

New immigration rules for students - Effective 1 September 2007

This information is for students coming to study in the UK. Please read **ALL** the information below to see if you should apply for a **STUDENT VISA** (also called **Entry Clearance**) or a **STUDENT VISITOR VISA**.

1. Do I need a **STUDENT visa (Entry Clearance)** or a **STUDENT VISITOR visa**?

ASA semester students will have a length of study that is less than 6 months. ASA academic year students will have a length of study that is more than 6 months.

Length of Study	Type of Visa Required
Academic Year - More than 6 months	Student Visa (Entry Clearance)
Semester - 6 months or less	Entry Clearance or Student Visitor Visa (read on for details)

Semester students have the option of applying for Entry Clearance before leaving the U.S., or they may be granted their Student Visitor Visa by Immigration at the airport, upon their first entry into the UK. **Oxford Brookes University strongly recommends that semester students apply for Entry Clearance, if at all possible.**

2. Do I have to get my visa before I travel to the UK?

- **STUDENT VISA/ENTRY CLEARANCE** (mandatory for Academic Year students; optional for Semester students)

You **must** get this visa **before** you travel to the UK from the British Embassy in the U.S. Ask ASA for information on how to apply for Entry Clearance. ASA cannot apply for Entry Clearance on behalf of students. You must also apply for Entry Clearance at least 60 days in advance of your departure date to the UK. This information applies to both visa nationals (see link to the list of countries below*) and non-visa nationals. (U.S. citizens are non-visa nationals.)

- **STUDENT VISITOR VISA** (an option for Semester students only)

If you are a visa national* you **must** get this visa **before** you travel to the UK by applying to the British Embassy in your home country. If you are a U.S. citizen, you are a non-visa national, therefore, your Student Visitor Visa will be granted by Immigration at the airport, upon your first entry into the UK, as long as you bring the correct documents with you to present to the Immigration officer. Read on for these requirements.

If you are non-visa national (i.e. U.S. citizen) going to the UK for a semester, we still recommend that you apply for Entry Clearance before going abroad. However, you also have the option of getting your Student Visitor Visa from the Immigration Officer at the UK airport, without applying in your home country before you travel or paying an application fee. In order to be granted your Student Visitor Visa, you will have to explain to the Immigration Officer at the UK airport/port of entry about your situation and ask for entry as a 'Student Visitor'. You will have to show documentation about your course which lasts 6 months or less and your financial resources to pay your course tuition fees, your living costs and the cost of your return journey home at the end of your course. **However, if the Immigration Officer refuses you entry into the UK when you arrive and you have not gotten your visa before you travelled, you will not be allowed to remain in the UK to appeal the decision; you will be sent home immediately.** This is why it is advisable for even semester students to apply for Entry Clearance.

* A list of visa nationals can be found at this link. If your country does not appear on this list, you come from a non-visa national country:

<http://www.ukvisas.gov.uk/servlet/Front?pagename=OpenMarket/Xcelerate/ShowPage&c=Page&cid=1020786334922>

3. Will I be able to make an application in the UK to extend my visa to continue my studies?

- **STUDENT VISA/ENTRY CLEARANCE** – Yes, IF you fit the Immigration Rules for extending a Student visa.

- **STUDENT VISITOR VISA** – No. You cannot extend your Student Visitor visa while you are in the UK. You cannot ‘switch’ to or apply for Student Visa/Entry Clearance while you are in the UK if you entered the UK with a Student Visitor Visa. If you think you may want to extend your stay in the UK (i.e. you’re going for a semester but are considering staying for an academic year), you should apply for a Student Visa/Entry Clearance.

4. Will my visa allow me to work in the UK?

- **STUDENT VISA/ENTRY CLEARANCE** – Yes, as long as you are granted permission from the British Embassy during the application process for Entry Clearance. If you would like to be able to work, you must ask for permission to work when you apply for your visa in your own country. However, you should also make it clear that you do **NOT** need to work to pay for your studies or living expenses.
- **STUDENT VISITOR VISA** - No, you will not be able to work under any circumstance (paid or unpaid), nor may you participate in an internship (paid or unpaid).

5. Will I be able to re-enter the UK with my visa if I go on a short holiday to Europe before the end of my studies?

- **STUDENT VISA/ENTRY CLEARANCE** – Yes
- **STUDENT VISITOR VISA** - This isn’t known yet. It is possible that you will not be able to use your visa to re-enter the UK. (If you are **not** a visa national you could ask for a new Student Visitor visa when you re-enter the UK.)

6. If I am under 18 years of age which visa can I apply for?

- **STUDENT VISA/ENTRY CLEARANCE** – Yes
- **STUDENT VISITOR VISA** – No.

7. How do I apply for a Student Visa/Entry Clearance?

Contact ASA for further details.

8. What documents do I need to show to the Immigration officer in order to be granted a Student Visitor Visa upon entry into the UK?

- **Valid U.S. passport** that does not expire for at least 3 months after your proposed departure date from the UK. Check your passport’s expiration date NOW to see if you need to renew it!
- **Your Immigration letter from Oxford Brookes** We’ll mail this to you before the program begins. *Don’t discard this letter, because you those with a Student Visitor Visa will be required to show it to Immigration EACH TIME you enter the UK. So, if you plan to travel outside the UK during your program, you’ll need to present your Immigration letter in order to be allowed back into the UK.*
- **Proof of funding** for your stay in the UK (min. \$200 per week of your stay). This requirement can be fulfilled by showing official documentation of your financial aid award, bank loans, loans from family members, OR your or your parents’ bank statement. The purpose is to show you have enough money to live on for your stay.
- **Round trip plane ticket** showing you will be in the UK for less than 6 months.

Disclaimer: This information may change at any time. ASA has made every effort to use reliable sources, but neither ASA nor its partner universities can accept responsibility for its accuracy.