

Applying for a Schengen visa

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Step 1 - Planning your trip

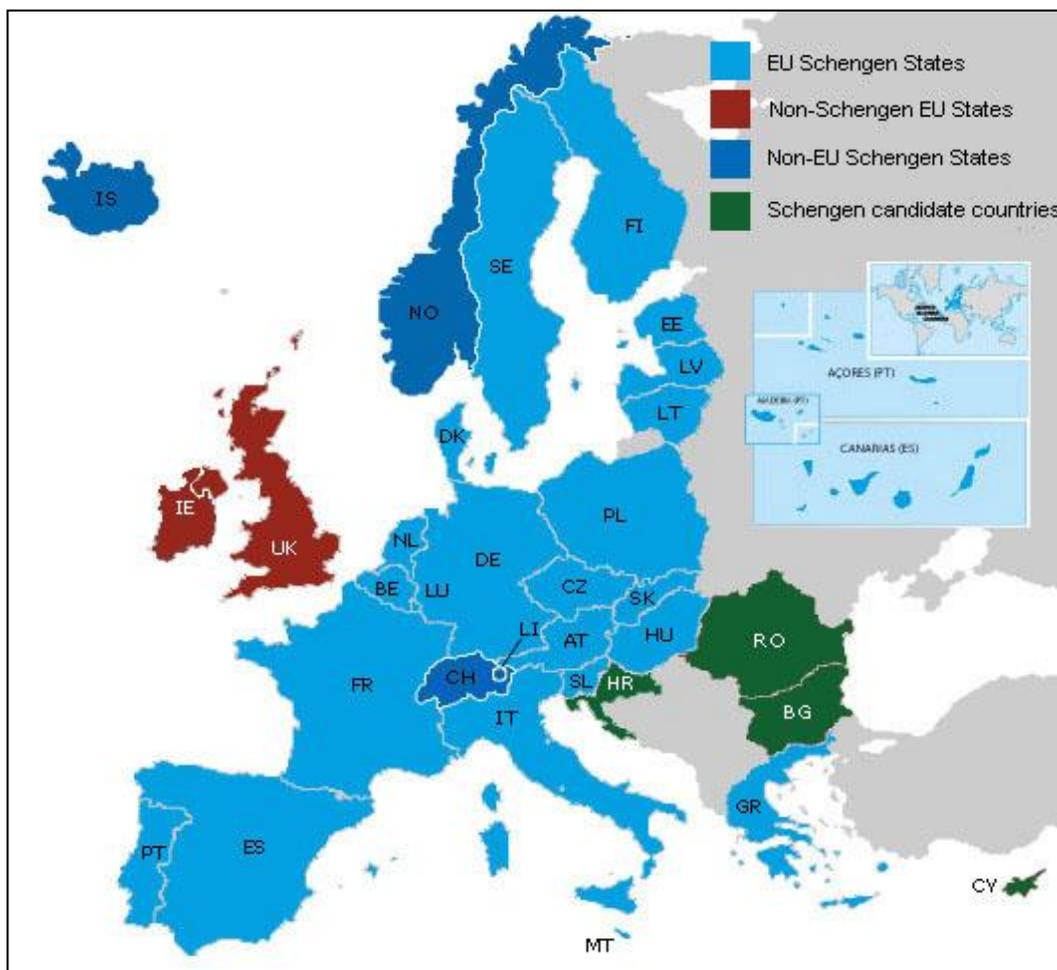
Where can I travel to on a Schengen visa?

A Schengen visa allows visitors to visit a number of designated countries with only one visa.

Not all EU countries are in the Schengen zone and not all Schengen zone countries are in the EU, so please check that the country you want to visit will be accessible with this visa.

For example, the UK and Ireland *are not* accessible with a Schengen visa despite being EU member states.

Most of the countries in the Schengen zone are in the European Union and some countries may be added to the Schengen list in the future; please refer to the map below for a guide to the current Schengen area.



Source: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/schengen/index_en.htm [accessed 28/02/14;10:00]

Countries in the Schengen area

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

Step 2 - Before you apply

What do I need to consider before I apply?

