



Royal Conservatoire of Scotland

STUDYING IN THE UK – The Student Route

The Student route is for students aged 16 or over from outside the UK and Ireland who want to come to or remain in the UK for their education. The Student route is the appropriate visa for Conservatoire students on full-time courses lasting 6 months or longer. If you are coming to the Conservatoire for less than 6 months, you should refer to the separate fact sheet – ‘*Visitor Visa*’*

This fact sheet refers to applying for your Student route visa overseas (referred to as permission to enter or entry clearance) and applying from within the UK (referred to as permission to stay or leave to remain). Please note that if you are new to studying in the UK you must apply for permission to enter from your home country – there is not an option to apply after arrival in the UK.

What requirements do I need to apply for the Student route?

The Student route is a points-based visa. For your visa application to be considered you need to score 70 points. You will need:

1. A valid Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS) from The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland = **50 points**
2. Financial requirement = **10 points**
3. English language requirement = **10 points**

What is a Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS)?

It is an official statement from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (who acts as your Student route sponsor) that you have an unconditional offer of a place on a course of study. It contains a unique alphanumeric reference number which you must enter on your Student route visa application. It has information about the course of study for which it has been issued along with your own personal details. To receive a CAS you must do the following:

- accept an unconditional offer of a place at the Conservatoire
- pay your deposit
- submit a copy of the passport you intend to use to enter the UK
- submit a [Student Route CAS Evidence Request Form](#) (available on the induction portal for successful applicants)
- If you're under the age of 18, submit a Parental Consent form (available on the induction portal for successful applicants)

If you do all of the above, the International and Student Experience (I&SE) team will email your CAS to you.

*MA Musical Theatre and MA CCT students from year 19/20 who are returning for term 4 in year 20/21 are an exception.

If you're applying for entry clearance from overseas a CAS cannot be used earlier than six months prior to the start of your course. The I&SE team will therefore email out CASs to those who have met the requirements to start a course of study in September, from the end of April onwards. You are not required to submit the CAS statement as part of your visa application. It is for your information only.

How much money must I have?

If you are applying for permission to stay and have been living in the UK with immigration permission for 12 months or more on the date of your visa application, you will meet the financial requirement and will not need to show funds.

If you are applying for your visa from overseas or you have had immigration permission in the UK for less than 12 months you will need to show funds sufficient to pay any outstanding course fees as stated on your CAS, and £1,023 for each month of the course (up to a maximum of 9 months)

The following information is an overview. Before you submit your visa application you must read the [Financial evidence for Student route applicants](#) in detail to ensure that if you need to show funds, you have met all the requirements.

For students who need to show funds

Your tuition fee will be listed on your CAS. If your course lasts for more than one year, only the first year tuition fee will be listed. You need to show funds sufficient to pay that fee.

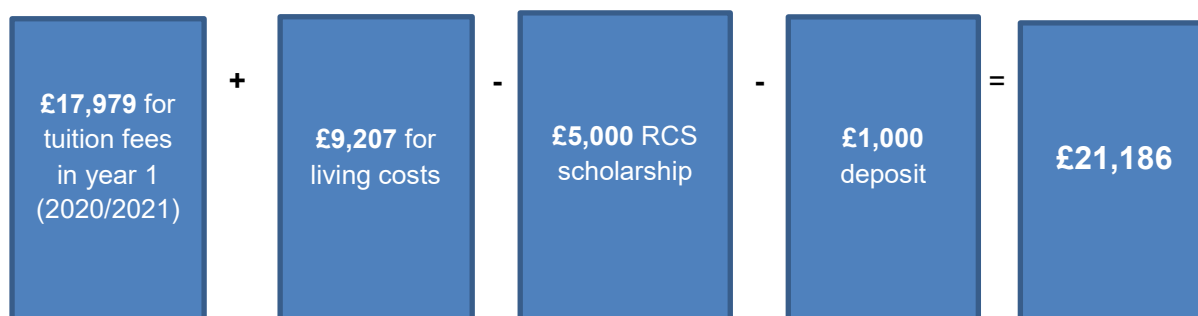
You will also need to have **£9,207** (£1,023 for each month of your course, up to a maximum of 9 months) in cash funds for living expenses (also referred to as "maintenance").

If you have already paid all or some of your tuition fee (including your deposit) to the Conservatoire and/or are receiving a scholarship from RCS, it will be shown on your CAS. This amount can be deducted from the total amount of money you need to show.

If the money available to you is held by your parent(s)/legal guardian(s) you will need to show evidence that you are related to them and have their permission to use their money. Please refer to the [Financial evidence for Student route applicants](#) for further details.

Calculating the funds required – an example

Matías Arezo from Uruguay has accepted an offer of a place on the Master of Music Performance programme. It is a 2-year programme. He has been awarded a Conservatoire scholarship of £5,000 for the first year of his course and he has paid £1,000 as a deposit. For his visa application he needs to show he has **£21,186**.



Money for accommodation

On your visa application, you will be asked if you have paid any money towards your accommodation. If you have reserved a room in Base Glasgow, you should **not** factor in any of the money you may have already paid to Base in your visa application. Base Glasgow is not owned by the Conservatoire therefore you cannot deduct any money already paid to Base for housing from the total amount of money you need to show.

