

Visa application document checklist

The documents you will need to make a successful Tier 4 visa application include:

- Passport
- CAS letter from Bangor University
- ATAS certificate (if applicable – some research degrees only)
- Proof of funds
- Documents required by Bangor for issuing a CAS (e.g. previous qualifications, English language test...). These will be listed on the CAS letter under 'documents used to assess application'.
- Financial sponsor letter (if applicable)
- Passport sized photographs
- Biometric details – fingerprints and face photo will be taken at the Visa Centre
- Medical certificate - proof of being clear of tuberculosis for 6 months if applicable
- Application fee
- Pay the immigration health surcharge fee

All documents must be original. If they are not in English, a certified English translation must also be presented.



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Meet the International Student Support Team

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Introduction

Congratulations on being issued an offer of admission to Bangor University. This guide provides useful information and advice on applying for a visa.

If you have any questions about this guide, or about applying for a visa to study at Bangor, please contact us – our contact details can be found at the back of the guide.

We look forward to welcoming you to Bangor!

International Student Support Team

How to Apply

The process of applying for a visa varies depending on the country from which you are applying. For example, some countries will allow you to apply online whilst others may require that you visit to the visa office in person. It is therefore very important that you check the procedure for your country of application. You can find details of your country by visiting the UK Home Office web page at www.gov.uk/find-a-visa-application-centre and clicking on the 'country finder' link.

Visa requirements for studying in the UK

If you are classed as a 'Visa national', (i.e. that you need a visa to enter the UK) you must apply for 'Entry Clearance' (Visa) before travelling to the UK to study. This Entry Clearance will be stamped in your passport and it will look like this:



More information about applying for Entry Clearance is available at:

www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/study-visas

The Entry Clearance will:

- state the start and end dates of your permission to stay, you will be given temporary leave for 30 days and you will then have to collect your BRP card on arrival in the UK.
- **To ensure your BRP Card is delivered to Bangor, please ensure you give the university's alternative collection location code: 2HE592**
- give details of whether you need to register with the police.
- state if you are allowed to work.
- it will also have a specific reference number for Bangor University – GWBETJJ6X – and will detail the type of visa. This would normally be a 'Tier 4 (General) Student Visa'.

On receipt of your Entry Clearance and BRP, please check:

- that your personal details are correct and match the details on your passport.
- the valid 'from' and 'to' dates.
- that it has a note allowing you to work part-time.

Non-Visa Nationals

European Economic Area (EEA) Students, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland, Bulgaria, Romania, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovenia and Slovak Republic:

You do not need entry clearance to enter the UK to study.

Some other nationalities can obtain a 6 month short term study visa at the UK port of arrival (e.g. students from the USA). These other nationalities will get a stamp in their passport noting that they are short term study visa and will have a maximum stay of 6 months in the UK. In these cases, you must ensure that the Immigration Officer writes 'student' on the stamp, otherwise you will not be allowed to study. These visas prohibit students to undertake any work and they cannot be extended from within the UK.

Courses of 6 months or less – A short term study visa



If you intend to follow a short course which is for less than 6 months (or 11 months if you will be studying English language), you may be able to apply for either a Tier 4 visa as above, or a short-term study visa.

For Exchange students, the university does not issue a CAS for one-semester study, unless there is a good reason.

A short-term study visa is cheaper and, often, quicker to apply for in your home country. However, please be aware that:

- you cannot extend this visa beyond 6 months from within the UK
- you are not allowed to work on a short-term study visa
- you cannot bring your family with you

If any of these points are important to you we recommend that you apply for a Tier 4 student visa.

If you intend to follow a short pre-sessional English course followed by a degree course, it is recommended that you apply for a Tier 4 visa for the English course as you are able to renew a Tier 4 visa from within the UK. This is not possible with the short-term study visa.

You can apply online:
www.gov.uk/study-visit-visa

Tier 4 Visa Requirements – for Overseas (Non-EU) Students

You may only apply for a Tier 4 visa within 3 months of the course start date, therefore, you will normally be issued a CAS no longer than 3 months before the course start date. The course start date can be found in the Notification of CAS. Once you are issued an offer of admission, you should make sure you meet all the visa requirements in advance to ensure a successful application. To check the details of how to apply in your country, please go to the Home Office's visa centres overseas page: www.gov.uk/find-a-visa-application-centre

It can take weeks to prepare documentation that you will need to present with your visa application therefore you are strongly advised to start preparing your documents as soon as possible.