Some non-EEA nationals do not need to apply for a Schengen visa in advance and are allowed to apply on arrival at the Schengen border (you would still need to obtain the documents required for an application and carry them in your hand luggage so you can prove when you apply at the border that you meet the requirements to do so).

Usually a Schengen visa will be applied for if you want to visit a Schengen country for the purposes of tourism. However, you can also apply as a “business visitor” or as a “family visitor”. Please check with the Embassy or Consulate you will apply with to find out which visa type is right for you.

You will need to consider how many times you plan to go to the Schengen zone from the UK over the next three months to decide whether you should apply for a single or multiple entry Schengen visa:

- a visa covering one trip of up to 90 days (*“single-entry”*), or
- a visa that allows you to enter and leave the Schengen area more than once over a 90 day period (*“multiple-entry”*).

Please note however, that even if you apply for a multiple-entry visa you may only be granted a single-entry visa. It is the decision of the visa caseworker whether they grant the type of visa you have requested.

Remember that you will also need to ask permission first from your School / College / Supervisor if you want to travel in term-time.

Check that your passport is valid for the period you will be away. If it is going to expire during this time, you must apply for a new one well in advance of your trip. Also, check that your UK visa will not expire before your return to the UK. If it will expire, you should apply for an extension of stay before you go.

- ❗ You will need at least 3 months left on your passport and on your UK visa from the date you will leave the Schengen area.

Please remember to take your passport and your Biometric Residence Permit card (if you have one) when you travel. If you plan to re-enter the UK on a student visa when you leave the Schengen area you must show evidence that you still meet the conditions of that visa.

You can carry proof of your student status and evidence you meet the financial support required for your UK visa in your hand luggage. When you re-enter the UK, you can then use this evidence to help demonstrate to the Border Force Officer that you qualify for re-admission to the UK.

- ❗ If you are a student who applied for leave to enter when you arrived in the UK, your immigration permission will come to an end when you leave the UK. If you need to re-enter the UK, you would then need to apply again on arrival (carrying with you all of the required application documents in your hand luggage).

Step 3 - The application process

How can I make the Schengen visa application?

Applications should be made to the Embassy or Consulate (in the UK) of the country that you wish to visit.

If you will visit more than one country in the Schengen zone during your trip, you will need to apply to either:

- The Embassy of the country where you will spend the most time *or*
- The Embassy of the country you will arrive in first (if you will spend equal amounts of time in different countries)

The application form for a Schengen visa varies slightly between countries so please check with the Embassy or Consulate of the country you will apply to which one you need to use.

What documents do I need to prepare?

The types of documents acceptable as evidence vary according to the Embassy/Consulate you are applying to for a Schengen visa.

We have made a list of common documents in this guide that are required for most Schengen visa applications. This list should be used for general guidance. You will need to check the website of the relevant Embassy or Consulate representing that country in the UK to determine what documents are required and what they need to show to be acceptable.

You can contact the Embassy/Consulate with any application or document queries by e-mail or telephone. There is a list of Embassies and Consulates in Glasgow and Edinburgh on page 22 in the [International Student Handbook](#). If you cannot find the details of the Embassy or Consulate you are looking for, please contact us and we can assist you with this.

- The completed Schengen visa application form

This may be submitted online, in person or via the mail, depending on the Embassy/Consulate requirements. You will need to pay an application fee as well. Check if you can pay the application fee by card, cash, cheque etc.

You may be able to apply in-person, online or by post – the Embassy or Consulate can confirm how to apply and which form to use.

Remember to make your application at least 1 month ahead of time. Some Embassies have a rule that applications must be submitted within a certain timeframe!

- Your current, valid passport

You must have at least 3 months left on your passport from the date you will *return* from your Schengen holiday to the UK. Your passport must contain blank pages.

Some Embassies will only accept applications from holders of passports issued (not extended) within the last 10 years. Therefore, holders of passports which were issued more than 10 years ago may be required to apply for a new passport.

If you have your current visa as a sticker and this is in a previous passport please also include this.

- Current valid visa

This could be on a sticker in your current or previous passport or it may be on a BRP card if you have previously extended your visa inside the UK.

