

APPLYING FOR YOUR UK STUDENT VISA

Site to Apply for Entry Clearance/Visa:

<http://www.visa4uk.fco.gov.uk/ApplyNow.aspx>

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Do I need a student visa?

Nationals of countries outside of the European Economic Area will need a student visa to study in the UK for more than six months. This includes U.S. passport holders. **You MUST obtain a visa before entering the UK to begin your studies.**

2. How do I apply for a student visa?

Go to <http://www.visa4uk.fco.gov.uk/ApplyNow.aspx> to apply online for your visa. You will print out your application, provide your biometric data (see below), and either mail the application to your nearest British consulate or submit the application in person at the consulate.

3. How far in advance should I apply?

Students can apply no earlier than three months prior to the start of their university term. It is recommended that students apply by June for fall entry and by November for spring entry. Many expedited visa companies are also available online. We recommend A Briggs (www.abriggs.com). **Please note: If you are applying less than a month before departing, you MUST use an expediting company in order to have your visa in time.**

4. What information will I need to complete my application online?

The online application process requires you to provide personal details (including details found on your passport), financial details, and information about your course of study in the UK.

5. What are the Purpose and Type of Application?

One of the first screens of the online application process asks you for the **Purpose of Application**. Select "PBS Tier 4 Student" from the pull-down list of options. Immediately below the online Purpose of Application field, there is a **Type of Application** field. Select "Tier 4 (General) Student" from the pull-down list of options.

6. What supporting documents do I need to send with my application?

- A. Your passport
- B. Application fee of £145.00
- C. A confirmation letter from Richmond confirming the intended course of study, the duration of study, and tuition and fees information. A confirmation letter is sent to all students who submit their confirmation deposit and forms.
- D. Evidence of funds to cover tuition and living expenses. Documentation to provide evidence of funding would include bank statements, FACTS payment plan receipts, and/or loan approval letters.
- E. Official High School or College Transcript
- F. Depending on the circumstances, some students may be asked to provide further documentation to help support their application.

7. What is "biometric data", and how do I submit mine?

See below.

8. Will the visa be issued for the full duration of my course?

Typically a student's visa will be valid for the entire duration of their course. On some Occasions, visas are granted on a year to year basis.

9. Does my student visa entitle me to work?

Students who are granted student status in the UK will be eligible to work up to twenty hours during term time and up to forty hours during vacations under certain conditions. Please visit www.ukvisas.gov.uk for more information.

10. Can I stay in the UK and work after I graduate?

A new visa scheme allows graduates from UK universities to work in the country for up to twelve months following the completion of their course. After this time, it will be necessary for a student to obtain a work permit from an employer to continue to work in the UK.

BIOMETRIC DATA COLLECTION NOW REQUIRED

The British government **requires** biometric data collection (10-finger scans and a digital photograph) as part of a world-wide biometric identification process, designed to protect an individual's identity, facilitate future entry to the UK, combat visa fraud and the abuse of the UK's immigration and asylum systems. (This requirement went into effect on December 3, 2007.

UKvisas in cooperation with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) will collect the biometric data of applicants for UK visas from their network of 129 Application Support Centers (ASCs). This arrangement with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will provide wide coverage of biometric collection points in the USA.

As part of the on-line Visa Application process, you will be instructed to book an appointment to submit your biometric data. Available appointment location(s) according to your Visa requirements will be given to you in your online application. If there are multiple appointment locations, you may choose the most appropriate location. You will be able to schedule your appointment online for the Application Support Centers (ASCs) where you will be required to provide your fingerscans and a digital photograph in support of your application. **Unless otherwise advised, all visa applicants must provide their biometric data. The application cannot be processed if an applicant refuses, or cannot provide, acceptable biometric data.**

Fingerscans will be collected from you by using an electronic scanner. No ink, liquid or chemical will be used. A digital photograph will be taken at the same time and the whole biometric capture procedure should take no more than 10 minutes to complete.

Important Information To Help You Apply For Your Biometric Visa

All applications should be submitted and paid for online. You will then be directed to make an appointment at one of the Application Support Centers in your area in order to submit your biometric data. Once you have submitted your biometric data you can either send in your passport and documents through a Registered Courier or by Express Mail to one of the Visa offices in New York, Chicago or Los Angeles- Your online application will give you the details.

Biometric FAQs

Q: Why must I have my fingers scanned to get a visa?

A: All UK visa applicants are required to provide finger scans and be photographed from now on. This is now part of the application process. Biometric data collection (finger scanning and a digital photograph) is part of the British Government's five year plan to ease the management of asylum and immigration.

Q: Will there be an additional charge?

A: No, currently there are no plans to charge applicants for the service.

NOTE: You should print and retain a copy of your on-line Entry Clearance/Student Visa e-application for your records and obtain a tracking number when you send in your passport and related documents.

Please note the guidelines on the sheet provided by Richmond are guidelines that are correct at the time of going to print. For most up-to-date and accurate information, please refer to the official UK government website listed at the top of the sheet overleaf.