

RUSSIAN LANGUAGE UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES LTD

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Patron: Sir Rodric Braithwaite G.C.M.G.

Web site: www.rlus.co.uk

GUIDELINES FOR GETTING A RUSSIAN VISA

INTRODUCTION

You cannot apply for your visa until you receive your visa invitation. We will send your invitation as soon as we receive it to the address you gave RLUS on your booking form. If it is being sent to a UK address, it will be sent by Special Delivery. You will need to sign for it. If you have asked for the invitation to be sent outside the UK, it will be sent to you by UPS. You will be expected to pay the cost (currently £40). Sending visa invitations outside the UK by the ordinary postal system (even if a signature is required) has resulted in invitations being lost in the postal system and there is no way of tracking where they are, once they have left the UK. As a result, RLUS is not willing to risk the invitation being lost.

We expect to receive your invitation 3-8 weeks before departure. However, we cannot predict when we will receive it, as it depends on Russian bureaucracy, which is unpredictable at the best of times. Please check the website to see if the invitations for your course have been sent out. You should also receive an e-mail informing you that your visa invitation has been sent. The original invitation is normally required. This is a valuable document and cannot be replaced. **Warning: if you lose it, you are unlikely to go to Russia, as our Russian partners normally cannot obtain a duplicate.** Don't forget to let Dr Bivon know in writing if you have moved, or want documents sent elsewhere.

Unless you have made special arrangements, you should obtain your visa in the UK. It has to be done through an organisation called VFS Global, and not through the Russian consulates either in London or Edinburgh.

An alternative in London is to use an agent such as Scott's Tours (141 Whitfield St London W1T 5EW, phone 020 7383 5353), e-mail: visas@scottstours.co.uk to obtain your visa for you. They are very helpful if you need an urgent visa and cannot travel to London to get it. Urgent visas cannot be applied for by post, except by using an agent.

APPLYING FOR A VISA

Go to the VFS website <http://ru.vfsglobal.co.uk/>. You should select *Apply Online* and follow the instructions. You cannot send the form online. Answer all the questions online and print out the form.

Russian organisations to be visited

Moscow

Petrozavodsk

St Petersburg

Tver

Volgograd

Yaroslavl

Route of journey

for St Petersburg courses:

for Moscow:

for Petrozavodsk

for Tver

for Volgograd

for Yaroslavl':

Language Link

Petrozavodsk State University

either Benedict School

or St Petersburg State University

Tver State University

Language Link

Yaroslavl State University

St Petersburg

Moscow

St Petersburg, Petrozavodsk

Moscow, Tver

Moscow

Moscow, Yaroslavl'

HOW TO ANSWER ONLINE QUESTIONS

IMPORTANT Please make sure that you do not use any punctuation marks (full stop, commas, dashes, brackets, slashes etc) when filling the form.

Type of passport: Tourist

Visa category: Student visa

Visa duration: 3M*

Type of entry: Single entry*

Name, address of person you will be staying with in Russia: Put contact details of the university/institute you will be studying at in Russia (see below)

Education Details: Give details of your current university. You do not need to put details of education before starting university

Course dates: Put the dates on the invitation as the start and finish dates for your visa

Who is financing your course: University

Do you have medical insurance: Yes, Put the insurance company name in the box (You do not need to send in a copy of your policy)

Employer/School details: Put details of your UK university

*You will only be given a single entry 3 month visa. On arrival in Russia, if necessary, this will be extended and you should be able to convert it to a multi-entry visa.

University/institute contact details

Moscow (MLL13, MLL16, MLL18, MLL36):

Language Link Ulitsa Chayanova 15 Moscow 125047 Russia, Phone 495 258 9922

St Petersburg State University (PST13, PST16, PST18)

199034 St Petersburg Universitetskaya Nab.7 9, Center for Russian Language and Culture phone 8122741485

St Petersburg Benedict School (PBEN3, PBEN16, PBEN18, PBEN36)

St-Petersburg 19000 PO box 178, Benedict School Phone 8123153596

Petrozavodsk (PET13A, PET16A)

Petrozavodsk State University Department of Philology Pr. Lenina 33 Petrozavodsk Republic of Karelia 185910 Russia phone 8142719609

Tver State University (TV32)

RUSSIA 170000 Tver ul Zhelyabova d 33 International Department Tver State University, phone 4822321195

Volgograd (VOL13/18S)

Russia 400005 Volgograd ul Komsomolskaya 6 Language Link phone 9033717582

Yaroslavl (Y13, Y16, Y18, Y32)

Russia 150000 Yaroslavl ul Sovetskaya 14 Yaroslavl State University International Affairs room 317 phone 485297746

If you do not hold a UK passport, go to the website and check the documents and fees required, as they are different from those for a UK passport holder. Do not follow the instructions below.

