

Information for Visa Students on arrival

Biometric Residence Permit

A Biometric Residence Permit is a credit-card sized plastic card which looks very similar to a driving licence.

If you have a STSV11 and will stay for more than 6 months, you will no longer get a paper visa in your passport. You will get a vignette (rubber stamp) which will allow you to enter the country, and you will need to collect a Biometric Residence Permit after you arrive.

The vignette will be valid for 30 days from the arrival date that you gave when you applied for your visa. **You must arrive in the UK during this period.** If you will arrive later you will need to apply for a new vignette.

When you are granted your visa, you will be told the address of a Post Office where you can collect your BRP. After you enter the UK, you must collect your BRP from this Post Office **within 10 days.**

You may get a penalty or your leave can be cancelled if you don't pick up your BRP within 10 days of your arrival in the UK.

When you have collected your BRP you must show it to us as we need to make a copy for our records.

You do not need to carry your BRP all the time and it might be safest not to do so. But you need to take it with you if you leave the country as you will need to show it when you re-enter the UK.

Registering with the police

If you have a stamp in your passport which tells you to register your arrival in the UK you will need to visit International Visitor Registration Office here in Belfast (normally within 7 days of arrival).

To register you must first make an appointment at with the International Visitors Registration Office: 02890 650222 extension 22168 (email: InternationalVisitorRegistrationOffice@psni.pnn.police.uk)
Foreign Nationals Unit, Lisburn Road Police Station

To register you will need the following:

- Two passport size photos
- £34
- Your passport
- Biometric Residence Permit (if applicable)

If you change address after you have registered at this police station you can go to ANY police station in Belfast to report your new address. Remember that you **MUST** register with the police every time you change address.

Please note that all students MUST notify IH Belfast in writing within 10 days of any changes to their contact details.

Medical Care

International Students in the UK on a student visa are entitled to free NHS care and can register with a practice near their residence, although if you have applied for a visa lasting more than 6 months, you will have to have paid a Health Surcharge fee as part of your visa application process, which allows you to use the National Health Service. This costs £150. Please note that this must be paid even if you also have private health insurance. For more information on the Health Surcharge Fee, see the following link: <https://www.gov.uk/healthcare-immigration-application/overview>

How do I register?

- ✓ Ask your nearest GP for a HSCR-1 Form.
- ✓ Complete the form. Ask at reception if you need any help!
- ✓ Include a copy of your Visa with your application.

GP's may accept you on their list of NHS patients but they don't have to. A GP may take you on as a 'Private Student', which means that they may charge you.

You may have difficulty finding a GP or a dentist who is prepared to register you. In this situation you should contact your Primary Care Trust or local health board.

In Northern Ireland, you should contact the Central Services Agency on 028 9032 4431, or a list of local GPs by Board area is available from the NHS Northern Ireland website at <https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/services/gp-practices>

Even if you are accepted onto a GP or dentist's list of NHS patients, you have to pay charges for some things like prescription charges and dental treatment.



Attendance and absence

If you are absent through illness, please ask reception for an ABSENCE FORM after or before your absence (some copies will be provided at the end of this pack also). **NO** absence can go unreported!

If the period of absence is for **LESS than five class days**, it can be filled in by you. If the absence is for **MORE than five days, you must get a note from your GP** and you **MUST ALWAYS** supply a medical certificate.

If you are unavoidably absent for any other reason (e.g. family illness or an appointment), discuss the matter with the staff at reception and inform teachers whose classes you will miss.

Attendance will be checked by teachers **every day** and any student whose attendance is unsatisfactory will be contacted.

If a student is absent for 10 consecutive days with no reason or explanation given or if attendance falls below 80%, it is our duty to inform UK Visas & Immigration.

Holidays and Travel

If you are entitled to holiday leave and would like to book your days off, please complete the HOLIDAY REQUEST FORM and hand it to a member of reception.

International students who want to travel as a tourist in Northern Ireland or the rest of the UK **will need a letter confirming that they are an enrolled and attending student from IH Belfast**. Please ask reception for a *Confirmation of Student Status* letter.

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