

Visa Guideline for International Visitors to HSE University - Saint Petersburg

1. Introduction

In order to enter Russia most foreign nationals or stateless persons need a Russian visa and an official invitation for visa application. It takes some time for us to issue an official visa invitation as well as for your visa application itself, so it is important to begin the application process as early as possible. Normally, one should start caring about the Russian visa not earlier than 3 Months, but **ultimately not later than 40 days prior** the expected date of visit, depending on the type of visa invitation you'll require (see below).

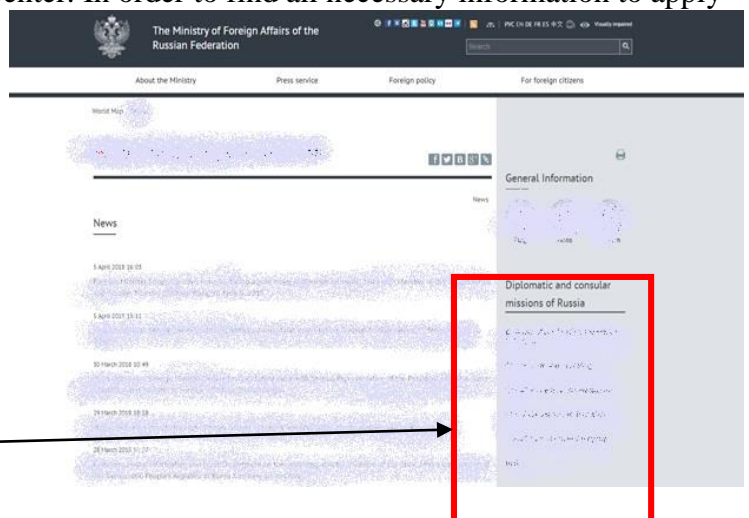
Please mind the following:

- **Not all foreign nationals are required to have a visa** to enter Russia; the list of countries for which there is no visa requirement can be found [on the 'Study in Russia' website](#).
- At the same time, some international visitors can enter Russia for a limited period of time without a visa for tourist purpose **but will be required to have a visa** for if coming to Russia for other purpose like conference, academic cooperation, study or work. Please always check with your local Russian Consulate or visa center whether you need a visa for your purpose of visit!
- **International students from visa countries can be enrolled to HSE only under a student visa issued by HSE invitation!** Should you have a valid tourist, private, business visa or a valid student visa issued by another institution, you will have to cancel it and apply for a new student visa with an HSE invitation. In some cases, students under a work visa can be enrolled to HSE
- It is possible to participate in a conference or other event at HSE under a Humanitarian visa issued by a third party (not HSE) institution
- To apply for a Russian visa you will need an official visa invitation from HSE. Please contact your host party at HSE to request a visa invitation in advance!

2. Where to find information

You can apply for the Russian visa in the nearest Russian Consulate / Consular section of Russian embassy / official Russian visa center. In order to find all necessary information to apply for visa please do the following:

1. Visit the website of [The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation](#), choose the country where you will apply for visa.
2. You will find information about Russian Consulates and Consular sections of Russian Embassies on the right side of the website page. Choose the one which is the nearest to you.



On the website of the Consulate or Embassy you will find all necessary information considering documents necessary to apply for visa, consular fees and processing time of visa issuance or links to websites of official visa centers where this information is available as well.

Also we advise to visit our web site to check out the latest information and updates regarding the procedures of visa support and invitation: <http://spb.hse.ru/en/io>

In case of any questions or doubts please feel free to inquire your host party at HSE or our Visa Support Unit via visasupportspb@hse.ru

3. Categories and Types of Russian visas applicable for visiting HSE - Saint Petersburg

Before applying for a Russian visa, applicants and their hosts at HSE should properly choose the visa category under which they wish to lodge their visa application. Please make sure you familiarize yourself with the information on the visa category you are applying for.

Please note: regardless of the category and type of Russian visa you apply for, you will always first receive a single- or double-entry visa for 90 days. If visa extension is permitted, it will be performed by our Visa Support Unit after your arrival on site and upon further application.

