



Offer Holder News Visa Special 2026

Dear Offer holder ,

Welcome to our Visa Special newsletter. If you don't require a visa to study, you can ignore this (although check out the news and events mentioned!)

This month's newsletter was written by LSE's Student Advice and Engagement Team (SAET). It is long and includes a lot of detailed guidance. For most students the visa process runs smoothly, but preparation is key. Please read the following information carefully and keep a copy of this email.

Kind regards,

Graduate Admissions Office

EU/EEA and Swiss Students

If you are an EU/EEA (European Union/European Economic Area) or Swiss student who did not obtain a status under the [EU Settlement Scheme](#) post-Brexit, you now require a Student Visa to study in the UK. It is not possible to study your degree using a Standard Visitor visa, otherwise known as a tourist visa.

Student Visas

You will require immigration permission to allow you to study in the UK. For the majority of our graduate offer holders the visa required will be a **Student visa**. Do not mistakenly apply for the

Quick Links

[Previous issues](#)

[Graduate Admissions](#)

[Offer Pack](#)

[Term dates](#)

[Graduate Applicant Portal \(GAP\)](#)

[Knowledgebase](#)

Graduate Route to join your studies because you are studying at *Graduate* level. The Graduate Route is a work permit only available after you have completed your degree. It is not intended for studies and you are not permitted to study on this visa by law. The Graduate Route is a one-time only visa, so if you apply for it now and it is granted, you would not be able to apply for it again at the end of your studies with LSE.

Most students apply for a Student visa to study a full-time programme at LSE. If you already have a visa or immigration permission for the UK, check whether you can use it to study your programme on the following [page](#). You should note that if you are interested in applying for the Graduate Route, at the end of your studies, and already have another form of immigration permission for the UK, you should [seek advice](#) on whether to switch into the Student Route before your programme commences as there is a specified amount of time you need to be in the UK on a Student visa to be eligible

You must receive a Confirmation of Acceptance for Study (CAS) issued by LSE before you can apply for a Student visa, but you do not need to wait for your CAS to start preparing to submit your visa application.

To be issued with a CAS you will need an unconditional offer (so have met our academic and English language conditions) and have submitted your offer acceptance and Financial Undertaking Form (FUF). Further details can be found in the [Graduate Offer Pack](#).

LSE does not support applications under the Student Route for [part-time study](#). If you have been accepted on a part-time programme and are reliant on a Student visa to study in the UK, please discuss your options with [Graduate Admissions](#). [Part-time MSc students](#) cannot use the Standard Visitor visa due to the requirement to attend more frequently and the length of the programme. Frequent and successive visits are not permitted on the Standard Visitor visa.

[Careers](#)

[Graduate Destinations](#)

[LSESU](#)

[CMA](#)

[Programme and course information](#)

News from around LSE

[LSE and
and business advisory
firm BDO launch
leadership series to
power the next
generation of high-
growth founders](#)

Video of the month:

[How can we be more
resilient? | LSE IQ](#)

Podcast

LSE Events:

[Economics, ethics, and
the role of the state in
climate action](#)

**Tuesday 19 May 2026
6.30pm to 8.00pm**

***Hosted by the Global
School of Sustainability***



Students already in the UK

If a CAS can be issued for a programme, the immigration rules do not allow you to study that degree programme on a Graduate Route visa/High Potential Individual Visa instead. It will not be possible to enrol for your programme on either of these visas, or while you are waiting the outcome of your Student visa application. Therefore, you will need a Student visa to join your programme. If you are switching from the Graduate Route visa to a Student visa, you will be unable to campus enrol until your Student visa has been granted. You can only join your programme and attend teaching at LSE once you have been issued your student visa and you have the correct immigration permission in place.

If you are currently in the UK there are some circumstances in which you can apply for your visa from within the UK. You must check whether this applies to you. Please contact the [LSE Student Advice and Engagement Team \(SAET\)](#) to find out if you can apply from inside UK, especially if you will not have completed your previous UK degree programme before you are due to start at LSE. You are not able to study a degree programme at LSE whilst holding a visa for another institution.

If you are currently in the UK as a tourist, you cannot apply for your Student visa in the UK. You will need to leave the UK to apply for your visa, so you should seek advice from the Student Advice and Engagement on your options.

Where to seek advice

Your academic department and Graduate Admissions are not qualified to provide you with detailed immigration advice. Our Student Advice and Engagement Team (SAET) are legally qualified to advise you on the immigration rules. Visit the [SAET web pages](#) for information and contact details.



Receiving your CAS

To be eligible for LSE to issue you a CAS you must:

- hold an **unconditional** offer
- have [accepted](#) your offer
- have returned the [Financial Undertaking](#)
- have provided **official proof of your English results**, or have had your English language condition passed by Graduate Admissions

You will receive your CAS number via email. The CAS itself is a unique reference number which confirms that LSE will be your Student visa sponsor. You will need to use this number in the Student visa application form. You do not need a copy of your offer letter or a hard copy of your CAS as part of your visa application.

