



# ATAS Application Guide

Last updated 13/01/2026

If you are required to obtain an ATAS certificate for your visa application or to be allowed to study in the UK, the Student Immigration Service will notify you in advance to ensure you have plenty of time to submit the application and obtain the ATAS certificate. Please use this guide to complete the online form correctly.

## What is ATAS?

The Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) applies to all international students and researchers (apart from exempt nationalities) who are subject to UK immigration control and are intending to study or research at postgraduate level in certain sensitive subjects.

## Do You Need ATAS?

New students: We will tell you if you need ATAS after you receive your offer.

Current students: If you make changes to your course, we will check if ATAS is required. We recommend that you discuss your potential course change with us prior to making the change, so we can advise you accordingly.

## How to apply for ATAS

If you are advised to apply for an ATAS certificate, you will need to submit the application online, on the [Foreign and Commonwealth Office website](#). It does not cost anything to submit an ATAS application.

What you will need:

- Passport
- The CAH 3 code for your course (we will provide this)
- Your module list/ area of research description (we will provide this)
- Your Director of Studies/ Supervisor's full name (we will provide this)
- Details for two referees who you have known for at least 3 years (their full name, email address, phone number, contact address)

## After You Apply

Once the application is approved, both you and The Student Immigration Service will receive a copy of your certificate via email and the certificate is valid for 6 months from the date of issue. If your application is refused, contact us immediately for advice.

## Tips

- The form takes about 1 hour to complete.
- You can save and return later.
- Check our FAQ section at the end of this guide
- Need help? Please contact us at [studentimmigrationservice@bath.ac.uk](mailto:studentimmigrationservice@bath.ac.uk)

## Step by step process

GOV.UK Academic Technology Approval Scheme

Create an account | Sign in

### Check if you need an ATAS certificate

Please do not complete an application without referring to the guidance available at:  
[www.gov.uk/academic-technology-approval-scheme](http://www.gov.uk/academic-technology-approval-scheme)  
Failure to follow the guidance may delay your application

To check if you need an ATAS certificate you will need to know the CAH3 code that applies to your course or research. Your Higher Education Institute (HEI) or employer will either include this on your official offer letter or will be able to confirm it for you separately.

CAH3 code  
Please Select --

Are you a taught / research student or are you a researcher?  
☐ Taught / research student ☐ Researcher

What is your country of nationality?  
Please Select --

Check

The first page of the ATAS application form will look like this. Your first step is to select the correct CAH3 code, which will be included in the ATAS information email you received.

If you are applying for a PhD or part-time PhD, choose Taught/Research student.

If you are a visiting student coming to the UK as part of an overseas study or research project, you should also select Taught/Research student. Then, choose Taught if you are coming to study, or Research if you are coming to carry out research.

Only select Researcher if you are joining the University of Bath as an academic member of staff, not as a student.

Finally, select your nationality exactly as it appears on your passport.

If the information you entered shows that you need an ATAS certificate, you will see a confirmation screen. At this point, you must create an account if this is your first time applying. If you already have an account, simply sign in.

The screenshot shows the 'Check if you need an ATAS certificate' page. At the top, there is a black header with the GOV.UK logo and the title 'Academic Technology Approval Scheme'. Below the header, there are links for 'Create an account' and 'Sign in'. The main heading is 'Check if you need an ATAS certificate'. Below this, there is a warning icon and text stating: 'Your answers indicate that you will require an ATAS certificate to study or research in the UK.' This is followed by a paragraph explaining that an ATAS certificate is required before applying for a visa or extension of stay, and that it does not guarantee a visa. It also mentions that visa applications will be refused if an ATAS certificate is needed but not provided. Below this, it states: 'In order to apply for an ATAS certificate you will need to create a user account, or sign in if you have one already.' At the bottom, there are two green buttons: 'Create An Account' and 'Sign In'.

GOV.UK Academic Technology Approval Scheme

[Create an account](#) | [Sign in](#)

## Check if you need an ATAS certificate

**!** Your answers indicate that you will require an ATAS certificate to study or research in the UK.

You will need to apply for an ATAS certificate before applying for your visa or extension of stay. The possession of an ATAS certificate does not guarantee you a visa or extension of stay. You must also provide evidence that you meet the usual student or research criteria. Visa applications will also automatically be refused if you need an ATAS certificate and cannot provide one.

In order to apply for an ATAS certificate you will need to create a user account, or sign in if you have one already.

[Create An Account](#) [Sign In](#)

Once your account is set up, you will be prompted to start an ATAS application.

