

A Guide to Credibility Interviews for Tier 4 Students Applying from Overseas

What is a Credibility Interview?

Credibility interviews are now part of the Tier 4 visa application process. Once you have submitted your visa application you will be called to an interview to answer questions from an Entry Clearance Officer about your prospective studies in the UK. The interview is conducted in English and will take approximately 10-15 minutes.

What is the purpose of the Credibility Interview?

The purpose of the interview is to establish if you genuinely wish to study in the UK and if your declared circumstances are genuine. During the interview you will also be expected to demonstrate that your English Language ability is sufficient to follow your chosen course and level of study.

Who will be interviewed?

All applicants who are applying for a Tier 4 student visa both overseas and inside the UK are likely to be interviewed.

When will the interview take place?

Your interview is likely to take place immediately after you enrol your biometrics at the visa application centre. If you have applied within the UK you may be requested to attend an interview a number of days after enrolling your biometrics.

How will I be interviewed?

It is most likely that you will be interviewed via video-call, however you may also be interviewed in person or on the telephone.

What happens once I have been interviewed?

During the interview the interviewer will write down everything that you say and will send this record to the Entry Clearance Officer (ECO). The ECO will then make a decision on your visa application on the basis of your credibility interview and all the other supporting documents you submitted with your Tier 4 visa application.

You may be called for a second interview if the ECO needs further information and clarification on your situation. You need to be prepared to provide evidence if requested i.e. source of income.

We would recommend you request a transcript of your interview once completed and you also write down everything you can remember from the interview when you have finished. You should keep a record of your interview safe.

You are likely to be asked questions about the following topics:

1. Intention to study questions:

Why do you want to study in the UK?

- *You might want to talk about what you have learnt about the British education system.*
- *Why would you like to live and study in the UK?*
- *How this experience will benefit you.*

What are the benefits of studying in the UK compared to your home country or other countries?

- *What attracts you to the UK?*
- *How would study in the UK differ from studying in your home country?*
- *Why have you chosen the UK over countries such as America and Australia?*

How did you choose which university to study at in the UK?

- *What research did you carry out?*
- *Did you use an agent?*
- *Did you meet a University of Chester member of staff in your home country when you were looking at your options?*
- *Is the course that you are going to study particularly well taught at Chester?*

Which other universities did you consider?

- *Did you look at other options?*
- *Why did you choose University of Chester over other universities?*

2. University of Chester Specific Questions

Where is Chester?

- *It may be useful to take a look at some British websites; do you know where University of Chester is?*

What facilities do you expect there to be at University of Chester?

- *Have a look at our website: www.chester.ac.uk*
- *What attracted you to the city of Chester and the University?*

Why have you chosen to study at University of Chester?

- *You may wish to consider the facilities, the location, the size of the University and the city, the cost of living*

What University campus will you be studying at?

- *The University of Chester has a number of different campus' so you need to be aware of the campus you will be taught at, further information on www.chester.ac.uk*

Why did you choose to study this course and how does it relate to your previous study?

- *What attracted you to study this course?*
- *What do you hope to achieve by studying it?*
- *How will it enhance the subjects that you have already studied?*

How long does your course last?

- Make sure you are aware of your course details, check your offer letter, CAS statement or check the University website: www.chester.ac.uk/international/courses.

How is your course assessed?

- Check the University website: www.chester.ac.uk/international/courses

How will the course you have chosen help you in your chosen career path?

- Is it a necessity to have a qualification in order to follow your career path?
- If not, how will the qualification help you?

Do you know what level your course is?

- Are you studying a Bachelors (BA or BSc), Masters (MA or MSc) or PhD?
- They could also be referring to the NQF level of your course.
- If you will be studying at Bachelors level this would be level 6.
- If you will be studying at Masters level this would be level 7.
- If you will be studying at PhD level this would be level 8.

What qualification will you receive?

- Make sure you are aware of your course details; check your offer letter, CAS statement or check the University website: www.chester.ac.uk/international/courses

Did you consider studying any other course?

- It will be fine to say that you did, but you must then be able to justify what made you decide on your final choice.

3. Post study plans

What are your post-study plans?

- You will need to think about your plans for the future and what you hope to do once you have completed your studies
- If completed your course will help you to obtain a better job, earn a higher salary or start your own business you will be asked to explain in exactly what way this course will help you to do so.

Can you explain any gaps in your years of study or work?

- If there have been periods of time in which you have been working? Why are you now looking to come back to study? Would this study benefit your current profession or enhance your future prospects?
- Also if there has been a gap between your previous course of study, what were you doing in this time and why are you now ready to return to study?

4. Tier 4 visa requirements

Do you understand what your responsibilities will be as a Tier 4 student?

- Take a look to the UKCISA website at the guidance that tells you more about protecting your Tier 4 status www.ukcisa.org.uk/International-Students/Immigration-/Protecting-your-Tier-4-status

Do you know whether you are entitled to work part-time in the UK?

- Take a look at the UKCISA website, which will provide you with information about your future study in the UK. www.ukcisa.org.uk/International-Students/Study-work--more/Working-during-your-studies

How reliant are you on being able to work when you are in the UK?

- Will it be essential for you to work to be able to support yourself during your studies?
- If so your visa application will be harder to approve, remember here to talk about the support that you will be receiving from your parents and/or money that you have saved in order to fund your tuition fees and living costs during your course of study.

5. Financial Questions

Who is financing your studies?

- You or your parents?
- You may be asked to discuss how they are able to do this. Is it affordable to you/them based on your/their annual income?
- Remember documents confirming their financial status will be included with your application. It may be that you have government sponsorship

What is the profession of your financial sponsor and what relationship are they to you?

- You may be asked what job the person who is sponsoring you has, to justify how they can continue to support you in this way.

Do you have evidence of the financial status of your financial sponsor?

- E.g. bank statements for the last 6 months, bonds, investments etc.
- These should have been submitted with your application.

Are you able to verify the genuineness of these documents?

- If the Home Office contact the school, college or bank that produced the documentation submitted would the school, college or bank confirm that they are genuine?
- Do you foresee any issues in the Home Office contacting the institution? If so have a covering letter ready that provides contact details for the institution involved.

Can you prove that this money is available for your study?

- You should already have documentation in the form of bank statements, or your parents' bank statements (with proof of their relationship to you) ready to form a part of your application.
- Are these original documents?
- Will the Home Office be able to contact the bank to verify these statements?

Would you be able to pay your tuition fees in one full amount?

- If not what arrangements have you made to ensure that you can pay at the appropriate times?

Have you checked the University refund policy?

- This may be asked and our refund policy can be found on the back of your offer letter.

Do you know how much accommodation will cost in the UK?

- You can find out more about University accommodation on our website: www.chester.ac.uk/accommodation