

VISA and Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA)

IMPORTANT - National ID cards are no longer accepted for travel. A valid passport is required.

NEW - Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA)

As of April 2025, the UK Government has introduced an ETA (Electronic Travel Authorisation). The scheme is broadly for visitors who do not need a visa for short stays to the UK, or do not already have a UK immigration status prior to travelling.

This is strictly enforced and a legal requirement, therefore carriers (such as airlines, Eurostar, ferries) will not board eligible visitors without one.

The ETA is required by anyone entering the UK apart from those with:

- A British or Irish passport
- Permission to live, work or study in the UK
- A visa to enter the UK

Process, Validity and Fees

Simply apply via the [ETA App](#) or online - <https://apply-for-an-eta.homeoffice.gov.uk/how-to-apply>

A decision is usually made within 3 working days

The ETA is linked to your passport and lasts 2 years or to the expiry of your passport, whatever comes first.

The cost of an ETA is £16 per person, including for babies and children.

VIDEO – Watch this useful video on how to apply for ETA

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uG1zaOMl63M>

VISA

Not all visitors to the UK require a visa, however we strongly advise you to find out if you need a visa to enter the UK as early as possible, and should a visa be required, to apply as soon as possible as the process can take up to 20 working days.

Process

The following link will tell you if a visa is needed and explain the process www.gov.uk/check-uk-visa

You'll need to have your fingerprints and photograph (known as 'biometric information') taken at a **visa application centre** (VAC – see below) as part of your application. The application will not be submitted until that process has been completed. You will be able to book an appointment to provide your biometric information at the end of the online application.

Find details of your nearest visa application centre using this link <https://www.gov.uk/find-a-visa-application-centre>.

In those countries where there is no visa application centre, you may find a Temporary Enrolment Location is available on given days or you may need to travel to a nearby country where a visa application centre is available. Should you live in a country where no visa application centre is available you should take account of additional timescales for biometric submission when considering when to apply.

In support of your application, you should gather evidence of your circumstances, employment, ability to meet the costs of the trip and the arrangements in the UK. More details can be found via this link to the guide to supporting documents

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/visitor-visa-guide-to-supporting-documents>

If you have already registered for the conference, we would strongly recommend that you include a copy of the registration confirmation letter together with conference invitation letter to these documents.

IMPORTANT UPDATE - eVISAS

From 25 February 2026, visitors with a successful visa application may not get a vignette (the visa sticker in their passport), as eVisas (a digital record of your identity and immigration status) are replacing vignettes.

Visitors will need to create a UKVI account and access their eVisa to see the permission they have been granted before they travel to the UK.

IMPORTANT UPDATE on E-GATES:

Visitors from Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, South Korea and the United States of America will now be able to use e-gates upon arrival in the UK.

Frequently Asked Questions

How much does it cost to apply for a Standard visa?

The cost for a Standard visa is £127 per person.

When should I apply for my visa and how long will my application take?

The process can take **up to 20 working days** from submitting biometrics, but **we recommend that applications are made as early as possible, from up to 3 months before the congress and allowing at least four weeks.** In many locations, for an additional fee, delegates may be able to use our Priority and Super Priority visa service.

I am applying late – what is a Priority and Super Priority Service?

Priority service means that the UK Visa and Immigration office will aim to make a decision on your application in 5 working days, this service is available in over 200 locations. Super Priority service reduces this to the end of the next working day, this service is available in around 20 locations. Both services are charged at an additional fee. Some applications may take longer if they are complex, please check the visa application centres website for any further information.

Fees - Fees for Priority and Super Priority Services apply in addition to the Standard visa fee, as follows: £500 for Priority and £1,000 for Super Priority. Important note: Priority service does not imply or guarantee in any way that a delegate will be successful in their visa application. All visa applicants must meet the requirements of the UK immigration rules.

I travel a lot and cannot be without my passport, are there any services that could help?

The UKVI offer a Keep My Passport service in over 40 locations, this allows the applicant to keep their passport while their application is being considered. If their visa application is successful they will need to provide their passport to the VAC for the vignette to be printed. This service comes at an

additional cost and details of which services are available at each VAC are available on the commercial Partner website.

What travel date should be stated on the application form?

On the application you should be specific in stating planned dates of travel to and from the UK. Visitors cannot arrive in the UK earlier than the start date on their visa and the airline may not let you board their flight, or they may be refused entry on arrival in the UK. It is not usually possible to make changes to the validity dates of a visa, after it has been printed. If plans change, you may need to make a new visa application.

What can I do if my visa is refused?

A decision to refuse a visa is made only after careful consideration of all the facts by an Entry Clearance Officer, including the fact that the delegate is to attend or contribute to a specific event. If the application is refused, the refusal notice will provide details about the reasons for refusal. Visitors are free to make a new application, but it is strongly recommended that they read their refusal letter carefully and fully address all the reasons for the initial refusal.