

STUDENT VISAS

What You Need to Know Before You Go!

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
Why Should You Read This Brochure?	1
BEFORE YOU CAN APPLY FOR A VISA, YOU MUST HAVE A PASSPORT!	3
What is a passport?	3
Do I need to apply for one?.....	3
What documents are required to obtain one?	3
Where do I apply for one?	4
How long does it take to get one?.....	4
How long is my passport valid?	4
When should I renew it?	5
Quick Tips!	5
APPLYING FOR A VISA	6
<i>What</i> is a visa?	6
<i>Who</i> is required to apply?.....	7
<i>When</i> do I apply?.....	7
<i>How</i> do I apply?	7
TOP TEN DO's	8
Quick Tips!	9
TOP TEN DON'Ts	9
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs) ...10	
Will I need to apply for a student visa?	10
Whose responsibility is it to apply for a visa?.....	10
How do I find out if I need to apply for a visa?.....	11
Can I go abroad without a visa if one is required?.....	11
Who issues student visas?	11
How do I know which consulate to contact to apply for my visa?	11
Can I apply online for my visa?	11
How do I find the requirements to apply for my visa?.....	11
What is the best way to contact the consulate?.....	12
Can I assume that the instructions on the consulate's Web site are correct?.....	12
Do I have to leave my passport with the consulate, or can I send the consulate a copy of my passport instead?	12
The consulate says that I can mail my visa application. What's the best way to do this?.....	12
What about the consulate visa fee?.....	12
What if they say I need to apply in person? ...	13
Can I use financial aid to pay for a trip to the consulate?.....	13
How long does it take to receive a student visa?.....	13
Can I use the services of a visa agency to apply for my visa?.....	13
Are there special tips on how to fill out a visa application?.....	13
How much time does it take to apply for a visa?.....	14
Are consulates always open for business?	14

(continued on page iv)

CONTENTS (continued)

What if I am an international student?.....	14
What else should I think about if I am an international student?.....	15
What if I am a permanent resident?.....	15
What if my university is doing batch processing of visa applications and I couldn't turn in my application with the group?.....	15
What if I am studying in one country in the fall and a different country in the spring—can I apply for both visas at the same time?.....	16
What if I am studying in one country in the summer and a different country in the fall?.....	16
Once I apply for a visa, is it guaranteed that I will receive one?.....	16
Does it matter what type of acceptance letter I supply to the consulate?.....	16
Does it matter what type of photos I send?.....	17
Do I need to carry my passport with me every day while I'm abroad?.....	17
What if the consulate requires “proof of funds”?.....	17
What if the consulate requires a letter from my bank?.....	17
What if the consulate requires a copy of my parent's bank statement, their income tax statement, or an affidavit of support?.....	17
What if I am using financial aid to pay for my program?.....	18
What if the consulate requires proof of my travel itinerary?.....	18
What if my consulate requires medical certification?.....	18
What if my consulate requires a background check?.....	19
What if I plan to work?.....	19
What if I plan to do an internship or a service-learning project?.....	19
What if my visa is denied?.....	20
I just received my visa back from the consulate. Now what?.....	20
THINGS TO REMEMBER AND KEEP IN MIND.....	20
GLOSSARY OF VISA TERMS.....	21
GOVERNMENT RESOURCES.....	24
INTERNET RESOURCES.....	25
OTHER RESOURCES.....	26
ABOUT THE AUTHORS.....	27
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	27