

## FAQ's for the Graduate Route Visa

The Graduate route provides an opportunity for international students who have been awarded their degree to stay in the UK and work, or look for work, at any skill level for two years.

The Graduate route is an unsponsored visa, meaning students will not need a job offer to apply for it.

### Eligibility

To be eligible for the Graduate route visa international students must meet the following mandatory requirements:

- ✓ You must have **successfully completed** (*i.e. awarded*) a course at degree level with a UK higher education provider with a track record of compliance.
- ✓ You must have completed the course during your current period of Tier 4 or Student permission.
- ✓ It must be the same course your last Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) was assigned for (*there are some exceptions to this, please email [visaadvice@law.ac.uk](mailto:visaadvice@law.ac.uk) for more information*).
- ✓ You must still have a valid Tier 4/Student route visa at the time of the application.
- ✓ You must switch into this route from the UK.

If you do not match all the above eligibility criteria, we strongly recommend you do not apply for the Graduate route visa as you would be at risk of having your application refused and lose your fees costs.

### Assessments

The assessment dates, including results publication are readily available in your Elite page - please contact your Assessment Office if you need help in finding this information.

Please note that if your course completion is delayed due to a re-sit or resubmission, you are at risk of receiving your final results after your student visa has expired, meaning that you would not be eligible for the Graduate route visa.

Unfortunately, **it is not possible to extend your student visa for the purposes of waiting for results, or to cover a re-sit period if physical attendance is not required.** Please also note that the results publication dates are set in advance and International Student Advice team is not involved in or has any authority to modify the dates to suit individual circumstances.

## Solicitors Qualifying Examination (assessed centrally by the SRA not The University of Law)

Please note that if you do not pass the first stage of the SQE, namely the SQE1 examination at the first available sitting on your course, you will have to wait for a later re-sit point set by the SRA. Currently, there are only two sittings for SQE1 in each year, January and July.

This may mean that if you defer/fail the first attempt you will not be able to do your re-sit within the validity of your visa. You are not permitted to sit the second part of the SQE, namely SQE2 until you have successfully passed and had results published for your SQE1 examination. The SQE2 sittings are also set by the SRA and it is likely that your assessment will happen outside the validity of your visa.

If this is the case, you will have to return home after your visa expires and apply for a visitor visa to return to the UK to sit these assessments. This will also mean that you would not be eligible for the Graduate Route visa. You may, however, be able to transfer to our online course and complete your studies in your home country.

Below you will find answers to the questions we get asked the most about applying for the Graduate route visa at The University of Law. **Please review the below FAQs before contacting the International Student Advice team.**

### Which courses are eligible for the Graduate route visa?

- an undergraduate degree
- a Masters' degree

The following qualifications listed in paragraph [GR 5.2 of Appendix Graduate](#) of the immigration rules are also acceptable:

- ✓ a law conversion course validated by the Joint Academic Stage Board in England and Wales (GDL, PGDL or MA Law)
- ✓ the Legal Practice Course in England and Wales, the Solicitors Course in Northern Ireland, or a Diploma in Professional Legal Practice in Scotland
- ✓ the Bar Practice Course in England and Wales, or the Bar Course in Northern Ireland
- ✓ a professional course requiring study at UK bachelor's degree level or above in a profession with reserved activities that is regulated by UK law or UK public authority.

The list of courses above are not exhaustive. If you need further guidance or would like to discuss your individual case, please write to International Student Advice at [visaadvice@law.ac.uk](mailto:visaadvice@law.ac.uk)

### Can I apply for the Graduate route visa if I am studying an online course?

Unfortunately, courses that are studied fully online are not eligible for the Graduate Work Visa. Students will normally be expected to undertake their studies in the UK to be eligible for the Graduate route.

There are some exceptions for courses started before 30 June 2022, please contact International Student Advice at [visaadvice@law.ac.uk](mailto:visaadvice@law.ac.uk) for individual assessment.

### When can I apply for the Graduate Route visa?

You can apply for the Graduate route visa only after your final award is published. You must wait for a confirmation from The University of Law that you have been reported to the UKVI (generally within 24 hours from the final award publication). The deadline to apply is the end date of your current student visa.

You do not have to wait until you have graduated or received your degree certificate to apply, you just need to wait for our notification. Please note that if you apply too early your visa application may be delayed or even refused.

### How much will it cost to apply for the Graduate Route visa?

The application fee is currently £822. Applicants will also be liable for the Immigration Health Surcharge, which will be £1248 for 2 years. Please note that from January 2024, the fees will increase, please check here for the updates: [Graduate visa: How much it costs - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/graduate-visa-how-much-it-costs)

### What documents do I need to apply for the Graduate Route visa?

When you apply you will need to provide the following evidence:

- A valid passport or other travel document that shows your identity and nationality
- Your BRP, if you were given one for your Tier 4/Student visa.
- Your CAS reference number, which was sent to you by the University when you applied for your last Tier 4/Student visa. **You don't need a new CAS to apply, you should use your existing one.**

You will not need to demonstrate English language ability, as you will have already proved your level of English language by successfully completing your degree at a UK university. There is also no requirement to show that you have funds available.

