

UNITED KINGDOM – VISA ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES (FULL TEXT)

Purpose

This guidance covers short-term and standard visitor visas and explains the eligibility and suitability criteria UK Visas and Immigration uses when deciding applications. It also includes permitted activities, validity and evidentiary expectations.

Eligibility Criteria

- Applicant must intend to visit the UK for a **temporary** period and leave at the end of the visit.
- Applicant must be able to **do only permitted activities** for that visa class (e.g., tourism, visiting, short business activities) and must *not* do work or study beyond what is permitted.
- Applicant must **pay for their return or onward journey** or demonstrate funds to do so.
- Applicant must be able to **support and accommodate themselves** for the duration of their stay without accessing public funds.
- Applicant must satisfy **identity, suitability, and credibility** checks – including whether they have previously breached UK immigration rules or been removed.
- Applicants who require a visa must apply online and attend a biometric appointment at a visa application centre.

Documents Typically Required

- Valid passport (with sufficient validity) and previous passports if available.
- Completed online application and confirmation.
- Biometric enrolment (photo + fingerprints) at the visa centre.
- Proof of travel plans and funds: bank statements, payslips, sponsorship letters, accommodation details.

- Evidence of ties to home country: employment letter, family, property or study enrolment.
- Additional documents for specific visitor subcategories (eg academic visitor evidence, medical treatment letters, etc.).

Notes and Special Cases

- There are several distinct visitor subcategories (Standard Visitor, Transit Visitor, Marriage/Civil Partnership Visitor, Academic Visitor) each with specific permitted activities and time limits.
- A visa does not guarantee entry – final admission is subject to border control.
- Some nationalities are visa-exempt; check nationality tables for requirements.

Key official guidance (source)

UK Visit guidance (Home Office).