

Preparing to Study English in the UK

Choose the UK route before you prepare the application

Course length changes everything. Identify the Visitor, Short-term Study or Student route first - then prepare the provider, money and documents that belong to that route.

Up to 6 months Visitor study route	Over 6 to 11 months Short-term Study visa	Short-term Study No paid or unpaid work
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1. Choose the route before the paperwork

English - up to 6 months - Standard Visitor

Check whether your nationality needs a Visitor visa, an ETA or neither before travel. Visitor eligibility still applies at the border.

English only - over 6 to 11 months - Short-term Study

The course must be with an accredited institution. You cannot work, extend this route, change course or bring dependants through it.

Longer or sponsored study - Student visa

You normally need an eligible course, a licensed Student sponsor and a Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies. Not every English school can issue one.

2. Your preparation journey

Step 1: Measure the course duration

Use the exact course dates; six months and eleven months are critical route boundaries.

Step 2: Check nationality requirements

Confirm whether you need a visa, an ETA or another permission before travelling.

Step 3: Verify the institution

For Short-term Study, confirm current accreditation. For Student, confirm sponsor status and CAS eligibility.

Step 4: Check the route restrictions

Understand work, dependant, extension and course-change rules before committing money.

Step 5: Build a realistic budget

Cover fees, accommodation, living expenses and return travel without assuming UK employment.

Step 6: Prepare route-specific evidence

Keep acceptance or CAS evidence, financial records, accommodation details and translations consistent.

Step 7: Resolve TB and under-18 rules

Check residence-country TB requirements and prepare consent and care arrangements where applicable.

Step 8: Apply at the correct time

Short-term Study normally opens three months before travel; Student applications outside the UK may open six months before the course.

3. Document preparation checklist

- Current passport or valid travel document
- Course acceptance letter or CAS, depending on route
- Evidence of paid fees or the ability to pay
- Bank statements and genuine source-of-funds evidence
- Accommodation and travel-plan details
- Evidence of funds for return or onward travel
- TB certificate where required
- Certified translations into English or Welsh
- Proof of lawful residence if applying in another country
- Parental consent and care documents for under-18s

4. Financial evidence

Short-term Study has no single published monthly minimum: show enough genuine funds for fees, living costs, accommodation and return travel. Student-route maintenance figures are different and must not be copied into a Short-term Study application.

- Short-term Study does not permit work of any kind.
- Student-route funds may be subject to the 28-day rule.
- Parent-held funds need relationship evidence and consent.
- Check current fees and exchange-rate treatment before applying.

5. Common mistakes to remove early

- Choosing a visa before checking course length
- Assuming an ETA covers every type of study
- Using a non-accredited provider for Short-term Study

- Assuming Short-term Study permits part-time work
- Using Student-route maintenance figures for the wrong route
- Missing TB, translation or parental-consent evidence

6. Official sources

Study English in the UK

<https://www.gov.uk/visa-to-study-english>

Short-term Study documents

<https://www.gov.uk/visa-to-study-english/documents-you-must-provide>

Standard Visitor

<https://www.gov.uk/standard-visitor>

Student visa documents

<https://www.gov.uk/student-visa/documents-you-must-provide>

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The information available in this guide is for information purposes only. Rules, requirements and processing arrangements can change. Always refer to the official websites listed above before making an application or financial commitment.

Visit aimarketer.ie/student-resources for the online guide, course information and student support resources.