

Studying an English Language Course

Visa Information

It is important that you apply for the right visa to study an English Language course at the University Language Centre. You should read the information below carefully to ensure that you choose the right visa type.

There are important differences to be aware of if you wish to have family members with you in the UK or if you wish to change to a Pre-Sessional English Language course during your studies.

Which visa to get?

There are three main visa types that allow you to study English Language in the UK: Visitor Visa, Short-Term Student Visa, and Student Visa (previously known as Tier 4). The most important differences are explained below:

Standard Visitor Visa

- Suitable for English Language courses of less than 6 months' duration
- It costs less than a Student Visa but you will need to buy your own private medical insurance as you will not have access to the National Health Service (NHS) for non-emergency treatment and care
- The visa cannot be extended in the UK and you cannot switch to any other type of visa - you must leave the UK before your visa expires or within a month of completing your course (whichever is earlier)
- You cannot take any kind of paid or unpaid work during your stay
- You cannot have dependants/ family members with you in the UK

Short-Term Student Visa

- Suitable for English language courses of 6-11 months' duration
- It is less expensive than a Student Visa but includes access to the National Health Service (NHS)
- The visa cannot be extended in the UK and you cannot switch to any other type of visa - you must leave the UK before your visa expires or within a month of completing your course (whichever is earlier)
- You cannot take any kind of paid or unpaid work during your stay
- You cannot have dependants/ family members with you in the UK

Student Visa

- This visa is valid for the length of your course
- You will have access to the National Health Service (NHS)
- You need to apply for a new visa if you change course, but in most cases you can make this new visa application in the UK
- You can extend this visa in the UK if you start a degree course
- You can take work in the UK for up to 10 hours a week
- You can have dependants/ family members with you in the UK if you meet certain requirements

You must inform the University Language Centre which visa type you wish to apply for, so they can provide necessary supporting documents for your visa application. You must check that you have all the required documents for your visa application before you apply.

Dependants

If you wish to bring family to the UK for your studies you must apply for a Student route. Your dependants would need to make their own Student Dependant Visa applications to come to the UK.

You can only bring dependants during your English Language course if you are financially sponsored by a government and your course is at least 6 months' in duration. Your dependants may be able to extend their Student Dependant visas in the UK if you change to a postgraduate-level degree course after completing your English Language course.

This webpage (add link) provides more information about dependant visa applications.

Changing to a Pre-Sessional Language Course

If you have a Student Visa and you change from an English Language course to a Pre-Sessional Language Course you must apply for a new Student visa before you can start the new course. You are not permitted to study the pre-sessional course on the Student Visa you have for the English Language course.

You can apply for your new Student visa for the Pre-Sessional course in the UK if you successfully complete your English Language course and have evidence of this. You can apply for the Pre-Sessional course visa using the [University Visa Checking Service](#) which is where the Student Immigration Team check your visa application and send it for you.

If you have Student Dependants and change to a Pre-Sessional course:



Please note that if you move to a Pre-sessional course and get a new Student visa as required you will no longer be allowed to have dependants with you in the UK. This is because the Pre-Sessional course is less than 6 months in duration.

Your Dependants could not apply for a new Student visa with you for the Pre-sessional course. They can remain in the UK until their visa expiry date, but be aware that this date may be changed by UK Visas & Immigration. If their visa expiry date is changed they will receive a curtailment notice providing a new visa expiry date which will be 60 days in the future.

They could re-apply as your Student Dependants if you apply for or receive a new visa for a postgraduate level course in the future. You should contact us directly for more advice if this will affect you and your dependants.

If you have a Standard Visitor Visa instead of a Short-Term Study Visa or a Student Visa you would not need to apply for a new visa to change to a pre-sessional course, but only if your current visa expiry date would cover the new course in full. If your Standard Visitor Visa would not cover the length of the new course you should return home and apply for a Student Visa to return to the UK. You must contact ULC about your visa when you apply for the Pre-Sessional course.

How to apply for your visa

For more information about how to apply for your new visa please visit our website:

www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/immigration-and-visas/

For Standard Visitor visas for courses of less than 6 months' duration please visit:

www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/immigration-and-visas/visas-and-applications/standard-visitor/

For Short-Term Study visas for courses of 6-11 months' duration please visit:

www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/immigration-and-visas/visas-and-applications/short-term-student/

For Student Visas for courses of any length please visit:

www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/immigration-and-visas/visas-and-applications/student-visa/

If you have any questions after reading this information and our website please contact us:

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