



Frequently Asked Questions

Do I need to attend an embassy to make my visa application?

Visa applications are submitted online. After this you will need to book an appointment at a Visa Application Centre in your home country. Please note that Visa Application Centres are not the same as country embassies. At this appointment you will need to provide your relevant identity document for scanning, along with your biometrics (your fingerprints and photograph) as follows:

- **Finger Scans:** The Visa Application Centre will take scans of your finger prints. This is an electronic process which does not require the use of any ink, liquid or chemicals. Please note that any decoration (such as henna), or any cuts or other markings on the fingertips can prevent the successful capture of the required finger scans.
- **Digital Photograph:** The Visa Application Centre will also take a digital photograph of your face and you should not wear sunglasses, a hat or any other head covering (unless for cultural or religious reasons). Please note that any cuts, bruises or abrasions on the face may prevent the successful capture of the required photograph and so any cuts, bruises or abrasions to the face must have healed or disappeared before the photograph is taken.

There is no Visa Application Centre in my country. What should I do?

Use the following link to find your nearest application centre -

<https://www.gov.uk/find-a-visa-application-centre>. You will see that this list provides alternatives for countries where application centres are closed or there is no available centre. When you first proceed to complete your application form you will be asked to check if there is a centre near you that you can use - please check this link before completing your application.

How early can I apply for a visit visa?

You should apply as soon as possible. You may submit an application for a visit visa up to three months before your intended date of travel.

How long does the process take?

The whole process can be split into two stages:

- **STAGE 1: Submitting your application** - In order to complete this stage you must complete and submit an online form and attend an appointment at a Visa Application Centre. The availability of the appointments continue to be affected by the covid-19 pandemic and varies from country to country. We therefore recommend that you submit your application as soon as possible.
- **STAGE 2: Home Office Consideration** - After you have attended your appointment at the Visa Application Centre, your application, including your supporting documents, will be considered by the Home Office. The Home Office are currently advising that it can take up to three weeks to make a decision on visit visa applications, although please note that decision timelines should be viewed as guidelines and not guarantees. It may take more or less time for them to make a decision depending on the complexity of the application and their general capacity. If available, the priority service may be selected for an additional fee, which may mean that a decision is reached more swiftly. Please note that there may be a further delay of several days before your visa is stamped in your passport following submission of your application.

How long can I stay in the UK?

If granted a standard visitor visa you may stay in the UK as a visitor for up to six months. You may re-enter the UK as often as you like during this 6 months period, however please note that UK Border Force officials are entitled to ask you questions on each entry to determine whether you are complying with the terms of your visa. Therefore if you intend to stay in the UK beyond COP26 you will need to provide evidence from your employer that you are being given additional time off and that you can support yourself during this time.

Can I work while I am in the UK?

You cannot undertake employment while in the UK. It is very important that you do not work while in the UK as this will be considered a serious breach of your visa terms. You are able to 'volunteer' for a registered charity, however this cannot amount to 'voluntary work' i.e. you cannot be paid in kind, you cannot have a contract and you should not be carry out any work such as admin or fundraising.

Can I stay in the UK after my visa expires?

You can only remain in the UK under a very limited set of circumstances. You should seek independent legal advice as soon as possible if you need to stay in the UK beyond the terms of your visa.

Do my supporting documents need to be in English?

Yes – where an original document is not in English, it must be accompanied by a certified translation. The translation must include details of the translator/translation company's credentials, confirmation that it is an accurate translation of the original document, and the translator/translation company's contact details. It must also be dated and include

the original signature of the translator or an authorised official of the translation company.

How much do I need in the bank to show for the purposes of this visa?

The UK government guidance does not state how much money you need to show, however in practice the amount that you show will need to be enough to support you without needing to access funds from the UK government and without working. It is advisable that you show as much as you can by way of funds in addition to those required to cover your expenses, including accommodation and transport etc, however you should not deposit a large amount of money into your account prior to submission of your application simply for the purpose of satisfying this requirement.