Depending on your country of application, you should apply either online or by using **Form VAF9** and **PBS Appendix 8 Tier 4 (General) Student Self-Assessment**.

Most countries require you to apply online: www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa

To be granted a visa for full-time study, you should pass a points-based assessment and score 40 points:

- 30 points for possession of a **Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies** (CAS) from Bangor University. Please see 'What is a CAS?' on page 8
- 10 points for evidence that you have enough **money** to cover the cost of your course and living expenses, please refer to page 10

In addition, the visa application form will ask questions about your English language ability, previous visa applications and academic qualifications. You may also be asked to attend an interview as part of the application.

Go to the last 2 pages of this booklet for a timetable which will help you plan your visa application and ensure you arrive at Bangor University on time.

Families (dependants)

You may wish to bring your family to Bangor during your studies. Tier 4 visa holders can only do so if:

- you are government-sponsored and your course is over six months long OR
- you are doing a postgraduate level course of 12 months or longer.

Dependants include: your wife/husband/children under 18/civil partner. They will be given the same length of visa as you.

If you are planning to bring your family with you, please contact the International Student Support team to make sure you have made plans for your accommodation and childcare well in advance of your arrival.

More information about visas for your family is available at:

www.ukcisa.org.uk/information--advice/visas-and-immigration/dependants



Preparing your visa application documentation

Visa application document checklist

Below is a list of documents you will need to make a successful Tier 4 visa application

1. Passport
2. CAS letter from Bangor University
3. Documents used by Bangor for issuing a CAS (e.g. previous qualifications, English language test...). These will be listed on the CAS letter under 'documents used to assess application'.
4. ATAS certificate (if applicable – some research degrees only)
5. Proof of funds
6. Financial sponsor letter (if applicable)
7. Passport sized photographs
8. Medical certificate - proof of being clear of tuberculosis for 6 months (if applicable)
9. Application fee
10. Biometric details – fingerprints and face photo will be taken at the Visa Centre
11. Proof of having paid the immigration health surcharge

All documents must be original. If they are not in English, a certified English translation must also be presented.

Refer to the next section for further details of how to prepare each of the documents listed above.

The CAS: Confirmation of Acceptance of Study

Before you apply for a visa, you will firstly need to receive a Notification of CAS from Bangor University.

What is a CAS?

A CAS is a unique number attached to your name that you should quote in your visa application. It will be provided by Bangor University once you have met all conditions of entry (as specified in the offer of admission) and you have paid a deposit of £2,000 or have provided to Bangor University a letter confirming that your sponsor will meet the costs of your study. This number will be confirmed to you in a Notification of CAS document that will be sent to you by email attachment. Please be aware that a CAS is only valid for 6 months from the date of issue and can only be used once.

Before issuing a Notification of CAS, you will need to meet the University's entry requirements.

They are:

- Academic
- English Language
- ATAS (in some instances only – further details below)
- others

Academic Entry Requirements

The University must have proof that you have achieved the academic qualification for entry onto the course applied for. Details of the qualification and grades required are provided in the offer of admission.

English language requirements

The University must have proof that your English language is at the correct level. If you intend to study a course at degree-level (NQF level 6) or above, your English language ability must be at a minimum CEFR level B2 in each of the four components (reading, writing, speaking and listening). For study below degree level (pre-sessional) you must meet CEFR level B1.

To meet these requirements, you will need to take one of the Home Office's approved secure English language tests (SELTs). The approved SELTs are listed here:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-applying-for-uk-visa-approved-english-language-tests

In certain circumstances, Bangor University can assess your English language ability to ensure you meet the required CEFR level. More information on English language requirements is available at:

www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa/knowledge-of-english

Please refer to the offer of admission, it will confirm whether or not you have met the English condition.



Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS)

For certain Research Degrees, students must obtain an ATAS Certificate before applying for a visa. Your offer of admission will state whether or not an ATAS certificate is required. A Notification of CAS will not be issued by the University until we have received a copy of the ATAS certificate.

