



**Immigration Department**  
**The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region**

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**Guidebook for Entry for Study in Hong Kong**

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## **I. Introduction**

This guidebook sets out the entry arrangement for persons who wish to enter the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) for study.

## **II. Eligibility Criteria**

2. An application for a visa/entry permit to enter the HKSAR for study may be favourably considered if :

(a) the applicant:

- (i) is admitted to a private school registered under the Education Ordinance (Cap. 279) or Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance (Cap. 320) (entry for study in public or aided schools is not permitted except for tertiary education);
- (ii) takes up studies in a full-time locally-accredited post-secondary programme including short-term course, part-time locally-accredited taught postgraduate programme, or full-time exchange study programme for not more than one year at degree or above level; or
- (iii) is enrolled in a course on the register of non-local higher education or professional courses as set up under the Non-local Higher and Professional Education (Regulation) Ordinance (Cap. 493);

(b) the applicant is:

- (i) from the age of 5 years and 8 months to 11 for primary education; or
- (ii) below the age of 20 for secondary education;

(c) the applicant holds a school acceptance letter to confirm that he/she has been accepted for a course of study; and

(d) the applicant is able to meet the fees for the course, the living expenses for his/her maintenance and accommodation without working and without recourse to public funds.

3. This entry arrangement does not apply to:

- (a) Chinese residents of the Mainland and Taiwan;
- (b) former Mainland Chinese residents settled in Macao who were not settled there by 14 January 1979; and
- (c) nationals of Afghanistan, Albania, Cambodia, Cuba, Laos, Korea (Democratic Peoples' Republic of), Nepal and Vietnam.

4. However, subject to meeting the conditions at sub-paragraphs 2(c) & (d) above, Chinese residents of the Mainland, Macao and Taiwan may apply for entry to take up:

- (a) studies in full-time locally-accredited post-secondary programmes<sup>1</sup>;
- (b) full-time exchange study programmes for not more than one year at degree or above level; or
- (c) short-term studies, subject to the following conditions:
  - (i) the programme concerned is offered by Hong Kong higher education institutions with degree-awarding powers<sup>2</sup> (excluding their continuing and professional education arms); and
  - (ii) the cumulative duration of short-term studies taken up by any student should not exceed 180 days within any 12-month period.

In addition:

- (a) Chinese residents of Macao and Taiwan may apply to take up studies in part-time locally-accredited taught post-graduate programmes;
- (b) Chinese residents of the Mainland may apply to take up studies in part-time locally-accredited taught post-graduate programmes offered by the University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded institutions; and
- (c) Chinese residents of the Mainland may also apply to attend secondary school level short-term exchange programmes approved by the Education Bureau of not more than 2 weeks, if accompanied by Mainland teachers.

### **III. Application Procedures**

#### *Application Forms*

5. Applicant should complete application form (ID 995A). The sponsor should complete application form (ID 995B). The application forms (ID 995A and ID 995B) can be obtained free of charge from the following offices:

- (a) Immigration Department Headquarters.
- (b) Immigration Branch Offices.

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<sup>1</sup> The agreement between the Mainland and Hong Kong on mutual recognition of degree awards in higher education is not applicable to sub-degree qualifications (i.e. associate degree, professional diploma and advanced diploma programmes). Mainland students may come to attend sub-degree level study programmes in Hong Kong since there is no restriction in the Mainland prohibiting them to pursue further studies at educational institutions outside the Mainland on a personal basis.

<sup>2</sup> They comprise the eight University Grants Committee-funded institutions, the Open University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Shue Yan University, Chu Hai College of Higher Education and Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts.

- (c) Overseas Chinese Diplomatic and Consular Missions.
- (d) Immigration Division of the Office of the Government of the HKSAR in Beijing.
- (e) Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Guangdong.

The forms can also be downloaded from the Immigration Department's website at [www.immd.gov.hk](http://www.immd.gov.hk).

### *Sponsor in Hong Kong*

6. To apply for entry for study, the applicant should nominate a local sponsor. A local sponsor can either be the educational institution granting the acceptance or an individual. If the local sponsor is an individual, he/she should be:

- (a) of the age of 18 or above;
- (b) a bona fide Hong Kong resident;
- (c) acquainted with the applicant; and
- (d) financially capable to support the applicant and provide him/her with accommodation.

7. Besides, if the applicant is under the age of 18, one of the applicant's parents should authorise the sponsor or his/her relative/friend in Hong Kong to be the guardian of the applicant. A consent letter duly signed by both the guardian and one of the applicant's parents should be produced.