If you plan to pay a short-term visit to HSE University – Saint Petersburg for the purpose of participation in an event e.g. conference, seminar etc., negotiations with your colleagues at HSE or for a guest lecture / research without remuneration, **most probably you will have to apply for a Humanitarian visa for Scientific/Technical Cooperation – please see below:**

Category of visa	Type	Purpose of visit	Duration of stay and entry type	Type of visa invitation* / Extension of visa
Humanitarian Visa	Scientific / Technical Cooperation	Short-term stay for general purpose of academic / scientific cooperation. Suitable for participation in conferences, seminars and other events; for negotiations, consultations etc. official visits; for guest lectures and guest research <u>without</u> receiving salary, honorarium or other direct reimbursement from university	Single- or Double-Entry for the period of event (up to 90 days of stay) 1-year Multi-Entry for up to 90 days of stay for each 6 Months for those who have already had a Russian visa before, subject to HSE host party and consular decision	Simplified or Regular Invitation Extension not permitted
	Accomp. family	Accompanying family members of an international visitor coming under a Humanitarian visa	Same as the principal international visitor's visa	Simplified or Regular Invitation Extension not permitted
Ordinary Work Visa	Teaching / Research	Professional purposes of teaching / performing research at the university under a standard work contract with salary / remuneration	Duration of stay is stipulated by the work contract At first, a single-entry visa for 90 days is issued and is subject to extension after arrival on site	Regular Invitation Extension for multi-entry visa for 1 year with further annual extension according to the term of work contract
	Accomp. family	Accompanying family members of an international visitor coming under an Ordinary Work Visa	Same as the principal international visitor's visa	Same as the principal international visitor's visa
Student Visa	Aspirantur	Partial non-degree postgraduate studies up to 90 days under a study contract	Single- or Double-Entry for up to 90 days of stay	Simplified or Regular Invitation Extension not permitted

Category of visa	Type	Purpose of visit	Duration of stay and entry type	Type of visa invitation* / Extension of visa
		Full-time postgraduate degree studies under a study contract	At first, a single-entry visa for 90 days is issued and is subject to extension after arrival on site	Regular Invitation Extension for multi-entry visa for up to 1 year with further annual extension to the term of study contract
	Internship	Professional training, re-training or academic / research internship at the university for up to 90 days under a study contract	Single- or Double-Entry for up to 90 days	Simplified or Regular Invitation Extension not permitted
	Student	Non-degree studies e.g. exchange or free-movers	At first, a single-entry visa for 90 days is issued and is subject to extension after arrival on site	Regular Invitation Extension for multi-entry visa for the term of exchange period
		Full-time undergraduate (Bachelor's) or graduate (Master's) degree studies under a study contract	At first, a single-entry visa for 90 days is issued and is subject to extension after arrival on site	Regular Invitation Extension for multi-entry visa for up to 1 year with further annual extension according to the term of study contract
Highly Qualified Specialist (HQS)	HQS Occupation	Carrying out teaching and/or research activities at the university under an HQS contract with salary / remuneration according to the HQS Regulations	HQS Invitation Please consult your host HR department for details of HQS visa and visa support for family members accompanying HQS visitors	

* please see 'Types of visa invitations' section below

4. Documents required for visa application

To apply for a Russian visa, you would normally need a basic set of documents + additional documents depending on the type of the visa you are about to apply. **The basic set** of documents as described by the Consular Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation shall include:

1. Valid travel ID document, accepted as such by the Russian Federation. For a **Humanitarian visa** make sure your travel ID is valid for at least **6 Months after the end date of the visa** you intend to obtain. For a **Student or Work visa** your travel ID should be valid for at least **18 Months from the starting date of the visa** you intend to obtain.

Please check with your local Russian Embassy/Consulate/official Visa Center regarding the appropriate ID document for your visa invitation!

2. Appropriate Visa Invitation from the university (see the section below)

Please check with your local Russian Embassy/Consulate/official Visa Center and with your host party at HSE what type of visa invitation you will require and whether you will

have to submit an original hard copy or an electronic copy of invitation along with your visa application!

