

# Start-up visas

The UKVI have opened a Start-up visa route in order to allow both graduates and non-graduates alike to apply for a 2-year visa to set up their own business in the UK. The Start-up visa route replaces the Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) visa route.

## Who can apply?

In order to apply for a Start-up visa, you need:

- to be at least 18 years old
- to be a national of a country outside the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland
- to have had your business / business idea assessed and endorsed by an approved endorsing body.
- to demonstrate that you have held at least £945 in a bank account in your name for at least 90 consecutive days leading up to the date that you submit your visa application online.
- to meet the UKVI's [English language requirements](#)

## How do I get endorsed? Will King's endorse me?

The UKVI's list of endorsing bodies can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/endorsing-bodies-start-up>

King's College London is one of the authorised endorsing bodies. In theory, you can be endorsed by any of the listed organisations or HEIs - but each endorsing body will have its own endorsement selection process and criteria.

At King's, the endorsement process for the Start-up visa scheme is managed by King's Entrepreneurship Institute. [Their website](#) details the endorsement application windows and process. In order to be endorsed by King's, you must be a non-European student or alumnus/alumna of King's College London. If you are a **current** King's student, then you must meet one of the following criteria:

- **Undergraduate students:** completed all exams and coursework
- **Postgraduate Master's & Postgraduate Taught students:** completed all exams and submitted your dissertation
- **PhD students:** submitted your PhD thesis

King's Careers & Employability Service can offer advice and support on preparing your application and business plan for the endorsement application process. You can book an appointment with a Careers Consultant via [CareerConnect](#).

## I got endorsed! What now?

If successfully endorsed, King's will issue you with an endorsement letter which you will use to apply to UKVI for your Start-Up visa. If you're applying from outside the UK, apply online at <https://www.gov.uk/start-up-visa/apply>.

If you're applying from within the UK, apply online at <https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/product/start-up-and-innovator-ic>

You should make your application once you have all of your supporting documents ready (which include your endorsement letter from King's and your bank statements that meet the maintenance requirements detailed above). After applying online, you'll then need to upload scans of your supporting documents to the UKVCAS application portal, and book an appointment at a UKVCAS centre in order to submit your biometric information.

You can [book an appointment](#) with an International Student Adviser to check everything before you submit your visa application.

## What happens once I get my visa?

The Start-up visa will be granted for 2 years. It's not possible to extend it beyond this 2-year period. Instead, you are expected to switch into another immigration category (such as the new Innovator visa route) if you wish to remain in the UK.

As a Start-up visa holder, you are allowed to study, be self-employed, and be employed (excluding work as a doctor or dentist in training, or as a professional sportsperson or coach) as long as you are spending the majority of your time working on developing your business idea. King's Entrepreneurship Institute will work with Start-up visa holders to monitor and evaluate your progress on developing your business while you hold the Start-up visa.

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