

FACTSHEET: Doctorate Extension Scheme – for PhD/Doctorate students

The overview

Doctorate Extension Scheme (DES) is designed for students who have almost finished their PhD or another Doctorate-level qualification at a Higher Education Institution (HEI) in the UK. The scheme allows these students to apply for a further visa to stay in the UK for a maximum of 12 months after they complete their course.

The scheme allows graduates with extra time to gain practical work experience in their field, undertake supplementary study, find work in the UK with a Tier 2 employer or set up a business as a Tier 1 entrepreneur or graduate entrepreneur.

Dependants of Tier 4 students living in the UK can also extend their visas under this scheme.

Who can apply?

To be eligible for this visa, you must:

- Hold a current, valid Tier 4 (General) visa at the time of application.
- Be studying a PhD or other Doctorate level qualification.
- Apply for visa from inside the UK.
- Apply within 60 days of course completion (i.e. submission of final amendments/corrections).
- Meet the financial as well as all other requirements of the Tier 4 application.

When should you apply?

- You must apply prior to completing your PhD programme, but you cannot apply before you have had your viva voce exam and a decision on the length of time you need to complete corrections has been formally agreed.
- If your current Tier 4 (General) visa does not cover the period of minor/major corrections, you will have to apply for a normal Tier 4 (General) visa extension prior to applying under the DES scheme.
- You should contact the Immigration Team (International Office), when your viva date has been agreed, for further advice on the DES scheme.

Note: ATAS is not required for the DES visa but if your PhD course is subject to ATAS clearance and you are applying for a normal Tier 4 visa extension, you must [obtain fresh ATAS clearance](#).

How to apply?

- If you wish to apply for this visa, you will need to sign a contract with the University and pay the administrative fee.
- Immigration & Compliance Team will issue you with a new CAS. The DES visa will be granted for a period of 12 months from the expected PhD completion date stated on the new CAS.
- ATAS clearance is **not** required for the DES scheme.

- If you are financially sponsored for your PhD study by your government or employer then you must also obtain written permission from their sponsor confirming that they will allow you to continue under the Doctorate Extension Scheme.
- If you are a self-funded student you will need your bank statement to cover the Home Office maintenance requirements. The maintenance of living cost you will need to show is £2,030 (main applicant) and £1,360 (for each dependant). The total amount you need should be saved in your account for minimum 28 continuous days before you apply for the DES visa.

Conditions of Visa

- Once you have spent 12 months in the UK on a DES visa, you cannot extend your visa under this scheme. However you are eligible to switch to another visa category.
- Whilst on the DES visa you must attend three symposia per-year at the University (September, January, April). These are organised by the Immigration Team in association with the Careers and Employability Service team.
- Comply with all Home Office rules and University requirements associated with the Doctorate Extension Scheme.

Related links

[UKCISA website](#)

[After your study](#)

If you have any further questions about how to make this visa application please attend one of the term-time [Immigration Drop-in Sessions](#) (Mon & Wed 1200-1300 and Fri 1100-1200). For out of term advice, please [contact the Immigration team](#) for an appointment.

Note: The UKVI/Home Office immigration requirements can change at a short notice. The University of Huddersfield and its staff cannot take responsibility for any changes to the rules or decisions made by the UKVI.