

## **FACTSHEET – Changing your course (Student visa holders)**

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In addition to academic requirements, a course transfer on your current visa must also meet the academic progression requirements set by the Home Office. You can change your course on your current student visa if the following conditions are met:

1. Your current visa covers the duration of your new course, AND
2. Your new course is at the same academic level e.g. masters to masters AND
3. Your new course is the same area of study as your current course.

If your course transfer request does not meet the above conditions, you will be required to apply for a new student visa in your home country using a new CAS.

The only exception to the above is if you are adding a [work placement](#) to the course for which your visa was granted. This is because adding a placement is exempt from demonstrating academic progression. This means you can apply for visa extension in the UK either before starting the placement or after you have completed the placement year. The placement however must be an assessed part of your course that you are studying.

We have provided some course transfer examples below that would not meet the Home Office's academic progression requirement and will have an impact on your student visa.

### **i. Changing to a longer course (other than adding a work placement)**

Examples:

- Switching from a 3-year BEng to a 4-year MEng
- Switching from MPhil to PhD
- Switching from a one-year Masters to a longer Masters course
- Switching courses with trailing modules or restarting in Year 1 of the new course

Under the Home Office's academic progression rule, you cannot change to a longer course on your current visa. You must withdraw from your current course and return to your home country to apply for a new student visa for the new course. You will also need to apply for a new CAS for the new course.

### **ii. Changing to shorter course at a lower level**

You cannot switch courses on your current visa if the new course is at a lower academic level. Due to the Home Office's academic progression rule, the University may not be able to issue you with a CAS for a lower-level course. An example of this would be that you were granted a student visa to study a master's course but you're now switching to bachelor's degree.

### **iii. Changing your mode of study**

Examples:

- Changing to distance learning and/or part-time
- Changing to assessment/exam-only

The University only permits fulltime study on a Student visa so you will be required to return to your home country to finish your course should you decide to switch your mode of study. The University will inform the Home Office that you are finishing the remainder of your course from overseas. The Home Office will then curtail (shorten) your Student visa and provide you with a new visa expiry date. You must not use your

student visa for travel back into the UK. If you are academically required to visit the University, you can do so by applying for a [Standard Visitor visa](#).

### **ATAS Clearance**

If your course is subject to [ATAS clearance](#), you must check with your school if your new course requires ATAS clearance. If so, you must obtain fresh ATAS clearance certificate **before** you can start studying your new course. Similarly, if you are required to make a new Student visa application because of the course change, you will need a fresh ATAS clearance as part of your CAS and visa application.

### **Change of course process**

You should contact your academic school in the first instance. During the process you will be advised to complete a course transfer form and the process may also include providing a personal statement. When your change of course process has finalised, the Immigration & Compliance Team will send a report to the Home Office confirming details of your new course.

### **Immigration advice available at the University**

For further advice from the Immigration & Compliance team, attend one of the online [Immigration Drop-in Sessions](#)