



CHEVENING

Applying for a Student visa

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Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is a visa?

A visa, also known as entry clearance when applying from outside the UK, gives you permission to enter the UK. You will need to make an application for a [Student Visa](#) and this guide covers this visa category.

2. Can Chevening apply for the visa for me?

You must apply for your own visa application. Neither Chevening staff nor staff at the British Embassy or High Commission can apply on your behalf. We have created extensive guidance to help you through the process.

3. Where should I make my visa application?

You must apply for a visa in the country where you normally live. As part of the application process, you will be required to attend a visa appointment at your local [visa application centre](#).

4. When should I apply for my visa?

Before you apply, make sure that you have received your **Chevening Final Award Letter** and your [Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies](#) (CAS) from your chosen university.

The date when you apply for your visa must be:

- Before you travel to the UK
- No more than six months before the start date of your course as indicated on your CAS
- No later than six months after your CAS was issued

5. How much does it cost to apply?

As a Chevening Scholar there is no visa application fee. In the online visa application form, you will be asked '**Do you have a Marshall, Chevening or Commonwealth Scholarship?**' You **must** select 'yes' to this question.

Selecting 'yes' will allow you to bypass the payment pages for both the visa fee and the [immigration health surcharge](#). You must also submit your Chevening Scholarship Final Award Letter (FAL) with the supporting documents as evidence of your scholarship and eligibility for the fee waiver described above.

6. What is the Immigration Health Surcharge, and do I have to pay?

Anyone applying for a visa to come to the UK for more than 6 months is required to pay the [immigration health surcharge](#) (IHS) at the point when they submit their visa application. Paying the IHS means that you will have access to the UK's [National Health Service](#) (NHS) and allows you to access the NHS in the same way that anyone else, ordinarily resident in the UK can. You can read more about access to healthcare in the UK on [our website](#). Please note the **Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office pays the IHS on your behalf (Please see the 'Submitting your application' tab, and as long as you select 'yes' when asked if you have a Chevening scholarship, as described in question 5, you will not be charged.**

7. How should I apply for my visa?

You should apply for your visa online at the [GOV.UK website](#). To ensure you do it correctly, please follow our extensive step-by-step guide to making your visa application which you can find on [our visa guidance page](#).

8. What happens if I have applied for the incorrect visa?

If you have made a mistake and applied for the incorrect Student visa, you may be able to withdraw your application and get a refund if you haven't yet attended your visa appointment. You can visit the Government's website to [cancel your visa](#). If you have already attended your visa appointment, it isn't possible to withdraw your application or get a refund. We are also unable to reimburse these costs.

9. What is the Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS)?

You must have a confirmation of acceptance for studies (CAS) before making your Student visa application. A CAS is an electronic document generated by your university after you have met all the requirements and have accepted an unconditional offer to study at that institution. You will need to liaise with your university directly about this, we're unable to get a CAS for you.

Your university will send you the unique reference number that corresponds to your CAS. You must provide this reference number in the appropriate field on the online visa application form. The Entry Clearance Officer who processes your application will check this electronic document to verify that you have an unconditional offer from that university for the course that you intend to study.

Your university should also send you the information that they have used to generate your CAS. This is often referred to as a 'CAS statement' and it is

normally sent to you by email. The CAS statement itself is not required for your Student visa application because the original CAS is a live electronic document, but it gives you all the information about your course and sponsor – which is your university – and you need it to complete the visa application. If there are any discrepancies between the information used by the university to generate the CAS and your application form, then your visa application may be refused. If there are any errors in the information on your CAS, you should notify the university immediately.

The CAS statement should tell you:

- Your personal details as shown in your passport such as your name, date and place of birth and passport number
- The 14 digit reference number for the CAS, containing a mixture of letters and numbers
- The Sponsor Licence Number (SLN) of the university where you intend to study
- The start and end dates of the course that you intend to study
- The title of the course that you intend to study and the course NQF/CEFR level
- The tuition fees for the first year of the course, or the entire course if it will last one year or less
- Any tuition fees that you have already paid to the university, if a separate receipt has not been issued
- Any accommodation fees that you have already paid to the university if a separate receipt has not been issued. A maximum of £1,334 of accommodation costs paid to your university can be counted towards evidence of maintenance funds if required in your visa application
- Any qualifications that the university has used to make you an offer to study the course
- An assessment of your English language ability
- If you have previously studied in the UK with a Student visa or Tier 4 visa, it will confirm that the new course demonstrates academic progression from the previous course

You may obtain a CAS statement from several different universities. However, you should only apply for your visa using the CAS sent to you by the university where you intend to study, and it can only be used once. When your visa has been granted, and you enter the UK, you must enrol at and study at this university.