This is a certificate issued by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), which gives you security clearance to study certain subject areas. If your offer of admission states that you must obtain an ATAS, you should apply online as soon as possible:

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

Documents relating to university admission that should be presented with your visa application

You should present with your visa application documents that were required by Bangor University for issuing a CAS. This will include:

- Academic certificate
- English language test certificate (if stated on the Notification of CAS)
- ATAS certificate (if applicable and stated on the Notification of CAS)

PLEASE NOTE. ONLY the documents listed in the Notification of CAS letter under 'documents used to assess application' should be presented.

If you fail to present relevant documents, you will be awarded 0 points for CAS.

Financial Sponsor Letter

If you are being sponsored by a government agency, employer, University etc to undertake your study, you must present an original copy of the sponsor letter on letter-headed paper. It should include the contact details at the organisation. If a private company is sponsoring your studies, it may benefit your application if you include company background documentation such as the company's certificate of incorporation.



Maintenance / Funds

You will need to show that you have enough money to pay for your course fees and your living costs while you are in the UK. The Home Office refers to this as the 'maintenance (funds) requirement'. Before being awarded 10 points see page 6 for more information) you must have the following amount of funds available to you:

Length of Course	Bangor Campus
9 months or less	Course fees plus £1,015 for each calendar month of the course to cover living costs
More than 9 months	First year of fees and £9,135 to cover living costs for 9 months in the United Kingdom

Important

1. You must prove that you have the above amounts by presenting your bank statements or a letter from your bank, and supply evidence **that the funds have been in your account for at least 28 days.**
2. In addition, the statement or letter from your bank **should be dated no more than 28 days before the date of your visa application.** See example below
3. **All amounts should be in pounds sterling,** so we suggest you print out a currency conversion sheet from the OANDA website: www.oanda.com/currency/converter
4. The Home Office **will not** accept proof of funds from certain banks. The list of banks is available at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-rules-appendix-p-lists-of-financial-institutions

Example

- The visa application is submitted on the 1st June
- The letter from the bank should be dated no earlier than the 4th May
- The statement should cover a period of at least 28 days immediately prior to the 4th May, ie a date range from 1st April to 4th May.
- The amount should cover the costs shown in the table above.



Costs met by Parents / Legal Guardian

If your parents or guardian are financing your studies, you must:-

- Show proof that you are related to them by presenting a birth certificate
- Provide a letter written by them confirming you are their son/daughter and that they will be financing your studies
- Provide bank statements showing the amounts required for a visa

Sponsored Students

If you are being sponsored by your Government, you must provide a letter confirming they are meeting the above costs. The letter must be on the organisation's official letter-headed paper or stationery, and must bear the organisation's official stamp. It must show:

- your name;
- the official financial sponsor's name and contact details;
- the date of the letter;
- the length of the sponsorship; and
- the amount of money that the official financial sponsor is giving to you, or a statement that it will cover all of your course fees and living costs.

Medical checks - Tuberculosis (TB) & Health Surcharge

Students from some countries are required to provide a medical certificate confirming that they are clear of Tuberculosis if they are coming to the UK for more than six months. The list of countries requiring TB screening is listed here together with a list of approved clinics for providing the medical checks.

www.gov.uk/tb-test-visa

As part of the visa application process you will be expected to pay a Health Surcharge. You should pay this amount before submitting your visa application. Once you have paid you will be sent an email with an NHS reference number. This number will be listed on the visa application form. Details at: www.gov.uk/healthcare-immigration-application

Passport sized photographs

You should check that the size of the photographs are correct and the number of photographs required with your application. This would be stated on the application form and further guidance is available at: www.gov.uk/photos-for-passports

Go to the last 2 pages of this booklet for a timetable which will help you plan your visa application and ensure you arrive at Bangor University on time.

Submitting your Visa Application

Biometric data and fingerprints

Submitting your visa application online

If you submit your application online, you will then receive a letter requesting you to attend a Visa Centre to provide your fingerprints and photograph. You may also be interviewed at this appointment. The length of time between the submission of your application and the biometric data/interview appointment varies between countries – but you will be advised of the timescale at the time of application.

