PhD students nearing the end of their studies are able to apply to extend their visa to remain in the UK for 12 months to work, look for work, or set up a business. This visa is called a Tier 4 Doctorate Extension visa.

**When can I apply?**

PhD students can apply for this visa once the following steps have been completed:

- viva completed
- final corrections made and uploaded to the Spiral system
- internal examiner has confirmed that the corrections have been completed and
- submission of Thesis Declaration Form to Registry, signed by the PhD student and their supervisor

The visa application must be made:

1. before the PhD date of award and
2. before the current Tier 4 (General) student visa expires.

Applications submitted after the date of award will be refused and applications can only be made from within the UK.

**Requesting a CAS number**

Once you have completed the steps as set out above in “When can I apply?” please email international@imperial.ac.uk to request a new CAS number, provide your CID number and state in the subject line that it is for a Doctorate Extension visa.

**Financial requirements**

There are no tuition fees as this is a work visa. Applicants must hold a valid Tier 4 student visa as well as £2530 for 28 days at the time of making the application. Bank statements must still meet the Tier 4 requirements. You will also need to pay the £150 Immigration Health Surcharge to cover the 12-month period of the Doctorate Extension visa.

**Visa application**

The online Tier 4 application form is available at:
https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/product/tier-4-student and is the same as the Tier 4 student application.
The International Student Support office will check your application and documents before submitting your application. The 12-month Tier 4 Doctorate Extension visa will begin on the PhD date of award.

**Dependants**

If you have dependents with you in the UK they can also apply with the main applicant, dependants who live outside of the UK can also apply to join you as a dependant once this visa has been granted.

**Rules on working**

While on a Tier 4 student visa, work is permitted on a part-time basis only (maximum 20 hours per week). This rule continues until a PhD viva has been completed, all corrections done and the final version of the thesis has been submitted. After this, a Tier 4 student visa holder may work unlimited hours on a fixed-term contract (usually until the Tier 4 student visa expiry date or for a maximum of 4 months). If applying for the Tier 4 Doctorate Extension visa, the restriction of 20 hours per week is also lifted on the PhD student’s date of award, or the date the visa is issued, whichever is earliest.

**When the visa is granted: Monitoring by Imperial College**

The Home Office requires Imperial College to monitor all sponsored PhD graduates who are granted this visa on the basis of a CAS from Imperial. You will need to provide the College with a non-Imperial email address so we can maintain contact with you. Please ensure that you check this email account regularly and respond to any monitoring emails you receive from Imperial. If we do not hear from you, we will report this to the Home Office and your visa could be curtailed.

While holding the Tier 4 Doctorate Extension you must keep Imperial College up to date with any changes to your personal details: (e.g. change of address, new marital status/name etc). This can also be done by emailing visacompliance@imperial.ac.uk

Other monitoring information that we are required to report to the Home Office includes:

- If you decide to permanently leave the UK (note: you are permitted to temporarily leave and re-enter the UK on this visa)
- If you decide to stop participating in this visa scheme (e.g. if you change to another visa type: please keep us informed)
- If we have reason to believe that you are breaching the conditions of this visa
Who cannot have a CAS for the Tier 4 Doctorate Extension?

Imperial College reserves the right to refuse to sponsor a PhD graduate under this scheme. Examples of situations where this would occur are (but are not limited to) when a student:

- has outstanding unpaid tuition fees,
- cannot provide evidence that they have successfully completed their PhD studies
- holds a Short-term Study visa, or any other type of non-Student / Tier 4 visa
- intends to apply from outside the UK (not possible).