Graduate Admissions has recently started issuing CAS in small batches. We are currently prioritising CAS for offer holders that have an early start date. Before we issue you with your CAS, we will send you an email (known as a Pre-CAS) which lists the information that we will send to UK Visas and Immigration to generate your CAS. Please ensure that lse.ac.uk is added to your email safe list. **Please read through the Pre-CAS email carefully and follow the instructions to confirm the details or to inform us if changes need to be made. For the latter, you will also need to include the necessary evidence.** It is quicker to make changes before the CAS is issued and changes cannot be made once you have used your CAS in a visa application. It is very important that the information on your CAS matches the documents you are using in your visa application e.g. passport details.

You do not need to request a CAS – Graduate Admissions aim to begin working on your CAS within five working days of you having met the eligibility criteria but processing times vary and we would ask you to remain patient. There is a significant number of CAS to be processed for those who have already met the eligibility criteria and these will take us a short while to get through before we are processing within five working days. Please be assured that we appreciate the urgency of issuing your CAS and will do so as soon as possible.

The best way for you to get your CAS is to make sure that any documents requested in your offer email and listed on the application tracker have all been sent to Graduate Admissions, and you respond to any questions from the CAS team in a timely manner. Please do not contact us or the Student Advice and Engagement Team to ask when you will receive your Pre-CAS or CAS as it will not be possible to respond with an accurate answer. The best way to keep track of our progress is through our [current processing times](#) page which will indicate how long it may take to process your documents and issue your Pre-CAS/CAS.

Further information on CAS numbers can be found in LSE's [CAS issuing policy](#).

ATAS

All international students who require a visa and plan to study a programme that requires ATAS clearance must obtain an ATAS certificate regardless of which visa they have. At the LSE, very few students require ATAS and this is at Postgraduate Research level only.

You will be informed if your course requires ATAS clearance as part of your offer and you will be unable to receive your CAS until you have provided Graduate Admissions with your ATAS certificate.

After receiving your CAS

Once you receive your CAS, please check these details carefully as **errors could lead to your visa application being refused:**

- **Personal details:** Please check that this information matches your passport exactly. If you get a new passport after you have been issued your CAS statement, please update Graduate Admissions with a copy of the photo page of your new passport and wait until we update your CAS before submitting your visa application. We will notify you once the updates have been made.
- **Information regarding your LSE offer:** Please check your offer letter to confirm that the full title of your programme is correct. **You should always use the programme start date quoted in your CAS statement** when completing your visa application (the offer letter may show a slightly different date due to the way we organise registration).
- **Sponsor Licence Number (SLN):** LSE's SLN is 1RRV3MMEX
- **Evidence reviewed:** LSE will list the qualification used to assess your suitability for your programme on your CAS. However, you are no longer required to submit this as evidence as part of your visa application. You can also find details of your English Language Assessment in this section of the CAS. LSE is a Higher Education Provider with a Track Record of Compliance. This means we can use our own methods of assessment for English language. You can find out how your English language has been assessed for your application by checking the detail in this section of the CAS.
- **RQF Level:** The visa application form will ask you what level you are studying. The RQF level may be stated as NQF on your CAS email so for example, if you are studying at NQF 7 you should choose RQF 7 on the application form.



FINANCIAL DOCUMENTS

You should read the information on the Student Advice and Engagement Team (SAET) [web page](#) very carefully. It is not difficult to apply for a Student visa, but it is make simple mistakes which can lead to your visa being refused. In our experience, most refusals occur because of avoidable mistakes with financial documents. **There are no exceptions to the financial requirements because you are studying at LSE, so it's important to get it right.**

At the visa application stage you will need to provide evidence (in the form of official bank statements, educational loans, scholarship letters and/or accommodation payment receipts) that you have the finances in place to cover your tuition and maintenance costs.

If you are using a bank account, you need to show that you have held the following funds in an accepted account for a consecutive 28-day period from the closing balance of the bank statement:

- **Tuition fees for your programme as stated on your CAS; plus**
- **£1,529 per month living costs up to a maximum of nine months (£13,761)**

There must be no more than 31 days between your date of application and the date of the closing balance of your bank statement. Details of money paid by you or your home institution towards your LSE tuition fees will be listed on your CAS and provided to the UKVI (UK Visas and Immigration).

We advise against paying your accommodation in full to use as evidence, as you can only claim a maximum of £1,529 and only for LSE or University of London halls of residence (not including Urbanest halls or Lilian Knowles). Payments made towards accommodation will not be shown on the CAS and you will need to obtain a receipt as evidence of payments made.

Some students applying in the UK may not be required to show any evidence of their finances if they have held a valid visa for 12 months by the date of application, and are applying from the UK. Check with SAET to see if this applies to you. If you are a low-risk national, you should prepare your evidence of your finances, but you do not need to submit them with the student visa application. The UKVI however can request these are part of your visa application and we have had LSE students who have had to delay their studies, because they had to withdraw their visa applications. For more information on this, please review our info sheet on Applying for a Student visa as a Low Risk National [here](#). It is also possible that the UKVI may contact your bank to verify that you have the funds shown on your financial evidence. As we have already seen a number of refusals from the UKVI due to them not being able to verify the funds with the bank, we will recommend that you request the bank to issue you a bank statement with contact details for your branch. This may help when the funds are being verified by the UKVI however, this is not guaranteed as the UKVI may get in touch with the main branch via their own contact details that they have in the system.

