



International Student Advice Team
Student Centre
visaadvice@city.ac.uk
020 7040 7040

Immigration health surcharge – important information for Tier 4 applicants

(Updated in October 2020)

Students making Tier 4 applications for courses longer than 6 months will be liable to pay an Immigration Health surcharge of £470 per year for the maximum length of immigration permission that can be granted, and NOT based on the course dates on CAS. The total surcharge amount for the whole grant of leave will be payable upfront at the time you pay for your visa application.

Why is this being introduced?

The health surcharge payment is not a visa fee. The payment will be collected by the UK Visa and Immigration (UKVI) and will go directly to the National Health Service (NHS) in the UK. This will give those migrants coming to the UK for more than 6 months access to the NHS on the same terms as a permanent UK resident.

What sort of healthcare can I expect?

You will be able to access the same level of healthcare as a permanent UK resident. Most care under the NHS is generally free of charge but you may be charged for some services in the same way as a permanent UK resident (such as dental treatment and prescription charges).

If I take out private healthcare insurance will this mean I don't have to pay the surcharge?

No. The health surcharge is mandatory for anyone coming to study in the UK under Tier 4 for longer than 6 months. If you decide to take out private healthcare insurance this is your own decision and you will still need to pay the surcharge.

How much will I have to pay?

Check how much you'll have to pay before you apply at the link below:
<https://www.immigration-health-surcharge.service.gov.uk/checker/type>

If you have any dependants applying with you, they will be charged the same amount as you.

When and how do I pay the surcharge?

The surcharge is paid as part of your online visa application process. Once you have either paid the immigration health charge you are given a reference number. This reference number starts 'IHS' followed by 9 numbers.

What happens if the charge is required but is not paid or is cancelled?

If the application has been made, and the charge has not been paid, but leave has not yet been granted or refused, the entry clearance officer or caseworker should contact the applicant to request payment. If payment is not made within 7 working days (for entry clearance) or 10 working days (for leave to remain) of the date of request, an entry clearance application will be refused. A leave to remain application will be treated as invalid.

What happens if my visa application is refused?

If your visa application is refused you will automatically be refunded without needing to take any further action. If you are issued with your visa but decide not to travel, the surcharge payment will not be refunded. No partial refund will be made if you decide to leave the UK before your visa expires or where UKVI bring forward the end date of your visa (for example because you are withdrawn from your course).

What if I never need to use the NHS during my time in the UK? Can I get a refund?

No. The surcharge payment is not refunded if you don't use the NHS.

Will this mean the visa processing time is extended?

There is no change to the current UKVI customer service standards and processing times. However, if you don't pay the correct surcharge when you make your visa application, your application will be delayed until the correct payment is made.

Please contact the International Student Advice team if have any other questions:

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