10. What is a 'low risk' national?

Nationals of some countries do not need to provide evidence of their qualifications or their money when they apply for Student visa. UK Visas and

Immigration (UKVI) calls this the 'differentiation agreements' for 'low risk' students.

You are a 'low risk' student if you are applying for a Student visa to study at a higher education provider with a track record of compliance and:

- You are a national of Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Barbados, Belgium, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates or the USA, and you are applying for entry clearance in the country where you are living.
- You hold a Hong Kong SAR passport, a British National (Overseas) a Macau SAR passport and you are applying for entry clearance in the country where you are living.
- You hold a Taiwan (ROC) passport with a residence card number, and you are applying for entry clearance in Taiwan.

Even if you are a 'low risk' student, we recommend that you prepare all the documentation and carry it with you when you attend your visa appointment anyway. This is because UKVI reserves the right to request the documentation at any point during the application process. If you cannot provide the documentation when asked or if the dates prove that you did not have the documents at the time you applied for the visa, your application may be refused, and you could also face a ban from the UK on grounds of deception. Even if you are a 'low risk' student we advise you to submit your Final Award Letter (FAL) as this is evidence that you are a Chevening scholar and eligible to have the visa fees waived.

11. What evidence should I include with my application?

a. Your passport

You must enclose a valid passport which must be valid for your intended date of travel and have one full blank page for the visa.

If the validity period of your passport will not cover the duration of your course, we strongly advise you to renew your passport in your home country as it can be costly and complex to renew your passport in the UK.

You should not use a diplomatic or government official passport to travel to the UK because your Chevening scholarship is not considered to be an official posting. If you plan to travel to the UK on a passport other than a civilian passport please contact the welfare and immigration team at welfare@chevening.org for further advice.

Note: You must submit your actual passport with your visa application, not a copy.

b. Your finances

If you have a full scholarship, you will need to show that your scholarship covers your course fees and living expenses while you are in the UK.

If you have a partial scholarship, you must also show that you have the additional funds to cover your contribution. **Please refer to our step-by-step guide (page 55 onwards) for further information.**

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office is what UKVI calls an official financial sponsor, and if you are a fully-funded scholar, your **Final Award Letter** is evidence of the funding you will receive for your course fees and living costs.

Check that your Final Award Letter shows all the required information including:

- Your name
- The name and contact details of the official financial sponsor (the British embassy/high commission in your home country)
- The date of the letter
- The institution you will be studying at
- The length of the sponsorship
- Confirmation of the amount of funding that you will receive during your scholarship

The letter should be on official letter-headed paper or stationery and must be signed by the British embassy or high commission, this can be a digital signature. You will likely receive your FAL by email from the Chevening Officer at your local British embassy or high commission. We advise you to print a copy for your records.

If you have received your FAL by email it may be password protected, please ensure that you remove the password before you upload the document with your visa application.

You will need to upload your Final Award Letter with your visa application as evidence of your funding. Even if you are a 'low risk' student you should make sure you submit this letter with your visa application as evidence that you are a Chevening Scholar and are eligible for a visa fee waiver.

If you have a part award scholarship of less than £9,207 for living costs (known as your stipend) for the year (or less than £12,006 for the year if you are studying in London) and/or if you need to contribute to your fees you will need to show that you have the balance of the money available to you. You will be considered to be studying in London if you're studying at the University of London, or if the majority of your study (more than 50% of your study time) is at a site or sites situated wholly or partly within the Greater London Area. The "Greater London Area" means the City of London and the 32 London boroughs. If you are not sure if your institution is considered to be 'in London' you should check with your university before you make your visa application.

The required funds must have been available to you for a period of at least 28 days and ending no longer than 31 days before you apply for your visa. You can use funds from an overseas bank account, but this will be rejected by the Home Office if:

- (a) the decision maker is unable to make satisfactory verification checks; or
- (b) the financial institution is not regulated by the appropriate regulatory body for the country in which that institution is operating; or
- (c) the financial institution does not use electronic record keeping.

For further information is available on the [gov.uk website](https://www.gov.uk) about documents used to evidence funds.

c. TB test certificate

You will need to submit a certificate from a UKVI approved clinic to confirm that you are clear of Tuberculosis (TB) if you live in certain countries. Please see 17 for more information.

