Student visa: Financial requirements when applying inside or outside the UK

SOAS Student Advice Service endeavours to ensure that the information in this guide is accurate but please note that legislation is subject to change at short notice. We recommend always accessing this guide from the following link to ensure you are using the most up to date version of this document: www.soas.ac.uk/international/entry/applying-for-student-visas/

This guide should be used with the following documents:
SOAS Student visa requirement guide
SOAS Student visa application form guide
UKVI Student route caseworker guidance
UKVI Financial Requirements caseworker guidance

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A common reason for Student visa refusals is a problem with financial documents or an incorrect amount of funds being shown. If you can apply under the 'differentiation arrangements', you must meet the financial requirements but do not need to provide the evidence. See example documents at the end of this guide.

How much money do I need to have?

If your course is 9 months or more in length

You are required to have:

- £13,761* of maintenance funds*,
- plus your course fees for your first year/current year of study

If the course you will be studying is less than 9 months in length

You are required to have:

- £1,529* for each whole or partial month you will be studying for. For instance, if your course is 6 months and 17 days long you will need to show enough money for 7 months = **£10,703**
- plus your course fees for your first year/current year of study

*For applications made on or after **30 November 2026,** the amounts of money required to be shown to meet the financial requirements will increase to **£14,130** (£1,570 per month up to a maximum of 9 months).

If you have paid fees to SOAS before you apply for your Student visa and this amount is shown as paid on your CAS statement, you can deduct the amount from the total you need in your bank account. If you have any queries about the fees shown as paid on your CAS, reply to your CAS email.

As SOAS and University of London student halls of residence are provided by third-party organisations, you do not pay hall fees directly to SOAS and therefore this money cannot be considered in your application.

Automatically meeting the financial requirements (inside the UK application only)

If you're making your application in the UK, you will automatically meet the financial requirements if you have been living in the UK with valid immigration permission for at least 12 months, counting backwards from the date of your Student visa application. If you don't meet these criteria, you will need to meet the financial requirements and provide evidence if you don't benefit from the 'differentiation arrangements'. UKVI caseworker guidance states that absences from the UK for holidays and short periods do not break the 12-month period, however, "if an applicant has

not been based in the UK for a significant part of the 12 months, for example for at least 3 months, they will not meet the requirement."

How to show that you meet the financial requirements:

There are several ways you can evidence that you meet the financial requirements:

1. Cash funds in a personal bank account
2. Student loans that meet certain requirements
3. Official financial sponsorship e.g. scholarships, if they meet certain requirements
4. Tuition fees showing as paid on your CAS

1. Cash funds in a bank account

If using a bank account, it must be a **personal** account in the name of one of the following:

- your name, either alone or as a joint account holder
- your parent or legal guardian*, joint accounts are acceptable where the account is in the names of both your parents only.
- your partner, if your partner has valid UK immigration permission or is applying at the same time as the you. Not all students can bring partners to the UK, refer to the Dependent section of this guide or contact us for guidance. Partners are defined as:
    - Your spouse
    - Your civil partner
    - Your unmarried partner if you have been living together in a relationship similar to marriage for at least two years before the application, evidence of this will be required.

* The definition of parent excludes step-parents and is restricted to biological parents, legal parents, and adoptive parents. If in doubt, contact our team for guidance.

Caseworker guidance also states that your funds will not be accepted if they are held by a financial institution and any of the following apply:

- the financial institution is not regulated by the appropriate regulatory body for the country in which that institution is operating; or
- the financial institution does not use electronic record keeping.

Verification checks

Caseworkers will contact your bank to verify your bank statement is accurate so please ensure you statement contains contact information for your local branch. If UKVI cannot verify your document, they will refuse your application or may ask for alternative verifiable documents. Consider this

requirement when choosing where to deposit your funds and speak to your local branch about how they handle these types of UKVI requests.

Types of funds:

- Funds must be in a personal (not business) account and available for use.
- Funds held in a type of account where the funds can be accessed immediately.
- Financial instruments such as **shares, bonds, credit cards will not be accepted as evidence.**

Duration that required funds must be held for

You must show that you have had the total amount of money in cash funds in your bank account for a 28-day period. The document you provide to evidence your funds in the bank account must not be older than 31 days.

