

Information for Students with Visa Requirements

To enter and study in Switzerland, you will need a so-called long stay visa (national visa D). Furthermore, once you are in Switzerland, you will receive a residence permit. To apply for a long stay visa, please contact the [Swiss representation in your country of residence](#) **at least four months** before you plan to enter Switzerland. Please note that usually the Canton in which the student is planning to live grants the entry permit (visa) and - once you are in Switzerland - the residence permit. It is not the Canton in which the University campus is located who decides about your visa application.

Under no circumstances should you enter Switzerland as a tourist or with a tourist visa (Schengen visa C). A tourist visa cannot be used for study purposes nor be converted to a residence permit after you have entered the country.

Switzerland is an associated member of the Schengen/Dublin agreement, but a tourist visa (Schengen visa C) from another country entitles the holder only to enter and travel through Switzerland, and not to take up residence or study in Switzerland. To do so, you need a long stay visa (national visa D). Please only enter Switzerland with your long stay visa D approved and stamped into your passport.

You must enclose the documents stated below with your visa application at the Swiss representation. Please note that a missing document can lead to delays. If the Swiss representation in your country requests any further documents, please enclose these too.

After entering Switzerland, all students (except those living in Canton Zug) must register with the residents' registration office at their place of residence within 14 days in order to get the residence permit issued. Further information on this procedure will be provided by the International Office through another checklist.

Visa Application

Start your visa application as soon as possible after receiving your Letter of Acceptance, but at least four months before the semester starts and conclude the following three (3) steps:

- 1) Schedule an appointment for visa submittal at the [Swiss representation](#) in your country of residence.
- 2) During the appointment, you have to hand in several documents. We highly recommend checking beforehand directly with the Swiss Embassy what documentation is required. Take note, the documents may slightly change in every country. Mostly, the following documents are requested (please find further information on these documents below):
 - a. National (type D) visa application form
 - b. Passport
 - c. Proof of financial means
 - d. Motivational Letter
 - e. Curriculum Vitae - CV
 - f. Diplomas / Transcripts
 - g. Language Certificate
 - h. Written pledge to exit Switzerland
 - i. Letter of Acceptance from HSLU / Studienplatzbestätigung
- 3) Send us a copy of the signed visa application and all other mentioned documents by email.

a. National (type D) visa application form

National (type D) visa [application form](#) filled in on the computer, with a written signature by hand (not digital).

b. Passport

Your passport must be valid for at least 3 months beyond the planned duration of your stay. If you have to hand in the original or only a copy of your passport depends on your country. Please inform yourself directly at the Swiss Embassy what is needed.

c. Proof of financial means

For your visa and your residence permit application you must prove that you have sufficient funds in a bank account in your name for the tuition fees and for your living costs during your studies.

The following information is needed in the form of a "Statement of Funds" letter or bank account statement from your bank. The "Statement of Funds" letter or bank account statement shall be emitted preferably in English language, but other major European languages may also be accepted (French, German, Italian):

- 1) Evidence of sufficient financial means through current statement of a bank account in your name with the required minimum amount of CHF 21'000 for a whole academic year | CHF 10'500 for one semester (Cantons of Lucerne & Zug)
- 2) Ideally the statement of funds/bank statement is from a FINMA-bank. [Here](#) you can find out if your bank is authorised (look for "List of banks and securities firms authorised by FINMA").
→ If your place of residence will be in **Canton Zug**, the statement of funds/bank statement must be from a FINMA-bank (Swiss bank or a foreign bank with a branch in Switzerland).
- 3) The statement of funds/bank statement has to be in your name. Parents' or relatives' bank statements will not be accepted.

d. Motivational Letter

The following points should be covered in your motivational letter:

- 1) The motivational letter must be written in the language in which the studies will be completed.
- 2) Mention the reason why you would like to study at the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts (*Hochschule Luzern, HSLU*).
- 3) Make sure that you mention the correct study period:
Bachelor: 3 years
Master: 1.5 - 2 years depending on the duration of studies of your degree (full-time)
- 4) Mention what your future plans are in your home country after completing your studies in Switzerland and why you need this qualification for your professional future. Also mention that you will be travelling back to your home country once you finish your studies.
- 5) Information for your partnership status is not recommended and might have a negative impact on the decision of granting a study visa / residence permit.
- 6) Refer to your language skills according to the language in which your studies will take place (English / German).
- 7) Please sign your motivational letter with a written signature by hand (not digital).

e. Curriculum Vitae - CV

Please note, in Switzerland a CV should be submitted as follows:

- 1) tabular, chronological format with no gaps
- 2) Date of CV, photo of student and contact details of student
- 3) No text passages (table format)

[Here](#) you will find an example of a CV in the correct format.

f. Diplomas / Transcripts

Please add Diplomas according to your education / training mentioned in your CV. The following diplomas are mandatory (in German, English, French or Italian) for the following types of degree:

Bachelor:	Higher Secondary certificate or equivalent
Master:	Bachelor-Diploma

If you are in your final year / semester of your current education, then you shall submit a copy of your diploma after your graduation. However, you must in advance deliver a current certificate of enrolment with the statement for the date when you will graduate.

g. Language Certificate

For the visa / residence permit application you will need an official language certificate (German or English) according to the language of instruction of your studies at HSLU. A letter stating that you participate in a language course is not sufficient.

Note I: In case you do not have an official language certificate, please contact the according person in the department in which you are going to study as early as possible for assistance.

Note II: In some countries the Swiss Consulate will make an assessment of your German language skills during the visa application process.

h. Written pledge to exit Switzerland

Please note that your letter of commitment to leave Switzerland (in German or English) on completion or discontinuation of studies needs to be signed with your original written signature by hand (not digital). Ask your contact person at the school for a sample template of the letter.

i. Letter of Acceptance from HSLU / Studienplatzbestätigung

The Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts will send you an Acceptance Letter which should be sufficient to submit to the Swiss Embassy for your visa application.

Note I: In case you need a special Acceptance Letter, please contact the according person in the School in which you are going to study as early as possible for assistance.

Residence Permit application / documents:

Please refer to the checklist for Residence Permit application in order to know how to receive your Residence Permit. This might include handing in some additional documents (Canton Zug) after your arrival or registering at the residents' registration Office (Canton Lucerne) once you've entered Switzerland. Ask your International Office / Student Administration if you did not yet receive the other checklist.

Students from countries needing a special permission to study in Switzerland (Zustimmungspflichtige Studierende):

Students from "Zustimmungspflichtigen" countries (countries needing a special permission to study in Switzerland) shall read the Swiss government information on this topic. You can search for "Zustimmungspflichtige Studierende" on the following [website](#) to find out more.