Your responsibilities under Tier 4 as a full-time student

Introduction

This document explains the responsibilities of a full-time student sponsored by the Cambridge Theological Federation for a Tier 4 visa and provides guidance on protecting your immigration status in the UK. It is important that you understand and comply with the responsibilities of your student visa and co-operate with the Federation in fulfilling our shared Tier 4 duties. Any breach could have serious implications on your studies and continued stay in the UK. In using the Federation’s CAS to apply for your Tier 4 visa, you agree to the requirements outlined in this document.

Please note that the immigration rules and guidance are liable to change. The current Tier 4 Policy Guidance can be accessed via www.gov.uk/tier-4-general-visa. In cases of conflict, information on gov.uk has priority over information in this document.

Federation office

The Bounds House team provides a visa advice service to applicants and students and has a responsibility for ensuring institutional Tier 4 compliance. We can advise on queries relating to the conditions of a Tier 4 visa and should be contacted for information on how a change in your circumstances may have implications for your immigration status in the UK. Contact us on enquiries@theofed.cam.ac.uk.

Your BRP

The Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) is the documentary evidence of your immigration permission in the UK. It is a credit-card sized document and contains your personal and biometric information. It is very important you keep it secure. You must take it with you if you travel overseas as you will require it to re-enter the UK, and may need it for flights within the UK. Note that there is no requirement to carry ID in the UK so it is advisable not to carry your passport/BRP inside the UK other than where necessary for formal identification purposes.

Collecting your BRP if you apply for your visa outside the UK

When you receive a successful decision on your visa application you will be issued a 30 day entry vignette in your passport. You must ensure that you enter the UK during this 30 day period. If the 30 days expire, you will need to apply for a new permit from overseas at an additional cost.

You will need to collect your BRP within 10 days of arriving in the UK and prior to commencing your course. The collection point will be confirmed in the decision letter you receive after your visa application has been processed.

Receiving your BRP if you apply for your visa inside the UK

If you apply for further leave to remain inside the UK, your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) will be sent to the address you use in the application form. You should check your eligibility to apply in the UK before doing so.
Checking your visa

It is a Home Office requirement to have any errors on your visa corrected. Your BRP should contain the following information:

*Type of Permit:* T4 GENERAL STUDENT  
*Sponsor licence number:* WRC5NK8C4

If this information is missing or there are any other errors on your BRP with your name, personal details or the length of permission granted, please contact the Bounds House team who will be able to advise you on getting it corrected.

The length of leave granted on a Tier 4 visa depends on the course. You should check your CAS course end date and ensure you have been granted the correct length of leave:

- the length of the course plus four months for undergraduate and PhD courses;
- the length of the course plus six months for Masters courses of 13 months or less, under the Tier 4 visa pilot (students admitted in 2019-20);
- the length of the course plus four months for Masters courses lasting more than 13 months;
- the length of the course plus two months for other courses lasting less than 12 months, e.g. exchange students.

On arrival

**If you applied for your Tier 4 visa from outside the UK**

You will need to report to your college office and present your original passport and BRP before you start your studies. You will also need to provide evidence of when you entered the UK, which for most will be the entry stamp marked on the 30 day vignette in your passport by immigration control. Evidence of your flight (e.g. flight ticket) will be required in the absence of this stamp. The office will scan your documents and send them to us to keep on your file.

**If you applied for your Tier 4 visa in the UK**

If you currently hold a Tier 4 visa for a different Tier 4 sponsor, you cannot use that visa to study at the Federation. If you hold a Tier 4 visa for another institution and you wish to make your new Tier 4 application for the Federation inside the UK, you can only start your course after you have presented either a new Tier 4 BRP showing the Federation Tier 4 sponsor licence number or provided evidence that you have submitted an in-time application for a new Tier 4 visa for the Federation.

You can start your studies at your own risk based on evidence of having applied for a new Tier 4 visa for the Federation but you will need to keep us up to date with the progress of your visa application and take your new BRP for copying when received. If your visa application is unsuccessful, you must notify us immediately.

If you have completed one course at the Federation and are continuing to a further degree here, you must apply for a new Tier 4 visa within six weeks of your new course start date or before your leave expires, whichever is earlier. You must provide evidence to us which confirms you have submitted your new visa application.
Police Registration
Nationals from the following countries are required to register with the police after arrival in the UK: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belarus, Bolivia, Brazil, China, Colombia, Cuba, Egypt, Georgia, Hong Kong, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, North Korea, Oman, Palestine, Peru, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, United Arab Emirates, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Yemen, Stateless or travelling on a non-national document (i.e. Travel Document).

When you register with the police, you will be issued with a police registration certificate. It is important you keep this document in a safe place. You do not need to carry it around with you in Cambridge.

New to the UK
You will need to book an appointment with the Parkside Police Station in Cambridge. You must book an appointment in advance by emailing OVRD@cambs.pnn.police.uk.

To register you will need your passport, Biometric Residence Permit (BRP), the decision letter notifying you of your successful visa application and two passport size photographs. There is a charge which must be paid in cash. You will also need to complete a registration form which you should try and complete before registering on the day.

