

## **Tier 4 Doctorate Extension Scheme (DES) – Guidance for Applicants**

The purpose of the Doctorate Extension Scheme (DES) scheme is to allow successful PhD candidates to apply for an additional twelve months after successful completion in order to find work with a Tier 2 employer, set up as an entrepreneur or gain further experience in their chosen field.

Applications for a Tier 4 DES visa can **only** be made from within the UK although applications can also be made for dependants.

For more information about the scheme and its objectives, please refer to the Tier 4 Policy Guidance:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/477366/T4\\_Migrant\\_Guidance\\_Nov\\_V1\\_0.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/477366/T4_Migrant_Guidance_Nov_V1_0.pdf)

Information on the scheme is also available on the UK Council for International Student Affairs website:

<http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Working/Working-after-studies>

Please note that the University is required to sponsor students under this scheme and continue to monitor contact with students. You will therefore be required to stay in touch with International Compliance once every three months, during the 12 months of the scheme.

In addition there is no automatic entitlement for the University to assign a CAS by virtue of eligibility for the DES. The University will only provide Tier 4 sponsorship where it is satisfied that the student is eligible for the DES and intends to use the time on the scheme to gain experience in their specific field or seek skilled work.

### **To be eligible for the scheme you must:**

- have current Tier 4 leave to study at PhD or other doctorate level at an HEI in the UK
- not have previously been granted leave under the Doctorate Extension Scheme
- be following a course leading to the award of PhD/ doctorate
- you must be studying for a PhD qualification or for one of the doctorate qualifications listed in Annex 5 of the Tier 4 Policy Guidance
- be sponsored by a recognised HEI (and that sponsor will be awarding your PhD)
- apply for a DES visa within 60 days of the **expected end date** of your course leading to the award of a PhD which will be stated on your new CAS.

### Calculation of expected end date:

- Your **expected end date** will be calculated as the date you have been given to submit any minor amendments plus one month, OR, in the case that you have no amendments to make, the date of your viva plus two months
- Your **expected end date** will be agreed with you by International Compliance before your new CAS can be approved
- To confirm your Tier 4 DES CAS start and end dates, you will need to contact International Compliance at [International.compliance@tees.ac.uk](mailto:International.compliance@tees.ac.uk)

### How to express interest in the Tier 4 DES:

- After your viva date has been agreed, you should complete the 'DES *Expression of Interest Form*' as soon as possible
- You can obtain this form from the International Student Advisor who is located in the Student Services Department, first floor, Student Centre
- You will be required to meet with the International Student Advisor to discuss your application and intentions after completion of your degree
- As there is no automatic entitlement for the University to assign a CAS, your form will be submitted to International Compliance for review and a decision
- You **must** keep International Compliance informed about the outcome of your viva, as amendment may require you to delay your application for the Tier 4 DES
- You **must** take responsibility for the timing of your application. It is very important that your application is submitted before your PhD is conferred and before your current Tier 4 visa expires

### To apply for your DES you will need to:

- Visit the link below to make a start on the online application form and prepare the necessary supporting documents before attending an appointment with the International Student Advisor  
<https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/product/tier-4-student>
- You should then schedule an appointment with the International Student Advisor and can do this by visiting the Student Services reception desk in person or by telephone on 01642 342277
- During your appointment, your advisor will check the content of your application and supporting documents. If the University agrees to assign a CAS your application will be submitted and posted via the Student Services Batch Scheme
- During your appointment, you will need to pay your Immigration Health Surcharge payment online, currently £150.00 per year per person
- You will also need to pay your immigration application payment online, currently £448.00 per person (Standard Service)

### Applying in person to the Home Office:

- It is possible to apply in person by scheduling a Premium Service Appointment at a Premium Service Centre. The current fee for this service is £948.00 and you will normally receive a decision on the same day as your appointment
- You will still submit your application online, however, you need to take your supporting documents with you to your appointment
- The International Student Advisor can prepare your file and supporting documents in advance of your appointment if required
- There are a limited number of appointments available at each Premium Service Centre and you will be able to select and book your appointment when you submit your application online

### Supporting documents needed for a Tier 4 DES visa application:

- Your passport
- Your BRP (Biometric Residence Permit) if you have one
- Your police registration certificate (if you are required to have one)
- A valid ATAS certificate if required
- Two passport sized colour photos, taken within the last month which meet the Home Office requirements: <https://www.gov.uk/photos-for-passports>
- Evidence of maintenance funds, currently £2,030 (£1015 x 2 months) which must be held in your account for a consecutive 28 day period on the date of your application, and must be dated within 31 days of the date of your application
- You can use money held in an account owned by you or your parents/ legal guardian. If you are using funds held by your parents/ legal guardian, you will need to show evidence that you are related to parents (original birth certificate) / legal guardian (court document confirming this) and that you have permission to use their money

The evidence of money you use must be cash funds in a bank (this includes savings accounts and current accounts even when notice must be given), as a loan letter or official financial government sponsorship available to you. Other accounts or financial instruments such as shares, bonds, overdrafts, credit cards and pension funds are **not** acceptable

- If you have an official financial sponsor that will continue to sponsor you after your studies have finished, you can rely on a letter from them in which they confirm the extent of their sponsorship
- If you have been financially supported by a government or international scholarship agency during your studies, or within 12 months of making this application and sponsorship has now stopped, you must provide the unconditional written consent of your financial sponsor to this application under the DES

Further details on this can be found in the Tier 4 Policy Guidance:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/477366/T4\\_Migrant\\_Guidance\\_Nov\\_V1\\_0.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/477366/T4_Migrant_Guidance_Nov_V1_0.pdf)

- If you have dependants with you, each dependant will need to show £1360 (£680 x 2 months) in their (or your) account for a consecutive 28 day period on the date of your application and the evidence provided must be dated within 31 days of the date of your application

Further details on this can be found in the PBS Dependant Guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-dependants-of-uk-visa-applicants-tiers-1-2-4-5>

- Your bank card to pay the Tier 4 application fee of £448.00 per person (Standard Service) and the Immigration Health Surcharge fee of £150.00 per person per year

#### **The University's responsibilities as your Tier 4 sponsor:**

You will be required to be in contact with International Compliance team once every three months during the 12 months. International Compliance will agree with you, in advance, when those points will be.

Please note that, if the University finds that you are not meeting the conditions of your Tier 4 DES visa, we are required to report this to the Home Office. Examples would include:

- If you miss a scheduled contact with International Compliance and do not provide an explanation we consider to be satisfactory
- If we have reason to believe that you are breaching any conditions of your leave
- If you are no longer participating in the scheme (for example, if you become an employee under Tier 2)
- If the University withdraws its sponsorship

If you are awarded a qualification which is lower than doctorate level, this will affect your eligibility to participate in the scheme.

**If you require help at any point during the process of considering, or applying for the Tier 4 DES, please contact the International Student Advisor in Student Services at [Interational@tees.ac.uk](mailto:Interational@tees.ac.uk) or by telephone on 01642 342277.**