



## What is this visa?

The Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur Visa allows non-European graduates, who have been identified by their institution as having entrepreneurial skills and would like to develop a ***genuine and credible business idea***, to extend their stay in the UK after graduation to establish one or more businesses in the UK.

- *At Imperial a 'genuine and credible' business would be one that is able to demonstrate a sound financial plan, a clear business development strategy and who or how the development of the business will be supported*
- The business idea must ***make good use of graduates' skills*** and ***add to the UK economy***, rather than routine businesses which will merely compete with other local traders.
- The Home Office **does not allow** a business that engages in property management or property development under this visa route.
- You will need to be a co-founder or hold shares/equity in the company (your role needs to be more than that of an employee of the business)
- Demonstrate why the business would need to be based in the UK (Are some of the team members from the UK? Will you employ persons in the UK?)

The Home Office **defines a business as** *a sole trader, partnership or a company registered in the UK.*

The visa will be valid for 12 months initially, with a possible extension for a second year, if sufficient progress is made in year one.

*Successful applicants will be required to present a plan of action for their first year at their first monitoring meeting with the International Student Support office and progress will be assessed based upon this plan of action and milestones reached during the year.*

## Who is eligible to apply?

**Only UG and PG students from Imperial College and Imperial graduates, who have completed their course within the past 3 years, are eligible to apply for endorsement by Imperial College (the 3 year period will be calculated from the date of award). Post-Doctoral researchers currently employed by Imperial College and on a Tier 2 visa may also apply, as long as they hold a UK degree.**

## College Endorsement Application Process

Please keep checking our website and twitter feed for the latest information.

<b>26 April 2016</b>	An evening 'Information Session' will be held to provide more details on the scheme for any interested students (event details still to be confirmed)
<b>3 May 2016</b>	Endorsement application form will be made available on our <a href="#">website</a>
<b>2 June 2016</b>	Closing date for submission of endorsement application form
<b>6-10 June</b>	<i>First round:</i> Initial Assessment Panel evaluate the applications
<b>14 June</b>	Applicants notified by email of the outcome of their applications.
<b>July</b>	<i>Second round:</i> Successful first round applications will be submitted to the Graduate Entrepreneur Panel and applicants will have the opportunity to pitch their business plan to the Panel and answer questions from the Panel.
<b>July</b>	A few days after the Panel meeting applicants will be notified by email if the College will endorse their business.

It is possible to make an application for endorsement before course completion: if successful, the Panel will make a conditional offer of College Endorsement, which will only be issued upon successful completion of your studies.

## Apply for the visa

If selected for endorsement, candidates will be given an official College Letter to include with their Tier 1 visa application. This letter is valid for 3 months, so the application for the Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur visa must be made within that time. Students are only eligible to apply for this visa after their degree has been officially awarded by the College (1<sup>st</sup> August for UG students and 1<sup>st</sup> November for most MSc / MRes students).

If you have previously had a Post Study Work visa, you are not eligible to apply for this visa (this also applies if you previously had IGS, SEGS or Fresh Talent visas).

General information and the Policy Guidance on the Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur Visa is available on the Home Office website <https://www.gov.uk/tier-1-graduate-entrepreneur-visa> and the application is made online.

You can apply for this visa either in the UK (before your Tier 4 Student Visa expires) or overseas.

## Application Fees

	<b>Fee if you are applying by post in the UK</b>	<b>Fee if you are applying outside the UK</b>
Main applicant	£465	£342

## Dependants

Dependants must complete a separate PBS dependant application form and pay the relevant application fee. Evidence of additional funds for dependants will also have to be shown. The application costs will be the same, per dependant, as for the main applicant as stipulated above. The maintenance that dependants

need to show will be £1,260 per dependant if the family is outside the UK or has been in the UK for under 12 months; otherwise £630 for each dependants. The maintenance must have been held in a bank account for 90 days in a row.

### **Points**

To obtain a Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur visa, you must score a total of 75 points for Attributes, 10 for English Language and 10 for Maintenance (see table):

<b>Attributes: pass mark = 75</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Points</b>
Endorsed by a UK Higher Education Institution	Tier 1 Letter	25
The UK Higher Education Institution has awarded a United Kingdom recognised bachelor's or postgraduate degree	Tier 1 Letter	25
The endorsement confirms that the UK Higher Education Institution has assessed you and your business idea	Tier 1 Letter	25
<b>English Language: pass mark = 10</b>		
If you meet the pass-mark of 75 points for attributes (above) you will satisfy the English language requirement	no document required	10
<b>Maintenance: pass mark = 10</b>		
Applications in the UK: £945 (£ 1,890 for applications from overseas) in your / a joint bank account for 3 months (90 consecutive days). The end date of the 90 day period must not be more than 31 days before the date of application.	Original bank statements	10

### **Working restrictions**

There are no restriction on working hours or on working for another employer whilst you work on your business idea. It is also possible to use this visa to work for an existing business or on someone else's business idea. However, please keep in mind that you will be monitored by the College and expected to show progress in your business. This visa is granted to develop your business idea and this should remain the focus of your time spent under this visa route.

### **Document Checklist**

1	Letter of Endorsement from the College
2	Bank statements to show evidence of maintenance (living expenses). This should be £945 for the 3 months prior to making the application (£ 1,890 if applying from overseas). Funds should be held in a personal (or joint) bank account ( <i>UK or overseas accounts accepted</i> ).
3	2 new passport size photos that meet the Home Office criteria
4	Current passport
5	Previous passports with current or previous UK visas.
6	Biometric Residence Permit ( <i>if your visa was issued in this format</i> )
7	Police Registration Certificate ( <i>make sure you have updated this with any change of address</i> )
8	Financial sponsor letter ( <i>if applicable</i> )

## Terms and Conditions of the Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur Visa

Successful applicants who are endorsed by the College will be required to give their consent in writing to the College to provide the Home Office with their personal details for the purpose of endorsement for this visa. This consent will also permit the College to keep details of your application and the process of assessment of the application on file for audit purposes.

When Imperial College issues an Endorsement Letter for Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur, you will be under the supervision of Imperial College for the duration of your visa. This means that you should maintain up to date contact details (email and telephone) by notifying [international@imperial.ac.uk](mailto:international@imperial.ac.uk) when the details change. You should also notify Home Office by completing the Migrant Change of Circumstances form available here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/notification-of-change-of-circumstances-form-mcc>

Imperial College is responsible for monitoring you on a quarterly basis while on the Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur Visa. We will contact you by email and invite you to a face-to-face meeting at College. If you fail to respond to this contact, the College will report this to Home Office and your visa will be curtailed.

To extend your visa for a second year, you will need to re-apply for College Endorsement, through the panel described above, with evidence of progress on the project over the first year, and then submit a new Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur application to Home Office.

Students who apply for their visa from outside of the UK will need to:

- arrive in the UK within one month of having been granted the visa and
- make contact with the International Student Support team to confirm their arrival

Failure to inform the College of your arrival could lead to the College withdrawing sponsorship and your visa being curtailed.