If you are not a European Economic Area national and want to travel to Europe, you may be required to apply for a Schengen visa before you travel.

A Schengen visa allows the holder to **travel freely in 26 European countries** known as the Schengen space. Many international students at Imperial will need to apply for a Schengen visa in order to travel to Europe for fieldwork, conferences or a vacation.

**The countries involved are:**

- Austria
- Belgium
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- Finland
- Germany
- Greece
- Hungary
- Iceland
- Italy
- Latvia
- Liechtenstein
- Luxembourg
- Malta
- Netherlands
- Norway
- Poland
- Portugal
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Turkey
- United Kingdom

**Who does NOT need a Schengen visa?**

Certain nationalities are exempt* as long as they do not engage in non-tourist activity. These countries include: Canada, Hong Kong, Israel, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Singapore, USA (*please check the website of the embassy of the destination for the most up-to-date information including how long you are allowed to stay in each country without a visa. You may still need to have medical insurance for the trip.

**Different Types of Schengen Visa**

1. **Airport transit visa**
   - Allows the traveller to transit through the international transit zone/area of an airport of a Schengen member state, but not to exit this zone/area before they fly on to their next destination.

2. **Transit visa**
   - Enables a traveller to pass by land through the territory of one or more Schengen countries on their way to another country outside the Schengen space and can be issued for a maximum of 5 days.

3. **Short stay / travel visa**
   - Allows a visit of up to three months in any six-month period. This is the visa that most students wanting to travel within the Schengen space as tourists or to attend conferences will require.

**Applying**

- If visiting only 1 country, apply to the embassy/consulate (in UK) of that country. For a list of foreign embassies in the UK go to [www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk)

- Full details of the visa fees, eligibility criteria and documentation required vary according to which type of Schengen visa you need and the country you are applying to. If the embassy’s website does not have the information you should telephone, fax or email the embassy with your query.

- If visiting several countries within the Schengen space, you MUST apply to the ‘main destination’, i.e. the country in which you plan to spend the most time.
- Apply to the country of first port of entry ONLY if there is no main destination, i.e. equal time in various Schengen countries.

- If a non-EU national is married to an EU national they must apply to their spouse’s national embassy in the UK (even if not travelling to spouse’s country).

**Application Process:**

- Make your application well **in advance (4-6 weeks) of your proposed travel date** and check you have at least 6 months left on your student visa.

- Book your appointment (usually online or by phone) at the appropriate embassy

- Download and complete the application form (Hints: Home address means UK address. If you are staying at more than one hotel then write details of first hotel and then ‘various’)

- Prepare all appropriate documents including

  - Recent passport photos (2)
  - Original passport
  - Proof of purpose of the visit (conference information, tour bookings, airline reservations/flight details, hotel booking, letter of invitation if visiting friends/family)
  - Evidence of sufficient funds to complete your trip (usually a UK bank statement)
  - The visa fee (approximately £50. Most embassies stipulate that the fees should be paid in cash/by postal order - please note that the visa is free to non-EU spouses and dependents of EU nationals)
  - Evidence of student status (a ‘Statement of Attendance’ confirming that you are a full-time student – this is available from the Student Hub, Level 3, Sherfield Building)
  - Evidence of return to the UK/home country and proof of medical insurance to cover the trip (STA Travel [www.statravel.co.uk](http://www.statravel.co.uk) offer travel insurance)

Please refer to our website for further information on Schengen visas [www.imperial.ac.uk/study/international-students/visas-and-immigration/schengen-visas](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/study/international-students/visas-and-immigration/schengen-visas)

We also deliver regular workshops on Schengen visas so keep checking our website for further details.