

AUB's Start-Up visa guidance 2021

NOTE: All dates are subject to change

The Start-Up visa route is for first-time entrepreneurs who want to live in the UK, but require a visa to do so, and who have an innovative and viable business idea. You need an endorsement from an authorised endorsing body before you apply for your visa; this document explains how you can apply for an endorsement from AUB.

If you are successful, endorsement is for a two-year period with no option to renew.

Who Is Eligible

To be eligible for a Start-Up endorsement, you must be an early stage entrepreneur.

If you have previously started a business in the UK or have had leave in the Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) category, you are not eligible to apply.

AUB currently prioritises own graduates and those associated with the University for endorsement.

Endorsements

We have a limited number of endorsements available each year; awarded to those who have genuine and credible business ideas and the entrepreneurial skills to establish the business in the UK. We base our endorsement decisions on four main points:

- meeting the general criteria for the visa
- the nature of your business
- the quality of your business plan submission
- your presentation to a panel

The panel members are:

Jon Renyard – University Secretary (Chair of Panel)
Daniel Cox – Knowledge Exchange Manager
Lucy Devall – Innovation Manager
AC Forscutt – Compliance Officer

You can read more about the requirements for endorsement in Appendices B and C, and [Appendix Start-Up](#) of the Immigration Rules.

Our Application and Selection Process

The full details of our application and selection process are set out in Appendix A. The key dates for the process are as follows:

28th May 2021: Deadline for expression of interest – email your completed [Expression of Interest form](#) to Tier1@aub.ac.uk by midnight. We will use the information you submit on this form to decide if your proposal meets the basic criteria for a Start-Up visa and will tell you by mid-June whether we will consider your business idea further or not.

Panel members will be available for one on one sessions between the 14th June and the end of July to support those who have progressed to this stage. Initially, you can book one session with each of the panel members (excluding the Chair), further sessions may be agreed directly

with the relevant panel member. Details on how to book will be sent directly to relevant applicants.

30th July 2021: Business plan submission – you must send your business plan to Tier1@aub.ac.uk by midnight on Friday the 30th July. We will tell you if you have progressed to the presentation stage by the 13th August 2021.

W/C 23rd August 2021: Presentations – this is the final stage of the submission process; you will have 15 minutes to present your idea for the panel. We will tell you if your endorsement application has been successful or if we have any suggestions for improvement of your business plan within ten working days.

Please note: the application and selection process may be subject to change for reasons outside the Arts University Bournemouth's control. For example, if the Home Office change the Immigration Rules, requirements for the scheme or requirements of the endorsing body.

All the above dates are subject to change; any notifications of changes will be communicated to all relevant applicants.

Visa Information

If we tell you that we will endorse your business, we will send you a letter with an endorsement code to support your visa application. You must apply for your visa within three months of the date of this letter.

AUB have produced a summary of the visa application process and visa requirements; please see Appendix B. In addition, please ensure you read [Appendix Start-Up](#) of the Immigration Rules for full details.

Post-Endorsement

If your application for endorsement is successful, we are required to maintain contact with you regularly. The purpose of this is to make sure that you make progress in establishing your business and that you spend the majority of your time on your business venture.

You have to keep us informed of progress with your visa application and important business developments by email to Tier1@aub.ac.uk. We will arrange six-monthly contact points with you; any face-to-face meetings will take place at AUB. The purpose of these contact points is to ensure your business is progressing well and to have a formal record of progress for your file. If you do not attend any arranged meetings as agreed; fail to provide information at arranged contact points and/or fail to keep us informed of developments, or if your business is not progressing as required, we may withdraw our visa endorsement and you will have to leave the UK.

Appendix A – Arts University Bournemouth Start-Up Application Process

Step 1: Declaring an Interest

Please email your completed Expression of Interest form to Tier1@aub.ac.uk by midnight on the 28th May 2021.

Step 2: Business Development Support

As a graduate or student approaching graduation we expect you to be able to independently research, develop, prepare and write a business plan and present your proposal to a selection panel.