### *Supporting Documents*

8. Please refer to the checklist at Part VIII.

### *Submission of Application*

9. All the forms must be duly completed and signed. Where there are accompanying dependants (please refer to information at Part VI below), each dependant must complete and sign Part B of application form ID 995A. For an applicant or a child dependant under the age of 16, it must be signed by the parent or legal guardian of the child. Completed application forms, i.e. ID 995A and ID 995B, and all supporting documents should be submitted in either one of the following ways:

- (a) By post directly or through the local sponsor in the HKSAR to:

Receipt and Despatch Unit  
Hong Kong Immigration Department  
2/F, Immigration Tower  
7 Gloucester Road  
Wan Chai, Hong Kong

- (b) Applicants residing in overseas countries or territories may submit their application forms together with the relevant supporting documents and their travel documents in person to the nearest Chinese diplomatic and consular missions in their place of domicile.
- (c) Holders of foreign passports who are living in the Mainland of China may submit the application forms together with all supporting documents to the Immigration Division of the Office of the Government of the HKSAR in Beijing (Beijing Office). Applicants are required to produce their travel documents to the Immigration Division of the Beijing Office so that a visa/entry permit could be issued if the application is approved. The address of the Beijing Office is:

No. 71, Di'anmen Xidajie, Xicheng District  
Beijing 100009  
People's Republic of China

10. Applications from the Chinese residents of the Mainland should be submitted to the Immigration Department through the educational institution (the sponsor) granting the acceptance.

#### **IV. Travel Documentation Requirement**

11. Visa/Entry permit label will be issued upon successful application. It should be collected by the sponsor from the Immigration Department for onward transmission to the successful applicant. For application submitted to the Chinese diplomatic and consular mission or the Immigration Division of the Beijing Office, visa/entry permit will be issued through the relevant Chinese diplomatic and consular mission or the Immigration Division of the Beijing Office as appropriate.

12. The visa/entry permit label should be affixed onto a blank visa page of the applicant's travel document for presentation to the immigration officer upon arrival in the HKSAR.

13. Successful applicant who is a Chinese resident of the Mainland should apply for an Exit-entry Permit for Travelling to and from Hong Kong and Macao (EEP) and a relevant exit endorsement from the Public Security Bureau office where his/her household registration is kept. The entry permit label should be affixed onto a blank endorsement page of the applicant's EEP on which his/her relevant exit endorsement has been obtained. The applicant should present the EEP for immigration examination upon arrival in the HKSAR.

## **V. Extension of Stay**

14. Persons admitted for study may apply for extension of stay to study in the HKSAR within 4 weeks before their limit of stay expires. Such applications will be considered only when the applicants continue to meet the eligibility criteria for entry for study. Extension of stay, if approved, will normally be on a yearly basis or in accordance with the duration of their studies (whichever is shorter).

## **VI. Entry of Dependants**

15. Applicants admitted for study (in full-time undergraduate or post-graduate programmes in local degree-awarding institutions) may apply to bring in their spouse and unmarried dependent children under the age of 18 to the HKSAR under the prevailing dependant policy. Persons admitted or applying for admission for study will be the sponsors of their accompanying dependants to the HKSAR. An application for admission of a dependant may be favourably considered if:

- (a) there is reasonable proof of a genuine relationship between the dependant and the sponsor;
- (b) there is no known record to the detriment of the dependant; and
- (c) the sponsor is able to support the dependant's living at a standard well above the subsistence level and provide him/her with suitable accommodation in the HKSAR.

16. This entry arrangement does not apply to:

- (a) former Mainland Chinese residents residing in Macao who have acquired residence in Macao through channels other than the One-way Permit Scheme; and
- (b) nationals of Afghanistan, Albania, Cuba and Korea (Democratic People's Republic of).

17. The length of stay of such dependants will be linked to that of their sponsors. Dependants are required to leave the HKSAR when the sponsors leave the HKSAR. Dependants whose sponsors have been admitted into the HKSAR for study are prohibited from taking up employment in the HKSAR unless they have obtained prior permission from the Director of Immigration under existing policy.

## **VII. Other Information**

18. In general, unless a person has the right of abode or right to land in the HKSAR, he/she requires a visa/entry permit to study in the HKSAR. While each application is determined on its individual merits, an applicant should meet normal immigration requirements (such as holding a valid travel document with adequate returnability to his/her country of residence or citizenship; be of clear criminal record and raise no security or criminal concerns to the HKSAR; have no likelihood of becoming a burden on the HKSAR, etc.) as well as the relevant specific eligibility criteria detailed above before he/she may be considered for the grant of a visa/entry permit. It should be noted that the eligibility criteria may be subject to change from time to time.

