



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

IMMIGRATION FAQ - BELFAST

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Will I need a UK Student Visa

If you are an international student, you are likely to need a UK student visa to study in Belfast. This includes EU and EEA nationals (except those with settled or pre-settled status in the UK). If you hold an Irish or UK passport, you won't need a visa. It is the student's own responsibility to ensure the correct visa is in place, if required, before travelling.

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Can I bring dependents

Postgraduate research students can bring partners and children to live in the UK while they study. The Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation MPhil is a taught master's, therefore students on this course cannot bring dependents.

What do I need to apply for my visa

- You need to have accepted an unconditional offer for your course.
- A CAS (Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies) provided by Trinity College Dublin at Belfast.
- A valid passport.
- Ensure you can meet the financial requirements, see below.

Fees and financial requirements

Application fee

It costs £558 to apply for a student visa. Each person you are bringing with you must pay the fee.

Immigration Healthcare Surcharge

A student visa entitles you to access public health services for the duration of your studies, and the cost of this is covered by a mandatory healthcare surcharge payable as part of the application. The current cost is £776 for each 12-month period. As the student visa includes a month before the course start date and 4 months after the course ends, there is an additional fee to cover this time of £388, making a total of £1164.

Students applying for a visa to undertake a PhD, and any dependants, will need to meet the costs of the healthcare surcharge covering the full visa period up-front. A factsheet on healthcare is available on our [studying in Belfast](#) page.

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Evidence of enough money to cover course fees and living costs

As well as the above costs, you will need to have enough money to cover your course fees and living costs for up to 9 months. Living expenses are currently estimated at £1,171 per month. If your country qualifies for 'differential evidence requirements' you will not need to provide evidence of funds up front as part of your visa application, but can still be asked for this.

Students who do not qualify for differential arrangements due to their nationality will need to provide evidence they will have enough money to cover fees and living expenses as part of the visa application. The list of countries that qualify for the less strict differential evidence requirements is available at the link below.

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When do I apply and how do I get my CAS

If applying from outside the UK, the earliest you can apply is 6 months before the start of your course, or 3 months if applying from inside the UK. We begin issuing CAS numbers from late spring. If you have accepted a firm offer, we'll contact you to ask for a copy of your passport. This is used to create your CAS on the UK Visa system. You'll receive a PDF from us which includes your CAS number and other information you need to complete the visa application.

How do I apply

[Apply online](#). As part of your application, you'll need to prove your identity. How you do this depends on where you're from and what type of passport you have. You'll either:

- use the 'UK Immigration: ID Check' app to scan your identity document - you'll also create or sign into your UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) account, or
- have your fingerprints and photo (biometric information) taken at a [visa application centre](#)

How long does it take

You should usually expect to get a decision within 3 weeks (8 weeks if applying from inside the UK). Services are available to get a quicker decision if needed. See [Priority and Super Priority Visa Services](#).

How will I receive my visa

Stickers in passports are being phased out in 2026. You may still get one of these to show your leave to enter the UK, but everyone will also get an [e-visa](#). Your confirmation email will explain how to access your e-visa through either creating or linking your UKVI account.

Once you have your visa, you can share your immigration status with anyone who needs to check your permission by generating a Share Code using the [View and Prove Service](#). For example, an employer or accommodation provider might ask for it.

When available, please email a share code to the CRR office in Belfast: sradmb1st@tcd.ie. This allows us to download a PDF of your student visa for our records.

You can [report an error with your e-visa](#), for example, it says work is prohibited and you think this is wrong.

Arrival in Dublin and Irish visas

If you plan to fly into Dublin Airport, ensure that you have a valid Irish visa if you are visa-required for Ireland. To check if you need a visa, visit the official [Visit Ireland](#) website. See also Trinity's [Arriving in Ireland](#) page. After arriving in Dublin, you can travel to Belfast without routine immigration checks at the border with Northern Ireland. However, you must hold valid UK immigration permission to study and remain in Belfast. You should carry evidence of your UK Student visa when travelling.

If you arrive via the UK but wish to travel to Dublin during the course, check if you need a short visitor visa to visit the Republic of Ireland - see the official [Visit Ireland](#) website. The application is online and once completed you will need to post your supporting documents including your passport, so please take any travel plans into account. The CRR office can provide a letter to confirm your student status. It is recommended to start your application at least 3 months before you plan to travel. If, for example, you wish to start a Dublin module in January or attend the one-day Dublin field trip in March/April bear this in mind when making your application. For more information see [Irish Immigration Service](#).

Don't forget, you can complete your studies in Belfast without going to Dublin! It is also worth knowing that normally one module from the School's Dublin-based MPhil courses will be made available online for CRR students.

Course start date

CRR Orientation Day and the start of teaching are usually in early to mid-September; exact dates will be confirmed for incoming students as soon as they are available. Please note, the start and end dates on your CAS are the academic year dates of 1st September – 31st August, which are the same each year.

When can I travel

It is essential that you arrive on or after the start date of your student visa, otherwise it will not be valid! If you arrive before this date, you will need to leave the UK and re-enter during the correct timeframe. Your visa start date will usually be a few weeks before the course start date. It is not possible to enter as a tourist then switch to a student visa. As we are required to know your arrival date, we will ask for a copy of your flight ticket once available.

Can I work alongside my studies

Yes, normally a student visa permits you to work for 20 hours per week during term time* and full-time during holidays. This will be shown on your visa. There are limitations to the type of work students can undertake. You can't be self-employed or carry out business activity.

*The summer months when you are writing your dissertation are considered term time, so you are limited to 20 hours per week during this time. Once you have completed your course you can work full time.

Is the Community Placement covered by my student visa

The CRR course includes an optional placement module, 'Community Learning and Reflective Practice'. This is covered by the student visa. It is also worth knowing you are allowed to do other study outside your main course, for example evening classes.

How long can I stay in the UK

Students on a full student visa are normally granted leave to arrive in the UK a month before the course start date and stay for 4 months 'wrap up' period after the course ends. You may like to switch into the graduate visa if you wish to stay in the UK after your student visa ends.

Graduate Visa

You can apply for the graduate visa once you have successfully completed your course, and this has been verified by your university. You must be inside the UK and apply before the expiry date on your current visa. You can't leave the country while your application is being processed as it will be invalidated, so make sure to take any travel plans into account. For MPhil students starting in September 2026, the graduate visa is for 18 months post-study, for PhD students it is three years. You can do any type of work and won't need a sponsor for the graduate visa. The immigration healthcare surcharge is payable as part of the application.

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My UK Visa record

The CAS you receive to apply for your visa remains a live document on the UKVI system while you are studying and some changes to student circumstances need to be reported. These include: not starting the course having obtained a visa, deferring to the following year, withdrawing from the course, not attending over a long period of time, completing the course early, moving to another sponsor, switching to a UK or Irish passport, and as noted above for the graduate visa route, successful course completion. These updates are necessary to ensure your UK immigration record remains accurate.

Further Resources

- [School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies - students studying in Belfast](#)
- [UK Council for International Student Affairs \(UKCISA\)](#)
- [UK Border Force - Ten Top Tips for Student Arrivals](#)
- [How to apply for a UK student visa - watch on YouTube](#)

Any Questions?

Contact the CRR office: sradmbfst@tcd.ie, and we'll be happy to help!