ATAS Application: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

When you begin your ATAS application please select Imperial College London from the drop-down menu. Your ATAS certificate must be linked to Imperial College to be able to use this as part of your visa application to study at Imperial.

When should I apply for ATAS?

You should apply for ATAS clearance well in advance (at least one month) of making your student visa application as the processing time for ATAS can be as long as 30 working days.

How long will it take for me to get ATAS clearance?

The ATAS team aims to respond to all applications within 20 working days from submission but this can take longer during peak periods. The ATAS website will give an estimated date by which you should have received your certificate; however, this is not a definite prediction. Please do not panic if you have not received your certificate by this date.
If you have been waiting for a decision for more than 30 working days, please email the International Student Support team with details of your ATAS application reference number and your date of application.

How long is ATAS valid for?

An ATAS certificate is only valid to be used with a visa application for 6 months from the date of issue. Please ensure that you submit your visa application before the certificate expires!

I am having problems registering on the ATAS website – what should I do?

Try registering from a different computer (e.g. in a place of work or education) or with a new login email address.
Alternatively, try using a different web browser (the ATAS website works best in Google Chrome). You may have trouble using Internet Explorer or Firefox to complete the form.

What is my CAH code?

To apply for ATAS you will need to know the CAH code for your course.
<u>STUDENTS STARTING A NEW COURSE OF STUDY</u>
Refer to the or to find your course. Scroll down the page to the 'Entry Requirements' section and select the 'Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS)' option from the list.
<u>STUDENTS ON A CONTINUING COURSE</u>
For UG and PG Taught students, please search for your course information page on the Imperial website, the CAH code will be listed there.
If you are PG Research student please contact your Course Administrator to request your CAH code.
Please note that your CAH code will not be the same as your course code. You need to enter details of your CAH code on your ATAS application.

Is my course Taught or Research?
COURSES AT IMPERIAL COLLEGE:
- Taught = All MEng, MSci and MSc courses
- Research = All MRes and PhD courses

The form does not accept a start date in the past?
If you are applying to start a brand-new course of study this should not present a problem as your start date will always be in the future as you would require ATAS approval to be able to meet your offer conditions.

Students who are on a continuing course of study who need additional time, or are returning from an interruption of study, will need to make their start date the date of ATAS application or the next day.

The application asks for my named Supervisor at Imperial – I do not know who this is.
If you do not know or do not have a named Supervisor, then please search for your course information page on the Imperial website and use the name of the Head of Department for your area of study.
If you are coming to do a PhD at Imperial, please include the name of the lead supervisor for your project.

I don't know what modules I'll be studying?
MSc students must enter the titles of the optional modules which they think they might choose to study as part of the course. For details of the modules available on your course, please see the postgraduate prospectus or contact your department.

MRes students should describe the options available on their course and (if known) list which options they will choose.

MEng and MSci students should also provide information about the modules offered on their course (in particular the final year elective & core modules). This information will be provided by the Undergraduate Admissions Tutor for relevant courses.

I'm a PhD student but I don't have a statement of research - where can I get this?
PhD students will also need to enter some information about their proposed area of research. This should be about 6-7 lines in length and agreed with your supervisor in writing (by email is fine). Please refer to our website for a document with examples of good and bad statements of proposed research provided by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Is my programme a joint programme with another country?
If your course includes a year abroad, but your degree will only be awarded by Imperial College, then you should answer "No". If your course includes study in two different countries, and will either be jointly awarded by Imperial College and another institution, or awarded solely by another institution, then you should answer "Yes".

What education history do I need to provide?

In the "Undergraduate / Postgraduate studies" section, the form will ask you whether you have "undertaken any undergraduate or postgraduate studies". This refers only to studies at university level. If you have not yet completed your course then you must provide your course details including the **expected completion date** (you can find this information on your My Imperial page) and the **expected qualification** eg Bachelors, Masters etc.

You are **not** required to provide information about your high school education.

How should I complete the 'Employment' section if I have never been employed?

You are required to provide details of employment since you left school that includes any paid work and any long-term voluntary (i.e. unpaid) work. You do not need to provide information about temporary jobs you have done during university vacations.

If you have not undertaken any employment as mentioned above, select "No" in this section.

Who should I use as referees?

The ATAS guidance states that you need to provide the

- Full names and contact details of 2 referees (First name(s) and Family name).
- **You must have known both of your referees for at least 3 years.**
- One of your referees must be an academic.
- One of the referees must be from your home country.
- If you have been studying outside of your home country, then you can use an academic referee that is not from your country of origin (eg if you have studied your UG in the UK then you may use a UK academic as a referee).
- If you are applying for ATAS to start or continue with an undergraduate Masters programme MEng / MSci), then you may use a high school teacher as a referee to meet the 3 year requirement.

What should I do if my referees are not based in my home country?

If you are unable to provide referees from your home country because you have been studying elsewhere, this should not be an issue. Please just provide two referees from your most recent studies who have known you for 3 years.

How should I complete the 'Sponsors' section if I am a self-funding student?

Where you are asked for the sponsor name and you are self-funded, write your own name.

I have already obtained ATAS clearance but my passport details have since changed – what should I do?

If you have been issued a new passport please email international@imperial.ac.uk with your ATAS ID and new passport number and we will forward this on to the ATAS team. In most cases they will update your certificate to reflect the new passport details. In some instances, you may be required to apply for a new ATAS.

Where you have changed nationality, you may be required to apply for a new ATAS.

I have already obtained ATAS clearance but I entered the incorrect CAH code – what should I do?

You will need to make a new ATAS application using the correct CAH code. Once you have submitted a new application, please send us a copy of your most recent ATAS certificate together with the ATAS Reference Number (for your new application) - we will then ask the FCO whether they will be able to fast-track your application. You will need to wait until you have your new ATAS certificate before making your visa application.

I have applied for ATAS clearance using the wrong passport/CAH code but do not yet have my ATAS Certificate – what should I do?

Please email international@imperial.ac.uk giving your ATAS reference number. We may be able to get this information changed for you before your certificate is issued. If we cannot, you will need to make a completely new ATAS application (see above).