

How to prepare for your to Visa Interview to study at Keele

The information within this guide is designed to help you provide a supporting statement to help prepare for your Tier 4 visa interview with the UK Home Office. This information is regularly updated with the latest information and video guides available online; www.keele.ac.uk/visa

Principle Statement

The information provided in this guidance is for reference only and is based upon the University's understanding of the UK Immigration rules, Tier 4 requirements and Sponsor Guidance at the time of publishing: 06/04/2017. For the avoidance of doubt any Tier 4 Visa application is made at the students own risk and; that a student is required to ensure that they have read, understood and meet the requirements outlined in the UK Home Office (UKVI) Tier 4 Policy Guidance ([available online here](#)) and that a decision on a Tier 4 Visa application is made by the UKVI.

Credibility Interviews

The UK Home Office routinely conduct credibility interviews to confirm that they are issuing Tier 4 Student visas only to genuine students. We know you are a genuine student - we wouldn't have made an offer to you otherwise – but you may still be asked to attend an interview with an Entry Clearance Officer (ECO) to discuss your motivations for studying in the UK.

Preparing for your interview

First of all, you should write a **personal statement** along with the course information document provided with your offer of admission. You will mostly find that these document will help you answered a lot of the questions you are likely to be asked. Here are the key things you should be able to tell the Entry Clearance Officer (ECO):

- Why you selected to study in the UK?
- Why you pick Keele University, what other University's (in the UK or elsewhere) and courses did you consider?
- Why you chose the particular course you are going to study, you should think about the modules which you will be taking on the course.
- How your educational or professional background has helped you prepare for this course?
- Explain in detail how the course will benefit your career, future plans and possibly further study.
- If you are taking a break from your employment to take the course, explain how this will help progress your career (for example has your employer giving you time out, financial support or will they give you a pay rise when you come back)
- Where you will be living whilst you study at Keele? If you have already booked your accommodation make sure you tell them this (as they will not know).
- What your plans are after you finish your course, this can include further study, scholarship or returning home
- How you will be funding your studies (more detailed guidance below)

You will also need to be very clear on how you are planning to fund your studies. This is particularly important if your family or employer is sponsoring your studies. The ECO will need to understand both why and how they are able to fund your studies. Please remember that working rights with a Tier 4 visa are limited to a maximum of 20 hours a week during term time so you should not be planning to work in the UK to fund your studies.

The interview

In many ways, your credibility interview is like a job interview, but you will need to make sure you give detailed answers as the interviewer will not help you with your answers. Remember:

- Make sure you know where you are going, and don't be late!
- Pause before answering, respond with consideration
- Be aware of your body language: try to stay relaxed.
- Listen carefully to the questions so you do not misunderstand what is being asked.
- Ask for clarification if you need it.

Immigration Compliance

Student Services Centre

- Don't talk too quickly - you can always pause and ask them to repeat the question.
- Don't simply answer yes or no.
- Give yourself time to think before answering; you don't need to jump straight into an answer.

Three points to remember for an interview

Be Confident

Be confident in your choices - you are investing a lot of time and money into your education in the UK so it is important that you are confident in the choices you have made. If you seem uncertain in your responses, this may make the ECO think that you are uncertain about your studies.

Be Comprehensive

Be comprehensive – answer questions fully and give all of the information requested. You have already been through a considered decision process in choosing the UK, our University, and your course, so be ready to explain this process in full.

Be Consistent

Be consistent – even if the ECO asks you the same question twice, or in a different way, remain straightforward and consistent in your answers. You know why you want to study in the UK.

The Entry Clearance Officer (ECO) knows that English is not your first language so it's okay to take your time while you think through your responses and process how to answer them in English. You do not need to rush through your interview - it is more important that you provide complete and accurate responses.

Immigration advice

Immigration advice in the UK is regulated by the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner (OISC) and only registered immigration advisers or solicitors registered with the Law Society can give immigration advice.

Keele University, like other UK University's has Ministerial dispensation to be able to provide Immigration Advice, however the University is bound to the OISC codes of practice. Immigration advice at the University is provided by [Immigration Compliance](#) and [International Student Support](#).

Immigration advice (External to the University)

Keele University Students Union does provide advice for students on a range of issues from their [Advice and Support at Keele](#) (ask) service. Please note that Keele University and Keele University Students Union are separate legal bodies and as such cannot share personal information about students without a student's prior written consent.

The [UK Council for International Student Affairs](#) (UKCISA) provide independent advice for all international students on a range of topics, including immigration advice.

If you seek immigration advice outside of the University, please ensure that the adviser is regulated by the [Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner](#) (OISC) or registered by the [Law Society](#).

Larger print available upon request.

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