



Immigration advice for non-visa nationals attending Summer School – March 2019

How do I know if I am a non-visa national?

Check the list in Appendix 2 on [this page](#). If your country is **not** on that list, you are a non-visa national.

What is a non-visa national?

A non-visa national can travel to the UK for a visit of up to 6 months without having obtained a visa before travelling. You are still subject to immigration controls but you can request to enter the UK as a Short-Term Student when you arrive at the UK border.

I've checked the [UKVI website](#) and it tells me I won't need a visa to come to the UK. Why have LSE contacted me to say I need a Short-term Student visa?

When you check if you need a visa, you may see the following message:

You won't need a visa to come to the UK

However, you should bring documents with you to show at the border. See the relevant [student visa](#) guide to see what documents to bring.

This means you do not need to apply for a visa before travelling, **but** you must still get the correct immigration permission at the border. The stamp you obtain at the border is known as "Leave to Enter" and is your immigration permission to be in the UK.

If you are coming to the UK for the main purpose of attending Summer School you should request to enter the UK as a **Short-term Student**. This is very similar to entering the UK as a Standard Visitor (tourist) however you must inform the Border Force Officer that study is the main purpose of your visit to the UK and that you wish to enter as a Short-Term Student and check that your passport is stamped accordingly.

Is it possible to apply in advance?

Whilst non-visa nationals are not required to obtain Short-Term Study immigration permission before travelling to the UK, you may do so if you wish. If you choose to apply in advance, you may want to write a covering letter explaining your reasons as it is quite unusual for a non-visa national to do this. If you have a complicated or adverse immigration history, it may be best to apply before travelling. [Contact ISVAT](#) for advice if required.

How long is Short-Term Study valid for?

6 months. This cannot be extended and it is not possible to apply for any other UK visas whilst in the UK as a Short-Term Student.

What documents should I prepare?

You will need a [visa letter from Summer School](#). This guidance is based on frequently asked questions. It is not intended to be used on its own and you should use it in combination with the detailed guidance available on our [website](#).

Can ISVAT provide me with a Summer School Visa Letter?

No, the Summer School office produces all visa letters. Please [email them directly](#) if you have specific queries. ISVAT cannot assist with visa letter queries.

Can I use a print out of the PDF version of the Summer School visa letter?

Yes, you can submit a PDF copy of your visa letter with your visa application. Please email the [Summer School](#) for a PDF copy.

What do I do when I arrive at the UK border?

Have the required documents and your passports ready to show the Border Force Officer. When asked about the purpose of your trip, say that you will be attending Summer School at LSE. If you are granted entry, your passport should be endorsed with a Short-Term Study stamp; please check that the stamp states 'STS or 'Short-term Study' before you leave. It is not possible to go back and get it amended.

Can I use the E-Gates to enter the UK as a short-term student?

If you use the e-gates to enter the UK, you will be entering as a tourist and will not have the correct permission for Summer School. You should speak to a Border Force Officer in person.

I didn't mention my studies at the border and I entered as a tourist. Can I still attend Summer School?

If you have entered the UK as a Standard Visitor (tourist) because you did not declare your studies as the main purpose of your visit, you do not have the correct immigration permission for the Summer School. The Immigration Rules permit up to 30 days of study per visit as a Standard Visitor, but the study can only be incidental to the main purpose of your trip. You can register for studies as a Standard Visitor if you can prove that attending Summer School is incidental to your main reason for being in the UK. If study is the main purpose, you may need to leave and re-enter the UK as a Short-Term Student in order to be eligible to register for Summer School.

Can I be refused entry at the UK border?

Yes, if you do not meet the requirements for Short-Term Study or if a Border Force Officer feels that you are not genuinely seeking entry to the UK for the purpose of Short-Term Study, which could affect future immigration. Whilst no guarantees can be made with regards to immigration, our recommendation is that you prepare the required documentation and read our guidance before you travel to the UK

I've been advised not to enter the UK via Ireland, why is this?

The Republic of Ireland is not part of the UK but it is part of the Common Travel Area, therefore you will not pass through UK immigration control upon arrival in the UK. This means you will not be able to request entry for the purpose of Short-Term Study upon arrival. Our advice is to either avoid travelling to the UK via Ireland or if you choose to travel via Ireland, obtain a Short-Term Study visa before you travel. [UKCISA](#) has further information about this.

Can I leave and re-enter the UK as a Short-Term Student?

Leave to enter as a Short-Term Student is only single entry. If you leave the UK (e.g. if you choose to take a trip to Paris for the weekend or if you'd like to travel in between two Summer School sessions), you will need to ensure that you carry the documents required to request entry for the purpose of Short-Term Study again at the border.

How long can I stay in the UK after Summer School ends?

You are permitted to stay in the UK for up to 30 days after your course ends or until the end of your visa, whichever is sooner.

Can I add another session of the Summer School after I have arrived?

The immigration rules allow you to add another programme of study as long as it can be completed within 30 days of your initial studies ending. You may be able to add one more session, but not two as this will exceed 30 days.

What are the permitted activities on Short-Term Study?

[This website](#) explains what you can and can't do. Work is not permitted however you can volunteer. There is a difference between voluntary work and volunteering. You can find the official definition on page 13 of [this document](#). Please note that doing an unpaid internship or working for free to gain work experience is not volunteering; that is voluntary work which is not permitted whilst in the UK as a Short-Term Student.

I'm doing Summer School before starting a degree at another university. Can I apply for a Tier 4 from inside the UK?

If you enter the UK as a Short-Term Student you cannot apply for a Tier 4 visa in the UK. Discuss your plans with the other institution to see if they have any advice. Depending on when the course starts, it may be possible for you to attend Summer School as 'supplementary study' before your main course begins. This will depend on course dates and visa validity dates.

I am a dual national; which nationality should I use to enter the UK?

It is your decision. You can only enter the UK as a non-visa national if you request to enter the UK using a valid passport of a nationality not on the list in [Appendix 2](#). If you are also a national of a country on that list, you would only need to obtain a visa before travelling to the UK if you wanted to use come to the UK as a national of that country.

I already have a UK visa, can I use it to register for Summer School?

It depends what visa you have. [Contact ISVAT](#) for advice.

If I get ill while I'm in the UK, can I use the National Health Service?

You won't have free access to the UK's National Health Service (NHS) whilst in the UK as a Short-Term Student therefore we recommend that you obtain your own private medical insurance before you travel.

Does Short-Term Study give me permission to visit other countries too?

No. The Short-Term Study immigration permission is only applicable to the UK; which is England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. If you would like to visit other countries (including the Republic of Ireland and other European countries), you should check the immigration requirements for that country before you travel.

I'd prefer a Tier 4 visa for Summer School, is that possible?

If you are only studying Summer School at the LSE, you cannot be sponsored by LSE under Tier 4.

I'm doing Summer School as a condition of my offer for a degree at LSE. Should I use Short-Term Study or Tier 4?

If you will be attending Summer School as a condition of your main programme at LSE, it may be possible to apply for a Tier 4 visa for Summer School however that will depend on the timing of the Summer School session you attend.