



GENEVA SCHOOL OF DIPLOMACY
& INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE

[IMMIGRATION GUIDELINES]

Information and advice on Visa and student permit procedures

Contents

GENERAL REMARKS.....	2
STUDENT VISA APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR NON-EU NATIONALS	2
HOW TO APPLY FOR A STUDENT VISA.....	4
STEP 1: SWISS REPRESENTATIONS (EMBASSY/CONSULATE).....	4
STEP 2: FORMS	4
STEP 3: DOCUMENTS TO SUBMIT TO NEAREST EMBASSY OR CONSULATE	4
STEP 4: RECEIVE VISA CLEARANCE	5
STEP 5: APPLY FOR THE STUDENT PERMIT.....	5
NOTES	6
FAQS	8
IMPORTANT SITES:	10

General Remarks

With these guidelines, GSD aims to aid you with the necessary administrative procedures required for your entry and residence in the Canton of Geneva, Switzerland. While GSD also dedicates a special session during its Induction Programme related to the exact procedures (which forms to complete and to provide to the Cantonal authorities in Geneva), note that some nationalities must fulfil obligations before entering Switzerland.

Although GSD is committed to assisting students with immigration procedures and completion of their applications, please note that GSD has *no legal capacity* to intervene with the authorities. It is a student's responsibility to fulfil legal obligations to obtain immigration approval.

Student Visa Application Requirements for non-EU nationals

While some candidates may not need to take pre-emptive steps before entering Switzerland, all non-EU nationals **must** apply for a **student Visa** and student permit from their country of residence **before** entering Switzerland.

Therefore, please read the instructions in this handbook carefully and contact the nearest **Swiss Embassy** or **Consulate** in your country of residence.

Please remember that all students from outside the European Union and EFTA member states must request a **Swiss Student Visa** from the Swiss Embassy or Swiss Consulate in your home country or country of residence before entering Switzerland. Tourist and/or short-term Schengen Visas are not accepted for study purposes and Geneva School of Diplomacy will not allow students to register for courses under a Tourist and/or a Schengen Visa.

Please also note that, it can take between two to six months (the average time is four months) from the time you submit your application until the Swiss Embassy or Swiss Consulate notifies you of the Canton of Geneva's decision.

Once the Swiss Embassy/Consulate notifies you, that the visa has been approved, you will be asked to bring or send your passport (bringing or sending depends on how far you live from the Swiss Embassy/Consulate). The Swiss Embassy or Swiss Consulate will then place a visa in your passport which is valid for a specific period of time (usually three months). Within this visa period, you must arrive in Switzerland, register for classes and present yourself at the Geneva 'office de la population' (immigration office). Detailed information on the permit request process (Student B-Permit) will be explained during the Induction Programme days at the Geneva School of Diplomacy.

The student visa process is lengthy and requires you to pay close attention to all of the details. Follow instructions carefully and provide all requested documents. Visa applications will sit untouched if incomplete and the authorities may not contact you. It is important to keep personal copies of all forms and documents submitted to the Swiss authorities.

STEP 1

CHECK VISA REQUIREMENTS WITH YOUR NEAREST SWISS EMBASSY



**NON-EU NATIONALS
STUDENT VISA REQUIRED**

**EU NATIONALS: STUDENT VISA
NOT REQUIRED**

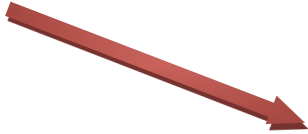
STEP 2

**APPLICATION FOR LONG-TERM VISA
at Swiss embassy/consulate
automatic transfer to
(Geneva cantonal authorities, OCP-SEC)**



STEP 3

RECEIVE VISA CLEARANCE



ENTER SWITZERLAND



STEP 4

**REGISTER LOCALLY AT OCP (GENEVA IMMIGRATION OFFICE) AND
OBTAIN STUDENT PERMIT IN GENEVA WITHIN THREE MONTHS UPON ARRIVAL**

HOW TO APPLY FOR A STUDENT VISA

Step 1: Swiss representations (embassy/consulate)

Consult the following link to Swiss representations across the world and the respective immigration requirements for entering Switzerland for study purposes: [Swiss Representations in the world: http://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/home/rebs.html](http://www.eda.admin.ch/eda/en/home/rebs.html) Here you will select your country of residence, and you will be able to see what your nearest **Swiss Embassy or Consulate** is and contact them about information on **Student Visa**.