The screenshot shows the 'Create an account' page. At the top, there is a black header with the GOV.UK logo and the title 'Academic Technology Approval Scheme'. Below the header, there are links for 'Create an account' and 'Sign in'. The main heading is 'Create an account'. Below this, there is a paragraph stating: 'Create an account to save and submit your applications.' This is followed by a sentence: 'If you've already created an account, you can [sign in](#).' Below this, there are three input fields: 'Email address', 'Password', and 'Confirm password'. The 'Password' field has a note below it: 'This must be at least 9 characters and contain uppercase letters, lowercase letters and numbers.' At the bottom, there is a green button labeled 'Create account'.

GOV.UK Academic Technology Approval Scheme

[Create an account](#) | [Sign in](#)

## Create an account

Create an account to save and submit your applications.

If you've already created an account, you can [sign in](#).

Email address

Password

This must be at least 9 characters and contain uppercase letters, lowercase letters and numbers.

Confirm password

[Create account](#)

Next, you will be asked to confirm whether your course is a taught course or a research course. Please select the option that applies to you.

The screenshot shows the 'Apply for an ATAS certificate' page. At the top, the GOV.UK logo and 'Academic Technology Approval Scheme' are visible. Below the header, the user is signed in as 'tje50@bath.ac.uk'. The main heading is 'Apply for an ATAS certificate'. A warning icon and text state: 'UK, EEA, Switzerland, United States, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Singapore, Japan and Republic of Korea nationals do not need to apply for an ATAS certificate.' Below this, a link to 'ATAS guidance' is provided. The form asks 'Are you a taught / research student or are you a researcher? \*' with radio buttons for 'Taught / research student' (selected) and 'Researcher'. It then asks 'What type of study are you undertaking? \*' with radio buttons for 'Research' and 'Taught' (selected). A green 'Continue to Checklist' button is at the bottom.

You will then need to confirm two things:

- That you have read the published guidance on how to submit an ATAS application.
- That you have received your CAH3 code from the University of Bath.

After confirming these, you can begin the application form.

The screenshot shows the 'Checklist' page. The heading is 'Apply for an ATAS certificate'. The same warning about UK, EEA, Switzerland, United States, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Singapore, Japan and Republic of Korea nationals is present. A link to 'ATAS guidance' is provided. The text states: 'If you need an ATAS certificate to study in the UK complete the checklist below to get started.' The 'Checklist' section has two questions: 'Are you ready to apply for your UK Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) certificate? \*' with radio buttons for 'Yes' (selected) and 'No'; and 'Have you received a CAH3 code from your Higher Education Institute (HEI), or research institute? \*' with radio buttons for 'Yes' (selected) and 'No'. A green 'Start application' button is at the bottom.

The form is divided into sections. Click 'Start' to open each section and follow our instructions below for completing each question. After finishing a section, you can choose 'Save for later' if you want to return and make changes later, or select 'Review progress' to check your answers. If everything is correct, the section will turn green.

**Apply for an ATAS certificate**

**What you need to know**

- Takes around 1 hour to complete the form
- Sections can be completed in any order
- You can save your progress and continue at a later date
- If you are given an ATAS certificate it will only be valid for 6 months from the date issued

1	Proposed study	NOT STARTED	Start
2	Personal details	NOT STARTED	Start
3	Spouse	NOT STARTED	Start
4	Contact details	NOT STARTED	Start
5	Undergraduate / Postgraduate studies	NOT STARTED	Start
6	Other studies	NOT STARTED	Start
7	Published papers	NOT STARTED	Start
8	Employment history	NOT STARTED	Start
9	Referees	NOT STARTED	Start
10	Sponsors	NOT STARTED	Start

1. **Proposed study:** Provide details of the course or research you plan to undertake in the UK. Refer to your **offer letter** or **ATAS information email** and make sure you enter the course name exactly as shown in the email.

**New students:** Use the course dates provided in your ATAS information email.

**Current students extending their course:** Enter the next working day as your start date and the new extended end date.

In the **“What will you be studying?”** section, copy the exact wording of your module list or research description from your ATAS information email.

For **“Why do you want to study this?”**, write a short personal statement explaining your reasons for choosing the course. If you are applying because of a course change, include the phrase:

