



ACADEMIC
STUDIES
ABROAD

THIS STUDENT VISA GUIDE IS FOR U.S. PASSPORT HOLDERS ATTENDING AN ACADEMIC YEAR OR INTERNSHIP IN THE UNITED KINGDOM.

OVERVIEW & IMPORTANT POINTS

U.S. citizens planning to study in the UK for more than six months and students planning to intern + study in the UK for any length of time must get a **Student Visa from UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI).** Ideally, you should apply for your visa 10-11 weeks before departure; however, you may apply as early as 90 days before departure. The UKVI does not guarantee successful processing of visa applications that are submitted within 6 weeks of the applicant's departure date. The UKVI also advises that you do NOT purchase your plane ticket to the UK until you have received your visa.

Please bookmark the following link – ALL of the information herein, as well as the most updated information about the UK Student Visa, can always be found at the link below. Students are responsible for reading the online information thoroughly, in addition to this document: <https://www.gov.uk/student-visa>

In order to obtain your Student Visa, you will need to send your physical passport to the UKVI Home Office. They will keep it during the processing period and affix your visa inside before sending the passport back to you. For this reason, **do not plan ANY international travel during the 2-4 months prior to your departure for the UK.**

You will not have the option to extend your visa once you arrive in the UK, so if you are a semester student considering staying for the year, you must apply for a year-long visa in your original application. **You will not have the option to extend your visa after your arrival in the UK.**

Your CAS is a unique reference number that will be generated by your host institution for your visa application. Your CAS will typically be sent to you electronically about 3 weeks after ASA has signed you up for classes at your host institution and they have verified that you have met the admission requirements for their program. When they issue your CAS number, that will notify

the UKVI that the institution is “sponsoring” your visa application. Please see later in this document concerning what a host institution may require from you before they will issue your CAS.

ASA cannot apply for your Visa for you. It is *YOUR* responsibility to obtain your Visa before you depart. This guide is written to help you with the process, but UKVI visa rules and regulations are subject to change at any time, without prior notice. ***ASA is not responsible for errors or omissions in this document.***

Please read this document in full so that you understand the process and are able to apply for your visa in time to ensure it is processed before your departure date.

The following is a timeline that you will need to carefully follow throughout this process.

STEP 1: COMPLETE ASA EMBARK APPLICATION

- ASA will submit your application to the UK university once you complete ASA’s application in Embark.

STEP 2: WAIT FOR APPLICATION DECISION FROM ASA

- Watch out for an email from your ASA program manager on your acceptance into the program. This can take between 3 business days and 3 weeks depending on which program you applied for.
- Once accepted you will receive a billing statement outlining that a \$5,000 non-refundable program deposit must be paid.
 - *Why is a \$5,000 program deposit required? If you are participating in an internship program or academic year program in the United Kingdom you must obtain a student visa. In order to obtain a student visa, a UK institution must sponsor you and issue you a Certificate of Acceptance of Study (CAS). This CAS costs money to issue and is non-refundable for the UK institution.*

STEP 3: CAS ISSUED, START COLLECTING EVIDENTIARY DOCUMENTS, & CREATING UKVI ACCOUNT

- CAS stands for “Certificate of Acceptance for Study”. You cannot complete the visa application without your CAS. Your CAS is a unique reference number that will be generated by the UK institution. When you enter your CAS number on your Student Visa application, it allows the UKVI to view information about you and the institution that is “sponsoring” your visa application.
- ASA will work with the UK institution to issue your CAS on your behalf.
 - It normally takes between 10-14 days to issue a CAS
 - ASA will send you your CAS once it is issued by the UK institution.
- While you are waiting for your CAS to be issued you should create a UKVI account by following this link: <https://visas-immigration.service.gov.uk/visa-type>

- A verification email will be sent to the email address you used to register your account. You must click the verification email before you can begin your visa application.
- Be sure to note your username and password as this is where you will complete your Student Visa application later.
- You are required to gather evidentiary documents to complete your Student Visa application. **DO NOT BEGIN YOUR UKVI APPLICATION UNTIL YOU HAVE ALL OF THE BELOW DOCUMENTS IN HAND.** The required evidentiary documents are as follows:
 - **Evidence of Finances:** You will need to show that you 1) have money to pay your course fees (tuition) for the time you are studying abroad, and 2) have money to support yourself in the UK for every month of your course (anywhere from £1,023 - £1,334 per month of stay, depending on where you are studying in the UK). Your evidence of finances can be a savings or checking account in your or your parents' name, showing you possess cash funds as described.
 - *Please confirm with your ASA program manager how much money you need to have in your Evidence of Finances.*
 - This is a necessary requirement of UK Visas & Immigration (not ASA). The funds will need to have been in your account for more than 28 consecutive days without dropping below the required amount at any point, before you apply for your visa (verified by bank statement). The bank statement also cannot be more than 31 days old. *ASA recommends you make these funds available in your account upon your acceptance to the program, and then leave the necessary funds in your account until your program begins.*
 - All evidentiary documents must be originals. No photocopies or scans.
 - The bank statements must be in YOUR name. If you have a joint account, your name must appear on the statement.
 - Check current exchange rates here: <https://www.xe.com/>
 - ASA recommends having more than the above-mentioned amounts in your account in case of fluctuations in the exchange rate. UKVI will calculate your money in pounds using the exchange rate in effect on the day you submit your visa application.
 - The original bank statement must show: your full name, account number, date of issue (again it must be no older than 31 days from your visa application date). It must also be on official bank letterhead with information about the bank, such as contact details or branch code, stamped and signed on EVERY page.
 - When you travel to the UK, you will need to bring another bank statement from the same account, showing the same funds, as you may be asked for it at immigration upon entry to the UK.
 - **Official Transcript:** you must be in possession of a copy of your Official Transcript, in case the UKVI requests it during the application process. The transcript must match the one you submitted with your ASA application.

