course more than **1 month** before the expected course end date on your most recent CAS, we are required to notify UKVI and withdraw sponsorship for your Student visa.
- The Student Immigration Team will email you once we have notified UKVI that you have completed your course early. Depending on how much time is left on your visa, UKVI may curtail your visa and issue you with a shorter expiry.
- If you completed your course and achieved the qualification for which your CAS was issued, you should still have a 4-month period of leave after your completion date and should still be eligible to apply for a **Graduate visa** (Provided you are still awarded an eligible qualification).
- If you plan to apply for a Graduate visa after completing early, then we advise against leaving the UK as you risk not being able to return if your visa is curtailed whilst you are overseas.
- You also won't receive an **IHS** refund if you complete early. You are only eligible for a refund if you reapply for a new visa from within the UK and there is more than 6 months of overlapping coverage with your previous visa.

# Post-study visas (Graduate route)

- PhD Students visa holders **who successfully complete** should be able to apply for a Graduate visa to remain in the UK for a further three years. Research masters students who successfully complete are currently eligible to stay for two years. This is due to change to 18 months for Graduate visa applications submitted on or after **1<sup>st</sup> January 2027**.
- In the context of the Graduate route, successful completion means you have submitted any final corrections and been awarded the degree reflected on your CAS statement.
- You must apply for the graduate visa from the UK while your student visa is still valid (cannot apply from overseas)
- No maintenance requirement, but you will need to pay the application fee and immigration healthcare surcharge: £880 for the application and £1035 per year for IHS.
- To be eligible, you must have studied in the UK for at least 12 months.
- If you are sponsored by a Government or international scholarship agency, you will also need to include a letter of consent from your sponsor permitting you to remain in the UK.

# Post-study visas (Graduate route)

- Un-sponsored route so you do not need a job to apply and can use graduate visa to look for work and to work full-time/more than one job.
- Provided you meet the eligibility criteria, we will report your eligibility to apply for a Graduate visa to UKVI and notify you of this via email.
- You should only proceed with an application for a Graduate visa **once your eligibility has been confirmed**. If you require more time to complete and submit your PhD, you **must** apply for a Student visa extension rather than submitting an early application for a Graduate visa.
- Once you've submitted an in-time application, your status to remain in the UK is protected by a provision called **3C Leave** until you receive a decision on your application.
- We do not advise on Graduate route applications and can only signpost to other sources of advice and guidance:

# Other post-study visas (e.g. Skilled Worker)

- Our team cannot advise on applications for other UK visa categories.
- Consultations with **Latitude Law**, a specialist immigration law firm based in Manchester, are available to all UoM students and graduates who are experiencing immigration concerns, or who need advice with future immigration applications.
  - You can contact Latitude Law to arrange a free telephone, Teams or Zoom consultation by emailing the following details to ✉ [UoMenquiries@latitudelaw.com](mailto:UoMenquiries@latitudelaw.com):
    - Your name
    - Your telephone number
    - The expiry date of your current status
    - Your level of study (eg undergraduate degree) and when your course is expected to complete
    - A brief summary of what you would like to discuss (eg "I am graduating this year and intend to marry my British partner and remain in the UK")

# Any Questions?

Student Support Site:

[www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/immigration-and-visas](http://www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/immigration-and-visas)

Email us – [visa@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:visa@manchester.ac.uk)

## Face-to-Face SIT advice drop-in service

Location: [Blue Ground Study Area](#), ground floor, Main Library, Oxford Road, Manchester, M13 9PP

Availability: [Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays 11:00 - 13:00](#).