**HELPFUL INFORMATION ON TIER 4 (GENERAL) STUDENT VISA**

The Visa Office provides information and advice about immigration related matters to all our international students. We also ensure that students who hold a Tier 4 (General) student visa are aware of the conditions of their visas and their duties as Tier 4 (General) students.

Students who currently hold or are applying for a Tier 4 (General) student visa, would have permission to study in the UK under the Tier 4 Regulations of the UK’s Immigration Rules. Whilst a Tier 4 student (General) visa allows its holder to study, it also imposes duties and conditions which must be obeyed.

Similarly, Tier 4 students must protect their status as students and be aware of the conducts or actions that may be detrimental for their current or future studies in the UK, as well as future visa applications.

The below information is provided so you inform yourself of your rights and obligation under a Tier 4 (General) student visa.

Please take time to read the information in this document and contact the Visa Office if you have any questions

**YOUR DUTIES AND CONDITIONS AS A TIER 4 (GENERAL) STUDENT**

**Study at our University**

You must enrol and study at the University of Buckingham because the CAS, which you submitted as part of your successful Tier 4 (General) visa application, was issued by our University. If you change your mind and want to leave the University of Buckingham to study at another university, you will have to make a new visa application using a CAS from the new university.

Additionally, you cannot switch from your original course to a different course or to a course which is at a lower academic level than that stated on the CAS you used with your Tier 4 visa application. If you wish to switch to a lower level or different course, you will have return to your home country to apply for a new visa before you start the new course.

If you at any point consider living the University of Buckingham or changing your course, please seek advice from the Visa Office, as the visa you hold is only valid for the course you are studying and for our University.

**Working as Student**

As a Tier 4 (General) student studying in the UK you are allowed to work outside of your studies. Currently, if you are studying at degree level or above, you can work 20 per week during term time and full time during holiday. If you are studying a course below degree level, you can work 10 hours per week during term time and full time during vacation.

**Registration with the Police**

If you are required to register with the police, your visa or the letter that you were given when your visa was approved will state this. In any case you must register with the police if you are from a country listed below:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belarus, Bolivia, Brazil, China, Colombia, Cuba, Egypt, Georgia, 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.

You have to register online at <https://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/services/foreign-national-registration/>

Once you register online you will be given an appointment to visit the closest police station, which is in Milton Keynes.

**"No Recourse to Public Funds"**

The conditions of the Tier 4 (General) visa prohibit you from accessing 'public funds', which means certain welfare benefits and local authority housing.

If you claim 'public funds', the UK immigration authorities can refuse your immigration application or remove you from the UK. You might also be barred from returning to the UK for a certain period.

Please note that sending your child to a state school, being exempt from the Council Tax, and paying "home" fees for study do **not** count as accessing 'public funds'.

**Conducts or Actions that may Affect your Student Status**

Apart from making sure you behave in accordance with the condition of your Tier 4 (General) Student visa, you must also make sure you obey all the UK laws and regulations as any infringements, such as traffic, criminal or immigration offences may affect your ability to apply for future visas to the UK.

If you require further information about this, please contact the visa office.

**DUTIES OF THE UNIVERSITY AS A TIER 4 SPONSOR**

As Tier 4 sponsor, the University of Buckingham has specific duties under the Tier 4 Regulations. These duties are outlined in Annex 1 of the Policy Guidance of the Point Based System’s Tier 4. These duties notifying the UK’s Home Office if:

* You have obtained a visa as a Tier 4 (General) student using a CAS, but you fail to enrol on the course before the last day for enrolment.
* You fail to attend a class or lecture, or submit work for a specific number of times, and the University does not authorise your absence or non-submission of work.
* You defer, postpone or take a break from your studies for any reason.
* You change to a shorter course, or you complete your studies early.
* You withdraw from your studies before you have finished your course.

If the University notifies the Home Office about any of the above issues, they will bring your Tier 4 student visa to an end. Therefore, it is very important that you attend all your classes and lectures and submit coursework when it is due. If you have problems or any concerns about your studies, you should seek advice from your school and the Visa Office so you can discuss your options.

It is very important that you notify your school if you are ill and cannot attend or submit work, or if you have to miss your academic commitments for any reason. Your school will ask you to provide evidence of the reason for your absence, for example a letter from a doctor.

If you decide to leave your course early you must also tell the University. If you are returning home or going to a different institution to study, you should provide the Visa Office with the details of your flight (copy of your flight ticket) or details of your new university and course of study so that they can pass this information to the Home Office. This will help to keep clear records of your immigration history, which will avoid any complication with future visa applications.

For more information on your duties as a student and our duties as your sponsor please read the Tier 4 of the Points Based System – Policy Guidance at: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/752873/T4_Migrant_Guidance_NOV_2018_FINAL_VERSION.pdf>

**OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

**Visa Renewals**

International students who need more time to complete their studies or study a new course at our University may be able to make a Tier 4 leave to remain application inside the UK within 3 months from your current visa expiry date.

If you need to renew your visa, please contact the Visa Support and Compliance Officer at magaly.galleguillos@buckingham.ac.uk for information about the procedure.

**Driving in the UK**

You must ensure that you hold a valid driving licence before to be able to drive in the UK. To check if you are eligible to drive in the UK please visit <https://www.gov.uk/driving-nongb-licence>

If you hold a licence issued in a European Economic Area country you can drive using your EEA licence as long as it remains valid. You can apply at any time to sit a test to exchange it for a British licence.

**Employment**

Students who hold a Tier 4 (General) student visa must not exceed the limit of hours they are allow to work under the Tier 4 Regulations. This also applies to internships and work placements**.** In order to work, you must apply for a National Insurance Number (NI).

To apply for a NIN, you must attend an interview with Jobcentre Plus. This will last about an hour and they will require you to bring certain documents with you such as those listed below. To make an appointment, telephone 0800 141 2075 from 08:00 - 18.00 Monday – Friday. For more information please visit <https://www.gov.uk/apply-national-insurance-number>