You must have at least 3 months left on your current Tier 4 / Student visa from the date you will leave the Schengen area.

- Recent passport-sized photographs

Check on the Embassy or Consulate website for the photograph requirements:

- How many photos are required?
- How recent must they be?
- What size / measurements must the photographs and your face be?
- Any other requirements?

- Travel insurance documents

Travel insurance is usually required to cover emergency medical expenses up to a certain value (commonly a minimum cover value of €30,000).

It is usually required that the travel insurance policy must cover all of the countries in the Schengen area for the duration of your requested stay.

Your policy may also cover you for other things, such as theft or loss of belongings – be sure to check what you are covered for before you travel and select a policy that seems practical.

It is easy to search for a travel insurance provider on the internet or high street. Travel insurance can be bought from the Post Office as well as at many banks, travel agencies, supermarkets and specialist insurance brokers

- Return travel booking/travel plan

Most Embassies require you to show that you have paid for return flights for all of your holiday. If you are travelling to several countries, it is commonly requested that you prepare a travel plan with exact dates of travel for your whole trip.

The Embassy website may have a template travel plan that you can complete or you could print one from a travel website.

The travel plan will show what Schengen countries you will visit, the dates you will be in each of those countries and the number of days you will spend in each Schengen country.

- Confirmation of accommodation for the duration of your stay

This could be hotel/hostel bookings for the whole period of your stay. Some Embassies will only accept hotel bookings which are confirmed directly by the hotel in writing (and not by a travel agency).

If you will be staying with friends/family, they may be required to complete an extra form confirming where you will be staying and/or send a copy of their passport and visa for that country.

- Confirmation of pre-paid travel

This could be receipts of the planes, ferries or other forms of transport you have booked for travel from the UK to your Schengen destination/s (including internal flights).

You should also include evidence of transport booked to return to the UK before the Schengen visa expires or to leave and enter another non-Schengen country.

- Student Status / Certifying Letter

Print this yourself from “My Campus” then take to the Student Services Enquiry Desk to be stamped (the SSET’s official stamp is required to show it is an authentic document). Please check to ensure that the details on the certifying letter are sufficient to meet the Embassy’s/Consulate’s requirements.

- Evidence of funds (for living costs)

Some Embassies require you to show a fixed amount of money has been held across a certain time period (e.g. £500 for up to 9 days (£450) plus £50 for each extra day).

Others may ask for evidence that you have a nominal amount to cover your living costs for each day of your visit in that country (e.g. £50 a day for 5 days = £250).

Check the Embassy website for the type of documents that they will accept (e.g. credit card / debit card statement or bank letter). Different Embassies accept different documents and may also expect documents to show different time periods.

Before you travel...

It is useful to carry the following documents in your hand luggage in case you are asked for evidence when you arrive at your Schengen destinations. You may be asked to prove your eligibility to re-enter the UK and these documents may assist you:

- a stamped Student Status/Certifying letter to show the start and end date of your course of study
- proof of financial support (e.g. bank statements, sponsor letter)
- If you are have a Standard Visitor Visa, a return ticket from the UK to your home country (if you have it already).

Document checklist

Please note that this list is for guidance only. There may be additional documents required, if relevant to your application.

COMMON DOCUMENTS FOR A SCHENGEN APPLICATION	
The completed Schengen visa application form	
Your current, valid passport	
Recent passport-sized photograph/s	
Payment for application (taken at Consulate or Embassy)	
Current visa for UK (this will be either a sticker in your passport or on a BRP card)	
If you are not returning to the UK or your home country when you leave the Schengen area: Valid visa for other non-Schengen country covering the date you leave the Schengen area	
Certifying letter (confirms you are a student and details of your studies). Please check for any specific details required by the Embassy/Consulate	
Travel plan	
Financial documents showing the appropriate funds for the duration of your stay	
Evidence of pre-paid transport (e.g. plane, ferry)	
Evidence of pre-paid accommodation (e.g. hotels or hostels) or addresses you will stay at (e.g. if staying at the homes of friends or family)	
Policy and details for travel insurance	
Letter from family member or inviting organisation (if applying as Family / Business Visitor)	