How do I prove that I have enough money?

Evidence that can be used	The evidence should contain <u>all</u> of the following...	Duration that the money must be held for...
<p>Personal bank or building society statements (both current/checking and savings accounts are acceptable)</p>	<p>Your name or the name of your parent(s)/legal guardian(s)</p> <p>The account number</p> <p>The date of the statement</p> <p>The financial institution's name and logo</p> <p>The amount of money available</p>	<p>You must have the correct amount of money available to you for at least 28 consecutive days.</p> <p>The financial evidence must end no more than 31 days before the date of application.</p> <p>The balance must not fall below the required amount at any point during the 28-day period – if it does your visa application will be refused and you will have to submit and pay for a new application.</p>
<p>Building society pass book</p>	<p>Your name or the name of your parent(s)/legal guardian(s)</p> <p>The account number</p> <p>The financial institution's name and logo</p> <p>The amount of money available</p>	
<p>Letter from your bank confirming funds have been held</p>	<p>Your name or your parents(s)/legal guardians name;</p> <p>The account number</p> <p>The date of the letter</p>	

	<p>The financial institution's name and logo</p> <p>The money in your account</p> <p>That there is enough money in the account (to cover your course fees and living costs)</p>	
<p>Letter from a financial institution regulated by either the Financial Conduct Authority, the Prudential Regulatory Authority or, in the case of overseas accounts, the home regulator (official regulatory body for the country the institution is in and where the money is held) for the purpose of personal savings accounts</p>	<p>Your name or your parents(s)/legal guardians name</p> <p>The account number</p> <p>The date of the letter</p> <p>The financial institution's name and logo</p> <p>The money in your account</p>	
<p>Letter from a regulated financial institution confirming a loan provided by your national government, their state or regional government, a government sponsored student loan company or is part of an academic or educational loans scheme</p>	<p>Your name</p> <p>The date of the letter</p> <p>The financial institution's name and logo</p> <p>The money available as a loan</p>	<p>The loan letter(s) must be dated no more than 6 months before the date of your application and must be the original (not a copy).</p> <p>There must be no conditions placed on the release of the loan funds to you, other than your Student route visa application being successful.</p>

The following are **NOT** acceptable as evidence:

- Personal bank loans.
- shares, stocks, bonds, overdrafts, credit cards, and other non-cash funds such as salary, government pension schemes and property value. UK Visas and Immigration will expect you to show the closing balance in pounds sterling. If your funds are not in Sterling please use the official exchange rate on the [OANDA](#) website on the date of application to ensure that you have the correct amount of money.
- Cash funds held by anyone other than you, your parent(s) or legal guardian(s).
- Loans held in the name of your parent(s) or legal guardian(s) as evidence of money held by you

An academic or student loan from your country's national government that will be released to you when you arrive in the UK, or a loan for your living costs that is paid to RCS for passing to you *is* acceptable as evidence.

You **can** use cash funds in the name of your parent(s) or legal guardian(s) but you must provide your original birth certificate (professionally translated if not in English), adoption certificate, official court documentation confirming legal guardian status and a signed letter from your parent(s)/legal guardian(s) confirming that you can use their money for your education in the UK.

Nationalities that don't need to show financial evidence

You do not need to show that you meet the financial requirements if you are a national of any of the following countries:

Australia	Brunei	Republic of Cyprus	Germany	Japan	Malta
Austria	Bulgaria	Czech Republic	Greece	Kazakhstan	Mauritius
Bahrain	Cambodia	Denmark	Hungary	Lativa	Mexico
Barbados	Canada	The Dominican Republic	Iceland	Liechtenstein	Netherlands
Belgium	Chile	Estonia	Indonesia	Lithuania	New Zealand
Botswana	China	Finland	Ireland	Luxembourg	Norway
Brazil	Croatia	France	Italy	Malaysia	Oman

Peru	Romania	Slovenia	Switzerland
Poland	Serbia	South Korea	Thailand
Portugal	Singapore	Spain	Tunisia
Qatar	Slovakia	Sweden	United Arab Emirates
United States of America			

You also don't need to show you meet the financial requirements if you hold a British National (Overseas) passport or a passport issued by Hong Kong SAR, Macau SAR or Taiwan. If you hold a passport issue by Taiwan it must include the number of your Taiwanese identification card.

How do I apply?

If you are applying from outside the UK (i.e. permission to enter) you should apply online [here](#)

If you are applying to extend your stay in the UK (i.e. permission to stay) you should apply online [here](#)

You will need to:

- fill in the application form
- have your documents ready
- pay the application fee
- pay the immigration health surcharge
- have your biometrics taken (fingerprints and a photo)

You can find out more about what is required at: <https://www.gov.uk/student-visa> and <https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Visas-and-Immigration/Applying-for-a-Student-route-visa-outside-the-UK> (for applying from overseas) and <https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Visas-and-Immigration/Making-a-Student-route-application-in-the-UK> (for applying within the UK)

What documents are required to be submitted?