Previously studied in the UK
If you have previously studied in the UK but have changed address and/or obtained a new BRP, you will need to attend Parkside Police Station in Cambridge to update your details. You will need to take your passport, Certificate of Registration and BRP. You do not need an appointment.

Reporting changes of circumstances to the police
You must also ensure that you update the police within seven days if you: change address during your studies; obtain a new BRP; renew your passport; get married; or if any of the other details on your Police Registration Certificate change.

Contact Details
You are required to keep your UK contact details up-to-date on your student record throughout your studies. This includes both your residential address and telephone number. Please notify the Bounds House team.

Attendance
You must comply with our attendance monitoring procedures, which can be found on our VLE (Hedwig). Failure to comply will ultimately lead to our sponsorship of your visa being withdrawn.
Working

Students on a Tier 4 visa sponsored by the Federation can not work, except for some work placements that are an assessed part of your course.

Changes in Circumstances

The Home Office may need to be informed if your circumstances change during your studies and there could be implications for your Tier 4 visa. Some changes must be reported by you. You are required to inform the Home Office of the following changes:

- your contact details
- criminal convictions
- passport number
- dependants’ details, for example if the relationship breaks down
- if any children stop living permanently with you

You are required to apply for a new BRP if any of the following change:

- name, e.g. if you have got married
- facial appearance
- nationality
- date of birth
- gender

Other changes, such as intermission or course changes, may need to be reported by the Federation as your Tier 4 sponsor and could have implications for your Tier 4 visa and/or continued studies.

If you encounter a change in circumstances during your studies, or think this might be likely, you should check if there are any implications for your Tier 4 visa by contacting the Bounds House team.

Changes to immigration documentation during studies

If you obtain a new passport or BRP during your studies, you are required to take this to your college office who will scan it and send it to us for uploading onto your record.

If you lose your visa/BRP, or it is stolen, you are required by the Home Office to apply for a replacement at an additional cost if it is valid for 3 months or more, or if it is valid for less than 3 months and you plan to travel overseas and re-enter the UK as a Tier 4 student.

If you switch to another visa category during your studies or acquire EEA or Swiss citizenship and wish to reside in the UK with this status, you must notify us within 7 working days of the change and provide your updated visa documentation or passport/national identity card. The Federation is required to report this change to the Home Office and cease Tier 4 sponsorship.
Completing your studies

If you complete your course on or after the expected date as stated on your CAS, then your visa expiry date does not change. Completion means unconditional approval of your degree.

Completing early
If you complete your course earlier than the date stated on your CAS, the Federation is required to report this to the Home Office. The Home Office will curtail your leave to remain in the UK to the normal entitlement period following a course end date. If you leave the UK after your visa has been curtailed, or you are overseas at the point of curtailment action, you may not be permitted re-entry to the UK on your Tier 4 visa.

Visa expiry and ‘overstaying’
You must leave the UK by the expiry date of your visa unless you have submitted a visa application to extend your permission in the UK. There is no ‘grace period’ following the expiry date of your visa. You will become an ‘overstayer’ if you are in the UK the day after your visa expires without having submitted a valid application for further leave or having obtained other valid immigration permission. This is the case even if you are able to enter the UK as a visitor without a visa. You cannot switch from Tier 4 to visitor status automatically from within the UK. You would need to leave the UK and re-enter as a visitor. Entry to the UK is at the discretion of Border Force officials.

The Federation will not allow you to continue your studies as an ‘overstayer’. You would also need to declare any periods of overstay on future visa applications to the UK and many other countries.
Protecting your immigration status: Checklist

This section provides a summary of what you need to do to adhere to the Federation’s Tier 4 sponsor licence responsibilities, your Tier 4 conditions and other considerations.

**Tier 4 sponsor responsibilities**
- Enrol by the course dates specified in your CAS.
- Before starting your studies, present your passport and immigration documentation to your college office so they can scan them and send them to us.
- Check your BRP and contact the Bounds House team if there are any errors as they will need to be corrected.
- Keep your UK contact details on your student record up to date throughout your studies. This includes residential address, telephone number and email address.
- Continue to engage with your studies.
- Complete the attendance register weekly (taught students) or monthly (research students)
- Complete your course on time, and within the time limits imposed by your visa. If your visa is expiring and you need more time to complete your studies, and the Federation has approved an extension, contact the Bounds House team to discuss your options.
- If you obtain a new passport or BRP during your studies, present this to your college office who will scan it and send it to us. Inform us if you switch out of Tier 4.

**Adhere to your Tier 4 conditions**
- If required, register with the police, keep your police registration certificate safe and update the police with any changes (e.g. change of address).
- Only work within the conditions set by the Home Office for a Tier 4 visa.
- Do not attempt to apply for ‘public funds’, including welfare benefits.
- Report any relevant changes of circumstance to the Home Office.
- Apply for a new BRP if your personal details change.
- Apply for a replacement if your BRP, or visa in your passport, is lost or stolen.
- Make sure you leave the UK prior to your visa expiring unless you obtain further leave or have submitted a valid visa application to extend your permission in the UK.