

Guide to completing ATAS application online.

When you begin your ATAS application please select University College London from the drop-down menu. Your ATAS certificate must be linked to the University College London for the certificate to be valid for a visa application or to start your course of study or postgraduate research.

From 2021, the ATAS application will ask you to declare whether you are a student, or a researcher and your selection will determine the questions you are asked and the clearance you obtain.

Postgraduate research students, including visiting research students, must apply for student ATAS clearance.

What is ATAS?

The Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) applies to all international students (apart from exempt nationalities) who are subject to UK immigration control and intend to study at the postgraduate level in certain sensitive subjects. The subjects are those where students' knowledge could be used in programmes to develop Advanced Conventional Military Technology (ACMT), weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), or their means of delivery. These students must apply for an Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS) certificate before they can study in the UK.

How do I know if I need ATAS?

All UCL students who require ATAS will be notified in their UCL offer letter.

Exempt nationalities

Students who are nationals of EU countries, the European Economic Area (EEA), Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea, Switzerland, or the United States of America do not need an ATAS certificate.

The requirement for an ATAS certificate applies to all other students irrespective of the country of residence when they apply.

How do I apply for ATAS?

You will need to apply on the ATAS webpage - <https://www.academic-technology-approval.service.gov.uk/>

How much does ATAS cost?

The ATAS application is free.

New students

If you're a new student and need an ATAS certificate, you will need to get this before applying for permission to enter the UK.

When you have received your offer from your university you should apply 6 months before your course will start.

An ATAS certificate is valid for 6 months from the date it is issued, to enable applicants time to apply for their visa.

You should apply for your ATAS certificate as early as possible from when you have received a conditional offer to study at a UK Higher Education Institution (HEI).

Make sure your ATAS certificate will not expire before you apply for your UK visa.

Continuing students

Continuing the same programme

If you are already in the UK on a student visa and you need to extend this visa to complete the same programme of study, you will need to obtain a new ATAS certificate- if your previous ATAS certificate is no longer valid.

We would recommend applying for your new ATAS 4 months before your current visa expiry.

You can use the same ATAS statement (about your course/modules/area of research) that was in your original UCL offer letter, provided this information is still applicable and your area of research has not changed.

If your research has changed you will need to liaise with your department / supervisor to obtain a new ATAS letter from UCL before you apply for your ATAS certificate.

You have applied for a programme change & your new course requires ATAS

If you are a currently enrolled UCL student and you are applying for an ATAS for the first time (i.e., you have applied for a programme change and your new course requires an ATAS certificate) and you are unsure about your modules please contact your programme administrator.

On the ATAS application form you cannot put a course start date in the past- if you are continuing the same programme you can put the next working day on the application.

ATAS processing times

ATAS takes at least 30 working days to process

For new students the processing time can take up to 6 months – therefore it is recommended new students apply for ATAS once they receive the conditional offer letter from UCL and no earlier than 6 months before the start date of the programme.

For continuing students the processing times can take up to 4 months therefore it is recommended you apply for ATAS 4 months before your intended visa application date

If you have been waiting for an ATAS decision for more than 4 months, or you are inside the UK and your visa is due to expire, please contact Visa Advice via [ASKUCL](#) with your ATAS reference number + expected decision date and we will follow this up with the ATAS team.

I am having problems registering on the ATAS website –

Try registering online from a different computer (e.g., in a place of work or education) or with a new login email address. Alternatively, try using a different web browser; the ATAS website works best in Google Chrome and Internet Explorer version 5 and above. The ATAS Team have reported that students using email servers 126.com, 163.com, sina.cn and qq.com may have difficulty receiving messages from them and recommend the use of Yahoo, Gmail, Hotmail or similar commercial email providers, if possible.

What is my CAH3 code?

Your CAH3 code will be on your UCL offer letter.

If you are a continuing student who has changed programme and your new programme requires ATAS, please contact your departmental administrator for information relating to your modules and CAH3 code required for the ATAS application.

What if I have multiple CAH3 codes?

Locate the CAH3 code relating to the programme that requires ATAS and submit using that code only. You only need to submit one ATAS application, so if you have multiple CAH3 codes that require ATAS, you only need to submit against one.

I will be applying for a new passport soon, should I apply for ATAS clearance now or with my new passport details?

As your ATAS application is linked to your passport, if you plan to obtain a new passport before applying for your visa you should wait until you have your new passport before applying for ATAS clearance

I don't know what modules I'll be studying

Your UCL offer letter should contain the module list you will need for the ATAS application.

I don't know who my supervisor is – where can I get this information?