Submitting your visa application in person

If you make an in-person (premium) application, where you actually go to the Visa Centre with your application and documents, your biometric data will be taken at that point. You may also be given the decision on the application on the same day.

Paying the visa application fee

If you apply online, you will also be able to pay the visa application fee online – using a credit/debit card.

If you make an in-person application, many Visa Centres will allow you to pay by cash or cheque, as well as a credit/debit card.



What happens next?

You will initially be issued with a temporary visa (Entry Clearance) stamped in your passport. This visa will be valid for 30 days and you will be expected to collect your full visa for the length of your course in Bangor on your arrival. This full visa will be in the form of an ID Card, called a Biometric Residence Permit or 'BRP'.

Credibility interviews

The Home Office intends to interview most Tier 4 student applicants before granting them a visa to come to the UK, therefore you might be asked to attend an interview (in person or by telephone) as part of the application process. Interviews take place when you attend a visa application centre to give your biometric information (fingerprints & photograph).

A Home Office member of staff will ask you about your course, your reasons for studying in the UK, the reasons for choosing to study at Bangor University, how the course relates to your future career, and they must be satisfied that you are a genuine student, and that your English language ability is at the correct level. Please look at our website for details of what to expect at the interview:

www.bangor.ac.uk/international/support

You will not be asked to attend an interview if you are a national or a passport holder of one of the countries classed as "low risk". These are:

Argentina	New Zealand
Australia	Oman
Barbados	Qatar
Botswana	Singapore
Brunei	South Korea
Canada	Taiwan
Chile	Trinidad & Tobago
Hong Kong	United Arab Emirates
Japan	United States of America
Malaysia	

Home Office advice states that students from the above countries do not need to provide evidence of their qualifications or their money when applying for a Tier 4 (G) Student visa. However, it is very important that, as a "low risk" student, you still obtain the evidence of your qualifications and your money just in case, as the Home Office can still request this evidence as part of their decision process.

How will I receive my passport and visa?

Following the submission of your application and documents, and having provided your biometric data (photograph & fingerprints), you will be notified of the outcome of the application either by post or by attending an appointment at the Visa Centre. The length of time taken to make a decision varies between countries / centres and it also depends on the time of year. You will be given an indication of the time it will take when you make the application.

When you receive your Tier 4 (G) Student Visa, it is very important that you check the details on it are correct. Make sure that:

1. you are allowed to work
2. it notes the Bangor University code (GWBETJJ6X)
3. it confirms that it is indeed a 'student' visa.

Your visa

How long will my visa last for?

If your application is successful, you will be allowed to stay in the UK for the full length of your course, plus some extra time after your course finishes. The length of extra time depends on the type and length of your course:

Type of course	Length of course	Length of visa given
Academic Course – your main course of study	12 months or more	The full length of the course plus four months after the end of the course
	At least six months but less than 12 months	The full length of the course plus two months after the end of the course
	Less than six months	The full length of the course plus seven days after the end of the course
Short course to prepare you for study - pre-sessional English course	12 months or more	The full length of the course plus four months after the end of the course.
	At least six months but less than 12 months	The full length of the course plus two months after the end of the course
	Less than six months	The full length of the course plus one month after the end of the course