Please make sure to verify that your bank which issues proof of funds is recognised by the Swiss authorities (see [list of recognised banks](#)).

Step 2: Forms

Download and familiarise yourself with the forms that need to be completed and the supporting documents required to submit to the Swiss representation.

Form “D” (Application for a long stay Visa)

Form “UE” for EU & non-EU nationals (Formulaire individuel de demande pour ressortissant hors UE/AELE)

Form “M” for EU & non-EU nationals (Formulaire individuel de demande pour ressortissant hors UE/AELE)

Form « E » for student permit (Formulaire complémentaire pour demandes d’autorisation de séjour pour études)

You can also consult samples of these forms sent to you via email together with your admission offer as these contain “bubbles” with the English translations.

Step 3: Documents to submit to nearest Embassy or Consulate

In order to process the Student Visa application, you will need to submit the following documents to the Swiss Embassy or Swiss Consulate:

-3 copies of each visa application forms (D, E and P), fully completed and signed by you. Applications which are not duly completed, dated and signed will not be accepted.

The D form is downloadable from the following website:

www.bfm.admin.ch/bfm/en/home/themen/einreise/visumantragsformular.html

The UE and M forms (available only in French) are downloadable from the following website:

Form M: <http://crm.crm-genevadiplomacy.com/sites/default/files/private/m2-noneu.pdf>

Form UE: <http://crm.crm-genevadiplomacy.com/sites/default/files/private/ue-form-for-eu-citizens.pdf>

-4 recent passport photos. Digital files and photocopies will not be accepted

-2 photocopies of your passport

-Letter of admission from Geneva School of Diplomacy (original and a copy)

-Attestation of enrolment in French from Geneva School of Diplomacy (original and a copy)

-2 copies of previous diplomas and school certificates

-2 copies of a resume/CV (biographical data, schools attended, etc.)

-Proof of sufficient funds that will cover tuition, housing and other expenses for one year (approx. 45'000 CHF) (e.g. bank statements, scholarship award, loan, etc. from a bank recognised in Switzerland)

-2 copies of a written confirmation/declaration that you will leave Switzerland after you have completed your education time at Geneva School of Diplomacy. The written letters must be signed by you. (you can ask the GSD for more information) (see sample declaration)

-2 letters of intention (or statement of purpose) in which you identify your plans for the future. The written letters must be signed by you.

-Visa and postage fee (please check the website for the current fees)

Additional documentation may be requested:

-confirmation of payment of the first semester University tuition fees

-confirmation of housing contract or proof of address you will be staying in Geneva

Step 4: Receive Visa clearance

Once the Geneva cantonal authorities have completed the examination of your dossier, they will notify the respective Swiss representation abroad to which you submitted your application of their decision. The local embassy/consulate will then inform you accordingly of their decision.

If the immigration outcome is positive, you will be issued a multi-entry Schengen Visa valid for three months, which will enable you to enter Switzerland to commence your studies.

Step 5: Apply for the student permit

Within this three months period once in Geneva (i.e. within the period granted on your student Visa), you must present yourself in person to the Geneva immigration office (OCP, Office

cantonal de la population), to pay the permit fee (fee subject to nationality) and to bring your passport together with an updated attestation¹ provided by GSD.

Notes

To help you with some of the previously mentioned documents, please find below some additional information that you may want to use:

1. How to complete the E form

Identité du demandeur (Identity of the applicant - you)

1. Family name 2. First name
3. Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy) 4. Nationality
5. Current address
6. E-mail address 7. Phone number

Plan des études envisagées (Plan of studies)

8. Name of the school – Geneva School of Diplomacy and International Relations
9. Type of course - Bachelor or Master
10. Attending school as p d'externe
11. Starting date of the program (dd/mm/yyyy)
12. Expected degree (mentioning expected date of graduation) – you will find this information on the attestation in French received by Geneva School of Diplomacy.
13. to 17. N/A – do not fill out
18. End date of your studies at Geneva School of Diplomacy (dd/mm/yyyy) - you will find this information on the attestation in French received by Geneva School of Diplomacy.
19. Reasons of your choice to come to Geneva (for the above-mentioned studies)
20. Your intentions at the end of your stay - indicate you will go back home to start your career.

