



Advice guide:

Doctorate Extension Scheme (DES)

What is the Doctorate Extension Scheme?

The Doctorate Extension Scheme (DES) is an immigration category aimed at student visa holders who are about to be awarded their UK PhD at a UK institution. The scheme provides successful doctorate candidates an additional twelve months of immigration permission to provide them with more time to find work with a Tier 2 employer, set up as an entrepreneur or gain further experience in their chosen field. The University is required to sponsor students under this scheme; therefore, you will need to obtain a DES CAS from the University in this regard.

Am I eligible for DES?

To be eligible for the scheme you must be a Tier 4 General Student, currently following a course leading to the award of a PhD* with a sponsor that is a HEP with a track record of compliance.

*For the purposes of the Doctorate Extension Scheme, PhD means a PhD qualification or one of the doctorate qualifications as referenced in the [UKVI Student and Child Student Guidance](#). This does not include Research Masters Degrees.

You must also:

- Have a CAS from your sponsor (Teesside University). This must confirm that they expect you to complete your course on the stated expected course end date and that they will sponsor you during the 12 months you are on the scheme.
- Be in a position to apply for a DES visa no more than 60 days before the expected course end date as specified on your new CAS AND before current visa expiry.
- Be able to apply from inside the UK.
- Not have previously been granted leave under DES.
- Not have already completed/ been awarded your PhD.

What is the 'expected end date of my course'?

- The expected end date of your course is considered to be:
 - the date you have been given to submit any amendments plus one month, **or**,
 - in the case that you have no amendments, the date of your viva plus two months
- This will be agreed with the International Compliance, before your DES CAS can be assigned.
- To confirm your DES CAS start and end dates, you will need to contact International Compliance at International.Compliance@tees.ac.uk





How do I express an interest in DES?

- You can contact the International Advice Service for initial advice by email: International@tees.ac.uk. An International Student Adviser will respond to your enquiry and will arrange an appointment with you, if required.
 - The best time to contact the International Advice Service is when you have a **scheduled date for submitting the examination copy of your thesis.**
 - An International Student Adviser will discuss the application process, give you initial advice and ask you about your intentions after completion.
- After your viva date has been agreed, you should arrange a meeting to complete the '**DES Expression of Interest Form**' with the International Student Adviser. You can find this form at the end of this guidance.
- Your form must then be submitted to the International Compliance team for review and approval. There is no automatic entitlement for the University to assign a DES CAS.

How do I apply for DES?

- If your *DES Expression of Interest Form* is approved, and the University agrees to assign a CAS, your DES visa application must be submitted via the International Advice Service.

What documents do I need to support my DES visa application?

- Your passport
- Your BRP (Biometric Residence Permit)
- Your police registration certificate (if you are required to have one)
- A valid ATAS certificate (if you are required to have one)
- If you have been living in the UK with immigration permission for 12 months or more on the date of the visa application, you will automatically meet the financial requirement and you **do not** need to provide any evidence of maintenance funds.
- If you have been financially sponsored by a government or international scholarship agency during your studies - or your financial sponsorship ended within 12 months of your DES visa application being made - you must provide your financial sponsor's unconditional written consent to your DES application.
- If you have dependants attached to your current leave:
 - If your dependants **have** been living in the UK with immigration permission for 12 months or more on the date of the visa application, they will automatically meet the financial requirement and **do not** need to provide any evidence of maintenance funds.
 - If your dependants have **not** been living in the UK with immigration permission for 12 months or more on the date of the visa application, each dependant must have evidence of maintenance funds, currently £1,360 (£680 x 2 months) which must be held in an account for a consecutive 28 day period on the date of the DES application, and must be dated within 31 days of the date of the DES application.





- For dependant spouses, the money can be held in a bank account in the name of the main applicant, or the dependant spouse. For dependent children, the money can be held in a bank account in the name of the main applicant or the other parent.
- Additional documents will be required to support the DES application, your International Student Adviser can advise you about this.
- Your bank card to pay:
 - DES application fee; currently £494.20 per person (Standard Service). Other payment options, including priority services may also be available.
 - Immigration Health Surcharge fee; £470 per year for applications made on or after **27th October 2020**.
 - If you are required to attend an appointment at a UKVCAS Service Point to complete the process of biometric enrolment, there may be an additional charge for this.

You **must** take responsibility for the timing of your visa application. Your DES visa application must be submitted before your doctorate is conferred **and** before your current Tier 4 visa expires.

What are the University's responsibilities as a DES sponsor?

You will be required to be in contact with International Compliance team once every three months throughout the DES period.

Please note that, if the University finds that you are not meeting the conditions of your DES visa, they will 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 you are awarded a qualification that is lower than doctorate level
- If the University withdraws your sponsorship

International Advice Service

If you require help at any point during the process of considering, or applying, for DES, you can contact the International Advice Service by email: International@tees.ac.uk.

External links

- [UK Council for International Student Affairs \(UKCISA\)](#)
- [Student Visa application form \(including DES\)](#)
- [UKVI Student and Child Student Guidance](#)





Expression of Interest: Doctorate Extension Scheme (DES)

The purpose of the Doctorate Extension Scheme is to allow successful PhD candidates to apply to remain in the UK for an additional 12 months after completion in order to find work with a Tier 2 employer, to set up as an entrepreneur, or to gain further experience in their chosen field.

| | |
|---|--|
| Student Name | |
| Student Number | |
| Name of Director of Studies | |
| Is ATAS a requirement of your current course? | |
| Date of viva | |
| Date of hand-in for amendments | |
| Agreed ' <i>Expected End Date</i> ' for inclusion on DES CAS* | |

**This will be calculated as the date given to submit your amendments plus one month, or, if no amendments are required, this will be the date of the viva plus two months.*

If granted leave under DES I confirm that I expect to spend most of this time in the UK and I intend to use the 12 months after completion of my PhD as below:





I understand that:

There is no automatic entitlement for the University to assign a CAS by virtue of eligibility for the DES. The University will only provide sponsorship where it is satisfied that I am eligible for the DES and that I intend to use my time on the scheme to gain experience in my specific field or seek skilled work.

Additionally, I have been advised that:

- I must notify International Compliance if I decide not to proceed with the scheme
- It is my responsibility to prepare my application for the DES visa
- My application must be submitted within 60 days of the agreed '*Expected End Date*' shown on this form
- I must arrange an appointment with an International Student Adviser to check and submit my online visa application and supporting documents to UKVI
- If my application is successful, I must remain in contact with International Compliance once every 3 months during the 12 months of my DES
- I must notify International Compliance of any changes to my contact details
- I must notify International Compliance in advance and provide flight details if I plan to leave the UK for any period of time during the 12 months of my DES
- It is my responsibility to abide by the conditions of my DES leave and to ensure that I leave the UK or switch into another permissible immigration category before my visa expires
- I must notify International Compliance immediately and provide evidence if I move into another immigration category during the 12 months of my DES

Signature _____
(Student)

Date _____

Signature _____
(International Student Adviser)

Date _____