### **Conditions of Stay**

19. A successful applicant entering the HKSAR as a student shall be subject to the following conditions of stay that:

- (a) he/she shall become a student only at a specified school, university or other educational institution and undertake such course of study as may be approved by the Director of Immigration; and
- (b) he/she shall not:
  - (i) take up any employment, whether paid or unpaid; or
  - (ii) establish or join in any business.

20. The restriction in respect of internship and part-time employment for non-local students has been relaxed from the 2008/09 academic year onwards. Non-local students of full-time locally-accredited programmes at degree level or above whose study period is not less than one academic year may take up internship subject to the following conditions:

- (a) the internships must be study/curriculum-related and be arranged or endorsed by the institutions they are studying in<sup>3</sup>; and
- (b) the duration of the internship is up to one academic year, or one-third of the

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<sup>3</sup> The study/curriculum-related internship must be endorsed by designated officers of the relevant institution, not by individual offices, schools, faculties or faculty members.

normal duration of the relevant full-time academic programme, whichever is the shorter<sup>4</sup>.

There is no restriction on the nature of work, level of salary, location, number of working hours and employers.

21. Moreover, these students (excluding exchange students) may take up:
  - (a) part-time on-campus employment<sup>5</sup> for not more than 20 hours per week<sup>6</sup> throughout the year; and
  - (b) employment during the summer months from 1 June to 31 August (both dates inclusive) without any limit in relation to work hours and location.
22. Eligible students will be notified of the relaxation individually by a “No Objection Letter” (NOL) upon approval of entry and extension of stay applications. The NOL will spell out the type(s) and conditions of employment which the student may take up.

### **Termination of Study**

23. If the educational institution or student for any reasons terminates the studies before the completion of such study course, the educational institution should notify the Director of Immigration of the date of termination of study in writing or provide the Director of Immigration with completed “Notification of Termination of Studies” (ID 977) within 7 days following the termination.

### **Re-entry into Hong Kong**

24. Non-permanent residents of the HKSAR, irrespective of their nationality and type of travel document held, do not require a re-entry visa/entry permit to enter the HKSAR provided that they return within the validity of their permitted limit of stay and that the circumstances upon which they have acquired their residential status remain unchanged. Non-permanent residents, if returning after a long absence of, say, 12 months or more, may be required to approach the Immigration Department Headquarters to have their residential status verified.

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<sup>4</sup> The internship cannot take place before a non-local student is officially registered with the institution and begins attending any scheduled classes of his/her registered programme in Hong Kong, or when the student concerned has fulfilled all the course/credit requirements for graduation (e.g. a student who has just finished his/her year of study).

<sup>5</sup> The employment must take place within the campus of the institution (including only the campus of the institution which the non-local student is enrolling, and excluding the campus of any subsidiary and associated body of the relevant institution proper or its self-financing arms) where the non-local student is studying or, if the work location is outside campus of the institution, the employer is the institution itself.

<sup>6</sup> Students are not allowed to roll-over unused hours from one week to another.

## **Payment of Fees**

25. If the application is submitted to the Hong Kong Immigration Department direct, payment of fees should be made upon collection of the visa/entry permit either in cash or by cheque. The cheque should be crossed, made payable to “The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region”, properly dated and signed.

26. If the application is submitted to an overseas Chinese diplomatic and consular mission or the Immigration Division of the Beijing Office, the visa/entry permit fee should be paid direct to the Chinese diplomatic and consular mission or the Immigration Division of the Beijing Office as appropriate.

## **Processing Time**

27. It will normally take six weeks to process a visa/entry permit application for study upon receipt of all the required documents. The Immigration Department would not be able to start processing the application unless all the required documents and information are received. Please refrain from making enquiries about the progress of the application unless it is absolutely necessary, as it may delay the processing of the application.

28. All applications are processed and determined by the Immigration Department. Approval of applications is entirely discretionary and is subject to changes in government policies. The Director of Immigration reserves absolute discretion to refuse any application even if the application meets all eligibility criteria.

## **Warning**

29. It is an offence to make false statements or representations to an immigration officer. A person who knowingly and wilfully makes a statement or gives information which he/she knows to be false or does not believe to be true shall be guilty of an offence under the Laws of Hong Kong and any such visa/entry permit issued or permission to enter or remain in the HKSAR granted shall have no effect.

## **Disclaimer**

30. The information in this guidebook serves as reference only. The Immigration Department of the HKSAR is not responsible for any loss or damage whatsoever arising out of or in connection with any information in this guidebook. The Immigration Department reserves the right to omit, suspend or edit all information in this guidebook at any time in its absolute discretion without giving any reason or prior notice. The Immigration

Department further reserves the right to change the eligibility criteria and details of the arrangement set out above from time to time without notice.

