



QUEEN'S
UNIVERSITY
BELFAST

Studying at Queen's: Study Visa Options

September 2021

This guide provides some basic information about applying for your visa overseas and the different types of visas that are available.

You will require a visa to study in the UK if you are a non-UK or non-Republic of Ireland national

Please note: from the 01 January 2021 if you are an EU/EEA/Swiss national coming to the UK to study and do not hold [EU Settled or Pre-settled Status](#) you will require a visa.



International Student Support
QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST

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This guidance has been produced in good faith by Queen’s University Belfast to help students understand UK immigration procedures and to assist students making an immigration application to study in the UK. This guidance has been written in line with UKVI guidance which may change at any time if there are changes to the UK Immigration Rules. Our guidance has been carefully checked at the time of publication, however it is the responsibility of students to ensure that any immigration application complies with current UK Immigration legislation. Queen’s University Belfast accepts no legal responsibility for the accuracy of this guidance and if there are any discrepancies found between Queen’s University guidance and UKVI guidance, guidance issued by UKVI will take precedence.

STUDENT VISA

Student visa is a category under the UK Immigration Points Based System (PBS). Queen's University has a Sponsor Licence to sponsor Student visas. If you are coming to study in the UK on a main course of study for **more than six months** you must apply for a Student visa. This route can also be used in some instances for students who want to study for less than six months e.g. students coming to study on a pre-session English course or is one of the two visa options for students coming for a Study Abroad programme for one semester. You must score points in different eligibility categories in order to be granted a Student visa. With a Student visa you can normally work in the UK and in *some* instances it may be possible to extend a Student visa without leaving the UK.

Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS)

When you apply for a Student visa you must have a **Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS)** number. This will be issued to you by Queen's once you have met certain conditions including: you must have accepted an unconditional offer of a place to study at Queen's before CAS can be issued; if you have ever studied before in the UK, you must provide additional information about your immigration history; and applicants for postgraduate taught programmes must pay a tuition fee deposit before CAS can be issued.

Your CAS number will be included in your 'CAS Statement'. Your CAS statement will be emailed to you once you have met the conditions and are deemed eligible for a CAS. Depending on your course of study, you will receive your CAS statement from:

- **Queen's University Admissions and Access Service:** cas.info@qub.ac.uk
or
- **Queen's University Global Opportunities Team:** studyabroad@qub.ac.uk

Your CAS statement contains essential information you will need to fill in your Student visa application, including:

- The University's Sponsor Licence number;
- Your course title, course level and course start/end dates
- Details of your course fees and any deposits paid or any scholarships or stipends awarded;
- Details of your entry qualifications ('evidence used to obtain offer' section of CAS) which were used to make the decision to offer you a place.
- **Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS):**
Depending on your nationality, some courses will require you to have an ATAS certificate. Your CAS will state if this is applicable for you. The Admissions and Access Service will also inform you if you need this and provide you with the necessary information to enable you to apply for it. An ATAS certificate is free of charge and takes approximately 30 working days (6 complete weeks) to receive. You must have the certificate before you can apply for your visa therefore you should apply for your ATAS certificate as soon as possible. For further guidance about ATAS go to: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/academic-technology-approval-scheme>

Check your CAS statement carefully and let us know if any information is not accurate. Let us know if you have paid any further course fees since your CAS was issued. We will be able to update this information on your CAS statement before you make your visa application. If you change your mind about your course, or your circumstances change after you make your visa application or after you have arrived in the UK, you must inform International Student Support (ISS) at immigration@qub.ac.uk straight away. ISS will make any necessary reports to UK Visas & Immigration (UKVI) and will also be able to provide you with further immigration advice.

Applying for Permission to Enter the UK Visa (Applying from Overseas)

When you apply for a Student visa **overseas** you are applying for Permission to Enter the UK. You must apply online in the country where you live. **You cannot apply for your visa more than six months before the start date of your course.** You must prepare certain documents for your application such as certificates/transcripts of your academic qualifications and financial evidence to prove that you have sufficient funds to meet the Student visa maintenance requirement. For further guidance about the supporting document requirements please go to: <https://www.gov.uk/student-visa/documents-you-must-provide>

Certain nationalities will also be required to take a tuberculosis (TB) test if they are coming to the UK for more than six months. Visit the UKVI website for further information about TB tests at <https://www.gov.uk/tb-test-visa>.