Evidence you may need to include in your application

d. Your qualifications

You will not need to submit evidence of qualifications if you are sponsored by a higher education provider (HEP) with a [track record of compliance](#), or if you are a low risk national. This will be the case for most scholars unless you are attending JCA London Fashion Academy.

If you have a CAS from JCA London Fashion Academy, which is a Student Sponsor without a track record of compliance, you must submit the qualifications that your university has listed on your CAS under 'Evidence used to obtain offer'. If this information is not listed in the CAS statement, ask your university for details. You do not need to submit the originals of these documents. If you submit any certificates or transcripts which are not in English (or Welsh), you must also include a translation of each.

e. Assessment of your English language ability

Your English language ability will be assessed by the university as part of their academic admissions process. Universities must follow specific guidelines from UKVI when assessing your English language ability before they can issue you with a CAS. In most cases the university must state in the CAS how they have assessed your English language ability and the level of ability that you have obtained in reading, writing, speaking and listening. If you have any questions about the assessment of your English language, please contact your university.

You do not need to have an English language test if:

- You are the national of a majority English-speaking country. Majority English-speaking countries are defined by UKVI as: Antigua and Barbuda; Australia; The Bahamas; Barbados; Belize; the British Overseas Territories; Canada; Dominica; Grenada; Guyana; Ireland; Jamaica; Malta, New Zealand; St Kitts and Nevis; St Lucia; St Vincent and the Grenadines; Trinidad and Tobago; the USA
- or if you have completed a qualification equivalent to a UK degree in one of the following countries: Antigua and Barbuda; Australia; The Bahamas; Barbados; Belize; the British Overseas Territories; Canada; Dominica; Grenada; Guyana; Ireland; Jamaica; Malta; New Zealand; St Kitts and Nevis; St Lucia; St Vincent and the Grenadines; Trinidad and Tobago; the USA
- you proved your level of English in a previous visa application

If you do not fall into one of these categories, you may need to provide evidence that you have a minimum level of English language ability. If you wish to study a course at degree-level (NQF level 6 / SCQF level 9) or above, your English language ability must be at CEFR level B2 or above, and your university can choose how to assess this. There is more advice on the UKCISA website ([please see the 'Evidence' tab](#)). You can also read more about this on the [gov.uk website](#).

f. Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS)

Ask your university whether you need an [Academic Technology Approval Scheme](#) (ATAS) clearance certificate for your course. This is a certificate issued by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), which gives you security clearance to study certain subject areas. These subject areas are those where the knowledge gained may have application in the development of weapons of mass destruction.

Your university must confirm in your CAS whether you require an ATAS clearance certificate or not. The university should also tell you the CAH3 code as you will need this when you apply.

If you need ATAS clearance, you must apply to the FCDO for your [ATAS clearance certificate](#) before you submit your visa application.

For questions about your financial sponsor, once you are in receipt of your Final Award Letter, you should write 'Chevening Scholarship' and provide the details of the British Embassy/High Commission for the country which has awarded you your scholarship and provide their address. You can use your Programme Officer – UK's email address if a sponsor email is required. If you are waiting for your FAL or if your award hasn't been confirmed yet, you can write that a decision on a Chevening scholarship is pending.

You can apply for an ATAS certificate up to six months before the beginning of your course, therefore we strongly recommend that you apply as soon as you have received your offer of study. ATAS certificates usually take 20 working days to be processed but can take longer at busy times in the summer. There is no fast track service so make sure you apply in good time. There is no cost to apply for an ATAS certificate.

g. Translations

If your application includes any documents which are not in English or Welsh, you must also include a translation of each document.

Each translation must contain:

- Confirmation from the translator/translation company that it is an accurate translation of the original document
- The date of the translation
- The full name and signature of the translator, or of an authorised official of the translation company
- The contact details of the translator or translation company

12. What are ‘criminal convictions’?

The application form requires you to state any criminal convictions, including traffic offences, that you have obtained in any country, and to provide details on the form. This is because the immigration rules include the provision to refuse the application of someone with certain criminal convictions, under the [general grounds for refusal](#).

13. What are ‘general grounds for refusal’ and ‘breach of immigration conditions’?

The [immigration rules](#) include provision for an application to be refused under the [‘general grounds for refusal’](#). UKVI has detailed internal guidance on the general grounds for refusing.

