

# ATAS (Academic Technology Approval Scheme)

International students who require a visa to study in the UK may need to obtain ATAS clearance in order to study certain science & engineering courses. ATAS clearance is a background check to ensure that the knowledge gained from these courses does not contribute towards the development of weapons of mass destruction.

## Do I need an ATAS certificate?

Your offer letter from King's will confirm whether you need to obtain ATAS clearance as one of your offer conditions- so you should read this very carefully. Contact Admissions through the [King's Apply](#) portal if you're unsure.

If you are applying for a new visa (either in the UK or overseas) to continue a course you're currently studying, or to resume studies that you interrupted, it's likely that you'll need to get new ATAS clearance too. [Contact International Student Advice](#) to check if you're unsure.

## How do I apply for ATAS?

If you need to obtain ATAS clearance, apply online at <https://www.academic-technology-approval.service.gov.uk/> .

You will need your CAH code (a code for classifying academic subjects), which you should be able to find in your offer letter. Admissions / we can help you find it if you're not sure what your CAH code is. [Appendix 6 of the Immigration Rules](#) lists all of the different CAH codes.

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office have provided some helpful guidance on completing the ATAS application form on the [main ATAS page](#), and on a [separate guidance page](#). We **strongly** recommend that you read both of these webpages while preparing your application and completing the online form.

## When should I submit my application?

ATAS clearance is valid for 6 months, so if your course starts in September, you could make your ATAS application any time after April. We would recommend **applying as early as you can**, so that any delays to receiving your ATAS clearance won't impact your visa application. ATAS applications routinely take **20 working days** to be processed, and in the busy summer months, it can take **up to 6 weeks** to receive a decision on your ATAS application.

If you're holding more than one offer, you can apply for more than 1 ATAS clearance at a time – so it's worth applying for ATAS for every course that requires it. That way, once you make a decision about what you're going to study, you already have the relevant ATAS clearance.

## What happens once I get my ATAS clearance?

Your ATAS clearance will be emailed to you as a PDF, which you need to check carefully to ensure that your name and personal details are listed correctly, together with the details of your course. If everything is fine, print out the ATAS certificate and include this printout with the supporting documents for your visa application. If you notice a mistake, attach a copy of your ATAS certificate in an email to us that explains the mistake, and we can liaise with the ATAS team on your behalf (if appropriate).

Once you have your ATAS clearance for your course, you simply need to remember to submit your visa application before your ATAS clearance expires! Upon your arrival in the UK, do note that you'll need to present your ATAS clearance at enrolment in order to be enrolled on your course.

## What if my ATAS clearance is refused?

If your ATAS application is refused, you will need to let Admissions know so that you can discuss your options with them. Unfortunately, there is little you can do to challenge the decision- however, you can ask ATAS to review the decision if you think your application has been treated unfairly.

