



Visas for exchange study abroad and summer school

Important information for Study Exchange students from the European Economic Area (EEA) or Swiss nationals

The information provided in this information sheet is aimed at [EEA \(including EU\)](#) & Swiss nationals who are planning to study at Liverpool John Moores University on an exchange programme (ie: Erasmus) in the academic year 2020/21 (students coming to study in semester 2 commencing January/ February 2021).

If you are not a citizen of an EEA member state or Switzerland, please contact the International Student Advice Team InternationalAdvice@ljmu.ac.uk for advice on the current visa requirements.

Please note: Information is subject to change due to ongoing negotiations between the UK and EU.

Brexit and the Transition Period

The UK left the EU on 31 January 2020 and entered a standstill Transition Period, during which UK-EEA free movement continues until 31 December 2020.

The UK government are currently in ongoing negotiations with the EU about the future UK-EU relationship, including on citizens' rights.

However, the UK government have stated that intra UK & EEA freedom of movement will end at the end of the Transition Period.

However, the UK government have announced the continuation of the pre existing rules for the Anglo-Irish Common Travel Area (CTA) meaning that Anglo-Irish freedom of movement will continue and the following information does not apply to Irish citizens.

The UK government are currently implementing a new UK immigration system, which will also apply to EEA & Swiss nationals coming to the UK after 31 December 2020.

Under the new UK immigration system, the UK government have stated that EEA & Swiss nationals arriving in the UK **after** 11pm (GMT) on 31 December 2020 will be considered as non-visa nationals for most short stays in UK of 6 months or less. A visa will generally be required for stays in the UK of longer than 6 months.

Arriving in the UK before 11pm (GMT) on 31 December 2020

EEA & Swiss nationals arriving in the UK before 11pm (GMT) on 31 December 2020 will be able to enter and live in the UK under the pre existing UK-EEA freedom of movement rules, without requiring specific immigration permission.

EEA & Swiss nationals who arrive in the UK before 11pm (GMT) on 31 December 2020 will be free to study and work under pre existing UK-EEA freedom of movement rules, without requiring any other immigration permission.

EEA & Swiss nationals should obtain a [European Health Insurance Card](#) (EHIC) or other comprehensive sickness insurance before coming to the UK in order to be access free [healthcare in the UK](#) National Health Service (NHS).

If you plan to remain in the UK beyond 30 June 2021, you will need to make an application to the [EU Settlement Scheme](#) before 30 June 2021

Arriving in the UK after 11pm (GMT) on 31 December 2020

Unless there are any major changes as a result of the ongoing UK-EU negotiations on the future UK-EU relationship, as UK-EEA freedom of movement will end in the UK, EEA and Swiss nationals will need to obtain the relevant immigration permission to enter the UK.

As the UK government has stated that EEA and Swiss nationals will be considered as non-visa nationals for short visits to the UK, prior Entry Clearance (a visa) will not normally be required for visits of 6 months or less.

However, for some types of immigration permission, or for stays in the UK of longer than 6 months, prior Entry Clearance (a visa) will be required.

Below is a summary of the two immigration permission routes available for people coming to the UK for study.

UK Immigration Routes for Study: Overview for Study Exchange Students

There are two main immigration permission routes to study in the UK.

Which immigration route you require depends on a number of things, including the length of your studies.

The different immigration routes have different conditions attached. It is important that you obtain the right permission for your study exchange in the UK.

For most LJMU exchange students the Visitor route is the most appropriate route for coming to the UK to study.

Visitor:

- Visitor is immigration permission which allows study on a short course or exchange programme of 6 months or less at LJMU

- Nationals of some countries (visa nationals) need to apply for, and obtain prior Entry Clearance (a visa) to come to the UK as a Visitor
- Nationals of some countries (non-visa nationals) do not need to apply for prior Entry Clearance (a visa) and can request permission to enter the UK as a Visitor upon arrival at the UK border
- Permission to enter/ stay in the UK as a Visitor is for 6 months
- It is not normally possible to extend permission to stay as a Visitor
- Employment and engaging in business are not permitted as Visitors
- A Visitor visa costs £95 for a standard application for visa-nationals
- There is no charge for non-visa nationals requesting permission at the UK border without prior entry clearance

Note: The UK immigration rules change on 1 December 2020. Prior to this date a separate Short Term Study immigration permission route exists for study of less than 6 months. However, from 1 December 2020, Visitors will be permitted to study for up to 6 months at an accredited institution and the Short Term Study route will no longer be an option for study of less than 6 months.

Student Visas:

- A student visa is immigration permission which allows you to study a specific course of study or exchange programme of any length at LJMU.
- A student visa is required for studies of longer than 6 months (and may be an option for studies of shorter than 6 months)
- Visa sponsorship from LJMU is required and you will need a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) to apply for the visa
- An application for prior Entry Clearance (a Student visa) must be made and obtained in your home country before coming to the UK
- It is possible in some cases to apply for an extension of a student visa
- Restricted employment is usually permitted on a student visa
- A Student Visa costs £348 for standard application. An additional Immigration Health Surcharge is also charged for visas longer than 6 months

Note: Under changes to the UK Immigration Rules, the new Student Visa route replaced the old Tier 4 Student Visa route on 5 October 2020

Visitor v Student visa – which one to choose?

