

Applying for a Short-term Study Visa

This guide is for students who are applying for the Short-term Study Visa for their programme of study at SOAS. It will give you information on when to make your application, the documents you require and how to make your application.

Preparing for your application

You cannot make an application more than 3 months in advance of the start of the course. However make sure you give yourself plenty of time to make your application and receive your visa. Some countries take a lot longer than others to process visa applications. You can find out how long it takes to process a visa in your home country on the [UKVI website](#).

Make sure you prepare all the evidence that you need as stated below. You must supply sufficient evidence to support your application. Decision making can be subjective so do not give them a reason to doubt the validity of your application

When you make your application, state when you wish the visa to start from (date you intend to enter the UK) otherwise they will start the visa from the date they issue the visa to you

Requirements for the application

Below is a list of things you will likely be required to provide as part of the application process.

- Letter from SOAS - You should use your offer letter from SOAS confirming your course details, the dates you need to be in the UK and the course fees.
- If you are joining SOAS as part of a student exchange programme, your letter will be issued by our [Study Abroad team](#)
- If you are already enrolled but studying abroad and entering the UK for a short period as part of your course you should contact Registry or the Doctoral School (if studying a PhD) and ask them to provide a letter. This letter should confirm your enrolment and the periods you need to enter the UK for study or research.
- Finances, employment and insurance - You should prepare at least 3 months bank statements to show that you have funds to cover yourself whilst you are in the UK. You may also want to provide a letter from your employer as well if applicable. If you have a scholarship make sure you obtain a letter from your provider confirming their

sponsorship for the period you will be in the UK. It would also be a good idea to show you have medical/travel insurance to cover the period of your study

- Your accommodation and travel details - UKVI will expect you to provide some evidence of where you will be staying whilst you are in the UK. This can be a letter from a friend or relative, a letter from an accommodation provider or a hotel booking. You would also be expected to show proof of a return flight ticket booking.
- Qualifications - You may be required to show proof of your academic qualifications to prove that you are a valid student.
- Other information - It would also be a good idea to prepare some information to show that you intend to leave the UK at the end of your period of study. This may be proof of employment, proof of property or strong family links in your country. This sort of information is usually more important for countries which the UKVI consider higher risk and will be more suspicious about a student's motives for entering the UK.

How to apply

You will need to make your application on-line unless you are from North Korea in which case you have to make a paper based application.

You apply on-line using the following link -

When you apply on-line you will do the following:

- go to the [GOV.UK website](https://www.gov.uk) and '**Confirm your visa type**'
- you then need to 'select your location' using the drop-down menu and confirm that you are able to attend an appointment at one of the listed Visa Application Centres.
- read the guidance carefully and click '**Apply now**' to complete the online application.
- pay for the application
- make an appointment to have your biometrics taken

1. Biometric appointment

Whether you make an on-line or paper based application, you will need to make a biometric appointment to have your fingerprints and photo taken. These are a mandatory part of any visa application to the UK.

If you are from a smaller country or territory that has limited access to UK embassies you may be expected to travel to a neighboring country to have your biometrics taken and to complete the application.

2. Sending your documents

Once you have completed and paid for your application and booked your biometric appointment you will need to submit your documents to the UKVI. Normally you will send them through the post. After completing your application you will be sent an acknowledgement e-mail from the UKVI which will instruct you where to send your documents.

If you need to travel to another country for your biometrics you will be informed of that and will be required to present the documents in person.

You will need to provide the following documents

- a printed off copy of your on-line application
- your passport
- passport photos
- letter from SOAS
- financial information
- accommodation and travel details
- qualifications (if required)
- additional documents (if required)

3. After applying

After you have submitted your documents and had your biometrics taken they will process your application. How long this will take will depend on your country of application. They will return your documents to you with your new visa by post unless otherwise notified. **Making a paper application**

If you are from North Korea and making a paper based application you will need to complete the [VAF1D](#) application form. For more information about how to make a paper based application please see the [UKVI website](#).

4. Important: eGates

Nationals from Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the USA, Japan, Singapore and South Korea can now use eGates when entering the UK. This means that you will not be issued with an entry stamp in your passport.

If you are intending to rent a property, or a room in a property, from a letting agent, private landlord or host family for more than 3 months, then you will need to retain evidence i.e. boarding card, flight ticket or a travel booking confirmation dated within the last 6 months. This evidence must be shown to your landlord, agent or host family along with your passport, otherwise you may have problems securing your accommodation.

5. Visa conditions

As a short-term student, you have following conditions:

- you cannot work or do work experience while you are in the UK. This includes paid or unpaid work.
- you must leave the UK within 30 days of the end of your study/re-sits/resubmission.
- you cannot do a work placement as part of your study. If this is a requirement of your course, you may be eligible to apply for entry clearance as a Tier 4 student instead.
- you cannot do any business or professional activities in the UK
- you have no recourse to 'public funds'. 'Public funds' are defined in paragraph 6 of the Immigration Rules as a list of specific benefits available.

You cannot extend your stay in the UK, or switch into any other immigration category while you are still in the UK as a short-term student.

Short-term students are not permitted to bring family members to the UK, because there is no such category as 'dependant of a short-term student'.

If you are applying as a short-term student and you have a spouse, partner, child or other person who wants to come with you to the UK, they must apply to come to the UK in their own right as [standard visitors](#).

Further support or questions

If you have any further questions about the Short-term Study Visa please the Student Adviser (Immigration and Finance) at welfare@soas.ac.uk.