Entry clearance officers need to check applications for:

- Evidence of any adverse behaviour - using deception including false representation, fraud, forgery, nondisclosure of material facts or failure to cooperate
- Character, conduct or associations - criminal history, deportation order, travel ban, exclusion, non-conducive to public good, national security
- Immigration history - breaching conditions, using deception in an application

The immigration rules also include the provision to refuse an application by someone who has an outstanding unpaid National Health Service debt of £500 or more.

Contact the welfare and immigration team at welfare@chevening.org for advice if you have any questions about this, or you think that you may have been in breach of your visa conditions on a previous visit.

14. I’ve made a mistake on my visa application, can I change it?

You can edit the information on the application form up until the section where you complete the details relating to the Immigration Health Surcharge. If you have completed this part of the online application you will not be able to make further changes. If you have made an error on your application form and cannot change it then please contact the [Welfare and Immigration Team](#).

15. What biometric data do I have to give?

As part of the Student visa application, you are required to provide your biometrics - your facial photograph and fingerprints. Your biometric data will be taken when you attend the visa appointment.

16. Do I have to go for an interview as part of my application?

Possibly. The Home Office generally interviews most Students before granting them immigration permission to come to the UK. You might be sent an email asking you to attend an interview as part of the application process. You should check your email (including the 'Junk' folder) regularly as your application is likely to be refused if you are asked to attend an interview and you do not do so without providing a reasonable explanation.

Interviews take place when you attend a visa application centre to give your biometric information. In the short interview, you will be asked questions in English about the course you will be doing and the university you will attend. A report of the interview will be passed on to the entry clearance officer who assesses your application. You may also be requested to attend a further interview called a 'credibility interview', this is because UKVI wants to be satisfied that you are a genuine and credible student. Some of the questions may be similar to your Chevening interview, and you may be asked about the following:

- Your chosen course and modules
- Your chosen university
- Your education history
- Your visa history
- Your financial circumstances
- Your post-study plans

17. Do I need to be tested for tuberculosis (TB)?

Scholars who are residents in certain countries are required to provide a medical certificate confirming that they are clear of [Tuberculosis \(TB\)](#) for visa purposes. You can check on [GOV.UK](#) to find out if you need to be tested for TB. The [gov.uk website](#) has further information about the TB testing process.

TB testing results can take weeks or even months if the results are initially inconclusive. The earliest you can apply for your TB certificate is six months before you intend to travel to the UK. The test **must** be carried out at a UKVI approved clinic. Details of approved clinics can be found on the [individual country pages](#) of the GOV.UK website. If you've previously had TB, it's likely that the initial x-ray may show scarring on your lungs and you'll need further testing. You will need to upload your TB test as part of your visa application.

18. Can I bring my dependent family to the UK with me?

Due to high living costs in the UK, the Secretariat strongly recommends that you do not bring your family to the UK with you.

If you do bring your family, you must have the personal financial means to do so and understand that your family are not eligible to receive financial support or advice from the Secretariat. Your living allowance, known as a stipend, does not include any specific financial provision for family members. Additionally, you may find it very difficult to secure accommodation for your family in the UK. The Secretariat is also unable to provide immigration advice for your dependant family members so please contact your university if you have questions about visas for your family. You can also find further information dependent visas on the [UKCISA website](#).

19. How long will my application take?

Visa processing times vary across the globe, but the summertime is the busiest time for applications. Once you submit your application and documents at the visa application centre, it can take up to 3 - 4 weeks and sometimes longer for your application to be processed. Please complete the survey link you received from your programme officer when you received confirmation that your FAL had been created to provide us with your visa appointment information. This will allow us to flag your application with UKVI directly.

20. What if my visa application is refused?

If your application is refused, you should contact your university sending them a copy of the refusal notice as a matter of urgency. Please also send a copy to the [welfare and immigration team](#).

There is no full right of appeal for visa applications made outside of the UK. If you think the refusal was incorrect, based on the evidence you submitted with your application, you can ask for an '[Administrative Review](#)' of the decision to refuse it. There is no fee for this, and you must request the Administrative Review within 28 days of the date you receive your refusal notice. You cannot produce any new or different documents for an Administrative Review. There is further information in the [Home Office guidance](#). Your university may also be able to provide further advice.

You cannot submit a new entry clearance application at the same time as requesting an Administrative Review of an earlier entry clearance application. You can only use a CAS once. If your immigration application has been refused, and you wish to submit a new application, you will need to find out if your university will give you a new CAS.