Funds must not drop below the required amount throughout the whole 28-day period, or your visa application will be refused. The required funds must remain in the bank account until you have submitted your visa application and ideally until you receive your visa decision. If your funds fall below the required amount after you have submitted your visa application, the UKVI caseworker must be satisfied that you have spent these funds to pay outstanding tuition fees, accommodation or other costs associated with your proposed course of study in the UK. You should keep receipts or evidence to prove that you have spent the funds in the bank account on this type of expenditure.

Using parents' or partners' bank account

If you're providing your parent's or partner bank statement for your visa application, it should meet all the requirements outlined in this section. You must also provide evidence of your relationship and a letter of consent.

* The definition of parent excludes step-parents and is restricted to biological parents, legal parents, and adoptive parents. If in doubt, contact our team for guidance.

If using parents' account:

- your birth certificate confirming your relationship or,
- a certificate of adoption showing your name and the name of the parent who holds the funds, or
- a court document stating that your legal guardian is the person who holds the funds, or
- a government-issued household register, **and**
- a letter of consent giving permission for this money to be used for your studies in the UK.

If using partner's account:

- proof of your marriage or civil partnership e.g., marriage or civil partnership certificate, or
- evidence of co-habiting for two years if not married or in a civil partnership with your partner, **and**
- a letter of consent giving permission for this money to be used for your studies in the UK.

Acceptable forms of evidence when using cash funds in a bank account

Bank statement

You can provide original or electronic bank statements. The caseworker will count back 28 days from the closing balance date on the statement and check the balance in the account on each day. Your bank statement must not be older than 31 days on the date of your visa application. The document should include all the following:

- Be on official bank stationary or an electronic record
- Your name or your parents(s)/legal guardian's name
- Account number
- Date of the statement
- Financial institution's name and contact details for verification purposes
- Amount of money available over a 28-day period

Bank letter

If using a letter from the bank (with the details listed above included) it must also include confirmation of the lowest balance held over the 28-day period preceding the date of the letter. You letter should not be older than 31 days on the date of your visa application.

Certificates of deposit

Certificates of deposit are documents issued by a bank which confirm an individual has deposited or invested a sum of money. To be acceptable as evidence:

- the certificate of deposit must have been issued within 31 days of the date of application
- at least 28 days must have elapsed between the date of the deposit and the date of issue of the certificate
- confirms you can access the money at any time

2. Student Loans

Acceptable loan providers are:

- a government
- a government sponsored student loan company
- an academic or educational loans scheme which is provided by a financial institution regulated for the purpose of issuing student loans by either the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) or the Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA) or, in the case of an overseas loan, the official regulatory body for purpose of issuing student loans in the country in which the financial institution is located and where the money is held

You must be able to provide a letter from your lender which includes the following:

- be dated no more than 6 months before the date of application; and
- confirms the loan is a student loan provided to you by either the relevant government or a government sponsored student loan company or an academic or educational loans scheme; and
- confirms there are no conditions on release of the loan funds other than a successful application to study in the UK as a Student and
- confirms the amount of the loan and that the loan is in your name
- confirm the funds will be:
    - available to you before you travel to the UK; or
    - paid directly to SOAS before you travel to the UK, with any living cost part of the loan being made available to you by the time you arrive in the UK; or
    - available before you begin your course if the loan is provided by your national government.

3. Official Financial Sponsorship e.g. scholarships

The following providers are recognised as official financial sponsors:

- His Majesty's Government sponsored programmes
- your national government
- the British Council
- an international organisation
- an international company
- a university
- an independent school

You must provide a letter from your sponsor confirming:

- your name and that you are the recipient of the sponsorship
- the amount of the sponsorship, or confirmation that the financial sponsor will cover all course and living costs required by the applicant
- the date of the sponsorship and duration
- the name and contact details of the official financial sponsor

If you're financially sponsored by SOAS, your CAS statement must show this information including the amount of scholarship you will receive. If your financial sponsor is only covering some of your course fees or living costs, you must show that you have the rest of the money needed from other acceptable sources.

Funds not in Pounds Sterling

If the funds are in your local currency, UK Visas and Immigration advise that you convert the closing balance to Pounds Sterling (GBP) using the OANDA website. Use the conversion rate for the date you pay for your visa application fee. Write the converted figure next to the closing balance.

The following currencies should not use the OANDA rates and instead must use the FCDO Consular Rate of Exchange:

- Iranian Rials (IRR)
- Syrian Pounds (SYP)
- Mongolian Tugrik (MNT)

What are the financial requirements for dependants?

