What is Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur?

- Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur (GE) is a UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) initiative under which the University of Bristol can endorse a limited number of entrepreneurs.
- It is designed to encourage students who have genuine and credible viable business ideas and entrepreneurial skills to remain in the UK and establish their businesses in the UK.
- It is a one year visa, with the possibility of extending for a further year subject to progress.
- The team at the Careers Service (http://www.bristol.ac.uk/careers/student-enterprise/) is working together with Student Visa Services to assess potential candidates and endorse those who are successful.
- You are permitted to work, but this should not affect your ability to carry out the business development tasks as outlined in the endorsement letter and defined in the first point above.
- You cannot have a business engaged in property development or property management, work as doctor/dentist in training, or professional sports person.
- You can study, but a condition of the visa is if the course requires ATAS, you hold an ATAS certificate.

How can you start the process?

- If you are interested in applying for the Tier 1 GE visa, you should first arrange a consultation with the team in the Careers Service to discuss your business idea. Email: careers-basecamp@bristol.ac.uk
- Following communications and consultations with the Careers Service, you will need to submit a full business plan (via email to careers-basecamp@bristol.ac.uk) to the team for the first round of judging.
- If your business plan is successful at this stage, you will be given the opportunity to come and pitch to our panel one month later. We will notify you by email.

When can you be endorsed?

- There are two opportunities to be endorsed every year (following presentation of your business plan to panel) June and December.
- You can present to panel before you have been awarded your qualification, although you cannot be endorsed and apply for the GE visa until after you have been awarded your qualification.
- Student visa advisers will ensure you have been awarded your degree at the relevant exam board in July/December and issue the appropriate documents to support you in applying for the visa.
- You can apply up to 6 months after graduation if you have left the UK (you can present to panel by Skype), and up to 1 year after graduation (if you are still in the UK).

Key dates - 2017:

- Friday 5 May - deadline for submission of business plans with the panel on Monday 5 June.
- Friday 27 October - deadline for submission of business plans with the panel on Monday 4 December.
What are the University requirements?

- You must have signed a Student Declaration form declaring that you will act in accordance with the Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur visa rules and policy.
- You must have signed a Student Consent form confirming your details and confirming your consent to the disclosure of the information to the UKVI and consenting to the University of Bristol monitoring your progress in your business.
- You must maintain regular contact with the Careers Service regarding the progress of your business. You must complete and return a quarterly monitoring form. These will be sent by email, once you have secured your visa, in February, May, August and November. These will be sent to the Careers Service for confirmation of regular contact with them.

What are the visa requirements?

- You must be a non-EEA national.
- You must have been awarded a bachelor’s degree/master’s degree or PhD from the University of Bristol.
- You must have a signed endorsement letter with unique reference number issued by Student Visa Services.
- You must show evidence that you have held at least £945 in your bank account every day for a consecutive 90 day period (or £1890 if you apply from overseas).
- If applicable, you must have a Police registration certificate. This must be up to date with your current address/visa.
- If you have received sponsorship from your government or an international scholarship agency in the 12 months before you apply for GE, you will require a letter of consent from them to confirm they agree to you making the GE application, and to you remaining in the UK.
- You must pay a visa fee - £465 if you are applying inside the UK or £342 if you are applying outside the UK.
- You must pay £200 for the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS).
- You will also need to submit your passport and 2 new passport sized photographs with your visa application.

Applying for the visa

In the UK

- You can switch from a Tier 4 visa to the Tier 1 GE visa in the UK.
- Download, print and complete a paper application form: https://www.gov.uk/tier-1-graduate-entrepreneur-visa/switch-to-this-visa
- Pay the IHS fee online. You will then be given an IHS reference number to include in your application.
- Pay the visa fee. We strongly recommend that you obtain a postal order from the Post Office to pay your visa fee. This is to avoid visa rejections if your payment by bank card is not accepted. Please go to the Post Office and follow the instructions on the visa application form regarding this payment.
- You can submit your application form and supporting documents to Student Visa Services who will be able to send your application to the UKVI for you. You MUST have a postal order to pay your visa fee if you wish the University to send your application for you.

Outside the UK

- Apply online, pay your visa fee and IHS fee online as part of the application: https://www.gov.uk/tier-1-graduate-entrepreneur-visa/apply

For full details and to check up to date information, please see web and policy guidance:

- UKVI Tier 1 GE information https://www.gov.uk/tier-1-graduate-entrepreneur-visa/overview
- For queries about visa requirements or applying for the visa contact student-visa-advice@bris.ac.uk