- **Current passport and any other previous passport/visas used to travel to the UK**
 - You need a blank page in your passport for your visa to be affixed to.
- **CAS (Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies) provided by your UK institution**
- **Your address in the UK.** Please ask your program manager for this information.
- **Your official program dates.** Please ask your program manager for this information.
- **A credit/debit card to pay the visa application fee and Health Surcharge Fee**

STEP 4: APPLY FOR YOUR STUDENT VISA ONLINE

- *BEFORE YOU START YOUR STUDENT VISA APPLICATION, BE SURE TO HAVE A WORKING PRINTER READY!*
- Follow this **STEP-BY-STEP guide**.
- **Be sure to print your application for your records**
- **DOCUMENTS**
 - Tick the box to agree that you will provide each document listed
 - Typically only a passport will be listed in this step, if a different document appears tick those boxes as well and add it to your list of evidentiary documents required from Step 3.
 - Tuberculosis Test (TB Test)
 - If you are planning on being in the UK for more than 6 months and are a resident of **one of these listed countries**, you are required to provide a negative TB test result from your doctor.
 - United States of America is NOT one of the listed countries.
- **DECLARATION**
 - Check that the information you provided is correct
- **PAY**
 - **All payments are non-refundable.**
 - Pay the Immigration Health Surcharge (IHS)
 - Calculate your Immigration Health Surcharge **HERE**
 - Read what the Immigration Health Surcharge is **HERE**
 - Pay your Student Visa application fee – estimated at £348
 - Some visa application centers charge a ‘User payers fee’ of £55
 - Once you have paid your visa fees, you will be given a reference number. Please make a note of this, as it will be helpful should you need to make any amendments to your visa application or appointment.

STEP 5: SUBMIT YOUR STUDENT VISA APPLICATION & BOOK AN APPOINTMENT

- Once you have completed your visa application, you will need to select whether you want to attend one of the **Premium Application Centers** (10 locations) or an **Application Support Center** (130+ locations) to provide your biometric information (fingerprints and photograph).

- To attend a VFS Global Premium Application Center, you will need to purchase a Bronze, Silver, Gold, or Settlement Premium Package.
- Please note: once you have selected the type of center to attend for your biometric appointment you will not be able to alter your selection without cancelling your application and starting a new one.
- After selecting the type of center you wish to attend, you will be directed to the VFS Global website to book an appointment. You will also have the opportunity to select additional, optional services from VFS Global, designed to make your application process faster or easier.
 - For example, if you would like to purchase a return courier service so that you do not have to return to the visa center to pick up your passport later, that is an option.

STEP 6: UPLOAD YOUR SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- Once you have booked your appointment, you can digitally submit all the documents required to support your application from the comfort of your home, school or office on the VFS website; meaning you can keep valuable documents with you.
 - **ONLY UPLOAD ITEMS THAT ARE REQUIRED FOR YOU! It is important you do not upload documents that are not asked of you as this could jeopardize your application.**
- Alternatively, customers who book a biometric appointment at an **Application Support Center**, will need to send their supporting documents to the VFS Global UKVI Visa Processing Hub, at: 145 West 45th Street, Fl 5, New York, NY 10036.
- Customers who book their biometric appointment at a **VFS Global Premium Application Centre** have the Document Scanning Assistance Service included as part of their Bronze, Silver or Gold Premium Package.

STEP 7: ATTEND YOUR BIOMETRIC APPOINTMENT

- You must attend the biometric appointment for your visa application at either an Application Support Center, or a VFS Global Premium Application Centre.
- You cannot send someone in your place.
- Please read these [guidelines](#) for attending the Visa Application Centre.

STEP 8: TRACK YOUR APPLICATION

- Customers using a Premium Application Centre will be sent SMS updates on their application as part of the package purchased. Customers who attend an Application Support Center for their biometric appointment will be notified by an email from UK Visas and Immigration, when a decision has been made on your application.

STEP 9: DOCUMENT RETURN

- Customers who attend a Premium Application Centre, will have their passport returned to them by courier following the decision on their application, as part of the Bronze, Silver, or Gold Premium Package purchased.

- Customers who visit an Application Support Center for their biometric appointment are advised to use one of the **UPS courier services** offered by VFS Global. If you choose not to purchase this service from us, you may use a courier company of your choice to send your passport/documents to the UKVI Visa Processing Hub, but you **must** provide a pre-paid, self-addressed **UPS shipping label** for passport/document return.
 - It is HIGHLY advised you add tracking to this package as it will contain your passport.

STEP 10: SCHEDULE FLIGHTS & ARRIVE IN LONDON

~ **ACADEMIC STUDIES ABROAD (ASA)** ~
~ **72 RIVER PARK STREET SUITE 104 NEEDHAM HEIGHTS MA 02494** ~
~ **WWW.ACADEMICSTUDIES.COM** ~
~ **1 -617-327-9388** ~