



Credibility Interviews

Advice from the VISA Team

What is a Credibility Interview?

Credibility interviews assess your genuine desire to study in the UK and English language ability.

You may be asked to undertake an interview with an Entry Clearance Officer as part of your visa application. If you are called for an interview, this will take place when you are called to submit your biometric information (fingerprints). If you fail to attend, your visa application will likely be refused.

Will I have to attend an interview?

If you are applying for a Tier 4 (General) visa from overseas you should expect to receive a short credibility interview.

If you are applying for a Tier 4 (General) visa from the UK, you may be required to attend an interview as the Home Office need further information to make a decision on your visa application:

- To explain any differences between the supporting documents you have provided and your visa application form
- To allow the caseworker to assess whether academic progression requirement is met, and matches your career plans, if you previously studied a course at the same level as the new course.

At the interview you will be expected to provide reasons for choosing to study at GCU. The caseworker may consider the level of both courses, the subject matter of the new and previous courses; your education history; your reason for wishing to study the new course and whether the justification statement sufficiently explains why you are applying to study a course at the same level.

How will the interview be conducted?

If you are overseas, the interview will take place at a Visa Application Centre (VAC) as stated on the Home Office's letter.

The interview will be conducted in English and test your ability to communicate in English. If you have issues hearing them clearly, raise this so they are aware as it may be a technical issue and not one of understanding.

The interview will normally last for 30 minutes and conducted via video link (similar to Skype) with a Home Office member of staff in Sheffield, UK. The report from the interview will then be sent to the allocated visa officer who will consider it alongside your visa application.

You can request a copy of your interview transcript and we recommend that all students do this.

It is unlikely you will be asked back for a second interview. If you are, this is probably because the interviewer has more questions regarding something you said during your first interview. A second interview is your last chance to show the interviewer that you are a genuine student. Make sure you prepare well and can answer the questions fully.

What will I be asked at the interview?

The Home Office will ask questions about your career and previous studies, your family background and immigration history, your studies you are planning to undertake in the UK and why you chose to study on your chosen course at Glasgow Caledonian University. They will also ask how you intend to fund your studies in the UK and how the successful completion of your course fits into your future career plans.

There are no set questions, however from the feedback we have received here are common types of questions:

Why are you studying at GCU?

Think about why you chose the UK rather than your home country, another English-speaking country or country which other students of your nationality choose to study in.

If the costs of studying your course are higher in the UK than in your home country, you could be asked why and how you are planning to pay the extra costs in the UK? Think about the advantages that a degree from the UK might give you and why you and/or your family are prepared to make this investment. In addition, consider if you made a realistic assessment of all the costs involved and how you plan to pay for them. These costs include accommodation and costs of living. If your family are supporting you, do you have supporting documentation to prove this, if requested?

Why have you chosen your GCU course? There may be many courses in the same subject area as the one you plan to study at GCU. What is special about the GCU course and why do you prefer it over other courses at other institutions? Think about how you came to this decision. Did you apply for other courses - why did you choose GCU over them? As you have taken time to choose the university based on your career plans, this should be easy to talk about.

If you have previously studied in the UK why have you chosen to return, or continue to study in the UK?

Think about how the new course relates to previous studies and how it might build on your previous learning and how it will support your career plans.

If you had a break in your studies why are you returning to study at this stage? Think about your decision in the context of your long-term career plans.

How do your studies fit into your career plans? Think about your plans after you graduate - how will the knowledge and skills you gain from your course at GCU help you with the type of work you hope to do? Does your course lead to any professional exemptions or qualifications and are these recognised in your country? Do you know what others graduating from your chosen course have gone on to do? This could mean that you have contacted the university Alumni to find out some more information. The schools should also be able to help you identify the types of roles and organisations that feed into and off the course. If the course you plan to study is at a similar academic level to previous studies, how does it represent academic progression and does it have a career focus?

Have you ever been refused a visa?

All visa refusals and refused entry to the UK must be declared on your visa application. Be clear about why you applied for that visa and the reasons you were refused.

How will you fund your studies?

As part of your application you will have submitted proof of your finances - ensure that you are very clear about the source and availability of these funds, also how you plan to pay for subsequent years fees if your course is more than one year in duration. If you have official financial sponsorship make sure you are aware of the amounts and exactly what is covered. If you have a loan, how will you afford to pay this back? How much will your accommodation cost and are you clear about the cost of living in the UK? If your parent/s is/are sponsoring you and is/are working, be sure to have a letter from their employer denoting their position and salary, as this could be requested.

What are your family's plans? If you have a spouse and/or children, you must also be prepared to answer questions about them, such as whether they will be joining you in the UK and what they will be doing including childcare arrangements.

What are your post-study plans? If you have plans to seek employment in the UK, after your studies, discuss how you investigated the possibility of doing so, and under what visa.

Where will you live? If you will stay in a hotel at the start of your studies, be aware of how to find a place to live.

Support from the VISA Team

The GCU VISA Teams are here to support you through your **Visa and Immigration Student Journey**. Please visit our website or contact us if you have any questions related to Credibility Interviews or your visa application. Visit our website for more information and to access our publications: www.gcu.ac.uk/internationalstudent



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