3. Completed Visa Application Form. It is normally available for free downloading at the website of Russian Embassy/Consulate/Visa Center. 2 original copies are normally required.
4. One color photo 3,5x4,5 cm size
5. Consular Fee payment receipt
6. Health Insurance valid in Russia and covering the period of stay according to the norms as stated on the website of Russian Embassy/Consulate/Visa Center
7. Additional documents as per your case:

Type of visa	Additional documents
Student / Work visa	a General Health Certificate valid for 3 Months from the date of visa application, including HIV/AIDS Certificate and Lungs X-Ray Certificate
Any type of visa for some categories of international visitors applying for Russian visa outside of their home country	If you plan to apply for a Russian visa (any type) in a third country (outside of your home country), we strongly recommend to check with your local Russian Embassy/Consulate/Visa Center whether: a) your visa application in the country of your current residence (outside of your home country) is possible in principle b) you will have to submit a notary legalized original copy of a document proving your residential status in this third country (PR Card, Study/Work Permit etc.) along with both application for visa invitation (to the host university) and visa application to the Russian Embassy/Consulate/Visa Center <u>Example:</u> a citizen of Turkey permanently residing in London will have to submit a notarized residence permit along with other documents to apply for a Russian visa in London.
Multi-Entry Humanitarian visa	Copy of previous Russian visa is required to apply for a multi-entry Humanitarian visa. It shall be also provided to your host party at HSE at the time of application for visa invitation
All types of visas	Please always check the list of required documents with your local Russian Embassy/Consulate/Visa Center prior to submitting your visa application as it may slightly vary depending on your home country

5. Types of visa invitations

There are 4 main types of invitations currently used for application for a Russian visa as below:

Type 1: Regular Electronic Invitation

Issued by: Ministry of Interior upon Host University's application

Issued as: electronic .pdf or .jpeg file with a reference number and a bar code

Processing time: min. 20 days from the day of application of Host University to the Ministry

Required for:

- Humanitarian visa (except for citizens of countries where Simplified Invitation works)
- all Work visas
- Extendable Student visa: full-time students; non-degree students (exchange, summer school, free-movers)

How to use: write down the reference number or print out a copy and attach to visa application

ФМС России
Одностороннее приглашение на въезд в Российскую Федерацию
Electronic invitation to enter the Russian Federation

Номер приглашения
Invitation number

Дата и место рождения
Date and place of birth

Гражданство
Citizenship

Данные идентификационной личности / Passport or other ID

Имя
Name

Категория и вид визы
Category and type of visa

Визы
Entry form

Место назначения
Place of visa issuance

Цель, номер и дата подачи заявления на въезд
Purpose, number and date of entry application

Приглашение выдано
Invitation issued by

Дата выдачи
Date of issue

Кратность виз
Number of entries

МНОГОКРАТНАЯ (M)
MULTIPLE ENTRY

Продолжительность пребывания на территории РФ
Duration of stay in the Russian Federation

0395

Type 2: Regular Paper-based Invitation

Issued by: Ministry of Interior upon Host University's application

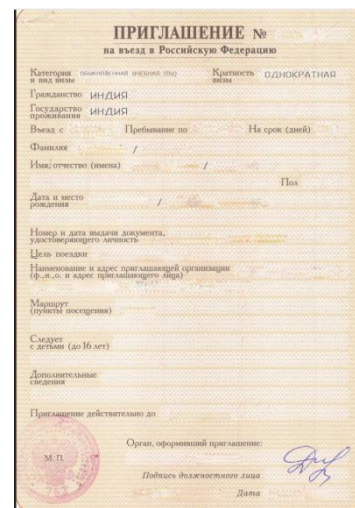
Issued as: hard copy paper-based document

Processing time: min. 30 days from the day of application of Host University to the Ministry

Required for:

- Humanitarian visa (except for citizens of countries where Simplified Invitation works)
- all Work visas
- Extendable Student visa: full-time students; non-degree students (exchange, summer school, free-movers)

How to use: attach the original hard copy of this invitation to your visa application



Type 3: Simplified Invitation

Issued by: Host University

Issued as: university letterhead paper with signature and stamp that is sent to international visitor in original hard copy or as electronic soft copy depending on the country of visa application