Séjours antérieurs en Suisse (Previous stays in Switzerland with residence permit) –

indicate only if you have already been in Switzerland – from – to – the Canton - Permit

Résidence et garanties financières (Residence and Financial guarantees)

21. Address in Geneva – Please indicate your local residential address in the canton of Geneva
22. Name of your landlord or régie (real estate agency if applicable)
23. Relatives living in Geneva – if applicable
24. How will you support yourself financially?
 - “ By your own means
 - “ With the help of some relative (identity, relationship, address)
 - “ With the help of a third party (identity, address)
25. How much money will you have at your disposal for your first year of studies?
Indicate approximately CHF 47,500.- this should cover all your expenses for tuition, housing, transportation, food, entertainment, etc. for one year for the Bachelor in International Relations. For the rest of the degrees check [Tuition and Expenses](#) page.)

¹ Attestations are only provided once the required deposit or the tuition fees of the current term have been settled. As your student permit is directly linked to your enrolment at GSD, any non-compliance with requirements of financial or other administrative nature will be reported to the cantonal authorities.

26. How will the money mentioned above reach you? Indicate bank transfer or Western Union or bank withdrawal, etc.

And how often? Indicate weekly or monthly or every three months, etc.

Lieu (place): Date (dd/mm/yyyy): Signature of applicant – your signature

2. How to complete the P form

Page 1

Genre de demande (Type of application) Type de livret (Type of permit)

=> Tick Etudiant (student) => Tick Longue durée (long term)

Bénéficiaire (Beneficiary - yourself)

1. Family name 2. First name

3. Maiden name (if married) 4. Date of birth (dd/mm/yyyy)

5. Nationality 6. Place of birth

7. Status Célibataire (single)

or Marié (married) - Date and place of wedding (dd/mm/yyyy)

8. Gender 9. Passport valid until (dd/mm/yyyy)

10. Previous authorizations to stay in Switzerland (residence permit if applicable)

11. Current address (home address)

12. Address in Geneva – Please indicate your local residential address in the canton of Geneva

13. Address abroad (same as home address)

14. E-mail address 15. Phone number

16. If you are applying for a visa the first time: Indicate location of the Swiss embassy or consulate near where you live and where you will be applying for the visa.

17. – 39. Do not complete this part unless you relocate to Geneva with dependents (spouse, children). Students of non-EU nationalities cannot take up paid work other than within the GSD internship programme as part of the academic curriculum.

Conjoint (spouse) – only if you are married

Enfants (children) – only if you have children

Revenus (income) – Do not fill out.

Genève, le ... (date)

Timbre et signature de l'employeur (employer's signature) – **do not sign**

Signature du bénéficiaire - your signature

Page 2 – to fill out after you arrive in Switzerland

Personal data to provide on your arrival to Geneva (on campus):

1. Family name 2. First name

4. Date of birth 5. Nationality

41. Family and first names of your father

42. Maiden and first names of your mother

12. Address in Geneva – repeat your local residential address as per question number 12.

43. Date of arrival in Geneva (dd/mm/yyyy) 44. Religion (optional)

45. Have you ever been arrested in Switzerland or abroad? NO YES

Genève, le ... (date)

Signature du bénéficiaire - your signature

3. Sample written confirmation/declaration that you will leave Switzerland after you have completed the chosen course study:

Please submit the declaration in French (see below):

DECLARATION

I, [name], born [date] of [nationality] formally and irrevocably agree to leave Switzerland after completing my studies, and no later than [date of completion of studies] whatever the circumstances at that time.

DECLARATION

Je soussignée, _____, (your full name)
née _____, (born on)
nationalité : _____ (nationality)

m'engage formellement et irrévocablement à quitter la Suisse au terme de mes études, mais au plus tard le et ce quelles que soient les circonstances à cette date.

Lieu : _____ (Place)

Date : _____

Signature : _____

4. Letter of intention (or statement of purpose) in which you identify your plans for the future. You will need to write a statement about your intended professional developments after having finished your studies in Switzerland. Explain how your professional future is going to benefit from your studies Geneva School of Diplomacy.

