

STUDENT VISA FAQs

Trinity College Dublin at Belfast

The following pages provide an overview of visas for prospective students applying to the MPhil in Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation, or PhD study, at the School of Religion, Theology, and Peace Studies in Belfast.

Will I need a UK Student Visa?

If you are an international student, you are likely to need a UK student visa to study in Belfast. This includes EU and EEA nationals (except those with settled or pre-settled status in the UK).

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What do I need to apply for my UK Student Visa?

- You must have accepted an unconditional offer for your course.
- A CAS (Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies) statement provided by Trinity College Dublin at Belfast. Incoming students will be contacted from April onwards in the year of entry to begin the process.
- Valid passport.

Financial Requirements

Please read the financial requirements. If your country qualifies for 'differential evidence requirements' there will be fewer checks on finances and previous educational qualifications, but you must still be able to cover your fees and up to 9 months of living expenses and could be asked to provide evidence. Students who do not qualify for these arrangements should familiarise themselves with how much money they will need to have, for how long and in what types of bank account.

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When do I apply?

If applying from outside the UK, the earliest you can apply is 6 months before the start of your course (3 months if applying from inside the UK).

How long does it take?

You should usually expect to get a decision within 3 weeks (8 weeks if applying from inside the UK). Services are available to get a quicker decision if needed. See [Priority and Super Priority Visa Services](#).

Can I bring dependents?

Only postgraduate research students can bring partners and children to live in the UK while they study. The Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation MPhil is a taught master's course therefore you cannot bring dependents.

Healthcare Surcharge

As part of the visa application, an Immigration Healthcare Surcharge (IHS) is payable, currently £776 for each 12-month period which entitles students to access the National Health Service (NHS). Please note, those applying for a visa to undertake a PhD and their dependants will need to meet the costs of the healthcare surcharge covering the full course period up-front.

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How do I apply and receive my visa?

Begin your application on the [UK government student visa website](#).

If you are a non-EEA national you will be invited to book an appointment at a Visa Application Centre to submit your biometrics after you have paid the visa and IHS fee. If your application is successful, you should receive a 90-day vignette (sticker) in your passport which you use for travel to the UK. You will also receive evidence of your full permission for the UK in a digital status format called an e-visa. Your email confirmation will tell you how to [set up your e-visa](#).*

EEA nationals use **the UK Immigration: ID Check app** to complete the identity check and will receive their permission in the form of an e-visa but do not receive a vignette.

*Please note, the system is transitioning to e-visas for all students during summer 2025, meaning NON-EEA nationals will no longer receive a vignette in their passport and will not need to make two visits to a visa application centre. Under the new system, biometrics will be enrolled at the visa application centre and the passport returned the same day. This is intended to provide a smoother customer journey. Depending on when you apply, you may follow the current or the new process.

Your immigration status can be shared with anyone who needs to check your permission through generating a Share Code using the [View and Prove Service](#). When available, please email a share code to the CRR office in Belfast: sradmbilst@tcd.ie.

Whether you receive your visa as a physical vignette in your passport or as an e-visa, you should receive a decision letter with it. This may be in the form of a physical letter or an email. It is important that you keep this somewhere safe as it is proof of your grant of permission and carries details of the conditions of your permission. To report an error with your e-visa, for example, it says work is prohibited and you think this is wrong, visit: <https://www.gov.uk/report-error-evisa>.

When arriving in the UK or Ireland, you may pass through an e-passport gate depending on your nationality. Your visa is digitally connected to the passport you used for the visa application, so if renewing your passport before travelling, be sure to update passport details in your UK visa account.

Do ensure that if you plan to arrive via Dublin airport at the start of your studies and are visa-required for Ireland, that you obtain the necessary visa before travelling.

When can I travel?

It is essential that you arrive on or after the start date of your student visa, otherwise it will not be valid. If you enter the UK as a visitor or tourist you cannot switch in-country to a student visa and you will not be able to start your course. These are Home Office requirements which your sponsor (university) must comply with.

We are required to know the date of your arrival in the UK and will ask that you email a copy of your flight ticket once available. In the first few weeks of term, we will also arrange to collect passports to take a copy of entry stamps as a record of arrival date.

When does my course start?

CRR Orientation is on **Monday 15th September 2025**, with teaching starting the following day. (The start and end dates provided on the CAS are the academic year dates of 1st September – 31st August and are the same every year so do not represent the actual start date.)

Can I work alongside my studies?

Yes, normally a student visa permits you to work for 20 hours per week during term time and full-time during holidays. This will be shown on your visa. There are limitations to the type of work students can undertake. You cannot be self-employed, carry out business activity or work full time during term time. The summer months when you are writing your dissertation are considered term time.

The Conflict Resolution course includes an optional internship module, 'Community Learning and Reflective Practice' and this is covered by the student visa. It is also worth knowing that other additional study outside your main course is permitted, such as evening classes.

How long can I stay on a UK student visa?

Students on a full student visa are normally granted leave to arrive in the UK a month before the course start date and stay for 4 months 'wrap up' period after the course ends. You may like to switch into the graduate visa if you wish to stay in the UK after your student visa ends, see below.

Can I apply for the Graduate Visa after my studies?

Currently, you can apply for the graduate visa once you have successfully completed your course, and this has been verified by your university. You must be inside the UK and apply before your student visa expiry date. You can't leave the country while your application is being processed as it will be invalidated, so make sure to take any travel plans into account. For MPhil students the graduate visa is for two years post-study, for PhD students it is three years. You can do any type of work and don't need a sponsor for the graduate visa.

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Can you tell me more about my CAS on the UKVI system?

The CAS remains a live document on the UKVI system for duration of the period of study and some changes to student circumstances need to be reported. These include: not starting the course having obtained a visa, deferring to the following year, withdrawing from the course, moving to another sponsor, and as noted above for the

graduate visa route, successful course completion. These updates are necessary to ensure your UKVI immigration record is accurate.

Will I need an Irish visa to study in Belfast?

No! Attendance at the main Trinity campus in Dublin is not required as the whole course is delivered in Belfast. For those students who do wish to travel to Dublin, most will not need a visa, but there may be a requirement to obtain a short Irish visitor C visa for up to 3 months for some students depending on nationality.

However, do ensure that if you plan to arrive via Dublin airport at the start of your studies and are visa-required for Ireland, that you obtain the necessary visa before travelling.

As part of the Irish visitor visa application, you will need to post off your passport and the process can take several weeks, so do consider any travel plans. For example, if travelling home for Christmas at the end of autumn term, you may like to wait until returning to Belfast before applying. A Dublin field trip normally takes place in March/April, so applying for an Irish visitor visa in January would work well. It is a reasonably involved process however and comes at a cost, so it may not be worth it for one day trip alone but will be worthwhile for anyone who plans regular travel across the border, for example to take a Dublin module, or for sightseeing.

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FURTHER RESOURCES

- A Guide for International Students is available on the [studying in Belfast page](#).
- [UK Council for International Student Affairs \(UKCISA\)](#) provides comprehensive and up to date advice on UK student visas.

ANY QUESTIONS?

Contact the CRR office: sradmbfst@tcd.ie.