Dependants will need to show that they have £845 per month of immigration permission they will be granted (if successful), up to a maximum of 9 months. Dependant visas will expire on the same date as your Student visa, and you can check when your Student visa will expire in the visa expiry date section of this guide.

Example 1
You're studying on a Masters' course that is 12 months or longer, your Student visa (and your spouse's Dependant visa) will expire 4 months after the course end date on the CAS. If your spouse is applying to enter the UK at the same time as you, they will need £845 per month up to a maximum of 9 months - £7,605.
If your dependants will apply to come to the UK later than you, please contact our team for help in calculating how many months they will need to show finance for. See also page 102 of the guidance dated 06 April 2021.

Example 2
If you're applying for a visa for an additional 3 months to finish your PhD, your dependants will need to show 7 months x £845 (£5,915) as your visa (and their visa) will expire 4 months after the new 'course end' date on your CAS. You will only need to show 3 months of finance for your own Student visa due to the difference in maintenance requirements between the Student and Dependant visas.

Financial Evidence

The required funds can be held in the same way as for Student visa applications however please note the following exceptions:

- Dependants cannot use bank accounts held by the Student's parents'
- Dependants cannot use an educational loan whether in their own name or the Student's name
- Dependants who are studying in the UK with their own official financial sponsor cannot use a letter from their sponsor to meet their financial requirements of the Dependant visa application. However, if the Student's official financial sponsor is willing to confirm that they are covering the dependant's maintenance, they can use that letter if they are named on it.

The funds held by dependents must be in addition to the funds required by the Student applicant. UKVI caseworkers can check bank statements for evidence that the same funds are being used for both applications.

Family members who are 'low risk' applicants can benefit from the differentiation arrangements and do not need to provide evidence of funds. However, they will still need to have the funds in the required format as the caseworker can request evidence of them.

To qualify under these arrangements your dependant(s) must be applying from their country of nationality or residence, and at the same time and location as you. Both you and your dependant(s) must be holders of a 'low-risk' nationality, as listed in Appendix Student ST 22.1(b) of the Immigration Rules.

For more information about dependant applications please see the Student and Child Student policy guidance. UKCISA also has useful guidance for Dependant applications.

Further help

If you need further immigration advice after reading this guidance, please email the Student Advice Service with your full name, nationality, name of the country in which you are making your Student visa application and SOAS student ID (if issued).
Email: adviceservice@soas.ac.uk
SOAS Student visa requirement guide
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UKVI Financial Requirements caseworker guidance

Example documents

Example bank letter



Bank logo

Date [not older than 31 days on the date you pay for your visa application]

To whom it may concern,

We confirm that *[your name/parents name], account number,* is holding a bank account with us.

The total amount held *[on date]* of the letter is [XX XXX]. The lowest amount held over the previous 28 consecutive days was [XX XXX].

Yours sincerely

[Bank name and signature
Contact details for verification]

Example of bank statement



Bank logo

Date of statement: *[not older than 31 days on the date you pay for your visa application]*
Account number: *[include full account number]*
Account name: *[your name or your parents name]*
Bank contact details: *[include phone number or email address so UKVI can make contact for verification checks.)*

Date	Transaction	Debit (£)	Credit (£)	Balance (£)
27 Jul 2026	Transfer		35,000	37,000
30 Jul 2026	Clothes	200		36,800
2 Aug 2026	Salary		500	37,300
13 Aug 2026	Rent	750		36,550
19 Aug 2026	lunch	10		36,540
4 Sep 2026	books	15		36,525
10 Sep 2026	Closing balance			36,525

Step 1. Count backwards from the closing balance to find your 28-day period.

Step 2, Check closing balance date is not more than 31 days ago on the date you pay the visa application fee.

Step 3. Ensure you have the required amount of funds on each date during the 28-day period. Funds cannot drop below the required amount on any single day.

Example of consent letter if using parents bank account

Date

Dear UKVI

I confirm that I am the parent of [*your name]*. I give permission for the funds in my bank account to be used by [*your name]* for their studies in the UK.

Yours sincerely
[Your parent's name and signature]

(If using a bank account in both parent's name, submit a letter from each parent)

Example of letter of consent for under 18s

Date

Dear UKVI

We confirm that we are the parents of [*your name]*. I give consent to [*your name]* making the Student visa application, their living and care arrangements in the UK as well as their travel to and reception on arrival to the UK.

Yours sincerely
[Your parent's name and signature]

(signed by both parents or legal guardians, or just one parent or guardian if they have sole responsibility for you)