Processing time: min. 7 working days from the day application of international visitor to the host party at HSE university

Applicable for:

- Humanitarian visa for citizens of EU (except the United Kingdom and Ireland), China, Denmark, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Norway, Sweden and USA (only for 3-year visa).
- Non-Extendable Student visa for short-term non-degree (max. 90 days - summer school, short internship etc.) students from the same countries as above except USA

How to use:

- please first check with your local Russian Embassy/Consulate/Visa Center whether you require an original hard copy or an electronic soft copy of invitation for your visa invitation
- if you need an original hard copy, attach it to your visa application. From our experience, an original hard copy is always required for citizens of China, India, Islamic Republic of Iran.
- if an electronic soft copy is sufficient, just print it out from the file and attach to your visa application package



Type 4: Special Student Visa Telex

Issued by: Ministry of Higher Education

Issued as: electronic (telex) message sent by the Ministry of Higher Education directly to the Russian Embassy/Consulate in the indicated city of visa application + a visa reference number sent by HSE International Admissions to the future student via email

Processing time: subject to the Ministry of Higher Education procedures

Applicable ONLY for:

- Extendable Student visa for full-time students accepted under the Russian State Scholarship / HSE Gold Scholarship

How to use: write down the visa reference number and indicate it in your visa application. Before going to the Embassy/Consulate, it is strongly advised to check with your local Russian Embassy/Consulate whether the telex message has been delivered to the Embassy/Consulate.

NB! Important Remarks

- **Please note that a visa invitation is NOT a visa – do not try to enter Russia having just an invitation in your hand!** A visa invitation shall be used for visa application to your local Russian Embassy/Consulate/Visa Center.
- **If you plan to apply for any type of Russian visa in a third country** (outside of your home country of citizenship) please always check first with your local Russian Embassy/Consulate/Visa Center whether you are eligible to do so, and what additional documents will be required for application

6. Applying for a visa invitation to HSE

If you need a visa to enter Russia, please contact your host party at HSE to request a visa invitation as soon as you decide about the dates of your visit.

Please be ready to provide (usually via email) following information to your HSE host party:

- 1) Copy of your valid travel ID that you will use for visa application
- 2) Country and city of your birth
- 3) Full name and full postal address of the institution or company you work for
- 4) Dates of your planned visit
- 5) Country and city where you plan to apply for Russian visa
- 6) Copy of your previous Russian visas (if any) if you want to apply for multi-entry visa

International full-time applicants and future non-degree/exchange/free-mover students will have to submit an application for visa invitation electronically through their Online Applicant's Personal Account. Please contact HSE International Admissions / Student Exchange Coordinator / Non-Degree Programme Coordinator for further details.

Please DO NOT address the Visa Support Unit directly to inquire a visa invitation!

7. Visa expenses

Most types of Russian visas except Student Visa require paying a Consular Fee (CF). The amount of CF may vary depending on visa type and country of application and is usually ranged between \$70-\$200. Please check the website of your local Russian Embassy/Consulate/Visa Center to find out the applicable amount of CF.

In some cases, urgent visa application can be done for an extra fee.

Besides the Consular Fee, please mind that other expenses may apply subject to the type of visa and specific consular requirements:

- Visa Center service fee, Travel Agency / Visa Advisor service fee
- Costs of Health Insurance
- Costs of medical examination for obtaining Health Certificate, HIV/AIDS Certificate, Lungs X-Ray Certificate
- Costs of translation, notary legalization of documents, documents delivery expenses

NB! Important Remarks

- **HSE cannot sponsor or directly reimburse any of visa-related expenses** of our international visitors due to national fiscal legislation constraints. Please negotiate this issue with your host party at HSE in advance.
- HSE does not bear any liability for the decision of a Russian Embassy/Consulate regarding your visa application and its possible consequences as this is subject to the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs solely.

8. Visa application processing time

Usually, it takes up to **10 working days** from the date of your visa application for a Russian Embassy/Consulate to review a visa application and issue a visa.