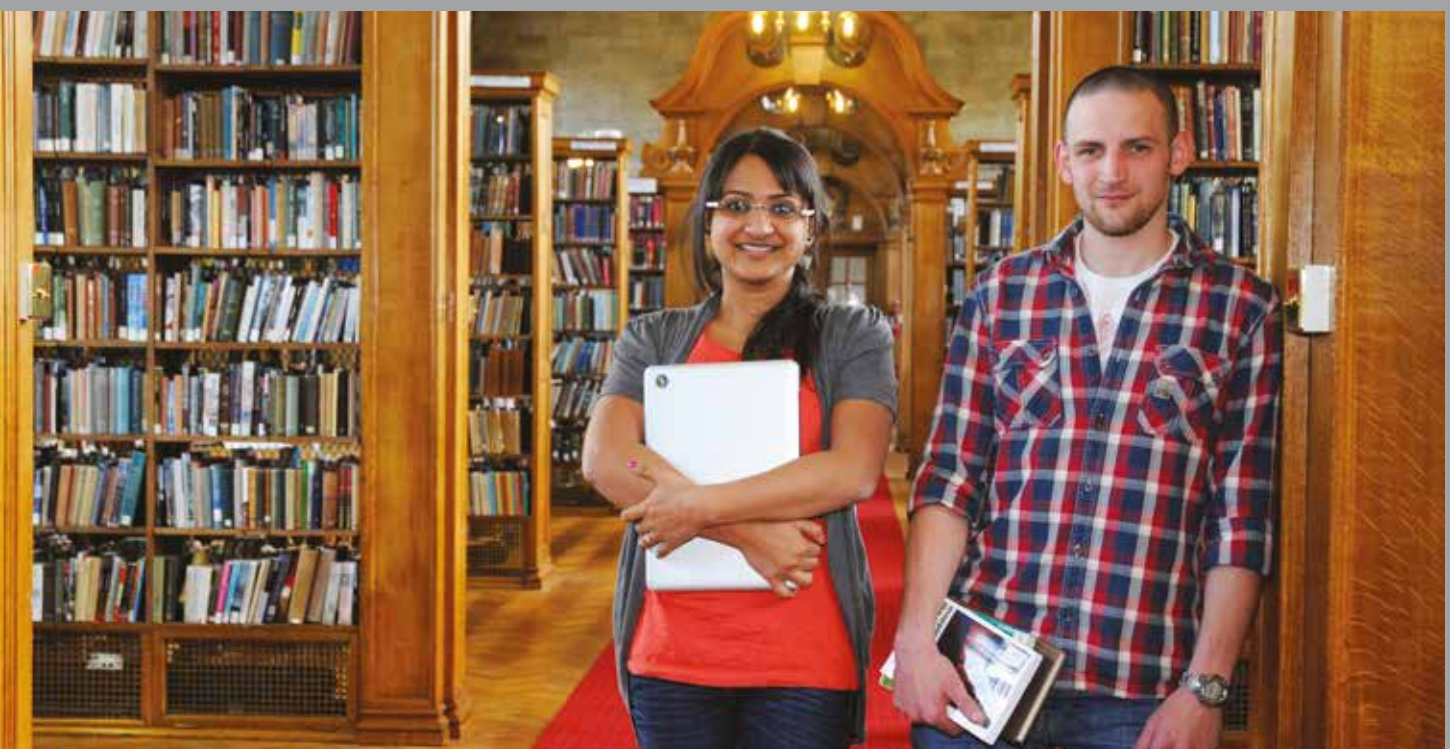


Maximum duration of your stay in the UK

The Home Office has set a maximum limit on the amount of time you can spend studying with a Tier 4 student visa. Currently, they are:

- Below degree level: 2-years
- Degree level: 5-years
- PhD students: exceptions to the 5 year limit

There are exceptions to these limits, please check with us if you are unsure.



What can I do if my application is refused?

If your visa application is refused, you will be given the reasons in writing in a 'Refusal Notice'. You would then have two options:

1. make a new visa application, using a **NEW** CAS letter issued by Bangor,
2. request an 'Administrative Review' if you think a mistake has been made by the Home Office.

If you request an Administrative Review, an Entry Clearance Manager will look at your application to check whether an obvious error has been made – you cannot provide new information and the application will be re-assessed on the original documents you provided. An Administrative Review is free of charge and can take up to 28 days to process. The process is explained in Annex 3 of the Home Office's Tier 4 Policy Guidance:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-application-for-uk-visa-as-tier-4-student

Very often, applications are refused due to inadequate funds, ie you have been unable to score 10 points for 'maintenance' (see page 10). In this case, we advise that you make a new application and ensure that you can prove that you have enough money to fund your studies and living costs at Bangor. You will need to request a new CAS from Bangor in order to make a new visa application.

Staff at the University's International Student Support Office can advise on what steps to take if you are refused a visa. Please send us an email with a scanned copy of the refusal notice to: internationalsupport@bangor.ac.uk

You can also seek further advice from your own lawyer, agent or the Visa Centre who issued the refusal.

