



Prifysgol Abertawe
Swansea University

Swansea University is a UKVI Licensed Student Sponsor – Track Record

Graduate Route (GR): Policy for Sponsored Students

Version 2.0 (Includes COVID-19 concession information)

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Swansea University respects that its UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) student sponsor license is a privilege and not a right. To ensure that UK immigration control is maintained Swansea University implement rigorous systems to fulfil its student sponsor duties from Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) issuance until:

- *Swansea University withdraws a student's sponsorship*
- *the student leaves the UK; or*
- *the student is given permission to stay in the UK with a different sponsor or in another immigration category*

Systems are underpinned by rigorous policies.

Author: International Student Compliance Services

Student Life

1.0 Purpose

1.1 This policy has been written to communicate Swansea University's policy and procedures for the Graduate route (GR) visa to its sponsored students.

1.2 The GR is a flexible post-study work visa that allows students to stay in the UK to work or look for work for 2 years after a degree has been awarded, or 3 years, if a Doctoral qualification has been awarded. Students can also study on this visa although study is restricted. Further information relating to conditions of the GR can be found in **section 9.0**.

1.3 Swansea University is a [UKVI registered Student sponsor with a track record of compliance](#) thus Swansea University can offer the GR to its eligible students.

1.4 Swansea University is required to report all students that are eligible irrespective of intention to apply.

1.5 Home Office GR immigration rules can be found [here](#).

2.0 Scope

2.1 Swansea University is required to report all Tier 4/Student route (SR) sponsored students that are eligible for the GR to the Home Office (HO) using the HO Sponsor Management System (SMS).

2.2 Students are reported to the SMS as 'student has successfully completed course in line with qualifying criteria for the graduate route'. Reporting students via the SMS advises the Home Office that the student has satisfied the **70 points** required for:

- [the GR successful completion requirement](#) (see **section 4**)
- [the GR qualification requirement](#) (see **section 5**) and
- [the GR study in the UK requirement](#) (see **section 6**)

2.3 Students cannot apply for the GR visa until an email from studentcompliance@swansea.ac.uk is received advising them that **point 2.2** has been completed. Students do not need to request this email and can expect to receive this communication within 21 days of the publication of their results. Students can prepare applications in readiness [here](#).

2.4 Students carrying University debt or who have unresolved academic, or other, misconduct allegations will not be reported and will not receive the email detailed in **point 2.3**.

3.0 Compliance

3.1 The GR is an unsponsored route; therefore, Swansea University's sponsorship duties cease once the GR visa is granted and we are unable to provide immigration advice for the GR. Application support and guidance can be sought via:

international.campuslife@swansea.ac.uk.

3.2 Only students that are assessed as eligible by Swansea University (see **section 4.0**, **section 5.0** and **section 6.0**) will be reported to UKVI as having 'successfully completed their course in line with qualifying criteria for the graduate route'.

3.3 Students should not apply for the UK GR until email notification from Swansea University's student compliance services is received (see **Appendix 1**).

3.4 A student sponsored on the Doctorate Extension Scheme (DES) will not be eligible to apply for the GR. The GR has replaced DES. You can only hold permission under the GR or DES once in your lifetime.

3.5 Students carrying University debt or with outstanding misconduct cases will not be reported.

3.6 Completing on time is crucial for smooth access to the GR. It is important for students to understand that qualification results must be ratified and published within their immigration validity. You must have received your qualification (see **section 4.0** for further information).

4.0 The Successful Completion Requirement

4.1 At the point of applying students must be in the UK on a valid Tier 4/SR visa having been awarded a GR eligible qualification (see **section 5.0**).

4.2 Having to retake exams and having to resubmit work will impact results being released on time.

4.3 If your course end date is extended (for any reason) it is recommended that you speak to your supervisor/faculty in the first instance to confirm when your results will be published. Faculty/school contacts can be found [here](#).

4.4 It is a student's responsibility to ensure that they will be able to receive results before their visa expiry date, thus allowing the opportunity to apply for the GR.

4.5 Swansea University will not be able to go outside of the normal assessment schedules to fast-track resits and the release of results.