Please make sure that you read the online guidance in detail and the info sheet on [Meeting the Financial Requirements](#), and make sure you meet all the criteria for this section of your visa application. There is specific guidance which is relevant to your level of study. Please ensure you are reading the correct guides to avoid errors. You need to read both the guide to applying and the guide to completing the online application form.

Credibility interviews

For some students, a credibility interview will be part of the Student visa application process, for example if the UKVI have concerns about your academic progress. More information on this can be found [here](#).

Students who are required to attend an interview may experience delays to their visa application. We therefore advise students to submit their visa application as soon as possible. You can apply up to 6 months in advance of your programme start date on your CAS if you

are overseas and up to 3 months in advance of your programme start date on your CAS if you are in the UK.'

If you have had problems with your UK immigration history in the past, please contact SAET for advice before submitting your application (use the [form](#) on our website).

If you have any gaps in your education, you should include a letter explaining to the UKVI what you have been doing during this time. The UKVI are requesting justification for gaps in education and recommend that submitting this as part of your application may mean you are less likely to be contacted for the information.

Immigration Health surcharge

The UK Government has introduced an additional charge for many temporary visitors, including students, to cover potential costs incurred by the National Health Service (NHS).

You must pay a set amount for each year that you may be in the UK, plus the additional time you will receive on your visa. The surcharge is currently £776 per year plus the additional time you receive on your visa. As an example, a 12-month Masters student would be required to pay £1164 because they receive a visa of 17 months.

This is payable in full at the point of application. This not an optional charge and failure to pay or pay the correct amount can lead to your visa being refused. It cannot be waived if you have medical insurance which will cover your stay in the UK.

If you are paying in an overseas currency, the UKVI set their own exchange rate and the amount you pay is likely to be higher than if you were paying in GB Pounds.

Details on the immigration health charge and how to calculate it can be found on the [UKVI website](#).

For full guidance on how to make your visa application, please see the [relevant pages of our website](#).

English Language tests

If we have set you an English condition, you must meet this before you will get your CAS. If you are coming to LSE to study a degree-level programme, we will accept the tests stated on our [entry requirements page](#).

Evidence of Qualifications

LSE will list the qualifications used to assess your academic suitability for your programme on your CAS. However, you will not be required to submit these as part of your application.

PLAN AHEAD

Residents of some countries are required to undertake Tuberculosis testing in an approved UKVI clinic before submitting their application. TB tests are valid for at least six months and

are based on residency in the country you are applying from, *not* your nationality. This means that if you are a national of a country that doesn't require TB testing, but you have been living in a country that does require testing for six months before your application, you will need a UKVI TB Test. Check if you need to take a TB test [here](#).

The earliest you can apply for your visa is:

- six months in advance of your official programme start date as stated on your CAS if you are applying from **outside** the UK
- three months in advance of your official programme start date as stated on your CAS if you are applying from **inside** the UK

If you are applying from inside the UK but there are more than 28 days between the expiry date of your current visa and the start of your programme at LSE, you will not be able to apply for your visa from within the UK. Please contact SAET to discuss your options.

We advise against planning to travel whilst your application is in progress. You may need to submit your passport for applications made overseas. If you are applying in the UK, any travel outside the UK whilst an extension application is in progress may lead to your application being withdrawn by the UKVI.

Please remember that visa processing times can vary greatly depending on where you make your application, and it is important to give yourself enough time for your visa application. In Summer 2025, there were delays in visa processing which meant that many students did not arrive on time for their degree. Plan to apply as soon as possible and base personal travel around getting your Student visa in place rather than basing your visa application around your personal travel.

Check your Visa for errors when you receive it, for example, it has the correct Sponsor Licence Number.

It is very important that you check your visa when you receive it for errors and get these amended before travelling. You will be issued with a digital status as evidence of your immigration status in the UK. You will need to generate a [Share Code](#) to prove your immigration status at campus enrolment. You will need to create your eVisa account so that you can create a [Share Code](#) to provide at campus enrolment.

All students can find out more about eVisa accounts and checking if your immigration permission is correct on SAET's ['When you have your visa'](#) web page.

You should only plan to enter the UK when your Student visa is valid. If you enter as a tourist before the start date of your visa, you will be required to leave the Common Travel Area (UK and Republic of Ireland) and re-enter when your Student visa is valid. This is the case even if the UK Border Force allowed you to enter before your Student visa is valid. You will not be able to campus enrol and attend teaching if your Student visa has not been activated at the border. This is especially important if you are from a country where you need a Schengen visa to travel to Europe.

Working on a Student Visa and the Graduate Route

If you are interested in working during your studies on a Student visa, there are some conditions in place that you must adhere to. You can find more information on working on a visa for LSE and details of the Graduate Route work visa [here](#). Not all students will be eligible for the Graduate Route, even if you transfer programmes e.g. from the LSE-USC double-degree, so it is important to understand your options before obtaining your visa as it may not be possible to change this once your visa is granted and you are in the UK.



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