If you are unaware of who your supervisor is, please put down the information of the programme director for your course. If you are unsure who that is, please contact your academic department.

I'm a PhD student but I don't have a statement of research - where can I get this?

PhD students will also need to enter some information about their proposed area of research. This should be at least 5 lines in length and agreed with your PhD supervisor in writing (by email is fine) - it should also be listed on your offer letter, in the project title and project description section, and can be copied and pasted into your ATAS application form.

What if I change my research topic or course?

An ATAS certificate is issued for a specific programme with a named university and remains valid if the university and/or course details do not change. If you already have an ATAS certificate you will need to apply for a new one if:

- Your course details change, including the course length
- The area of research or modules change
- You move to another institution
- You need to extend your visa

Is my programme a joint programme with another country?

If your course includes a year abroad, but your degree will only be awarded by the University College London, then you should answer "No". If your course includes study in two different countries and will either be jointly awarded by the UCL and another institution, or awarded solely by another institution, then you should answer "Yes".

What education history do I need to provide?

In the "Undergraduate / Postgraduate studies" section, the form will ask you whether you have "undertaken any undergraduate or postgraduate studies". We would advise to provide details of all studies undertaken since leaving school including undergraduate and (if applicable) any postgraduate studies such as masters and PhD- whether they are completed or still being obtained. If you are in the middle of your studies, please include the anticipated end date of your programme.

How should I complete the 'Employment' section if I have never been employed?

You are required to provide details of employment since you left school that include any paid work and any long-term voluntary (i.e. unpaid) work. You do not need to provide information about temporary jobs you have done during university vacations. If you have not undertaken any employment as mentioned above, select "No" in this section

Who should I use as referees?

The ATAS guidance states that you need to provide the "full names and contact details of 2 referees (First name(s) and Family name). You must have known both of your referees for at least 3 years. At

least one must also be an academic from your country of origin.” The FCDO does not require that your referees must be able to speak English.

What should I do if my referees are not based in my home country?

If you are unable to provide referees from your home country because you have completed your education in another country, this should not be an issue. In such a situation, please provide two referees from your most recent studies.

How should I complete the ‘Sponsors’ section?

This section is about any financial sponsorship or financial support that you have for your studies and living costs.

This may be an organisation or the name of a person. Where you are asked for the sponsor’s name and you are self-funded, write your own name and address.

The form asks if there are any “conditions of your offer”. An example of a condition of your offer could be that you are required to return overseas after completion of course, or you must provide regular reports about your progress. If you have more than one financial sponsor, make sure you include them all in this section

I have applied for ATAS clearance using the wrong passport/CAH3 Code but do not yet have my ATAS Certificate – what should I do?

ATAS will not make any changes to issued certificate – if your passport number or CAH3 code is incorrect you must reapply for ATAS. If you are inside the UK and your visa is due to expire please contact the Immigration Advice team for further clarification.

Submission

When all the sections are marked “complete”, then you can submit your application. Check your answers carefully before submission as it is not possible to edit them later. If the ATAS team need to contact you for further information then they will do so via email and ask you to log back into your account to provide further information in the relevant section

How will I know if my ATAS application has been successful?

If your application is successful, you should receive an email from ATAS with the attached ATAS certificate to the email address that you used to register. You should check your spam or junk folders regularly to ensure the email has not been filtered out. You must read your ATAS certificate carefully to check that the details on it are correct; if any information in the certificate is incorrect, please contact the Visa Advice team via [ASKUCL](#) for advice.

What if my ATAS application is refused?

Please contact [ASKUCL](#) for guidance.

What information do I need for the ATAS application?

Proposed study	Information on your course start & end date, your CAH3 code, the qualification you will receive – this information will all be available in your UCL offer letter
Personal details	Your name and personal information including passport details
Contact details	Your contact email and house address and your phone number
Previous studies	Information relating to previous undergraduate and postgraduate study if applicable. Course start/end dates, location of previous study and a brief description of your previous studies.
Other studies	This section is about your previous study at colleges or institutions other than university. This includes any formal professional training you have undertaken. You do not need to include your studies at school (up to the age of 18).
Published papers	This section is about any academic or professional papers you have published.
	This section is about your employment. This includes any paid work you have done and any long-term voluntary (i.e., unpaid) work since you left school. You do not need to disclose temporary jobs you have done during university vacations.
Referees	This section is about the people who will be providing references for your application. You must have known your referees for at least 3 years. You need to provide details of at least 2 referees before you submit your application and at least one of them must be an academic from your country of origin.
Sponsors	This section is about the people who will be sponsoring your study in the UK.