

Visitors

Immigration requirements

Any non-EEA migrants visiting the University of St Andrews who wishes to participate in any activity must hold an appropriate visa. Please note that any migrant holding a “*general tourist/visitor*” visa granted by an immigration officer are not allowed to participate in any activities in the University.

Depending on the nature of the activities involved, visitors to the University may be required to hold a Business Visitor Visa, Academic Visitor Visa, Permitted Paid Engagement (PPE) visa or a Tier 5 (Government Authorised Exchange) visa. Each visa category has strict eligibility criteria and is restrictive in permissible activities while in the UK.

It is recognised that it could be considered potentially embarrassing to request that, for example, a visiting Professor to confirm their immigration status prior to their visit. However, it would be significantly more embarrassing to the individual or to the University if such a person was refused entry into the UK or identified as an illegal migrant by the UKVI visit and subsequently deported.

Advice and Further guidance

It is important that any non-EEA migrant visiting the University obtains the most appropriate for activities they will be doing in the UK. It is not possible provide guidance on every visitor situation that may occur therefore please contact Human Resources for further information.

Below are the main visitor categories applicable to the University:

Business Visitors

The UKVI defines a Business Visitor as someone who is employed overseas but intends to come to the UK temporarily to do business on their own or their employer's behalf. Business Visitors may come to the UK for a maximum of six months.

A Business Visitor visa is required for to undertaking one or more of the following unpaid activities:

- Attending interviews, meetings and conferences;
- Conducting site visits and arranging/signing trade agreements;
- Speaking at a one-off conference;
- Translating for a business person;
- Board-level directors attending board meetings;
- Scientists sharing knowledge and experience relevant to an international project being led from the UK (but not conducting research).

Academic Visitors

Academic Visitors are a sub-group of the Business Visitor category. To qualify as an Academic Visitor, the applicant must be able to produce evidence that they have been working in a Higher Education Institution overseas, or in the field of their academic expertise immediately before seeking entry to the UK as an Academic Visitor. Academic Visitors may come to the UK for a maximum of 12 months.

An Academic Visitor Visa is required for to undertaking one or more of the following activities:

- Academics on sabbatical leave who wish to come to University of St Andrews to carry out research (e.g. research for writing a book);
- Academics coming to share knowledge and experience or to hold informal discussions with UK counterparts (but not conducting research on University projects);
- Academics coming on a formal exchange arrangement;
- Academics coming to take part in a single conference/ lecture;

- Eminent senior doctors and dentists coming to take part in research, teaching and/or clinical practice.

Academics or students coming to the University to collaborate with University staff on University-hosted formal research projects are likely to be classed as sponsored researchers and would require a Tier 5 Certificate of Sponsorship.

Restrictions

Those intending to enter the UK under any visitor visa can only conduct the permitted activities as indicated on your visa application. Visa holders must also not:

- undertake take other paid or unpaid work
- be filling a normal post or a genuine vacancy
- live in the UK for more than 6 or 12 months and intend to leave the UK at the end of their visit
- receive pay from a UK source (although payment of reasonable expenses to cover the cost of travel and subsistence from a UK source is permitted);
- marry or register a civil partnership, or give notice of marriage or civil partnership
- get private medical treatment

You must also provide that can maintain and accommodate themselves (and any dependants) without using public funds as well as meet the cost of an onward or return journey.

Those who are unlikely to be qualify as Business or Academic Visitors include

- Recent graduates
- People on sabbatical leave from private research companies
- Named researchers coming to work on University-hosted formal research projects
- Someone coming to give a paid lecture or series of lectures (whether paid or unpaid)
- Students coming on internships specifically to undertake research
- Students coming on non-research internships or work placements

In the above cases either a Tier 1, 2 or 5 visa may be required. This should be discussed with Human Resources prior to traveling to the UK.

Application process

Migrants applying under the visitors category who **are not** '*visa nationals*' and who are coming to the UK for less than six months **do not** require an visitor visa in advance of travel to the UK. However, they must announce the purpose of their visit (i.e. as a Business or Academic Visitor) to immigration officers at the UK port of entry and satisfy the immigration officers that they meet the visitor requirements.

Migrants applying under the visitors category who **are** '*visa nationals*', or who are not visa nationals but intend to come to the UK for longer than six months, **do** require a visa in advance of travel to the UK. Migrants who require a visa in advance of travel to the UK can find further information on how to apply for a visa on the UKVI website at <https://www.gov.uk/business-visitor-visa>.

All Visitors (regardless of whether they require a visa in advance of travel to the UK, or not) will require a letter of invitation from their host at the University to submit with their visa application or present to immigration officers at the UK border. Please note that a letter of invitation will not guarantee a successful visa application/ successful entry to the UK. This decision is made solely by immigration officers overseas and/or at the UK port of entry.

Permitted Paid Engagement Visitors (PPE)

The category of visitors undertaking permitted paid engagements is for a defined list of visitors who are invited to come to the UK because of their particular skills and expertise. They may apply to come to the UK for up to 1 month without the need to be sponsored under the points-based system. This route allows visitors to undertake a short-term, fee-paid permitted paid engagement which falls under one or more of the permissible activities

In the University a migrant with a PPE visa can:

- be a student external examiner or assessor
- take part in selection panels for the education, arts or research organisation you're invited by as a highly qualified academic
- give lectures, as long as you're not in a formal teaching role
- take part in arts, entertainment or sporting activities including broadcasting

PPE visa holders cannot, amongst other things:

- do specific paid work unrelated to your main job or area of expertise at home or sell merchandise, other than what's allowed by your visa
- extend this visa or switch to another visa
- live in the UK for extended periods
- get public funds
- study

A formal invitation letter from the University will be required.

Further information on PPE visa and the application process can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/permitted-paid-engagement-visa/>.

Tier 5 (Government Authorised Exchange)

A Sponsored Researcher is a migrant who wishes to come to the UK to work on supernumerary research projects within the University although not necessarily funded by the University. Sponsored Researchers should enter the UK under the Tier 5 (Government Authorised Exchange) category of the Points Based System.

Please see section on Tier 5 visas.

Student Visitor Visa

A migrant entering the UK on a student visitor visa is not permitted to work or conduct any business activities at the University including research activities.