

# **IMPORTANT: VISA INFORMATION**

## **Do I need a visa?**

Students who will study in the UK for six months or less, will *not* require a visa and will enter the UK as a **Student Visitor**. (see 1 below)

Students who will study for six months or less, but who will participate in an internship, paid or unpaid, or wish to work for a maximum of 20 hours per week, *will* be required to apply for an *Entry Clearance Visa* and must make application through the **Tier 4 Route of Application: General/Adult Student**. (see 2 below)

Students who will study for six months or more *will* be required to apply for an *Entry Clearance Visa* and must make application through the **Tier 4 Route of Application: General/Adult Student**. (see 2 below)

## **1. STUDENT VISITORS**

Students who hold US passports who will study in the UK for six months or less, who do not wish to work, or extend their time of stay beyond six months, **ARE NOT REQUIRED** to apply for *entry clearance (visa)* and can be admitted to the UK as a *Student Visitor*. However, restrictions apply:

### **Student Visitors must:**

Leave the United Kingdom at the end of the visit you told us about;  
Support and pay for accommodation for yourself and any dependants, without help from public funds; or  
Make sure that you and your dependants will be supported and accommodated by relatives or friends, and not take employment;  
Be able to meet the cost of your return or onward journey.

### **Student Visitors must not:**

Take employment in the United Kingdom;  
Engage in business, produce goods or provide services within the United Kingdom, including selling goods or services direct to members of the public;  
Study at a government-funded school;  
Be a child under the age of 18;  
Undertake part-time or full-time vacation employment;  
Undertake a work placement or internship (paid or unpaid) as part of your course of study; or  
Be in transit to a country outside the **Common Travel Area**.

This **Common Travel Area** is defined as England, Scotland, Wales and N. Ireland; the Isle of Man; the Channel Islands and the Republic of Ireland, where Dublin is located.

If you are travelling to Europe **BEFORE** your course ends (mid-course), you should carry up-to-date documents with you showing you are still a student at Swansea University. You should ask to be re-admitted as a "student visitor" upon your return to the UK.

If you are travelling to Europe **AFTER** your course ends, you should ask to be re-admitted into the UK as a "visitor". You should **NOT** be re-admitted as a "student visitor" as you have completed your course. If you are coming back to the UK for less than 48 hours just to board your return flight to the US, 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 U.K.

### **Entering the UK from the Republic of Ireland.**

Those coming to the UK without entry clearance (visa) and enter via the Republic of Ireland are unlikely to encounter any Immigration Officers. Therefore, it will not be possible to apply for entry as a "Student Visitor". **Entry into the UK and studies is permitted, but only for a maximum of three months.** Keep any travel ticket or any proof of date of entry. The only solution will be to travel outside of the UK e.g. France and return via one of the UK borders in England, Scotland, Wales or N. Ireland.

### **Arrival in the UK**

Upon arrival in the UK, you should explain to the Immigration Officers at the airport that you are coming to study and show documents to confirm this. You may be asked to provide proof of financial support, such as bank statements, confirming you have enough money for the duration of your stay, so be sure to carry these documents with you!

We recommend you provide proof of finances for \$4-\$5000 USD.

We also recommend that you carry proof of payment of your programme fee paid to your home institution or programme provider

Request you be granted “student visitor” status on entry.

## **2.TIER 4 (GENERAL STUDENTS)**

Students who will study in the UK for six months or less, **but who wish to work**, or are participating in an unpaid work placement, or internship component included in the course of study, **ARE REQUIRED** to apply for *entry clearance (visa)*.

Students who will study in the UK for more than six months, e.g. academic year applicants, **ARE REQUIRED** to apply for *entry clearance (visa)*.

Students must apply as a Tier 4 (General) Student. The UKBA (UK Border Agency) sometimes refers to Tier 4 (General) students as “*adult students*”

In addition to the **Visa Support Letter** from the education provider, you will need to provide evidence that you have funds to cover course fees and monthly living costs. You must provide documentation in the form of a bank or building society account, or an account with an officially regulated financial institution that has your name on it. It can be a joint account with someone else, but only if your name is on the account also. E.g. With a parent, partner or sibling.

Ensure you look through the information sheet and the UK Border Agency Policy Guidance to find out about what other documents you may have to provide and how this information needs to be presented. The UK Border Agency has very strict procedures that all documents must fulfil requirements outlined in the policy guidance for your visa application to succeed.

- [http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/student/information\\_sheets.php](http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/student/information_sheets.php) (see [Making a student immigration application in your home country](#))
- <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/studyingintheuk/adult-students> (Click onto *Guidance for Students applying from 31 March*)

**For courses of nine months or less, you will be expected to provide proof of support for the total cost of your programme plus £600 per calendar month, for the duration of the course. E.G. If your course is five and a half months, you should show you have £3600. (6 x £600). Should your accommodation cost be included in the programme fee, you can deduct this sum from the £600.**

**For courses of nine months or more, you will be expected to provide proof of support for the total cost of your programme plus £5400. Should your accommodation cost be included in the programme fee, you can deduct this sum from the £5400.**

We will specify in the acceptance letter if the accommodation fee is included or not, which will assist the immigration officer when examining your documents.

You must have had the required amount of money in your account for at least 28 days. The policy guidance says that the end of that 28-day period must not be more than one month before the date of

your application. This is to allow you to provide evidence, for example, bank statements, that is up to one month old.

2009-2010 Academic session only: If you make your immigration application before the 1 October 2009, you are not required to show that you have held the required sum of money for 28 days. Instead, you must only provide proof that you have the required amount on the day on which you apply.

### **So, what financial documents do you need to provide?**

Go to the following web link:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/studyingintheuk/adult-students>

Click onto **Guidance for Students applying from 31 March**, this will open the Tier 4 policy guidelines. Scroll down to **Elements of money you must show**.

**However, do note that the Policy Guidance is subject to regular updates and changes throughout 2009 and 2010 and Swansea University cannot be held responsible for pertinent information not included within this document.**

### **Once granted, you will be allowed to:**

Take employment for a maximum of 20 hours each week during term time and full time during vacation periods.

### **You will not be allowed to:**

Be self employed

Fill a full time vacancy

Be employed as a professional sports person or coach

Be employed as an entertainer

### **When will Entry Clearance Visa start/end?**

For students participating in a semester programme only for a duration of less than six months, entry clearance will start seven days prior to the course commencing and end one month after the end of the course.

For students participating in a programme of study for six months or more, but less than twelve months, i.e. academic year, entry clearance will start a month prior to the course commencing and end two months after the end of the course.

### **How to apply?**

Go to the following web links:

[http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/student/information\\_sheets.php](http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/student/information_sheets.php) (see [Making a student immigration application in your home country](#))

<http://www.visa4uk.fco.gov.uk/Welcome.htm>

<https://www.visainfoservices.com/Pages/Welcome.aspx> (and choose "United States from the drop-down menu)

The cost of applying is £145

Finally, be sure to carry all supporting documents in your hand luggage to show the the Immigration Officer upon arrival, if requested.

## WHAT IF I WANT TO EXTEND MY VISA WHILST IN THE UK?

This is only possible if you applied and were granted *entry clearance (visa)* as a General Student. It is not possible to extend your stay in the UK if you have "Student Visitor" status

The cost of extending in the UK is currently £357 plus £50 for each dependant and **can take up to three months.**

Students holding passports of other countries other than the U.S. are advised to contact the University's International Student Advisers ([isas@swansea.ac.uk](mailto:isas@swansea.ac.uk)) for immigration advice as different rules will apply to you.