21. How will my visa be issued?

Your visa will be issued as a vignette (sticker) in your passport and will be valid for 90 days. The 90 days will start 30 days before the course start date on your CAS or seven days before the date that you specified on your application as your intended date of travel to the UK, whichever is later.

You can only travel to the UK on or after the 'valid from date' on your vignette so please ensure that you understand when your visa starts before you book your travel to the UK

You should also receive a **decision letter** from UKVI by email which specifies the conditions attached to your visa and where to collect your **Biometric Residence Permit** (BRP). If your visa is issued in a different format, then please notify the [Welfare and Immigration Team](#) as soon as possible.

After you arrive in the UK you will have to collect your BRP within 10 days of arrival, or before the end date of your vignette, whichever is later. You need to pick up your BRP from a specified post office or from your university depending on the information on the decision letter. I



A Biometric Residence Permit is an identity card, about the size of a credit card, which contains your biometric information, as well as details about your permission to be in the UK and when your visa will expire. This will then be your new visa (example above) and you will need to carry it with you if you leave and re-enter the UK at any time during your award.

Please note that your BRP may have an end date of 31 December 2024 even though your permission to remain in the UK may extend beyond that until January or February 2025. This is because the Home Office is phasing out BRPs and from 1 January 2025 UKVI intends for immigration permission to be evidenced via a digital status. You can read more about this on the [gov.uk website](#). UKVI will provide further information about this in early 2024. Please

ensure that you have access to the email address you used to apply for your visa as you may be contacted by UKVI directly.

22. How do I know if my visa is correct?

Once you receive your visa (the 90 day vignette), you need to make sure that it includes all the correct information:

- Your name and date of birth
- That you have permission under the Student route
- The Sponsor Licence Number (SLN) of the university you intend to study at
- The correct start and end dates of the visa
- Whether you can work
- For some students, the instruction to register with the police.

If there are any errors with your 90 day travel vignette, ask to have it changed immediately before you travel to the UK. It can be more difficult to correct errors on your immigration permission after you have travelled to the UK. You can read more on the [UKCISA website \(please see the 'When Your Visa is Issued' tab\)](#) to check if your visa is correct.

23. How long will my Student visa be valid for?

For a postgraduate course lasting at least 12 months, your visa will expire four months after the end date of your course stated in your CAS. You cannot ask for it to end later. If your course lasts more than six months but less than 12, your visa will expire two months after your course end date. For example, if your course is 12 months long and ends on 30 September 2024 then your visa should expire on 30 January 2025.

24. What if I will arrive later than expected in the UK?

Your temporary 90-day vignette will only be valid for 90 days. If you can't travel within this 90 day window, you will need to apply for a replacement vignette, further information about how to do that is on the [UKCISA website \(please see the 'When Your Visa is Issued' tab\)](#).

Your university should tell you the last date that you will be allowed to enrol on your course. This date might have been included in the CAS statement issued to you. Make sure you contact your institution immediately if there will be a problem in arriving in time for the start of your course. **Do not** travel to the UK if you will not be able to arrive at your university before the last date of enrolment.

25. What conditions will be attached to my immigration permission?

Your Student visa permission has some conditions. The restrictions applied to each condition will be stated on your visa.

Study at your intended institution

You must enrol and study at the university that issued the CAS, and whose Sponsor License Number is printed on your visa. If you change your mind before travelling to the UK, and you wish to study at a different university, you must make a new entry clearance application using a new CAS from your new university.

'No recourse to public funds'

Your immigration conditions prohibit you from accessing 'public funds', which means certain welfare benefits and local authority housing. Using the National Health Service, sending your child to a state school, being exempt from the Council Tax, and paying 'home' fees for study do not count as accessing 'public funds'.

If you claim 'public funds', the UK immigration authorities can refuse your immigration application or remove you from the UK. You may be banned from returning to the UK for a certain period.

Working conditions

Most scholars will have the standard [student work condition](#) which is 20 hours per week. There is lots of information on our [website about this](#).

For more information about these conditions visit the [UKCISA website](#).

26. What duties does my university have in reporting immigration matters to the Home Office?

All Student Sponsors have specific sponsor duties. These duties are outlined in [The Student Sponsor Guidance](#). Your university must notify the Home Office if:

- You do not enrol on the course before the last day of the enrolment period
- You fail to attend a class or lecture, or fail to submit work for a specific number of times, and your institution has not agreed to your absence or non-submission of work
- You defer, postpone or take a break from your studies
- You change to a shorter course, or you complete your studies early
- You withdraw from your studies before you have finished your course

- Your visa is refused
- You significantly change your circumstances (e.g., your study location changes or you change to a course which requires ATAS clearance or a work placement)
- They have any reason to suspect that you are not compliant with your visa conditions (e.g., if the university has reason to believe that you are working more than the hours you are permitted to)

Your university will usually inform you in writing if they have made a report to the Home Office, particularly where the report may result in your visa being curtailed (cancelled). If you have any queries about reports submitted to the Home Office, please speak with the international student adviser at your university.

