

Immigration changes – Frequently Asked Questions

This document aims to provide students and parents with an easy guide on most frequent questions concerning changes as from 1 January 2021, immigration changes affecting students and student fees.

1. **What changes will apply, if I arrive in the UK before 1 January 2021?**

No changes; apply for EU Settlement Scheme to stay longer than 30 June 2021, if you want to remain in the UK beyond 30 June 2021 and keep 'home fee status' beyond this date

2. **What changes will apply, if I arrive after 1 January 2021 and start my course before 31 July 2021?**

There will be changes to immigration status but no changes to fee status

3. **What changes will apply, if I arrive in the UK after 1 January 2021 and start my course after 1 August 2021?**

There will be changes to immigration status and fee status (for studies in England, Scotland and Wales)

4. **Will EU students have to pay the same university fees as international students to study in the UK?**

At present, EU students studying at a university or further education institution have 'home fee status' in the UK. This means that if you're an EU student, you pay the same tuition fees as students from the part of the UK where your university is located (England, Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales). If you study in Scotland as an undergraduate, your tuition fees are paid by Student Awards Agency Scotland (SAAS). EU students studying in the rest of the UK as an undergraduate can apply for a student loan from the relevant student funding body to cover any tuition fees.

This won't change if you start a course at a university or further education institution in the UK before July 2021. You will continue to be eligible for 'home fee status' – in other words, you will be charged the same tuition fees as UK students, and you can still apply for a student loan in England, Northern Ireland or Wales, or have your fees paid by SAAS if you are studying as an undergraduate in Scotland.

If you're an EU national, and have already started your course in the UK, you are also guaranteed your existing status for the duration of your studies. These guarantees apply for the full duration of your course, even if it finishes after 31 December 2020.

EU students who start a new course in England, Scotland or Wales after August 2021 will no longer be eligible for home fee status. Instead, each UK university will set its own fees for EU students. Northern Ireland will announce arrangements in due course. If you're thinking of starting a course in the UK from August 2021 onwards, you will need check with the university you are applying to for more information about fees they will charge.

Students from the EU who start new courses in England, Scotland or Wales after August 2021 will also no longer be eligible for student loans (Northern Ireland will announce arrangements in due course). However, there may be other forms of financial support you can apply for. Find out more in [Scholarships and funding](#).

5. What is Settled status?

EU citizens will usually get settled status through the EU Settlement Scheme if they've started living in the UK by 31 December 2020 and have lived in the UK for a continuous 5-year period (known as 'continuous residence'). EU citizens with settled status can spend up to 5 years in a row outside the UK without losing their status.

6. What is Pre-settled status?

If EU citizens do not have 5 years' continuous residence when they apply, they'll usually get pre settled status. **They must have started living in the UK by 31 December 2020.** EU/EEA and Swiss citizens can then apply to change this to settled status once they've got 5 years' continuous residence. They must do this before their pre settled status expires. EU/EEA and Swiss citizens with pre settled status can spend up to 2 years in a row outside the UK without losing their status. They will need to maintain their continuous residence if they want to qualify for settled status. More information on the EU Settlement Scheme can be found [here](#).

7. What is the deadline for applications for the EU settlement scheme?

The deadline to apply is before the 30 June 2021.

8. What is a points-based immigration system?

Under a points-based immigration system points are assigned for specific skills, qualifications, salaries or professions. Visas are then awarded to those who gain enough points. The United Kingdom's Points-Based System will be in place from 1 January 2021.

9. Do students fall under the points-based system?

Yes. Students will also be covered by the points-based system and will need to demonstrate that they have an offer from an approved education institution, speak English and be able to support themselves during their studies. All students applying through the new Student Route will need to demonstrate they meet the required 70 points. They will achieve the required points if they can demonstrate that they have an offer from an approved educational institution, speak English and are able to support themselves during their studies in the UK.