The following instructions are copied from the website. **Before sending off your application, please check the website, as the rules can change without notice.**

“Along with your completed application form and required documents please include a

- Self addressed Special Delivery Envelope (SDE) for return of processed passports. Please remember **only one** processed passports shall be returned in one envelope. Hence, as an example, for a family of three please include three SDE's.

- Postal order with the visa fees and service charges. Once we receive your passport from the Embassy, we can return it to you in the SDE.

If you're unable to send the SDE envelope, VFS can arrange for the same at a nominal charge of £7.40. Please note that **only one** passport per envelope is permitted. You are requested to pay the charges for the same along with the visa fees and VFS service charges. Kindly include a postal order as the mode of payment favoring '**RNT Ltd**' while applying through Royal Mail. **Do not** send cash along with your application via post.”

When sending your visa fee, please note that you have to pay both the visa fee and the service charge. For UK citizens the 5 day visa service currently costs £50 plus a service charge of £25.85, a total of £75.85; the same day visa service currently costs £100 plus the service charge of £32.90, a total of £132.90. **Before sending off your application, please check the website to make sure that the fees and service charges have not changed.**

DOCUMENTS TO SEND WITH YOUR APPLICATION

This is what the website currently states:

1. Current passport which should be valid for a minimum of six months after visa's expiration date and has at least 2 blank pages which do not need to be consecutive.
2. Visa application form filled in and printed out from this website only. Kindly ensure that the dates of your entry and exit, as entered in the application form, match with or fall within the period specified in the supporting documents.
3. One recent passport size photo glued to the indicated space on the application form.
4. When applying for student visa you must additionally submit HIV Test (AIDS) Certificate taken in last three months. HIV Test (AIDS) Certificate should still be valid for 15- 30 days on the day of your application.
5. A letter of invitation issued by a Russian Federal Migration Service agency or a telex from the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
6. Introductory letter from your company (or from yourself if you are self-employed) giving full details of the traveler, destinations, dates and purpose of the visit. Self-employed and unemployed applicants must show copies of their bank statements for the last three months.

For item 6 they will accept a letter from your university. Your Liaison Officer will provide a suitable letter. You are not unemployed and do not need to send in bank statements.

You should send your application by post to:

Russia Visa Application Center
PO Box 64391
London,
EC1P 1NJ

If you prefer to apply in person, rather than by post, you can currently do so in London or Edinburgh. The addresses are:

15 - 27 Gee Street, London EC1V 3RD
16 Forth Street, Edinburgh EH1 3LH

Your visa will be stuck in your passport. Your visa invitation and any documents you have sent will be retained and not returned to you. When you receive your visa, you must check that there are no mistakes and, if necessary, return it for corrections. Check that the start date for the visa is the date of your flight or earlier.

Put the dates on your visa invitation on the form, even though they may not be the course dates. You will not get a visa for longer than 90 days, whatever the length of your course. If the return date on your visa is earlier than the end of your course, do not worry; travel to Russia using the visa. It will be extended in Russia. Your visa will be a single entry one (однократная виза). When you arrive in Russia and register your visa, you can usually opt to have it converted to a multi-entry one, allowing you to leave the country when you want and to return as many times as you need. There will be a small fee for doing this and you may be without your passport for a long time. However, rules change unexpectedly and no guarantees can be given.

You are responsible for applying for your visa in time. Do not leave it until the last moment as sudden unpredictable changes in regulations can cause delays. If you fail to get a visa and are not able to leave with the group, there may be considerable extra expenditure involved (air ticket, additional meeting in Russia, travel in Russia, etc). RLUS will not be liable to cover these costs. Your insurance is very unlikely to cover any costs you may incur if you fail to get your visa on time.

Once you arrive in Russia there are additional costs for the registration of your visa and, if necessary, exit or multi-entry visas. None of the above have been included in the cost of your placement or paid by you in advance. Only the cost of the visa invitation has been included in your invoice.

HIV CERTIFICATE

Currently for a student visa you will need to send an HIV certificate. All you require is a letter from your GP or a clinic stating that you are HIV negative. As long as it is on official headed notepaper, it will be acceptable.

Your local health centre may do the HIV test for you. Alternatively you may need to attend a GUM clinic. You can find your nearest NHS GUM clinic that will do a test for you by going to <http://www.bashh.org> . You will find information on private clinics by doing a Google search on the web.

You may be required to take another HIV test soon after arriving in Russia. Please note that the Russian authorities will not normally accept a UK test certificate. As practice varies from one town to another and the rules change unpredictably, it is not possible to say whether or where this will be necessary. You can, if you wish, bring a sterile needle pack. However, some clinics will insist on using their own. They do not reuse needles and you will be able to check that they are using a sealed pack.