If, following your expression of interest, we tell you that your business idea is strong enough to move to the next stage, we strongly recommend that you speak with AUB's [Careers and Employability Service](#) for support with developing and presenting your business idea and/or book a one on one session with panel members when invited. Information provided and opinions expressed by any panel member at this stage is for guidance only and is in no way confirmation that we will accept your proposal.

Step 3: Submitting the Business Plan

You must submit a detailed business plan to Tier1@aub.ac.uk no later than midnight on the 30th July 2021.

Your plan needs to be professional, detailed and demonstrate how you meet the selection criteria (Appendix C). The main part of your Business Plan must be no more than 15 pages. The Business Plan will also be stored on your record for Home Office auditing purposes.

When creating your business plan, you should bear in mind that we have a limited number of endorsements, and can only support the best applications. Getting it right, or almost right, first time is important.

Step 4: Initial Assessment

The panel will use your business plan to decide if your proposal meets the criteria for endorsement; if it does, we will invite you to present your idea to us. We will tell you if you have been successful as soon as possible but no later than the 13th August 2021. Successful applicants will be required to present their proposal the week commencing the 23rd August; we will send you further details nearer the time.

We make our selections by assessing the likelihood of an endorsement and the innovative nature of the business idea.

Step 5: Presenting the Business Venture

You will have 15 minutes to present your business venture to the panel, using the method you feel most appropriate. At the end of the presentation, the panel members will have the opportunity (approx. 20 minutes) to ask you questions and discuss any areas of your business venture in more depth.

Depending on the nature of the business, the panel may ask additional AUB staff members to provide their expertise in an area of business, either in reviewing or in providing feedback on

the business plan to the panel or being an additional member of the panel. We will tell you in advance if there will be additional panel members present during your presentation.

Step 6: Outcome and Endorsements

Following your presentation, the panel members will take some time to decide whether we can endorse your business or if there are any areas for improvement. We will not be able to give you the outcome of your application immediately, but will email you our feedback within ten working days. The judgement of the panel is final and there is no appeals process.

Depending on the number of applications received, AUB may not be able to endorse all business proposals that meet the criteria. If this is the case, the panel will decide on the most appropriate businesses to endorse based on innovation and likelihood to succeed.

Step 7: Visa Application

If we decide to endorse your business, we will ask you to sign an Endorsement Confirmation (we have included an example as Appendix D) and then provide you with an Endorsement Letter to support your visa application.

The visa application can take up to eight weeks. You must keep us up to date with relevant developments regarding your visa application, and [email us](#) as soon as you know the outcome of your application.

Step 8: Agreeing Regular Contact Points

As a condition of your endorsement, you are required to agree to regular contact points. We will organise these and confirm the details with you. Contact reports and/or meeting notes will be added to your file and shared with the Home Office if required.

If we decide that your business is not progressing satisfactorily or feel that you are not spending the majority of your time on the business, we will discuss this with you and give you time to put it right. We will withdraw our endorsement if you do not take the appropriate action.

We have to inform the Home Office if you fail to comply with contact points or attend arranged meetings and they can decide to curtail your visa, meaning that you have to leave the UK.

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Arts University Bournemouth reserve the right to reject any proposal at any stage of this process by assessing the likelihood of an endorsement and the innovative nature of the business idea.

Appendix B - Start-Up Visa

General Visa Information

You can apply for a Start-Up visa if you have a confirmed endorsement from an endorsing body such as AUB.

You can't apply for a Start-Up visa if you've already had a visa as part of the Post Study Work; Fresh Talent: Working in Scotland Scheme; International Graduates Scheme; Science and Engineering Graduate Scheme or more than one year under the Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) visa **OR** if you have previously started a business in the UK.

The Start-Up visa is subject to the UK Immigration Rules and you have to meet certain requirements:

- You must be at least 18 years old
- You must have an Endorsement Letter confirming that it is your intention to start a business in the UK and that the business meets the general criteria of the visa route
- Your English level must be at CEFR¹ B2 or above; this requirement can be met by being from a [majority English speaking country](#), having a degree taught in English, having passed a SELT² or had certain types of visas previously
- You must be able to support yourself financially

For full details of the requirements, please refer to [Appendix Start-Up](#) of the Immigration Rules.

