

# VISA REQUIREMENTS

## Howest is a public institution

Sources:

<https://dofi.ibz.be/sites/dvzoe/EN/Pages/home.aspx>;

<http://www.highereducation.be> and

<https://www.studyinlanders.be/practical-information/visa-requirements>

A number of distinctions are made with respect to nationality. The most important one is that between **nationals of the European Economic Area (EEA)** and **non-EEA nationals**.

- EEA nationals may reside in all the other EEA member states.
- Non-EEA citizens need a visa or an authorisation to enter and stay in Belgium.
- Special arrangements apply for Switzerland while Monaco follows the French regulations.
- **Chinese students** who want to study in Flanders at universities or universities of applied sciences need an APS certificate issued by DAAD Beijing, with whom Flanders has a cooperation agreement, unless if there is a cooperation agreement between the Flemish institution and the Chinese home institution. In that case the student is exempted from the APS Procedure.

The contact details of all Belgium embassies and consulates worldwide can be found [here](#).

## BEFORE ARRIVING IN FLANDERS (BELGIUM)

Before you start your studies in Flanders, please visit the Belgian Embassy or Consulate in your country.

Students from EEA member states (European Union + Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein) do not need a visa, students from non-EEA member states do need a visa:

Non-EEA students should apply for an Authorisation for Provisional Stay. This type of visa (in Dutch: *Machtiging tot Voorlopig Verblijf*) allows the holder to stay in Belgium for a period longer than three months. This visa is also referred to as Visa Type D. For non-EEA students, the Authorisation for Provisional Stay is also commonly known as student visa.

As a rule you must apply for this visa at the Belgian Consulate or Embassy in your country or in the country where you legally reside, and not the public authorities in Belgium itself.

If there is no Belgian consulate or embassy in your country, you may submit your application to the Belgian consulate or embassy in a neighbouring country.

**Request your visa as soon as possible as it can easily take 2 months in getting your visa!**

Never enter Belgium on a tourist visa if you intend to stay longer than 90 days or three months.

A Visa type D is never a residence permit! You have to register at the city hall for a residence permit within the first 8 days after arrival.

## **Principle**

As a general rule, authorisation to stay in Belgium for more than 3 months is granted to a foreign student wishing to pursue higher education there, or spend a preparatory year ahead of higher education, as a regular student, in an educational establishment organised, recognised or subsidised by the public authorities, if that student:

- > proves that he is a regular student in a higher education establishment organised, recognised or subsidised by the public authorities (please note that Howest is also a public institution),
- > proves that he is not carrying any of the diseases which might endanger public health, and
- > if aged over 21, produces a document stating that he has no convictions for crimes or offences under common law,
- > proves that he has sufficient **means of subsistence** to cover his healthcare, his living costs, his study and repatriation costs. In general applies the following calculation for proving the minimum means of solvability:

- 1.295.91 EUR** net monthly income of the sponsor
- + monthly minimum amount the student must have at his disposal (**670 EUR**)
- + **150 EUR per person already dependent** on the sponsor

More detailed information can be found on [https://dofi.ibz.be/sites/dvzoe/EN/Application-guides/Pages/The\\_commitment\\_that\\_charge\\_will\\_be\\_taken\\_Annex\\_32.aspx](https://dofi.ibz.be/sites/dvzoe/EN/Application-guides/Pages/The_commitment_that_charge_will_be_taken_Annex_32.aspx) and [https://dofi.ibz.be/sites/dvzoe/EN/Application-guides/Pages/The\\_commitment\\_that\\_charge\\_will\\_be\\_taken\\_Annex\\_32.aspx](https://dofi.ibz.be/sites/dvzoe/EN/Application-guides/Pages/The_commitment_that_charge_will_be_taken_Annex_32.aspx)

## **Visa types**

Stay < 90 days = <b>Visa type C</b> (= Tourist Visa Schengen)
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- This visa type allows you to travel freely in the Schengen Area for maximum 90 days, not outside the Schengen Area.

For **EU countries that are not part of the Schengen area**, a stay in their territories is governed by individual visa requirements for the given foreign national's country of origin.