For further information from UKVI about how to apply for a Student visa, the documents you must provide, and to access the link to the online application form visit <https://www.gov.uk/student-visa>. You should also read the Student and Child Student Guidance at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/points-based-system-student-route> to ensure that your application complies with the UK Immigration Rules.

ISS will also email you guidance on your **Permission to Enter Student Visa Application** shortly after you receive your CAS statement. This guidance will help to ensure that you submit a correct application. Visit the **ISS website** at <https://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/iss/VisasImmigration/> where you can download the Visa Application guide along with guidance on how to fill in your Student visa application form. We also recommend that you use your CAS statement for reference when you are filling in your visa application form.

Find out current visa application fees at <https://www.gov.uk/visa-fees>. If you are going to be in the UK for more than 6 months, you will also be required to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS) at the time of application. Visit <https://www.gov.uk/healthcare-immigration-application/how-much-pay> for further information.

The standard processing time for a Student visa application overseas is three weeks, however this may vary depending on what country you are in. For current visa processing times in your country visit <https://www.gov.uk/visa-processing-times>. You may be invited to a face-to-face visa interview at a local Visa Application Centre (VAC) as part of the application process. If this happens, you must be sure to know lots of details about your course, including information about the modules.

If your visa application is successful, you will receive a 90-day visa 'vignette' in your passport. This will enable you to travel to the UK. Once you have arrived in the UK you must collect your **Biometric Residence Permit (BRP)** from the designated collection point within ten days of your arrival. Your BRP is your full visa. If you want to collect your BRP from Queen's, make sure you enter the Queen's **Alternative Collection Location (ACL) Code 2HE572** in your visa application.

Applying for Student Permission to Stay visa in the UK

If you are currently in the UK holding a Tier 4 (General) or Student visa and you wish to extend this visa to study a new course, in certain circumstances, you will be permitted to make a Student visa application for Permission to Stay from within the UK. **You cannot apply for a Student visa in the UK more than three months before the start date of your course.** Contact ISS at immigration@qub.ac.uk for advice about extending your visa in the UK. If you are eligible to extend your visa in the UK, ISS will assist you with your visa application. If you are currently studying a course at Queen's as a Tier 4 student or Student visa holder and you wish to start a new course of study at Queen's, contact ISS for advice about whether you can make an application in the UK. If you are currently in the UK under a different visa category and you would like to switch into the Student category contact ISS for advice about whether or not this is permitted.

Student Visa Terms & Conditions

When you accept your unconditional offer you will agree to the Queen's University Terms and Conditions for Tier 4 and Student visa, which you can find at www.qub.ac.uk/sites/iss/Filestore/Fileupload,976601,en.pdf. As a Student route sponsor, Queen's University is required by UKVI to carry out certain recording and reporting responsibilities in relation to Student visa holders. These include keeping a record of your passport and visa/immigration documents; keeping an up-to-date record of your contact details in the UK, and keeping a copy of your ATAS certificate (if applicable). Queen's is also obliged to inform UKVI if you defer your studies before arriving in the UK or if you do not arrive on the expected date to start your course. Queen's will monitor your attendance in class for the duration of your course and will inform UKVI if you miss expected contact points, if you change or withdraw from your studies, if you change to another Sponsor or change your visa status, or if you breach any of the conditions of your visa.

Student Visa Dependants

Some Student visa holders may be able to apply to bring a husband or wife, civil partner or any children under 18 with them to the UK as dependants. To be eligible, the Student visa holder must be government-sponsored on a full-time course of study which is longer than six months OR a postgraduate student on a full-time course of study which is nine months or longer. For further information from UKVI about applying as a Student Visa dependant, visit <https://www.gov.uk/student-visa/family-members> or the UKCISA website at <https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Visas-and-Immigration/Dependants>. You can also email ISS at immigration@qub.ac.uk for further advice about bringing your dependants to the UK.

VISITOR STUDY VISA

This is a new visa route option for students who are coming to the UK to study a short programme for **less than six months** (for example on a Study Abroad or Exchange programme) that does not include a work placement or work experience. You are not permitted to work or bring family members (dependants) with you under this route and you cannot extend this visa. You will not require a CAS for this type of visa application but you will need a **Visitor Study Visa letter**. This visa letter will usually be issued to you from the Queen's University Global Opportunities team or International Student Support team. Students are not permitted to switch and apply for a Student visa whilst in the UK as a Visitor study visa holder. If you want to apply for a Student visa, you must return home and apply from the country where you live.

