



ACADEMIC  
STUDIES ABROAD

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## Standard Visitor Visa - UK

**This visa information applies to U.S. passport holders aged 18+ who will study in the UK for 6 months or less.**

### **IMPORTANT! PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING VISA REQUIREMENTS CAREFULLY TO ENSURE YOU COMPLY.**

- 1) **Standard Visitor Visa:** Students from the United States planning on studying in the UK for a course less than 6 months AND are not planning on participating in an internship can enter the UK as a standard visitor. *THESE STUDENTS DO NOT HAVE TO ATTEND A VISA APPOINTMENT IN THE U.S. PRIOR TO DEPARTURE.* The Standard Visitor Visa allows you to study in the UK for a maximum of 6 months. It cannot be extended. To see what kind of documentation is required and what this visa does and does not allow, read on.
- 2) You may not participate in paid or unpaid employment during your stay in the UK. This includes doing any kind of work, business activity, work placement, work experience, internship, self-employment, volunteering, business activity or professional activity during your studies in the UK. Other prohibited activities can be view at [this link](#).
- 3) **The UK does not grant extensions or changes to the Standard Visitor Visa.** Therefore, if you are undecided about your length of study (i.e. you're going for a semester but may want to stay for an Academic Year; or you are going for a summer and may want to stay for the Fall semester too), then you must apply for a Student Visa from UK Visas and Immigration before you depart. (See link on page 2.)
- 4) **When you arrive in the UK, you must have proof of a round trip plane ticket.** This purpose is to show your intention to leave the UK. **An immigration officer can ask you for this any time you are entering the UK, whether when arriving for the start of your program or after returning from a weekend trip.** Your round trip plane ticket must also show that you'll be in the UK for less than 6 months.
- 5) **Please be aware that you should not travel to the UK using a connection through Ireland as there are usually no immigration personnel.** This can cause serious problems when trying to enroll you in your course and may result in issues on arrival day.
- 6) RE: TRAVELING BEFORE OR AFTER YOUR PROGRAM.
  - a. If you are traveling in Europe *before* the start of your program and you are passing through the UK, you need to bring the below-listed documents with you. You might need to present them to an Immigration officer during your transit through the UK but it is likely you will be pushed through the eGates which are electronic immigration kiosks. Both options are acceptable. If you later re-enter into the UK and encounter an immigration officer, simply ask to be re-admitted as a Standard Visitor and present the below documents.
  - b. If you are traveling in Europe *after* your semester abroad, you should ask to be re-admitted into the UK as a "standard visitor" in case you come back to the UK before finally returning home. If you are coming back into the UK for less than 48 hours just to board your return flight to the U.S., you will be considered as making a transit to a country outside the Common Travel Area, and the Immigration Officer may not allow you to re-enter the UK. (The Common Travel Area is defined as England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, the Isle of Man, the Channel Islands and the Republic of Ireland. Dublin is located in the Republic of Ireland.)

**You must obtain the following documents before you depart and carry them with you throughout the duration of your program. Be sure to pack these in your carry-on and have them with you anytime you plan to leave or re-enter the UK during your program!**

- 1) Offer Letter/Certificate of Unconditional Acceptance from your UK host institution (will be emailed to you either with your ASA Pre-Departure Handbook, or with your final pre-departure email a few days before departure)
- 2) Visa Letter from ASA addressed “TO: UK Visas and Immigration.” (will be emailed to you either with your ASA Pre-Departure Handbook, or with your final pre-departure email a few days before departure)
- 3) Proof of funding for your stay in the UK. Please note that your Standard Visitor Visa Letter from ASA confirms that you have met all your financial obligations regarding tuition (course fees) and accommodation (housing) for the full term of your studies. *However*, per the terms of the Standard Visitor Visa, you must *also* provide proof that you have your own funds (spending money) to support yourself during your course. **You must bring proof that you possess a minimum of £1,334 for each month of your stay in the UK.** Check [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com) for the most up to date exchange rates. This requirement can be fulfilled by showing traveler’s checks OR bank statements from you or your parents. The purpose is to show you have enough money to live for your entire stay in the UK.
- 4) Valid U.S. passport that does not expire for at least 6 months *after* your proposed return date from the UK. Check your passport’s expiration date NOW to see if you need to renew it!
- 5) Round Trip Plane Ticket. Must show the date you will leave the UK at the end of your program.
- 6) Air Tickets/Boarding Pass/Flight Itinerary. When you enter into the UK it is likely you will be funneled into the eGates which are electronic immigration kiosks designed so that you don’t necessarily see an immigration officer (a live person) when you land in the UK. You will not receive a stamp in your passport showing the day you entered the UK which is vital information for your UK university to enroll you in courses. So, you must keep your air tickets, boarding pass, or flight itinerary because your university will need to see it. Documenting your exact entry dates into the UK is part of your host university’s process of finalizing your registration before you can begin your courses.

**Don’t discard the above documents! Carry ALL the above documents whenever you travel out of/into the UK during your program. You may need to present them to Immigration EACH TIME you re-enter the UK during your program.**

**IF you speak with a live Immigration Officer, make it clear your purpose of stay is to STUDY and ensure they see your Offer Letter/Certificate of Unconditional Acceptance from your UK university.**

*Further questions about UK Visas must be directed to*  
<https://www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/student-visas>