



Travelling outside the UK

A Guide for International Students

Like many international students, you may choose to travel to other countries outside the UK during vacation time. Before confirming or paying for travel it is recommended that you check the visa requirements for the country you intend to visit and allow plenty of time before you travel to arrange a visa, if necessary. To do this, please check the website of the embassy of the country you wish to visit. For a list of all UK embassies, go to:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/foreign-embassies-in-the-uk

Travelling within Europe - Schengen Visa Scheme

26 countries in Europe participate in the Schengen Visa Scheme. This means that a visitor need only obtain one visa to travel to any number of the Schengen countries in one trip. The Schengen countries are:

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|----------------|---------|---------------|-----------------|----------|-------------|
| Austria | Finland | Iceland | Lithuania | Norway | Slovenia |
| Belgium | France | Italy | Luxembourg | Poland | Spain |
| Czech Republic | Germany | Latvia | Malta | Portugal | Sweden |
| Denmark | Greece | Liechtenstein | The Netherlands | Slovakia | Switzerland |
| Estonia | Hungary | | | | |

Some nationalities do not need a Schengen visa. This list varies between Schengen member states, so you should check with the embassy of the country you wish to visit to find out whether you require a Schengen visa or not. Students from Canada, Israel, Japan, Malaysia, Mexico, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and USA do not need a Schengen visa.

Types of Schengen visa

There are three types of visa:

1. **The airport transit visa** - which allows the traveller to transit through the international transit zone/area of an airport of a Schengen member state, but not to exit this zone/area before they fly on to their next destination.
2. **The transit visa** - enables a traveller to pass through the territory of one or more Schengen member states on their way to another country outside the Schengen space.
3. **The short stay or travel visa** - allows a visit of up to three months in any six month period. This is the visa that most students wanting to travel within the Schengen space as tourists or conference attendees, will require.

Visa fees, eligibility criteria and documentation required to make an application may vary according to which type of visa is needed. You should look on the relevant website or contact the appropriate embassy to check what needs to be submitted with each type of application.

Applications can be submitted for multiple entry visas (ie you may wish to travel more than once into the Schengen space during a three-month period). However, the application may not be successful if evidence of all the travel arrangements and bookings are not available. Please contact the relevant embassies concerning this situation.

Where should I apply for a Schengen visa?

- If visiting only one country in the Schengen space, you should apply to the embassy or consulate of that country.
- If visiting several of the 26 countries, you should apply to the embassy or consulate of whichever country is your 'main destination' - the country in which you plan to spend the most time during your trip.
- If visiting several countries in the Schengen space without having a main destination, you should submit an application to the embassy or consulate of the country of the first port of entry into the Schengen space.

How do I apply for a Schengen visa?

Most of the countries within the Schengen space have their own websites which include most of the relevant information needed to make an application for a Schengen visa. Application forms can be downloaded from most of the websites. If a website is not available or does not include an application form, information on the application process and where to obtain an application form, can be found on detailed recorded information telephone lines.

The following list describes the main requirements of most applications. Please refer to the relevant pages of the country you wish to visit for an exact list.

- 1. Recent photograph(s) of the visa applicant.** The exact number required varies between member states.
- 2. A completed application form.** No application for a visa will be accepted without the appropriate application form, which you can download from the country's embassy website.
- 3. Original passport or official travel document.** There must be a blank page in the passport/document where the visa sticker can be placed. The required validity period of the passport/document beyond the travel to the Schengen country may vary.
- 4. Proof of purpose of the visit.** Invitation letters from friends or conference organisers may have to be verified by the local town hall/city hall. This may take time and you should be encouraged to start making arrangements as early as possible. Bookings and reservations for accommodation or tours need to be shown if applicable.
- 5. Time remaining on the permission ('leave') to enter and/or remain in the UK.** You should check that your current student visa will allow you to return to the UK. If you have less than three months remaining on your Tier 4 leave you will be unlikely to be granted re-entry to the UK. Most Schengen member states ask for a specific period of leave remaining on the UK student visa beyond the trip for which the Schengen visa is sought. The length of this period can vary, but may be as long as six months. Please also ensure that your passport has at least six months' validity remaining before arranging any travel.
- 6. Evidence of sufficient funds to complete the trip.** The applicant has to show that they can support themselves during their stay in a particular country. Evidence confirming this can be recent bank statements and credit card statements showing

the current credit limit - cash is not always accepted as proof. Not all member states say how much is required.

7. Visa fee. Visa fees charged by the different embassies and consulates vary and you should check the current fee and which form of payment is acceptable before you submit your application. The fee can be paid in pounds sterling (or euros in some cases) - it is approximately £45. Please note that most of the embassies state that the fee should be paid in cash and they will not accept cheques or conduct credit card transactions. The fee is usually non-refundable, whether the application is successful or not.

8. Evidence of occupation/student status. You will have to show documentary evidence from the institution explaining that you are a genuine student. Please download a 'Confirmation of Enrolment Letter' from MyNorthumbria.

9. Medical insurance to cover the period. Some Schengen member states require proof of medical insurance which covers the entire trip.

How long will the application take?

It is important for you to think ahead about any possible trips you would like to make within Europe, either for vacation purposes or to attend conferences. Most embassies describe the process as taking around three weeks. However, the length of time that it takes to obtain a Schengen visa varies considerably, with the passports of certain nationalities being sent to the authorities in the Schengen state itself before a visa is issued.

Most embassies do not issue Schengen visas on the same day of application, although they may consider doing so in exceptional circumstances.

For a list of all embassies in the UK go to: www.gov.uk/government/publications/foreign-embassies-in-the-uk

Contact Us

Visit us at an Ask4Help point

Tel: 0191 227 4127
sv.welfareandinternational@northumbria.ac.uk

Current Northumbria students should make enquiries via the Student Portal:
myportal.northumbria.ac.uk



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northumbria.ac.uk/internationalsupport