5. Confirmation of Tuition Fee and Housing deposit. Geneva School of Diplomacy advises you to pre-pay the first semester fee (xxx) as soon as possible. Once the payments are received, Geneva School of Diplomacy will issue and send you confirmation attestations. These are additional documents that you can include in your visa application package. Semester payments are refundable to the account of origin, if the Swiss Student Visa is denied by the authorities.

FAQs

OBTAINING A STUDENT VISA / PERMIT

Q: I am a non-EU national and currently in Switzerland/Geneva on a tourist Visa. Can I submit my application for a student permit locally to the Geneva authorities?

A: No. Student permit requests submitted through the official channels (i.e. through the Swiss representations abroad) have priority. Therefore, the Geneva immigration office will refuse any application which has not been submitted in accordance with the official procedure through the Swiss Embassy/consulate abroad.

Q: My Visa application is not complete. Should I nevertheless already submit it to the Swiss representation?

A: No. An incomplete file may not only cause major delay to the Visa process, but also causes double work for the authorities as several files will be started under your name. Therefore, only a complete application will be dealt with in a timely manner by the authorities.

Q: I am required to indicate a local address in Geneva on the forms. Can I use the school's address?

A: During the Visa application process, you may **very exceptionally** use GSD's address (Your name, c/o Geneva School of Diplomacy, Château de Penthes, 18 Chemin de l'Impératrice, CH-1292 Pregny/Geneva, Switzerland), in case do not have secured housing. However, as soon as you arrive for the Induction Programme, you are required to indicate your new residential address in Geneva on any form provided to the cantonal authorities. **The use of GSD's physical address once classes have started is not permitted.**

Q: I am required to provide proof of financial means, e.g. bank statement, but the embassy/consulate does not recognize my bank statement. What can I do?

A: Switzerland follows the guidelines of FINMA (Swiss Financial Market Supervisory Authority) as to which banks are recognized in Switzerland. To avoid any delay, please make sure that your bank is either listed or holds a partnership with any of the banks mentioned on this list: http://www.finma.ch/institute/pdf_e/ebeh.pdf.

Q: I have submitted all required documents to the Swiss representation. Is it guaranteed that I will obtain the immigration clearance?

A: No. Having a complete dossier is the formal requirement, but does not give any guarantee that the qualitative check will be positive. The final decision is taken by each canton, not by the federal level of Switzerland.

Q: Can GSD speed up my student Visa application by contacting the authorities?

A: No. GSD's role in the immigration process is very limited as we do not have any legal or other authority to interfere with the Swiss authorities. The canton alone has the final say about any applicant wanting to study in the canton of Geneva. However, a collaboration between the Geneva authorities and GSD does exist up to a limited extent to obtain additional information or to confirm specific statements made by an applicant.

RENEWING A STUDENT PERMIT

Q: How can I renew my student permit?

A: The permit renewal requires the first page of form "K" (EU & non-EU nationals), an updated attestation of enrolment at GSD, a copy of your current permit and your passport. You will then be asked to pay an administrative fee for the extension.

Q: I have requested the extension of my permit for a specific period, but was granted only a shorter period on my permit. What can I do?

A: The request for extension is reviewed by the OCP on the basis of the overall duration of your study programme. The ultimate decision on the duration for which a residence permit is granted lies with the cantonal authorities who have the right at any given moment to limit the requested duration or to request academic progress reports by candidates. Submitting an

extension request does not automatically lead to a positive outcome. The maximum duration of residence for study purposes in Switzerland is 8 years (all education combined).

CANCELLING A STUDENT PERMIT

Q: I have completed my studies. Do I have to cancel my student permit?

A: Yes. Upon completion of your study programme and your graduation, you are required to cancel your permit by completing the form D “Formulaire d’annonce de départ” (declaring departure form) before leaving Switzerland. Upon submission of this form to the OCP, you can request an “Attestation de départ” which will enable you to cancel contracts (e.g. insurances, housing, etc.) even outside the regular notice period. You are requested to provide GSD with a copy of the attestation de depart.

Important sites:

- Office Cantonal de la Population (Geneva Immigration Office): <http://www.ge.ch/ocp/>
- Federal Department of Foreign Affairs : <http://www.eda.admin.ch>
- Federal Office for Migration : <http://www.bfm.admin.ch>