In some cases, urgent visa application can be done for an extra fee – please check with your local Russian Embassy/Consulate/Visa Center whether this option is available in your case.

Please note that for the period of processing your visa application your local Russian Embassy/Consulate/Visa Center may require to retain your travel ID.

9. Receiving your Russian visa: peculiarities

To avoid confusions upon receiving your Russian visa, please note the following peculiarities:

Humanitarian visa is always issued as a single- or rarely double-entry visa for a certain period and a certain number of permitted days of stay as according to the timeline of the event you are going to attend. **A Humanitarian visa cannot be extended.** Contact your HSE host party regarding the possibility of issuing an invitation for a multi-entry visa.

If **you are going to attend an event at HSE** (e.g. a conference) under a **humanitarian visa**, your **visa invitation will be issued for the dates of the event +1 day before and 1 day after the event** to secure smooth arrivals and departures. **Should you require a longer period of stay**, please discuss this with your HSE host party or conference committee in advance!

Ordinary Work visa is always issued as a single-entry 90-days visa first. It is subject to extension to a multi-entry 1-year visa upon your arrival to HSE. If the term of your contract is longer than 1 year, visa extensions shall be performed annually. Please address to your HSE host party and HSE HR regarding the extension procedures. Work visa extension takes up to 30-45 days – **please do not plan any trips outside Russia for the first 2-3 Months** unless you receive an extended multi-entry visa!

HQS visa is instantly issued for the whole duration of an HQS contract. Please consult with HSE HQS Support Unit regarding further visa details.

Student visa is always issued as a single-entry 90-days visa first. If you are a full-time student or an exchange/free-mover student, it is subject to extension to a 1-year multi-entry visa upon your arrival and enrollment to HSE. Please address HSE International Admissions/Student Exchange Coordinator regarding the extension procedures. Student visa extension takes up to 30-45 days – **please do not plan any trips outside Russia for the first 2-3 Months of your stay** unless you receive an extended multi-entry visa!

Important!

- a single-entry **student visa** obtained to attend a short-term (max. 90 days) non-degree programme (e.g. Summer School) **cannot be extended**, even if you decided to apply for a following full-time study or semester exchange period at HSE. You will have to leave the country, receive a new visa invitation, apply for a new student visa and re-enter.

- international full-time **students graduating from another Russian university** and applying for the next cycle of full-time studies at HSE **are not eligible to extend their previous student visa**. E.g. if you are about to graduate from a Bachelor programme in Moscow in July and apply for a Master programme to HSE - Saint Petersburg from September, you will have to leave the country, receive a new visa invitation from HSE, apply for a new student visa and re-enter Russia.

It is highly recommended that you email a scan copy of your visa to your HSE host party / International Admissions / Student Exchange Coordinator as soon as you receive it!

We also appreciate if you email a scan copy of your visa to visasupportspb@hse.ru

10. Registration with the Russian Federal Immigration Service upon arrival to Russia

Upon arrival to Russia all international visitors **must** perform registration with the Federal Immigration Service, if the duration of stay in Russia exceeds **7 calendar days**.

Your host party at HSE shall take care of this simple procedure, but it's worth reminding.

Should you stay in a hotel/hostel in Russia, your hotel **must** perform your registration and give you an original stamped registration slip at check in. If your hotel refuses to do so, please report to your HSE host party immediately!

Please carefully read the [“Registration with the Federal Immigration Office”](#) section of our website to avoid any complications and secure compliance with Russian immigration laws.

11. Emergency contacts

If you face an issue with your invitation or visa application:

- always contact your HSE host party/International Admissions/Exchange Coordinator first
- if no solution is found or an emergency situation has evolved at the Border Control, please contact Visa Support Unit via tel.: +7 812 6445911 ext.61562 or email visasupportspb@hse.ru

If you face an issue related to the **registration with the Federal Immigration Service (FIS)**, especially if your hotel/hostel refuses to provide you the FIS Registration, please immediately report to Registration Support Unit via tel.: +7 812 6445911 ext.61577 or email migrationspb@hse.ru

General Emergency Number in Russia (Fire/Medic/Police): 112