4.6 Swansea University is committed to supporting students that are interested in the GR visa and will issue CAS's to enable students to apply for SR visa extensions even where new course end dates fall within the validity of current visas (within the wrap up period).

4.7 A student cannot extend their SR visa to wait in the UK for results and so taking prompt action when a course end date extension is given and applying before that new course end date passes is essential.

4.8 Applications for a SR visa extensions must be made as soon as possible and before a student's new course end date. Visa extensions would be (new course end

date + 4 months). To assess eligibility to apply for visa extension students are asked to send an email titled 'CAS for GR purposes' to: cas.compliance@swansea.ac.uk.

4.9 It is a student's responsibility to ensure that they coordinate a SR visa extension in a timely manner to support any future application for the GR.

4.10 A SR visa extension should be carefully considered as there are associated Home Office [costs](#).

4.11 If a student submits a GR application without receiving their results, their application will be rejected, and the application fee lost.

5.0 The Qualification Requirement

5.1 Detail about eligible qualifications can be found in appendix **GR 5.1 – GR 5.4** of the immigration rules found [here](#).

5.2 Students will meet the qualification requirement having successfully completed the course of study detailed within their current Tier 4/SR visa. Eligible courses include a UK bachelor's degree, a UK master's degree, a UK PhD or doctorate, or a qualification that is required by UK law to follow professions such as but not limited to medical doctors, architects, lawyers, teachers, and nurses. An example would be a PGCE (education) or the LPC (legal practice).

5.3 Students that have changed course who are unsure how this may affect their eligibility for the GR can contact international.campuslife@swansea.ac.uk.

5.4 The qualification obtained must have been gained during the last grant of permission to study as a student, or in the period of permission immediately before the applicant's last grant of permission if the last grant of permission was to undertake a role as a Student Union Sabbatical Officer.

5.5 If a student's qualification is not eligible then they will not receive the email detailed in **point 2.2**. An exit qualification would not be an eligible qualification.

6.0 The Study in the UK requirement

6.1 Students will be expected to undertake their studies in the UK to be eligible for the GR.

6.2 The minimum period of study in the UK for the GR is at least 12 months OR the full length of your course, whichever is shorter. Permitted 'study abroad' activities (i.e., activities that are undertaken overseas as part of a course) or time spent overseas during permitted breaks from study such as during official vacation periods or at the weekend can be included in the minimum period.

6.3 The minimum period of study can be undertaken on more than one Tier 4/Student visa if granted to study the same qualification at the University.

6.4 COVID-19 concessions apply to [30th June 2022](#).

6.5 If a student's course started at any time, and is longer than 12 months in duration, any time spent outside of the UK distance learning **between 24 January 2020 and 30 June 2022** will not prevent you from meeting the GR eligibility requirements.

7.0 Reporting (timeframe)

7.1 The Student Compliance Services team at Swansea University run regular reports (weekly where possible) to ensure that qualifications/awards are picked up and reported as quickly as possible.

7.2 Student Compliance Services aim to submit notifications to the Home Office and confirm this to students via email (see **Appendix 1**) within 14 days of an award being noted on the system, but students should allow up to 21 days. Students do not need to request this email.

7.3 Students will receive their email confirmation the same day that a report is made to the Home Office/UK Visas and Immigration (see **Appendix 1**).

7.4 Students that have received their qualification but not received an email within the 21-day timeframe can contact Kathryn.miller@swansea.ac.uk.

7.5 Students that have a short timeframe between the publication of their results and immigration expiry can also contact Kathryn.miller@swansea.ac.uk.

8.0 Making an application

8.1 The HO has advised Swansea University and all other student sponsors that they cannot provide immigration support to sponsored students making an application under the GR. The GR is an unsponsored route and exemptions on providing immigration advice do not apply under Swansea University's student sponsor license. Students should contact the HO directly with any specific GR queries, contact details can be found [here](#).

8.2 General support can be gained from international.campuslife@swansea.ac.uk

8.2 Students can make their applications from the moment they receive their confirmation email (see **Appendix 1**) until the end date of their current permission (or the expiry of their exceptional assurance, if applicable).