Useful sources of information

The following web pages have very useful information about UK visas and also on living and studying in the UK:

UKCISA: www.ukcisa.org.uk

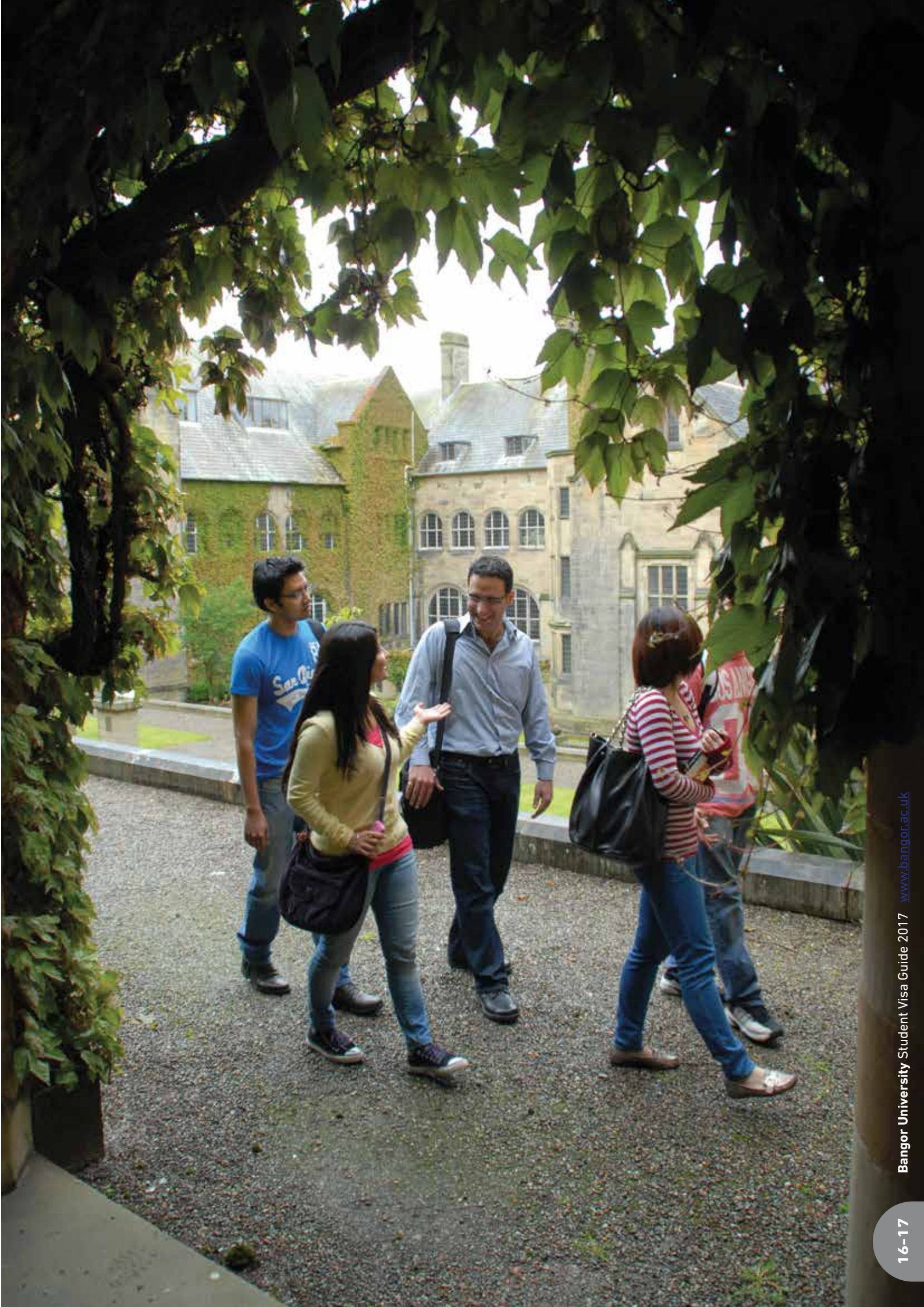
UKVI: www.gov.uk/visas-immigration

Bangor University: www.bangor.ac.uk/international/support

The British Council: www.educationuk.org/global

Wales Tourist Board: www.visitwales.com

Disclaimer: please be aware that all information was correct at time of publication. Rules change often and we endeavour to update the information accordingly. However, to ensure you benefit from the most recent rules, we advise that you check the UKVI web page (above) and/or contact us at the International Education Centre.



