



Inviting friends and family to the UK

Friends and Family Visiting the UK

If you would like to invite members of your family or friends to visit you whilst you are in the UK and they do not hold EEA nationality, they may need to apply for a Standard Visitor Visa before they can enter the UK.

To find out if Entry Clearance is required and how to obtain it you can visit the [UK Visas and Immigration \(UKV&I\) website](#). The information below is designed to help you and your family or friends understand what is needed to apply for a Visitor Visa before they travel.

Standard Visitor Visa

When your family have decided they would like to visit you, they will need to apply for Standard Visitor Visa(s). Please note that a Standard Visitor Visa is only suitable for short visits and will allow them to stay in the UK for a maximum of six months. It cannot be extended.

Once your family are in the UK as visitors they cannot change their status to become dependants of you, or to become a student. Once their permission to stay in the UK has finished they must leave the UK. It is not possible to work on this visa.

When to Apply

A Standard Visitor Visa application can be made up to three months before the intended visit date. The visitor should check the guidance provided by the British Embassy (or other Visa Application Centre) in their home country for specific details about when to apply.

At busy times it can take much longer for applications to be processed. Visitors should allow enough time to prepare the application and apply before travelling to the UK: [Information on visa processing times in your country](#)

How to Apply

The visitor should apply for a Standard Visitor Visa at a British Embassy, High Commission or other Visa Application Centre. For contact details, how to apply and further guidance, please refer to the [UKV&I website](#).

Helping your Friends and Family Apply for their Visa

You will need to send your friends and family the following documentation which they should take with them when they attend their appointment for Entry Clearance (visa):

- A letter of invitation from you stating when you would like them to visit; this must include the address of where they will be staying. You can download a copy of the Invitation Letter from 'My Records' 'Letter Requests' via 'My Northumbria'.
- A letter proving your student status (Enrolment Letter). You can request a copy through 'My Records' 'Letter Requests' via 'My Northumbria'.
- A photocopy of your passport pages that show your personal details, your UK student visa and the most recent immigration stamp, or your Biometrics (BRP) card.
- If your friends or family are attending your graduation ceremony, you should enclose your invitation to the congregation. Please note that the University does not issue personal invitations to students' families to attend graduation ceremonies.
- If your visitor is a family member you should normally send evidence, such as bank statements, to show you can provide financial support during their stay. This will not be necessary if they can provide evidence that they have their own funds. You do not need to provide evidence of financial support for friends. The Home Office are looking for evidence that they can 'maintain and accommodate' themselves without working or recourse to public funds.



Restrictions for Standard Visitor Visas

- Standard Visitor Visa holders can stay in the UK for a maximum of six months.
- Once in the UK, they cannot change their status to 'dependant' or 'student' (Tier 4). If they wish to do this they would need to return home and make a fresh application, according to their eligibility.
- Once their permission to stay in the UK is coming to an end they should return home before their visa expires.
- It is not possible to work on this visa.

Tier 4 Dependant Visa

If you want members of your family who are dependent upon you (spouse, civil partner, unmarried partner and children) to live with you in the UK whilst you are studying and you are eligible to bring family members with you to the UK, they should apply for a Tier 4 Dependant Visa.

Changes to Immigration Rules from July 2011

The UK Government introduced changes to the immigration rules for dependants in July 2011. This means that you can only bring your family to the UK if:

- You are studying a course at postgraduate level which lasts longer than 12 months, or
- You are a Government-sponsored student following a course that lasts longer than six months

For further advice please speak to a Welfare, Immigration and Funding Adviser.

Frequently asked Questions

Q. Will my spouse and children be able to work whilst they are dependants?

The conditions that apply to your spouse and children's stay in the UK will be shown on their visa. The vignette or BRP card will say how long they have been given permission to stay in the UK.

Q. Will my dependants be able to study?

If your spouse is here as your dependant s/he can study either full-time or, part-time and distance learning. S/he will be subject to the same rules for fees assessment and student support as you.

How to contact the Welfare, Immigration and Funding Team

Online

- Email us direct at sv.welfareandinternational@northumbria.ac.uk
- Visit our website at northumbria.ac.uk/financialsupport

At City Campus

- Come to the Student Support and Wellbeing Centre, Ground Floor, Northumberland Building, open 9.00am - 5.00pm (Monday to Friday)
- Speak to one of our Advisers (no appointment needed) any time from 10am - 4pm Monday to Friday, (1 - 4pm on Wednesday)
- Telephone us on 0191 227 4127

At Coach Lane Campus

- Visit the Ask4Help desk in Coach Lane Library
- Telephone us on 0191 227 4127

At London Campus

- Visit the Ask4Help desk on the Ground Floor

Please contact us if you require a copy of this publication in an alternative format - such as braille or large print.



INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SUPPORT

Visit an Ask4Help point
northumbria.ac.uk/ssw