### **Enquiries**

31. For more information about the entry arrangement for study, please contact the Immigration Department by enquiry hotline at (852) 2824 6111 or by fax at (852) 2877 7711; or visit the Immigration Department's homepage at [www.immd.gov.hk](http://www.immd.gov.hk).

## VIII. Checklist of Forms and Documents to be Submitted

### (A) Forms and Documents to be Submitted by the Applicants

✓	<b>Forms/Documents Required</b>
	Application for Entry for Study in Hong Kong (ID 995A)
	Acknowledgement Card (ID 813)
	2 mailing labels (ID 839)
	The applicant's recent photograph (affixed on page 2 of the application form ID 995A)
	Photocopy of the applicant's travel document containing personal particulars, date of issue, date of expiry and/or details of any re-entry visa held (if applicable). For an applicant who is currently staying in the HKSAR, photocopy of his/her travel document page containing the latest arrival stamp/extension of stay label in the HKSAR. Chinese resident of the Mainland who has not been issued with a travel document may submit a photocopy of his/her People's Republic of China resident identity card.
	Photocopy of the applicant's Hong Kong identity card (if any)
	A letter of acceptance from the educational institution
	One of the applicant's parents should authorise the sponsor or his/her relative/friend in Hong Kong to be the guardian of the applicant. A consent letter duly signed by both the guardian and one of the applicant's parents should be produced. <i>[if the applicant is under the age of 18]</i>
	Photocopy of proof of the applicant's accommodation arrangement <i>[if the applicant is under the age of 18]</i>
	Photocopy of proof of the applicant's financial support, e.g. bank statements, savings account passbooks, tax receipts and salary slips <i>[if the sponsor is the educational institution]</i>
	Photocopy of the applicant's Macao identity card <i>[for Macao residents only]</i>
	Photocopy of the applicant's household registration in Taiwan and Taiwan identity card <i>[for Taiwan residents only]</i>

(B) *Forms and Documents to be Submitted by the Sponsors*

✓	<b>Forms/Documents Required</b>
	Application for Entry for Study (Sponsor) in Hong Kong (ID 995B)
	An undertaking that the sponsor is prepared to provide accommodation to the applicant during his/her period of study in Hong Kong <i>[if the applicant is under the age of 18]</i>
	Photocopy of the sponsor's Hong Kong identity card #
	Photocopy of the sponsor's travel document containing personal particulars, date of issue, date of expiry, and the latest arrival stamp/extension of stay label in the HKSAR <i>[for non-permanent resident of the HKSAR only]</i> #
	Photocopy of proof of the sponsor's financial standing, e.g. bank statements, savings account passbooks, tax receipts and salary slips; and an undertaking that the sponsor is prepared to provide financial support to the applicant during his/her period of study in Hong Kong #

# Submission of the documents is not required if the sponsor is the educational institution granting the acceptance.

(C) *Forms and Documents to be Submitted by each accompanying Dependant of an Applicant for entry for Study*

✓	<b>Forms/Documents Required</b>
	The applicant's application form, Application for Entry for Study in Hong Kong (ID 995A) with Part B duly completed by the dependant
	The dependant's recent photograph (affixed on page 2 of the application form ID 995A)
	Photocopy of the dependant's travel document containing personal particulars, its date of issue, date of expiry and/or details of any re-entry visa held (if applicable). For a dependant who is currently staying in the HKSAR, photocopy of his/her travel document page containing the latest arrival stamp/extension of stay label in the HKSAR. Chinese resident of the Mainland who has not been issued with a travel document may submit a photocopy of his/her People's Republic of China resident identity card.
	Photocopy of evidence of the applicant's relationship with the dependant, e.g. marriage certificates, birth certificates, family photographs, family letters (with envelopes), census record book and Privilege Card for Single Child (if applicable)
	Photocopy of the dependant's Macao identity card [ <i>for Macao residents only</i> ]
	Photocopy of the dependant's household registration in Taiwan and Taiwan identity card [ <i>for Taiwan residents only</i> ]

**Important Notice:**

1. Notwithstanding that the documents and information required have been furnished, applicants, accompanying dependant(s) and sponsors may still be required to submit further supporting documents and information in connection with the application(s) when necessary.
2. Where a document is not in Chinese or English, it must be accompanied by a Chinese or English translation certified as a true translation by a sworn translator, court translator, authorised public translator, certified translator, expert translator or official translator.