You can bring dependants to the UK with you. Dependants must apply using the dependant's application form. Please read clauses SU13 to SU22 of [Appendix Start-Up](#) for further information.

You cannot gain access to public funds, work as doctor or dentist, professional sportsperson (or coach) or settle in the UK.

How to Apply

The visa application is fully online.

If you are applying from outside the UK, you have to submit your application [here](#) and then attend a [visa application centre](#) to have your fingerprints and photograph taken. You will receive a biometric residence permit (BRP); you have to collect this within 10 days of when you said you would arrive in the UK, even if you actually arrive later (at the time of publishing this information a concession to this rule is in place due to Covid-19; visa holders arriving in the UK are allowed longer to collect their BRP to ensure they can comply with any quarantining rules).

If you are currently in the UK on any Tier 2, a Tier 4 (General) visa, a Student Route or Graduate Route visa, you can [switch](#) to the Start-Up visa. You will have to attend a [UKVCAS centre](#) to have your fingerprints and photograph taken. They can also scan your documents if you are unable to upload them yourself. You must not leave the Common Travel Area (UK, Ireland, the Channel Islands and Isle of Man) until you receive your decision, doing so would automatically cancel your application.

Before you apply, please read [Appendix Start-Up](#) of the Immigration Rules.

¹ Common European Framework for Language and Learning

² Secure English Language Test

Supporting Documents

When you submit your application, you must provide the following:

- Your Endorsement Letter
- A current passport or other valid travel identification
- Bank statements showing you've had at least £945 in savings in your bank account for **90 consecutive days** before you apply
- [Tuberculosis test results](#) if you're from a country where you have to take the test
- Proof that you have [knowledge of the English language](#)

There must be a blank page in your passport on which to put the vignette to allow you to travel to the UK.



You will not be able to use your parent(s) or guardian(s) bank statements, any documents evidencing funds must be in your name.

For Start-Up, there are no 'low-risk' nationalities. Every applicant must submit all the required documentation.

Length of Stay

Leave is granted for two years and cannot be extended. At the end of two years, you could switch into the [Innovator route](#).

Throughout your endorsement, you will be required to remain in contact with AUB and attend any meetings as requested.

Processing Times and Cost

Visa processing times in the UK is up to eight weeks and overseas normally three weeks. You can check processing times [here](#). The cost of the visa is³:

- Applying inside the UK (switching visa) - £493
- Applying outside the UK (Entry Clearance) - £363

³ As of the 6th April 2021 (subject to change)

Appendix C - AUB Start-Up Visa Selection Criteria

You must demonstrate to the panel that you have a genuine and credible business idea; the entrepreneurial skills to develop a business and that you will spend the majority of your working time on your business venture. We will assess your proposal against the following three key criteria:

Innovation	Viability	Scalability
Does the applicant have a genuine, original business plan that meets new or existing market needs and/or creates a competitive advantage?	Does the applicant have, or are they actively developing, the necessary skills, knowledge, experience and market awareness to successfully run the business?	Is there evidence of structured planning and of potential for job creation and growth into national markets? ⁴

To decide what makes a good business proposal we will also consider the following questions:

1. Does the applicant have realistic, sustainable goals?
2. Is the product/service well defined with evidence of market research and an achievable market?
3. Is the business bringing something different to the UK market, creating or meeting a need that is not already being fulfilled?
4. Does the applicant have the required source of money to start a business and is this money from a credible source?
5. Has a Cash Flow and Profit and Loss account been included with the business plan and is it realistic?

We will not consider supporting any business where we have not answered YES to each of these questions.

Your proposal must be for a business, as defined by the UK Home Office guidelines:

- i) Sole Trader
- ii) Partnership
- iii) Company Registered in the UK.

Please note that it is not sufficient that the role could be described as sole trader – the job role must be classified/eligible for self-employment by HMRC.