10. Will EU citizens need a visa to visit the UK?

Under the new system, EU citizens will be able to continue to visit the UK without applying for a visa and in most cases, will be able to stay for up to six months. Visitors may participate in a wide range of activities, including tourism, visiting family and friends, short term study and business-related activities. All migrants looking to enter the UK for other reasons (such as work or study) will need to apply for a visa in advance.

11. When will EU citizens be able to apply for a visa?

The new Student Route opened on 5 October. EU citizens coming to study to the UK from 1 January 2021 can now apply. EU citizens coming to work in the UK from 1 January 2021 will be able to apply from 1 December 2020, when the majority of visa application routes will open.

12. Is there a cost associated to the Student Visa?

A Student visa will cost £348 if applied for outside the UK and students will also need to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge as part of their application, which gives migrants access to the UK's National Health Service on generally the same basis as a UK permanent resident. Students will receive a 25% discount on the Immigration Health Surcharge. The cost of the Immigration Health Surcharge is due to increase later this year.

13. How long will the visa process take?

The processing times for applications vary depending on the visa being applied for and the service available. Further information is available on [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk). Applicants must apply and receive confirmation that that have been successful, before traveling to the UK, and should travel using the same document they applied with

14. What happens if my course last less than 6 months?

EU/EEA and Swiss students can continue to visit the UK for up to 6 months, without applying for a visa and may participate in short term study. Further guidance for EU/EEA and Swiss students can be found at www.gov.uk/student-visa.

15. What happens with students who have already started their course before 31 December. Are there any concessions in light of COVID19?

We recognise that COVID-19 has had an impact on travel, which may disrupt plans for people deciding to take up residence in the UK. However, students, like all other EEA and Swiss citizens, must be resident in the UK before 31 December 2020 to have rights under the Citizens' Rights Agreements.

16. Are students still able to find a part time job in the UK?

Many, but not all, students on a student visa can work. This depends on the type of sponsor you have. If you are allowed to work, you will be subject to maximum weekly hours in term time. Find out more about working in the UK on a student visa on [UKCISA's website](#)

17. Do these changes apply to UK nationals living in EU countries?

UK nationals who live in EU countries, countries in the EEA-EFTA, or Switzerland will be eligible for home fees status if they start their studies in the UK before 1 January 2028. If you are a UK national and you're thinking of studying in the UK, please contact the British Embassy in your country for more information about this announcement.

18. Who should I contact in my country for UK visa enquiries and travel advice?

For specific visa enquiries, please contact your local [Visa Application Centre](#) . If you need to contact UKVI (UK Visas and Immigration) about a current application, visit [GOV.UK](#). For travel advice, contact your local [British Embassy or High Commission](#). The local British Council office will be able to provide more general advice on travel and visas to the UK.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- Check the UK government's [Brexit guidance for EU students in the UK](#) is the most up-to-date source of information
- Check the British Council [Study UK website](#)
- Check the website of [Universities UK](#), the representative organisation for UK universities, and read their [EU Referendum FAQs for universities and students.](#)
- Visit the website of the [UK Council for International Students \(UKCISA\)](#) and their regularly updated page: [Brexit: What we Know for EEA students and their families.](#)
- Visit the websites of the universities you are interested in to see their own statements on the impact of the referendum results.
- Check the [Erasmus+ website](#) and the [Erasmus+ transition period update page](#)

STUDENT FINANCE

For more information about EU nationals and student finance in the UK, please visit the following websites for each country to read their statement and check for any relevant updates.

England - [Government statement](#) and [Student Loans Company](#)
Scotland - [Student Awards Agency Scotland](#)
Wales - [Student Finance Wales](#)
Northern Ireland - [Student Finance NI](#) or [NI Direct](#)

VISA AND IMMIGRATION

- [Apply for a student visa](#)
- Download a UK [government guide to visas and the UK's points-based immigration system for EU students](#) .
- Sign up to the [UK government immigration mailing list](#) .
- Information on visas and English language courses from [English UK](#) .

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- Translated information about the UK's point-based immigration system can be found [here](#), along with specific guides for EU nationals looking to come to the UK for work, study, or to visit.

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