NIH OxCam students –
Student Immigration requirements for University of Oxford

Do I need a student visa?
Unless you have a passport from a country within the EU/EEA, you will need a Student Visa to study in the UK. Normally, students must apply for the Tier 4 General Student Visa for which the University of Oxford will act as your ‘sponsor’. When you have notified Oxford of your start date here, you will receive a CAS (Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies) number from the Medical Sciences Division’s Graduate School Office. (Please note that if you are only starting at Oxford e.g. in your 3rd year, you only need to apply during the summer preceding this.) You will need the CAS when you submit your visa application. You also need ATAS approval before you can apply for a student visa.

What is ATAS?
ATAS (the Academic Technology Approval Scheme) is a UK government programme to help stop the spread of knowledge and skills that could be used in the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery. The ATAS is specifically designed to ensure that those applying for postgraduate study in certain sensitive subjects do not acquire knowledge that could potentially be used in WMD programmes.

How do I apply for ATAS approval?
As a student in the NIH OxCam programme, you will need an ATAS certificate prior to applying for a student visa, and you can apply for an ATAS up to 6 months in advance of the beginning of your studies. A brief research proposal is required for the application, so your project and supervisor choice should have been defined before you apply. If you plan to start at Oxford, we encourage you to apply for the ATAS certificate as soon as possible (i.e. as soon as you have a research proposal available), as a late application will delay your application for a Tier 4 Student Visa. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) aim to respond to all successfully completed applications within twenty working days – four weeks – but this can take even longer during busy periods and there is no fast track process. You will be given a JACS code (Joint Academic Coding System) and other necessary information in your Oxford offer letter, which you may have already received from the Graduate School Office by email.

ATAS / Foreign and Commonwealth Office: https://www.gov.uk/academic-technology-approval-scheme

I have the ATAS and the CAS, now what?
You will now need to start applying for your student visa. In the US, most applications are processed within a few weeks, but at busy times it is good to allow for more time. You may also need to make an appointment to give your biometric details.

QUESTIONS?
Contacts at Graduate School Office, Medical Sciences Division: Graduate Studies Assistants (Erin Wheeler, Irene Lund and Clare Kilham) (graduate.studies@medsci.ox.ac.uk)
Contact at NDM: Graduate Studies Manager (graduate.studies@ndm.ox.ac.uk)
Central university contact: student.immigration@admin.ox.ac.uk

1. Decide on Oxford supervisor
2. Obtain research proposal
3. Obtain ATAS approval
4. Get a CAS number from the Division
5. Apply for Tier 4 student visa