You will not need to submit evidence that you have completed your course, The University of Law will inform the UKVI of your results directly.

Please note that you may be asked to provide additional documents depending on your circumstances:

- Proof of your relationship with your dependents (spouse or children) if they are applying with you
- If your tuition fees and living costs have been paid by a government and/or an international scholarship agency within the 12-month period before you apply, you must provide a letter showing the financial sponsor's consent to your application under the Graduate route.

Financial sponsor's consent is not required if you are or were sponsored by a university, an international company, an independent school, or any other type of financial sponsor.

If you have received any bursary or discount from The University of Law, you will not need consent from the University for a Graduate route application.

- Evidence of when you last entered the UK- this could be the entry vignette or a boarding pass or flight booking

If your documents are not in English or Welsh, you will need to provide a certified translation.

### How do I apply for the Graduate route Visa?

The application for a Graduate route visa is made online here: [Graduate visa: Apply - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/graduate-visa) .

As part of your application, you will need to scan your biometric residence permit (BRP) with the UK Immigration: ID check app. To do this you will need your Biometric Residence Card. When you are ready to apply, you will need to pay the immigration health surcharge and the application fee.

If you are an EU, EEA or Swiss national, you can use your biometric passport to verify your identity on the app.

Those unable to use the UK Immigration: ID Check app (if for example you have lost or damaged your BRP) will need to visit a UK Visas and Citizenship Application Services centre (UKVCAS) to complete the application process. You will be told how to book this when you apply.

### How long will it take to get a decision on the Graduate route visa application?

Once you have applied online, proved your identity, and provided your documents, you will usually get a decision within 8 weeks.

As long as you have made a valid visa application before your student route visa ends, you will be able to lawfully remain in the UK under 3C leave. For more information please check: [3C and 3D leave \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

### Can my dependents apply for the Graduate route Visa together with me?

Your partner and/or child under 18 who is already in the UK as your Tier 4 or Student dependent can apply to extend their stay as your Graduate route dependent. New dependents are not permitted.

### How long will the Graduate route visa be issued for?

It will be issued for 2 years from the day a decision is made on your application and cannot be extended.

### Can I study if I'm granted the Graduate route Visa?

**Study is very restricted under the Graduate route.** The current rule states that you cannot study any course which could, in theory, be sponsored under the Student route.

So, for example you could study

- Online
- SQE 1 or 2 Preparatory courses

If you intend to study a face-to-face course which qualifies for student route sponsorship, you will need to switch back into the student route and **obtain a student visa before your new course start.**

Graduate route dependents do not have this study restriction.

### **Can I travel abroad after I have applied for the Graduate Route?**

You must not travel outside of the UK, Ireland, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man until you get a decision on your Graduate route application. Your application will be automatically withdrawn if you do so.

If you need to travel urgently while your application is pending, your application will be automatically withdrawn when you leave the Common Travel Area. If your Tier 4 /Student visa is still valid, you can re-enter the UK after your travel. You will then need to apply again under the Graduate Route and may need to pay the application fee again.

### **Can I apply for the Graduate route visa more than once?**

No, you can only have permission under the Graduate route once. It is possible to switch from the Graduate route back to the Student route, but you could not then apply for the Graduate route again based on a new qualification.

### **What kind of work can I do on the Graduate route visa?**

While your Graduate route application is pending, you can continue to work under the conditions of your Student or Tier 4 permission.

When the visa is granted you will be able to do any work either employed or self-employed, at any level of salary or skill. However, you will not be able to work as a professional sports person or coach. The Graduate route is an unsponsored route meaning an employer will not need a sponsor licence to employ someone with a Graduate route visa.

### **Will the Graduate route visa count towards Settlement in the UK?**

No, this visa route does not count towards settlement and it is non-extendable

### **Where can I find further guidance on the Graduate Work visa?**

- [Graduate visa: Overview - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/graduate-visa-overview)
- [Graduate caseworker guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/graduate-caseworker-guidance)
- [Immigration Rules - Immigration Rules Appendix Graduate - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/immigration-rules-immigration-rules-appendix-graduate)
- [UKCISA - international student advice and guidance - Graduate route](https://www.ukcisa.ac.uk/international-student-advice-and-guidance/graduate-route)

If you need further guidance after reading these resources or want to discuss your individual case, please write to International Student Advice at [visaadvice@law.ac.uk](mailto:visaadvice@law.ac.uk)