8.3 Once an application has been made the applicant can stay in the UK to await a decision, even if their visa expires during this time. Decisions are usually granted within 8 weeks.

8.4 Once an application has been made you should not travel outside of the UK until a decision is received.

8.5 Any GR application should be made online from within the UK after Swansea University has notified the HO of a student's successful completion of a GR

qualification and before a student's permission (Tier 4/SR visa) or exceptional assurance expires.

8.6 Applications can be prepared in readiness [here](#).

8.7 An application should not be completed until a notification email is received from studentcompliance@swansea.ac.uk (see **Appendix 1**).

8.8 When granted, the visa will be issued as a digital status (eVisa). Digital status can be proven [here](#).

8.9 Dependants already in the UK can apply to be dependants under the GR.

9.0 Summary

9.1 The GR is a very flexible and inclusive route to remain in the UK only available to those in the UK sponsored by a higher education provider listed as 'Student Sponsor-Track Record' to study in the UK.

9.2 The GR is not a route to settlement and can only be granted once in a lifetime.

9.3 Students cannot extend their stay under the GR, but it is possible to switch into another post study work visa. It is also possible to switch back to the Student route for further studies but completing those studies would not lead to further leave under the GR.

9.4 The GR provides an opportunity for international students who have been awarded their degree to stay in the UK and work, or look for work, at any skill level for 2 years (3 years for doctoral students).

9.5 Work can be in any sector and at any level without any minimum salary requirements or the need for visa sponsorship.

9.6 Students can start employment in a full-time permanent vacancy once they have successfully completed their course and applied for the GR. See ST26.6 [here](#).

9.7 Students can also study under the GR. Study which could in theory be sponsored under the SR is not permitted therefore examples of permitted study would include:

- Some professional courses
- Online courses
- Evening classes
- Recreational courses

9.8 Dependants that are already in the UK as a dependant of a Tier 4 or SR student can apply as a dependant under the GR.

9.9 If you have dependants that are outside the UK, they must join you under the SR before applying for the GR. There is no deadline for dependants to join the main applicant, but it must be before the applicants Tier 4/SR visa expires.

9.10 Applicants and their dependants have the same work and study conditions to adhere to.

9.11 If a student has already found employment and/or sponsorship, there may be other post study work visas better suited. Information on other post study work visa options can be found [here](#).

9.12 Any questions can be directed to studentcompliance@swansea.ac.uk. Any email should be titled 'Graduate Route'.

Appendix 1

Dear XXXX,

Re: Graduate Route Visa – Successful completion of eligible qualification reported to UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI)

Congratulations, you have successfully completed a qualification which enables you to apply for permission to stay in the UK as a Graduate. Home Office information about the UK's Graduate Route visa including how to apply can be found [here](#).

UKVI is part of the Home Office.

In line with our Tier 4/Student sponsor duties, we have reported your successful course completion to UKVI, and you may now proceed to submit a Graduate route visa application if you so wish.

Before applying you should ensure that you satisfy all validation, suitability and eligibility requirements. The Graduate Route visa immigration rules can be found [here](#).

- You **must** be in the UK when you make your application.
- You **must** hold a valid Tier 4 visa/Student visa (BRP hasn't expired).

You will need your current Tier 4 visa/Student visa CAS number when you apply:
Your CAS number is: XXXX

It is recommended that you read the Home Office's Graduate route visa information and immigration rules thoroughly before applying (see links provided above).

Successful applicants of this route will be granted a 2-year visa (3-year visa if you have been awarded a PhD or Doctorate). It is an unsponsored route allowing you to take employment at any level with any employer (paid or unpaid). You can research the full conditions and further information about the Graduate route visa on our webpage [here](#).

If you have already found employment and/or sponsorship, there may be other post study work visas better suited to you. Information on other post study work visa options can be found [here](#).

The Graduate route visa can only be applied for and granted once, it cannot be extended or applied for again in the future even after another period of study. If you have already been granted a Graduate route visa you will not be able to apply again. It must also be noted that the Graduate route does not lead to settlement; however, you may apply to switch into other work categories or back to the Student route for further studies from within the UK.

With very best wishes,