The Home Office may curtail your visa early if they are notified of one of these issues. This means it is very important that, as far as possible, you attend all your classes and lectures and submit coursework when it is due. If you have problems doing this, you should let your tutor or student advisers know as soon as possible.

It is very important that you notify your university if you are ill and cannot attend or submit work, or if you have to miss your academic commitments for any other reason. Your university may ask you to submit further evidence to confirm the reason for your absence, for example a letter from your doctor. You should also alert your Chevening Programme Officer UK.

If you decide to leave your course early, you must tell your university. Your university will need to report this to the Home Office, and the Home Office may curtail your visa to 60 days, unless you already have fewer than 60 days remaining on your visa. You must leave the UK or make a new immigration application within this time. The Home Office will send the curtailment letter to your address, which will tell you when you must leave the UK. For this reason, it is important to always ensure that the Home Office and your university have your current address. The international student adviser at your university can advise on how to submit a change of address.

27. Further information

Please make sure you read the [guidance on our website](#), including the step-by-step guide. If you still have questions, please email the [welfare and immigration team](#) with copies of relevant documents.

28. Glossary

Glossary	
90-day vignette	After you have made a successful visa application you will get a '90-day vignette', which is a sticker in your passport, valid for 90 days to allow you to travel to the UK.
Alternative Collection Location (ACL)	Some universities have an ACL code and if you use this code in your online visa application you will be able to pick up your BRP at your institution rather than at a local post office.
Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS)	This is a certificate issued by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), which gives you security clearance to study certain subject areas. Your CAS will indicate whether you need an ATAS certificate.
Biometric data	You'll be asked to provide your fingerprints and photo as part of the visa process, and this is your biometric data.
Biometric Residence Permit (BRP)	A credit card sized permit that contains your personal details, including your biometric data and your permission to be in the UK. This becomes your visa.
Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies (CAS)	An electronic reference number provided by your university which you need for your visa application.
Entry clearance	Also known as a visa when applying from outside the UK
Entry clearance officer (ECO)	A UKVI employee who reviews your visa application and makes a decision.
Final Award Letter (FAL)	An official letter which confirms your scholarship and sets out the financial arrangements of your award. You will receive this from the British embassy or high commission in your country.
Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)	The UK government department which funds Chevening Awards.
Full Award	If you're in receipt of a full scholarship this means that your tuition fees are paid and you receive a monthly allowance. Please refer to your Final Award Letter for further details.
Higher Education Provider (HEP)	This is the collective terminology for universities and other institutions that provide forms of higher education in England, used by the Office for Students.
Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS)	A payment made at the time of your visa application allowing you to access the UK's National Health Service (NHS). This is paid for you by the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office.
Part Award	If you're in receipt of a partial scholarship this means that you may need to make a financial contribution towards your tuition fees, and you may be required to support yourself financially if you're not in receipt of a stipend. Please refer to your Final Award Letter for further details.

POUK	Programme Officer UK – your point of contact during your Chevening award.
Sponsor	Your university is the sponsor of your Student visa. The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office is your financial sponsor.
TLS contact	One of the commercial partners of UKVI providing services to people applying for visas for the UK. They often manage the visa application centres but are not involved in any of the decision making.
UKCISA	UK Council for International Student Affairs is the UK's national advisory body serving the interests of international students. It provides extensive online guidance for students coming to the UK.
UKVI	Part of the Home Office, the UK government department that makes decisions about visa applications.
VFS	One of the commercial partners of UKVI providing services to people applying for visas for the UK. They often manage the visa application centres but are not involved in any of the decision making.
Visa	A vignette in your passport giving you permission to enter the UK, once you are in the UK and have collected your Biometric Residence Permit, this becomes your visa.
Visa Application Centre (VAC)	Where you submit your visa application and documents in person and have your biometrics taken, often run by a commercial partner.

DISCLAIMER: Whilst every effort is made to ensure this guide is up to date, UKVI changes visa rules and regulations frequently. The information in this document is correct as of 07/06/2023.