⁴ In relation to scalability, we are looking for evidence that the business has the potential to grow over time and that this may lead to job creation. Any job creation does not have to happen within the two-year endorsement period, but should form part of your long term plan for the business

Appendix D – DRAFT Endorsement Confirmation

Full name:

Student ID number:

Business name:

Conditions of Endorsement

1. On receipt of your visa, you must provide a copy to Arts University Bournemouth.
2. You must provide Arts University Bournemouth with information as requested in order for us to properly monitor your business and its progress.
3. You must respond promptly, and within the time limits set, to all reporting requests and attend any meetings set in order for Arts University Bournemouth to monitor your business and its progress. You are expected to demonstrate progress in establishing your business, and evidence that you continue to spend the majority of your working time conducting your business.
4. Your endorsement may be withdrawn if you fail to submit a report, attend a meeting, provide Arts University Bournemouth with sufficient information relating to the business, and/or fail to demonstrate that you continue to spend the majority of time on your business.
5. You must inform Arts University Bournemouth of your trading name and confirmation of registration of the company (if you are operating as a limited company).
6. You must inform the Arts University Bournemouth immediately if your circumstances change, and you are no longer spending the majority of your time working on your business.
7. You must inform the Arts University Bournemouth of any change of address immediately (within five working days).

I agree and accept the above conditions for receiving an endorsement for a Start-Up visa. I understand that if I fail to comply with any of the requirements listed or if, following a report submission or meeting, the University is unsatisfied with the progress of my business or believe I am breaching the conditions of my visa the University may decide to withdraw the endorsement, and report to the Home Office. I understand that any report to the Home Office may result in a curtailment/cancellation of my visa.

I confirm that I have read [AUB's Start-Up guidance](#), [Appendix Start-Up](#) of the Immigration Rules and [AUB's privacy notice](#).

I hereby irrevocably consent to Arts University Bournemouth:

- monitoring my progress in establishing a business
- creating and holding a Graduate Entrepreneur file on me and my business
- using the information held within this file to comply with their obligations to the Home Office as an endorsing institution, including making disclosures of my personal and business information available to the Home Office or other Government Departments and Enforcement Agencies as required by law

Signature:

Date:

Appendix D cont'd

In order for us to contact you and fulfil our legal obligations as your endorsing institution, please provide the following details:

Your address in the UK (if known):	
Your personal email address (please provide a non-AUB email address for us to contact you on):	
Your mobile number:	

If these details change at any point during your endorsement period, you must inform us as soon as possible and within five working days.

Please send a copy of your passport, your current/most recent BRP and a copy of your degree certificate to Tier1@aub.ac.uk. If you are unable to send any of these documents to us, please explain why:

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Do you intend to bring any dependants with you to the UK? YES / NO

If YES, please provide details below AND send us a copy of their passport(s):

Dependant(s) name(s):	
Dependant(s) date of birth:	

Appendix D cont'd

Social Media consent form

Your Name	
Your Instagram handle	
Other social media accounts (please include your handle for each as necessary)	

The social media account @aubentrepreneurs is a collaboration between the Knowledge Exchange, Careers and Compliance teams at AUB. It will highlight AUB graduates with their own business and help increase the visibility of the Start-Up visa route.

We would very much like to feature your work on the account and ask that you complete the form below and return it to Tier1@aub.ac.uk.

There is no requirement for you to agree to any of the points below. If you give consent now and at any time in the future wish to withdraw or limit your consent, please email us on Tier1@aub.ac.uk.

This form will be held as part of your Start-Up visa file.

Consent information (please complete):	
<p><i>I give permission as follows:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> For my social media posts to be reposted <input type="checkbox"/> For photographs and videos of my work to be posted <input type="checkbox"/> For my photograph and my name to be posted <input type="checkbox"/> For all types of posts to include details of my social media account <p><i>Please tick as required. If you have any comments, please include these below:</i></p>	
Your signature:	Date:

You can read more about your rights under the General Data Protection Regulations on ico.org.uk