Visa application action timetable

This table below is a guide to help you prepare documentation, submit your application and receive your visa in time to travel and arrive in the UK for registration in September. The dates and times relate to the visa application date and the arrival date in Bangor.

Number of weeks before arrival	Activity Date	Activity	Notes
22 weeks	April & May	Funding Prepare your funding. Prepare evidence of funding to be submitted with the visa application.	This is information on how you will meet the costs of living and studying in the UK
22 weeks	April & May	Medical Certificate Arrange and attend an appointment for Tuberculosis testing (if applicable to your country)	Candidates from some countries are required to present a medical certificate testifying that they are clear of Tuberculosis
18 weeks	From May onwards	Documentation for Admission Send documentation to Bangor University so you may meet all conditions of entry . Send documents to the email address supplied in your offer of admission. Remember to send a copy of your passport ID page	The documentation required is listed in your Offer of Admission. This could be a school qualification, bachelor degree certificate, English language test certificate etc, ATAS certificate. Please Note: a CAS cannot be issued until all documents have been supplied.
16 weeks	End of May	Transfer to your bank account all the funds you will need to meet the cost of your study.	
10 weeks	5 July 2017	Request a statement from your Bank demonstrating that the funds have been in your account for at least 28 days.	The letter from the bank should be dated no earlier than 28 days before your visa application date
8 weeks	19 July 2017	Pay the £2,000 deposit to Bangor University OR submit a sponsorship letter The deposit should be paid once you have met ALL conditions of entry.	Once the deposit has been received and credited into Bangor University's bank account or we have received the sponsorship letter, a Notification of CAS will be issued.
8 weeks	19 July 2017	Arrange photographs of yourself	Take passport sized photographs of yourself for the visa application
8 weeks	19 July 2017	Prepare the visa application fee and Immigration Health Charge	
8 weeks	19 July 2017	Notification of CAS issued by Bangor University. It WILL NOT be issued unless you have met ALL conditions of entry	The Notification of CAS will enable you to book a date to submit your visa application.

This table is intended as a guide only. It is your responsibility to ensure that you read carefully the advice given by the UK Visa Service in your country to ensure that you satisfy all their requirements.

Please Note: should your visa application date be different to the example below, ENSURE that you adapt the timing of activities / preparations according to visa regulations.

Number of weeks before arrival	Activity Date	Activity	Notes
8 weeks	19 July 2017	Gather together all documentation for the visa application	Gather together all documentation for the visa. Read the UKVI visa guidance carefully to ensure you have all the required documentation.
8 weeks	19 July 2017	Prepare for your credibility interview.	You might be given a credibility interview as you submit your visa application in person, or at a later stage, so be prepared in advance
7 weeks	26 July 2017	IF APPLYING IN PERSON Book a visa appointment at the relevant UK visa office and attend at the given date and time.	Once you have received the Notification of CAS book a visa appointment as soon as possible IF you are applying in person
7 weeks	26 July 2017	IF APPLYING ONLINE Submit visa application Attend the visa centre at a later date to provide biometric data, fingerprints and possibly a credibility interview	You should submit your application at the very latest by this date
1-6 weeks		Credibility Interview You might be required to attend an interview at the visa centre or you might be interviewed by telephone during this period.	Please see our guide to Credibility Interviews on our webpage.
1 week	6 September 2017	Receive your visa	Ensure you have received your visa by this date so you may book your flight to the UK.
1 week		Make travel arrangements and notify the International Education Centre of your arrival details. You will receive instructions by email on how to do this.	Arrange to fly into Manchester International Airport
ARRIVAL	13 September 2017	Airport Meeting service at Manchester International Airport	Arrange your travel to the UK and to Manchester Airport. Bangor University will meet you at the airport on this day
	14 September 2017	International Registration and Orientation at Bangor University	Starts on this date
Within 10 days of arrival in the UK		Collect BRP	



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www.bangor.ac.uk

W: www.bangor.ac.uk/international/support

E: internationalsupport@bangor.ac.uk



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