



University of
Salford
MANCHESTER



Home Office Compliance Team

Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS)

Frequently asked questions

Do I need to apply for ATAS clearance?

The requirement for you to get an ATAS certificate is determined by the [Common Aggregation Hierarchy](#) code(s) allied to what you are studying and applies to all individuals whose nationality is outside of the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland (irrespective of where you are living at the point of application) who require a time-limited visa or passport entry stamp to enter and remain in the UK. For example, you may be classed as a home student when it comes to paying your fees but if you hold a time-limited visa and are studying on an ATAS related course, then you are required to apply for an ATAS certificate.

The CAH code(s) indicates the type of subject(s) that you will be studying and will be highlighted on your conditional offer letter.

If you wish to find further information about ATAS, or want to determine if your course(s) CAH code is covered by an ATAS requirement, please refer to the GOV.UK website at the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/academic-technology-approval-scheme>

When should I apply for ATAS clearance?

An ATAS clearance certificate is valid for six months from the date of issue by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office. You can apply for an ATAS certificate up to six months in advance of the beginning of your programme or research. For example:

September 2019 intake:

if your programme begins on 23 September 2019, you should not apply for your ATAS clearance certificate until after 23 March 2019.

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November 2019 intake:

if your programme begins on 1 November 2019, you should not apply for your ATAS clearance certificate until after 1 May 2019.

January 2020 intake:

if your programme begins on 27 January 2020, you should not apply for your ATAS clearance certificate until after 27 July 2019.

We strongly recommend that you apply for ATAS clearance as soon as you are able to because it can take approximately 20 working days (four weeks) to process the application. Please be aware that the FCO have confirmed that, during peak times, delays should be expected.

How much does an ATAS certificate cost?

An ATAS application is free and does not cost you anything.

I have obtained ATAS clearance for a different course or University. What do I need to do?

ATAS clearance is specific to the programme of study or research and institution. If you have changed course or university, then you must apply again for ATAS clearance.

Similarly, if you declared an incorrect CAH code in your application you must apply again for ATAS clearance.



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Can I have multiple ATAS applications with the FCO?

You can submit numerous ATAS applications for different courses and for different universities (including Salford) at the same time but each application would need to be made individually.

I applied for ATAS clearance too early / I deferred my start date. What do I need to do?

If more than six months has passed between the date of your ATAS certificate being issued by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the start of your programme of study or research, you will need to make a fresh ATAS application.

What if my ATAS application is refused?

If you receive a notice stating your ATAS application has been refused, please forward the refusal notice to Salford-ATAS@salford.ac.uk.

I have lost my ATAS clearance certificate. What do I need to do?

The University receives a copy of all ATAS clearance certificates so, if you have lost yours, we would advise contacting Salford-ATAS@salford.ac.uk.

What if I change my area of research or programme of study?

An ATAS certificate is issued for a specific programme of study or research with a named provider and remains valid as long as the provider and/or course details, including the length of the course, do not change. You must apply for a new ATAS clearance certificate in any of the following circumstances:

- the course (or research) completion date is postponed for a period of more than three calendar months;

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- there are any changes to the course content (or research proposal). If you are studying a PhD course, this includes changes other than minor variations to the areas of research or to the use of any new research technique;
- you apply for an extension of leave in order to continue on your course;
- you wish to start a new course that requires ATAS clearance;
- you move to another institution; or
- your visa was issued on or after 30 November 2007, and you need further permission to stay in the UK for writing up a thesis.

- **You did not previously require an ATAS certificate**

If you are switching from a programme, or an area of research, which does not require ATAS clearance to one that does (e.g. switching from BEng to MEng), you must have already **received a new ATAS certificate** before you transfer to that new programme or commence with your new area of research.

- **You have already received ATAS clearance for your current course or area of research**

If you are switching from a programme or an area of research which required ATAS clearance to a different one that also requires ATAS clearance, then you will need to have **applied for a new ATAS certificate** before you transfer to that new programme or commence with your new area of research. **Please be advised, in cases where a new visa is required in order to switch programme or area of research, then a new ATAS certificate will need to have been received**, as this may be a requirement in order to obtain your new visa.

If you require any further advice on changing programme of study or research and the implications for ATAS, please contact Salford-ATAS@salford.ac.uk. **Remember, you should not register on the new programme or start the new area of research until after it has been established whether a new ATAS certificate is required.**

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Will I need a new ATAS certificate if I extend my visa for further study?

If the programme of study or research area requires ATAS and you need to extend your visa to continue with your studies, you will need to apply for a new ATAS certificate.

Visiting student or researcher

If you are a visiting non-EEA or Swiss student hoping to undertake modules or research at the University of Salford that have a CAH code(s) requiring an ATAS clearance certificate then you will need to have **received** your ATAS certificate before the University can issue an invitation letter to you to apply for a short-term student visa. If you wish to find further information about ATAS, or want to determine if your module(s) or research CAH code(s) is covered by an ATAS requirement, please refer to the GOV.UK website at the link below:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/academic-technology-approval-scheme>

Doctorate Extension Scheme

You do not need to hold or apply for an ATAS certificate to cover your time spent in the UK on the Doctorate Extension Scheme (DES).

If I have any further questions – what do I do?

If you have any further questions or would like clarification on any point made above please contact us via Salford-ATAS@salford.ac.uk or 0161 295 0023

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