*“Applying for ATAS due to a course change.”*

**Undergraduate or Postgraduate Taught students:** Enter your **Director of Studies** as your supervisor.

**Postgraduate Research students:** Enter your **research supervisor’s name**.

2. **Personal details:** You will need your **passport** for this section. Enter your details exactly as they appear on your passport, including all names.  
Declare if you are a **dual national** and select your second nationality.  
Answer the following questions:
  - Have you ever been **refused admission to the UK**?
  - Do you have any **military service details**?
  - Have you ever trained in **CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear)** or in using firearms?
  - Have you ever been involved in **government-funded research**?
3. **Spouse:** If your spouse or partner is coming with you or is already in the UK, provide their personal details.
4. **Contact details:** Enter your current contact details as they are on the date of application.
5. **Undergraduate/Postgraduate Studies:** Provide details of any **completed university-level degrees** (e.g., Bachelor's, Master's, PhD). Do not include uncompleted courses. If you have more than one degree, list them all.
6. **Other Studies:** Include any previous study at colleges or institutions other than university, such as professional training. Do not include school-level studies. If you went straight from high school/A levels to university, you will likely answer "No" here.
7. **Published Papers:** If you have published any academic or professional papers, provide details here.
8. **Employment History:** List any paid work or long-term voluntary work since leaving school. Do not include temporary jobs during university vacations or casual work. You can add multiple employers. Approximate dates are acceptable, but be as accurate as possible. Explain any gaps in employment (e.g., unemployment, full-time parent) in the open text box.
9. **Referees:** Provide details of at least **two referees**:
  - One must be an academic from your home country.
  - You must have known both referees for at least **three years**.
  - If you cannot provide an academic referee from your home country, explain this in the open text box and include an alternative academic or professional referee.
  - Continuing students can use an academic from your UK university as the second referee.
  - The second referee can be an employer, but **not a friend or family member**.
  - Provide **full names** (no initials), email addresses, phone numbers, and addresses.
10. **Sponsors:** Provide details of any financial sponsors for your course (not your Student visa sponsor):

- If you are sponsored by your government or a scholarship body, include their details.
- If you are sponsored by the University of Bath, include the University's details.
- If you are self-funded, enter your own details.
- The form will ask if there are any **conditions of your offer** (e.g., you must return overseas after completing your course or provide regular progress reports). If unsure, check with us. Include all sponsors if you have more than one.

### Final Steps

Once all sections are marked “**Complete**”, review your answers carefully before submitting. You cannot edit your application after submission.

If the ATAS team needs more information, they will contact you by email and ask you to log back into your account to provide additional details.

## ATAS application FAQs

### New Students

#### *How do I know if I need ATAS clearance?*

If you are coming to study certain **Science and Engineering courses at postgraduate level or above**, you may need ATAS. We will email all students on courses requiring ATAS to confirm when you need to apply.

#### *Where do I apply for ATAS?*

Apply online using the official ATAS application form: <https://www.academic-technology-approval.service.gov.uk>

#### *How much does it cost?*

ATAS applications are **free of charge**.

#### *How long does it take to receive my ATAS certificate?*

Processing usually takes **at least 30 working days (6 weeks)**. Between **April and September**, it can take longer. Apply as early as possible, but **not more than 6 months before your course starts**. We will email you when it's time to apply.

#### *Do I need to obtain an ATAS certificate to get a CAS?*

Yes. If ATAS is required for your visa, we cannot issue your CAS until you have your ATAS certificate.

#### *How long is the ATAS certificate valid?*

Your ATAS certificate is valid for **6 months**. It must be valid when you submit your visa application. You do **not** need to renew it every 6 months.

*I am applying for a joint programme; do I need ATAS clearance for each university?*

In the ATAS application form, select your **main institution** from the drop-down list and include all additional institutions in the open text boxes.

*I will be getting a new passport soon, should I apply for ATAS now?*

Wait until you have your new passport before applying, as your ATAS certificate will be linked to your passport number.

*I'm a PhD/research student. Should I select "Taught/Research student" or "Researcher"?*

If you are applying to study (full-time or part-time), select **Taught/Research student**. Only select **Researcher** if you are coming to the University of Bath as an academic member of staff, not as a student.

*I am studying on a distance learning course. Do I need ATAS?*

If you are studying from outside the UK, you do **not** need ATAS to start your course. However, if you travel to the UK during your course for any on-campus study, you will need ATAS. If you are living in the UK while studying by distance learning, you will need ATAS.

## Current Students

*I have previously been granted ATAS clearance. When do I need a new ATAS certificate?*

You will need a new ATAS certificate if:

- You change to a new course that requires ATAS clearance.
- Your research area or course content changes substantially (anything beyond minor changes or new research techniques).
- Your primary supervisor or financial sponsor changes.
- You extend your course end date by **3 months or more**.
- You apply for a new visa (even for the same course).

In these cases, make it clear in the **"What will you be studying?"** section that you are a continuing student applying for further ATAS clearance.

*I need to apply for a new ATAS certificate. What referees should I select?*

Provide details of **two referees** you have ideally known for over **3 years**:

- One should be an academic referee from your undergraduate studies.
- If you cannot provide an academic referee from your home country, explain this in the open text box and include an alternative academic or professional referee.



- The second referee can be from previous employment, as long as they are not related to you.

*I need to apply for a new ATAS certificate. What start and end dates should I use?*

- If you are extending your studies, use the **date you submit your visa application** as the start date and the **new extended end date** as the end date.
- If you are applying for a completely new course, use the start and end dates for the new course.

*I have extended the duration of my course and need to apply for a new ATAS certificate, how do I complete the 'previous studies' section on the application?*

Only include details of **completed courses**. Do not list your current, uncompleted course.