Visa Nationals and Non-Visa Nationals

How and where you apply for a Visitor Study visa will depend whether you are a (A) **Visa national** or a (B) **Non-visa national**.

(A) Visa national

A visa national is a national of a country that is required to apply **in advance of travelling** for a visa to come to the UK for whatever purpose they intend and for any length of time. To check if you require a visa before you travel to the UK visit <https://www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa>.

(B) Non-visa national

A non-visa national is a national of a country (for example USA, Canada, Japan, South Korea and Australia etc.) who may apply in advance for a multiple entry visa to come to the UK **OR** may choose to apply for a Visitor Study single entry immigration permission endorsement (stamp) when they arrive at a UK Port of Entry (i.e. a UK airport). We always recommend that you obtain a visa **before** you travel to the UK to ensure you do not face any travel complications. However, if you do not have enough time to apply for a study visa before you travel, it is acceptable for a non-visa national to apply for this immigration permission at a UK port of entry (i.e. a UK airport). Please read the following important advice:

ePassport Gates

If you are permitted to use an ePassport gate it will be possible for you to use this gate on arrival into a UK airport and receive 6 months Visitor Study immigration permission. Using an ePassport gate will mean that you do not receive a stamp in your passport. Therefore, when you arrive at Queen's University you will need to provide evidence (such as a boarding pass) that will allow us to confirm you passed through a UK airport [ePassport gate](#) on arrival. **You can check if it is possible for you to use an ePassgate [here](#).**

Applying for the Visitor Study Visa

When applying for a Visitor study visa you must ensure that you submit the required supporting documents with your application:

- **Visitor Study visa letter** issued from Queen's
- A valid passport
- Several months' bank statements showing that you have enough money to support yourself during your stay in the UK. We recommend showing evidence of around £1023 per month of your visit.
- Evidence of where you will be staying in Belfast for your studies (if you have reserved University accommodation we will confirm this in your visa letter).
- Evidence that you intend to return home at the end of your studies, i.e. return ticket (or enough money to buy a plane ticket)

If applying for a Visitor study visa **in advance** of travelling to the UK you must complete and pay for the online application, submit the above supporting documents and you will need to have your fingerprints and photograph taken at a Visa Application Centre (VAC) as part of your application. The application fee for the Visitor Study visa is £95 (or equivalent in your local currency) when you apply for the visa in advance. **There is no charge if you are a non-visa national and you apply at a UK airport.** The standard application processing time is three weeks; however we recommend that you do not book your flights to the UK until your visa has been granted. For further information from UKVI about applying for a visitor visa:

<https://www.gov.uk/standard-visitor-visa>

TRAVELLING TO THE UK

We strongly recommend that you arrive in the UK via a **UK port of entry** e.g. Belfast, London Heathrow, Manchester etc. When your visa is issued to you overseas it grants you entry clearance to arrive in the UK. When you enter a UK port of entry your visa will be stamped by a UK immigration officer. If you come via the Republic of Ireland e.g. Dublin, you will **not** receive this stamp as the Republic of Ireland is **not** part of the UK.

Arriving in the UK via the Republic of Ireland

If you are a non-visa national and intend to apply for immigration permission at a UK Port of Entry you **MUST arrive via a UK port of entry** (e.g. airport) in order to obtain UK Visitor Study immigration permission. If you are a non-visa national and you are intending to arrive via the Republic of Ireland (e.g. Dublin) and then travel onwards to the UK, you **MUST** apply for and receive a Visitor Study Visa **BEFORE** you travel.

For further details about arriving via the Republic of Ireland visit UKCISA website at www.ukcisa.org.uk/Information--Advice/Visas-and-Immigration/Arriving-via-Ireland

ENGLISH PROGRAMMES AT INTO QUEEN'S

If you are studying an English Language programme at INTO Queen's and have received an unconditional offer, they will provide you with information regarding the type of visa you will require to study, you will find further information here: <https://www.intostudy.com/en-gb/universities/queens-university-belfast>

CONTACTS FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

International Student Support: immigration@qub.ac.uk

for immigration advice and further information about visa requirements

Admissions and Access Service: cas.info@qub.ac.uk

for further information about your course offer and issue of your CAS statement

Global Opportunities Team: studyabroad@qub.ac.uk

for further information about Exchange & Study Abroad programme and your short term student visa letter.

International Student Support (ISS) website

<https://www.qub.ac.uk/sites/iss/>

For further information about all of the available visa options visit the UKCISA website at

<https://www.ukcisa.org.uk/>