Coming to the UK as a Visitor is generally the most suitable option for most exchange students, but a Student Visa may be an option if, for example, you wish to be able to work part-time while you are studying or if you need to extend your stay in the UK as a Student.

- Visitor permission is for a duration of no more than 6 months, and short periods of study of up to 6 months is permitted

- Visitor permission cannot be extended and work is prohibited (with the exception of students on medical electives).
- If you will be studying for a period of less than six months on most programmes, you can come to the UK as a Visitor (in some cases it may be possible to come to the UK with a Student Visa).
- If you will be studying for a period of more than six months, you must apply for Student Visa before travelling to the UK.
- Normally a Student visa is issued for the length of the course + some additional time after the studies, depending on the length of the course.
- A Student Visa is more expensive than a Visitor Visa (£348 v £95)
- However, for non-visa nationals, no visa is required for entry to the UK as a Visitor and permission to enter is granted at the UK border is free of charge (You cannot enter the UK with Student Permission this way).
- If you come to the UK as a Visitor, you cannot switch to a Student Visa in the UK

Visitor: Visa nationals and Non-Visa Nationals

- If you are from one of the countries on the [Visa National list](#), you are considered a visa national. You must apply for and be granted your Visitor visa before you travel to the UK.
- If you are not from one of the countries on the [Visa National list](#), you are considered a non-visa national and you can request permission to enter the UK as a Visitor at the UK border without requiring a visa.

Coming to the UK as a Visitor

Information and guidance on coming to the UK as a Visitor can be found on the UK Government website

- <https://www.gov.uk/standard-visitor-visa>

Applying for a Student Visa

Information and guidance on applying for a Student Visa can be found on the UK Government website

- <https://www.gov.uk/student-visa>

Guidance for arrival in the UK (entering using the e-gates)

- EEA & Swiss nationals, and nationals of Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea & the United States of America), can use e-gates at the border to enter the UK at ports where they exist.
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- Permission is granted automatically by entry at the e-gate but no stamp is issued to demonstrate your entry into the UK, so it is important to keep a note of the date of your entry (as Visitor permission is for 6 months)

- You should keep evidence of your arrival in the UK (eg: flight ticket and boarding pass) to demonstrate when you arrived, as this will be required for registration at LJMU

Guidance for arrival in the UK (where entry using e-gates is not possible)

- Present your passport (or EEA or Swiss National Identity Card) to the Border Force Officer (and your Entry Clearance visa if applicable)
- Confirm to the Border Force Officer that you are coming to the UK to study as an exchange student on a formal agreement between our universities and you wish to enter as a visitor, if required
- Carry your LJMU Confirmation of Placement letter, proof of accommodation booked in Liverpool and your most recent bank statements with you in your hand luggage so you can present them to an Border Force Officer to provide evidence for the purpose of your stay, if required
- You must not enter via the Republic of Ireland. If you do, you will not pass through UK immigration control and you will not get the correct permission for study in the UK. You will only have permission to remain in the UK for 3 months. This means you will need to leave the UK and enter again the correct way and then you will be registered at LJMU

Evidence for LJMU to complete registration

- In order to complete your registration on arrival at LJMU you should present your passport and visa, including the passport stamp if you have one (or in some case evidence of your flight ticket and boarding pass where you have entered using the e-gates, where permitted)

Travelling during your studies

- If you have a Visitor visa (visa sticker in your passport), it should be valid for 6 months and should state 'multiple entry' to the UK. This means that you should be able to leave and re-enter the UK during your studies.
- If you have entered the UK as a Visitor with permission at the border (if you are a non-visa national), you will need to request new permission to enter the UK as a Visitor each time you re-enter the UK.
- In either case, you should carry your Confirmation of Study Letter/LJMU student card in your hand luggage in case you need to prove to the UK Border Force Officer that you are still studying.

After your studies

- If you have come to the UK as a Visitor, you should not stay in the UK for more than 6 months.
- If you have a Student visa, you must leave the UK by the expiry date of the visa unless you have made a valid application for an extension of stay.

Working in the UK

There are different rules about working in the UK depending on the type of immigration permission that an individual has

- **Working with a Student Visa:**
 - For most studies at degree level or above at LJMU a Student Visa normally allows work of up to 20 hours per week during term-time and unlimited hours during official vacation periods.
 - For most studies below degree level a Student Visa normally allows work of up to 10 hours per week during term-time and unlimited hours during official vacation periods.
- **Working as a Visitor:**
 - Work is normally prohibited if you are in the UK as a visitor
 - One exception is work for limited clinical attachments for dentistry and medicine students at overseas institutions

Visa / Immigration Advice at Liverpool John Moores University

We have a dedicated International Student Advice Team who can provide students coming to study at Liverpool John Moores University with specialist immigration and visa related advice

- Contact: InternationalAdvice@ljmu.ac.uk
- Web: www.ljmu.ac.uk/discover/student-support/international-student-support

The United Kingdom Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA) also provide detailed information and guidance on visa/ immigration and related matters for international students coming to study in the UK

- www.ukcisa.org.uk