

## Tier 4 time limits

There is a maximum time limit ('cap') on studying with a Tier 4 visa. Before we can issue your CAS, we will need to check that your application will not take you over the maximum time allowed. UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI)/the Home Office will not grant entry clearance/leave to remain (LTR) to someone whose current Tier 4 application means they will exceed these time limits unless there are "compelling and compassionate circumstances", such as injury or disability.

When making these calculations the UKVI will count the time in months and will round individual days upwards or downwards to the nearest month. For example, three months and ten days will be rounded down to three months but three months and three weeks will be rounded up to four months.

### ***Below degree level: 2 year cap***

The cap only applies to students 18 years old and over. From your 18th birthday, as a Tier 4 (General) student you can study courses that lead to a qualification below degree-level for a maximum of two years. This two year limit can be spent studying a single course or several courses as a Tier 4 (General) student, and the cap is always counted whether you are applying for the visa inside or outside the UK.

**Note:** the extra time you are given before the course (maximum one month) and after a course (maximum four months) will be included in this two year calculation. For more information, please visit the [UKCISA website](#).

### ***Degree level: 5 year cap***

For courses at degree level or above (NQF level 6), you must not spend more than five years at this level for a new Tier 4 application. There are some exceptions to the five year limit:

- If you are applying for a course at a Higher Education Institution (HEI) and the five year cap would prevent you from completing a fifth academic year at degree level or above, the limit is then extended to five years and 11 months;
- If you have successfully completed a UK degree course which was at least four years long and your Tier 4 application is to study a Master's degree at a higher education institution (recognised body or institution in receipt of public funding), the limit is six years and 11 months;
- If your Tier 4 application is to study a PhD (or postgraduate qualification listed in Appendix 5 of the UKVI's policy guidance) at a higher education institution;
- If you have already completed a PhD, any new Tier 4 application is subject to an eight year limit (including courses below degree level) but not including Tier 4 leave granted under the Doctorate Extension Scheme;
- Courses in architecture, medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine and science, or music at a conservatoire are exempt from the limit;
- If you have completed a UK degree, and your current Tier 4 application is to study certain legal qualifications (CPE, GDL/LPC or BPTC), the legal qualification is exempt from the limit.

UKVI will generally not grant entry clearance/leave to remain (LTR) to someone whose current Tier 4 application means they will exceed these limits. Please note, time spent in the UK as a Tier 4 (Child) student, or a Tier 4 (General) student aged 16 or 17 years does

not count towards these time limits. If you require further information, please visit the [UKVI](#) and [UKCISA](#) websites

## **How to calculate the time you have spent studying in the UK under Tier 4**

Add up all of the time you have held a Tier 4 visa (you need to count from the visa start date, until the visa expiry date).

Add the amount of time you would be given by UKVI if you made a Tier 4 visa application to study at Ravensbourne. If the total exceeds 2 years (If you will be studying at below degree level) or 5 years for degree level study), then you may be ineligible for further study at below degree level/degree level in the UK.

If any of your previous Tier 4 leave/immigration permission was curtailed, the length and expiry of your leave is determined by the date detailed in the curtailment letter you received from UKVI/Home Office **rather** than the date your Tier 4 sponsorship was withdrawn and/or the date you left the UK under your Tier 4 visa.

You can email the International Development Department for more information or if you have questions about the study limits: [international@rave.ac.uk](mailto:international@rave.ac.uk)