Stay > 90 days = <b>Visa type D</b> (= Student Visa)
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- In case of a visa type D single entry:
  - This visa type allows you to travel freely in the Schengen Area during the first 3 months of your stay.
  - A residence permit is needed to travel outside the Schengen Area and in the Schengen Area after the first 3 months of your stay.  
For **EU countries that are not part of the Schengen area**, a stay in their territories is governed by individual visa requirements for the given foreign national's country of origin.
- In case of a visa type D multiple entries:
  - This visa type allows you to travel several times between your home country and Belgium as long as your visa is valid.
  - It also allows you to travel freely in the Schengen Area during the first 3 months of your stay.
  - A residence permit is needed to travel outside the Schengen Area (unless if you travel to your home country) and in the Schengen Area after the first 3 months of your stay.  
For **EU countries that are not part of the Schengen area**, a stay in their territories is governed by individual visa requirements for the given foreign national's country of origin.

When visiting the embassy or consulate you will need the following documents:

- A completed and signed visa application form (in duplicate)
- Valid passport (with at least one year's validity remaining)
- Permission to enroll at the higher education institution (Acceptance Letter)
- Proof that you satisfy the conditions for access to higher education (such as diploma, academic records)
- Proof you can support yourself (sufficient means of subsistence)

- Certificate of good conduct
- Medical certificate
- Valid proof of payment of the administrative fee
- Declaration signed by yourself, certifying that you will leave Flanders (Belgium) upon the completion of your studies
- Recent passport pictures, signed on the back

### **Visa Application Cost**

For a visa type D (long-term):

- there is a handling fee of 180 EUR per application
- an extra contribution for administration costs that can vary between 207 euros and 363 euros.

Detailed information can be found on the website of the [Belgian Federal Public Service for Foreign Affairs](#).

For the administration fees, see <https://dofi.ibz.be/sites/dvzoe/EN/Application-guides/Pages/Administrative%20fee.aspx>

## **AFTER ARRIVING IN FLANDERS (BELGIUM)**

All international students, both EEA and non-EEA, have to register at the city hall within eight days after arrival in Belgium. The local authorities will issue an identity document for a foreign student temporarily living in Belgium (residence permit), which will be available 5 to 6 weeks after registration at the city hall. EEA students will get a paper residence permit for free, non-EEA students will get an electronic residence permit that costs 17,60 euros in Kortrijk/21,70 euros in Bruges.

This document will allow multiple exits/entries in Belgium and it will also show the exact duration of stay. Insurance companies may require it in case of accidents/damage!

Moreover, without this document, a Visa Type D (single entry) will allow you to travel around in the Schengen Area (for a list of the Schengen Countries, see

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schengen\\_Area](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schengen_Area)) during the first 3 months since your first day of arrival but if you still want to travel after this period or outside the Schengen Area, you definitely need to have a residence permit in order to re-enter Belgium.

The same goes for a D visa with multiple entries (instead of a single entry), but in addition you can travel several times between your home country and Belgium as long as your visa is valid.

The Campus Coordinator of Internationalisation will make you an appointment for registration at the city hall in the first week after your arrival, normally during the Orientation Week. You will receive the appointment info by e-mail.

- ➔ When registering at the city hall, you will need to present the following documents:
- Valid international passport
  - Your long-stay visa for Belgium
  - Passport photo (max 6 months old)
  - Proof of enrolment at Howest
  - A copy of your student accommodation rental contract
  - Proof of health insurance coverage
  - Proof of solvency
  - Personal data form in Dutch (called 'Inlichtingenformulier'): your buddy will help you to complete it during the Orientation Week.

For more information, you can consult the city hall of Kortrijk, Department Foreign Affairs (only available in Dutch):

<https://www.kortrijk.be/producten/buitenlandse-studenten>

The website of the city hall of Bruges is only available in Dutch:

<https://www.brugge.be/vreemdelingen-2>.

See also the Study in Flanders web page <http://www.studyinlanders.be/en/preparing-your-stay/checklist/> : Checklist.