

NW2014 - UK Border Agency advice

Do you need a visa as a business visitor?

This page explains whether you will need to obtain a visa before you come to the UK as a business visitor.

You **will** need a visa if you:

- are a visa national (see 'More information' below); or
- are stateless (you do not have a nationality); or
- hold a non-national travel document (a travel document which does not give you the nationality of the country that issued it); or
- hold a passport issued by an authority that is not recognised in the UK.

Even if you do not need a visa, you may want to obtain one before you travel as it could save you time when you arrive at the UK border and we **strongly advise** you to apply for a visa before travelling to the UK if:

- you have any unspent criminal convictions in any country, including the UK;
- you have previously been refused entry, deported or otherwise removed from the UK;
- you have breached the terms of any previous entry to the UK (for example, by working illegally or staying here after your permission to stay expired);
- you have previously applied for a visa and been refused; or
- you have been warned by a UK official that you should obtain a visa before you travel to the UK.

You may not be allowed to enter the UK if you do not have a visa.

If you do not need a visa and you travel to the UK without one, the next paragraph describes the documents that you should bring with you. If you cannot show that you meet the requirements for a general visitor, our officers at the UK border may refuse to let you enter the UK.

What documents do you need as a business visitor?

This page contains information about the documents that you may want to provide to support your application to come to the UK as a business visitor.

If you apply for a visa, you should provide these documents with your visa application. If you travel to the UK without a visa, you should bring them with you so that you can show them to our officers at the border.

You should provide as many relevant documents as you can to show that you qualify for entry to the UK. If you do not provide them, we may refuse your application.

You must decide which documents will best support your application. We advise you to consider providing documents that contain:

- information about you
- information about your finances and employment
- your accommodation and travel details

- information about your visit to the UK

You can also apply to come to the UK as a business visitor if you intend to carry out any of the following 'permitted activities' here:

- attending meetings (including interviews that have been arranged before you come to the UK) or conferences;
- arranging deals, or negotiating or signing trade agreements or contracts;
- undertaking fact-finding missions;
- conducting site visits;
- delivering goods and passengers from abroad (as a lorry driver or coach driver, for example, provided you are genuinely working an international route);
- accompanying a tour group as a tour group courier, provided you are contracted to a firm outside the UK, and you intend to leave with that tour group;
- speaking at a 'one-off' conference where this is not run as a commercial concern;
- representing a foreign manufacturer by coming to service or repair its products within their initial period of guarantee;
- representing a foreign machine manufacturer by coming to erect and install machinery too heavy to be delivered in one piece, as part of the contract of purchase and supply;
- interpreting or translating for visiting business persons, provided you are employed by the overseas company and are coming solely to provide this service for the visiting company member;
- acting as a monteur (a worker such as a fitter or serviceperson) for up to 6 months to erect, dismantle, install, service, repair or advise on the development of foreign-made machinery;
- attending board meetings in the UK as a board-level director, provided you are not employed by a UK company (although you may be paid a fee for attending the meeting); and
- representing a computer software company by coming to install, debug or enhance their products. You may also come here as a business visitor to be briefed about a UK customer's requirements - but if you use your expertise to make a detailed assessment of a potential customer's requirements, we will regard this as consultancy work, for which you will need a visa under the points-based system.

Advice on how to apply: <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/visas-immigration/visiting/business/apply/>

Apply online UK in the USA:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/countries/usa/applying/?langname=UK%20English>

More information

Are you a visa national?

Nationals or citizens of the following countries and territorial entities are known as 'visa nationals':

- Afghanistan
- Albania
- Algeria
- Angola
- Armenia
- Azerbaijan
- Bahrain
- Bangladesh
- Belarus
- Benin
- Bhutan
- Bolivia
- Bosnia Herzegovina
- Burkina Faso
- Burma
- Burundi
- Cambodia
- Cameroon
- Cape Verde
- Central African Republic
- Chad
- People's Republic of China (unless they hold a passport issued by Hong Kong Special Administrative Region or Macao Special Administrative Region)
- Colombia
- Comoros
- Congo
- Cuba
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Djibouti
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- Egypt
- Equatorial Guinea
- Eritrea
- Ethiopia
- Fiji
- Gabon
- Gambia
- Georgia
- Ghana
- Guinea
- Guinea Bissau

- Guyana
- Haiti
- India
- Indonesia
- Iran
- Iraq
- Ivory Coast
- Jamaica
- Jordan
- Kazakhstan
- Kenya
- Korea (North)
- Kosovo
- Kuwait
- Kyrgyzstan
- Laos
- Lebanon
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Libya
- Macau
- Macedonia
- Madagascar
- Malawi
- Mali
- Mauritania
- Moldova
- Mongolia
- Montenegro
- Morocco
- Mozambique
- Nepal
- Niger
- Nigeria
- Oman
- Pakistan
- Palestinian Territories
- Peru
- Philippines
- Qatar
- Republic of South Sudan
- Republic of Sudan
- Russia
- Rwanda
- Sao Tome e Principe
- Saudi Arabia
- Senegal

- Serbia
- Sierra Leone
- Somalia
- South Africa
- Sri Lanka
- Sudan
- Surinam
- Swaziland
- Syria
- Taiwan (unless they hold a Taiwan passport which includes the number of the identification card issued by the competent authority in Taiwan)
- Tajikistan
- Tanzania
- Thailand
- Togo
- Tunisia
- Turkey
- Turkmenistan
- Uganda
- Ukraine
- United Arab Emirates
- Uzbekistan
- Vatican City
- Venezuela (unless they hold a Venezuelan passport which contains biometric information held in an electronic chip)
- Vietnam
- Yemen
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe
- The territories formerly comprising the socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia

Travelling to the UK without a visa

You do not normally need a visa to come to the UK as a visitor for up to 6 months if you are a non-visa national, but you are not guaranteed entry into the UK.

When you arrive at the UK border, you must satisfy a Border Force officer that you meet the requirements of your visitor category. You might need to show the officer some documents to support your request to enter the UK. To find out about the requirements for different visitor categories, and the types of document that you should show, see the [Visiting the UK](#) section.

The Border Force officer will assess you on your individual merits, and will decide whether your account of your reasons for travelling to the UK is reasonable and credible. Please do not feel intimidated when the officer asks you questions - this is part of the process to ensure that only genuine travellers can enter the UK.