1. Financial documentation that evidences funds available to you for tuition fees and maintenance unless you meet the requirements to not have to show funds - see [How much money must I have?](#)
2. Passport
3. Submit a Tuberculosis certificate (if appropriate – to see a list of nationals who require a TB certificate go to <https://www.gov.uk/tb-test-visa/countries-where-you-need-a-tb-test-to-enter-the-uk>)
4. If you are 16 or 17 years old, a letter from your parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to show that they support your application. This letter must confirm all of the following:
 - their relationship to you
 - that they consent to your application as a Student route applicant
 - that they consent to your living arrangements in the UK
 - that they consent to your independent travel to the UK

You **do not** need to submit:

- your IELTS certificate (or equivalent proof of your English language level) or;
- your academic qualifications or;
- your CAS statement with your visa application.

How much is the Student route application fee?

The fee for applying outside of the UK is currently **£348** paid as the equivalent in your local currency and is paid at the end of the online application form. Some Visa Application Centres charge an additional 'User Pays Fee' of £55. This is to allow smaller VACs to remain open. If you do not wish to pay this additional fee then you should attend a different VAC, if possible. In some countries it is possible to pay an additional 'priority fee' of £212 or in some cases an additional 'super priority fee' of £956 to have your application processed more quickly. To check if your local VAC is a 'user pays' centre choose your home country from the list at: <https://www.gov.uk/find-a-visa-application-centre>

The fee for applying in the UK is:

- **£475** if you apply using the standard service
- **£975** if you apply using the priority service

- £1275 if you apply using the super priority service ('next day') (formerly premium service).

What is the Immigration Health Surcharge?

If you are applying for a visa to come to the UK for more than 6 months will be required to pay a charge to cover National Health Service (NHS) healthcare in the UK. The payment will go directly into the NHS and applicants will be entitled to receive the same cover as a permanent UK resident. You still need to pay even if you have private medical insurance. Each student will have to pay a fee when they apply for their first visa at home and if they extend their current Student route visa in the UK.

The surcharge is calculated as £470 per year for each year of your visa. If your visa includes part of a year that is six months or less you will be charged an additional £235 for this period. If your visa includes part of a year that is more than six months, you will have to pay £470 for this period. You can use the [Immigration Health Surcharge tool](#) to see how much you will pay.

What biometric data do I have to give?

When applying for permission to enter you are required to provide your facial photograph and fingerprints at your appointment at the Visa Application Centre (VAC) in your home country. Certain students who are applying for permission to stay from within the UK may be permitted to re-use their biometric data and will not be asked to attend an appointment.

What is a Credibility Interview?

The caseworker assessing your visa application must be satisfied that you are a genuine student and to do this they have to consider all of the information given in your application and, if necessary, conduct a credibility interview. It is unlikely that any RCS students will be asked to attend a credibility interview but you should be aware that they exist.

Examples (taken from the [guidance](#)) of things you may be asked about are:

- the amount of time that has elapsed since the applicant last studied, and whether the applicant has sound reasons for returning to, or commencing, formal study of this subject, particularly after any significant gap
- whether the applicant demonstrates sufficient commitment to the course
- whether the course represents academic progression
- the credibility of the applicant's rationale for, knowledge of, and research into the proposed course of study and the sponsoring institution
- the credibility of the applicant's rationale for, knowledge of, and research into living arrangements in the UK
- how the circumstances of any dependant may affect the ability or motivation of the applicant to study
- the relevance of the course to post-study plans in the UK or overseas
- whether the applicant intends to comply with the terms of their permission, including the requirement to leave the UK when their permission comes to an end (or, where lawful and appropriate, to apply to extend the

How long will it take to get my visa?

The Home Office service standards can be viewed at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration/about-our-services>

90% of non-settlement applications are processed within 3 weeks, 98% within 6 weeks and 100% within 12 weeks of the application date (where 1 week is 5 working days).

How long will my visa be valid for?

As well as the period of time granted to you to undertake your course of study, an additional period will also be given to you as set out below:

Type of course	Period to be granted before the course starts	Period to be granted after the course ends
12 months or more	1 month before the course starts or 7 days before the intended date of travel ² , whichever is later	4 months
6 months or more but less than 12 months	1 month before the course starts or 7 days before the intended date of travel, whichever is later	2 months
Pre-sessional course of less than 6 months	1 month before the course starts or 7 days before the intended date of travel, whichever is later	1 month
Course of less than 6 months that is not a pre-sessional course	7 days before the course starts	7 days

Do I need an ATAS certificate?

No – students' at the Conservatoire do not require an Academic Technology Approval Scheme certificate.

Bringing dependants

Some students are allowed to bring family members with them to the UK. For further information please see: <https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Visas-and-Immigration/dependants>

What happens if my visa application is refused?

In the unlikely event that your visa is refused please contact the International and Student Experience team at international@rcs.ac.uk as soon as possible to notify them of the decision and to request further guidance. In your email you should include a copy of your refusal notice.

Where can I get further information about making a Student route application?

Alongside the information on the Conservatoire's website and the Student route guidance on the UKVI website you should read the [UKCISA](#) website in full. UKCISA is an invaluable resource for international students coming to the UK.