



Student Welcome Guide 2024-2025

Before leaving your home country

- Ensure that you have sufficient financial resources to cover your period of study in Belgium.
 - Check whether you need a long stay visa. If so, **we strongly advise you to submit your application 3 months before your intended date of arrival in Belgium.**
 - Ensure that your passport is valid until 3 months after your expected date of departure from Belgium.
 - Prepare documents and ID photos. The documents required will depend on your nationality but will generally include: passport, diplomas, birth/marriage certificates, medical file, proof of address in home country, proof of funding. Non-EEA citizens will need a police clearance certificate and a [medical certificate](#) issued by a doctor approved by the Belgian consulate.
 - If your diplomas and certificates are in any language other than French, Dutch or English, you may need to obtain certified and legalized translations.
 - If you are coming to Belgium with family members, obtain [legalised translations of birth and marriage certificates](#).
 - If you are a citizen of an EEA* country or Switzerland, obtain a European health insurance card (EHIC) which will cover you until you have registered for health insurance in Belgium.
 - If you are a UK citizen, obtain a UK Global health insurance card (GHIC) which will cover you until you have registered for health insurance in Belgium.
 - If you are a citizen of a non-EEA country, arrange travel insurance if you wish to have repatriation cover, as the Belgian mutuality (health insurance company) will not provide this.
 - If you are on regular medication, bring with you at least one month's supply (more if you are on very specific medication) and obtain doctors' reports. You should also ask your doctor to check whether the equivalent medication is available in Belgium.
 - If your home address is not in your passport, obtain an official document from the local authorities confirming your home address (to facilitate opening of a bank account).
 - Book temporary accommodation, if necessary.
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- EEA countries : Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain & Sweden.

IMMIGRATION PROCEDURE

[Do I need a visa to study in Belgium?](#)

Whether or not you need a visa will depend on your nationality.

Citizens of a country in the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland

Citizens of countries in the European Economic Area (EEA) and Switzerland do not need a visa.

You need to register at the town hall of your municipality of residence after arrival in Belgium and once you have found long-term accommodation.

Citizens of a non-EEA country

You need to obtain a long stay student visa D (**to study in a private higher education establishment**) before travelling to Belgium.

Chinese students need to obtain an APS certificate before applying for their student visa.

You need to register at the town hall of your municipality of residence after arrival in Belgium and once you have found long-term accommodation.

[Visa application procedure](#)

You need to apply for a long stay visa at the [Belgian consulate](#) (or the external service provider with which the Belgian consulate collaborates eg. VFS, TLS) in, or responsible for, your home country or the country in which you are legally resident.

In some countries there is no Belgian consulate, and it will therefore be necessary to submit your visa application at the Belgian consulate in a neighbouring country or at the consulate of another country designated by the Belgian authorities.

Your long stay visa does not have to be valid for the full duration of your stay in Belgium. On arrival in Belgium, you will need to apply for a residence permit on the basis of your long stay visa. Once you have your Belgian residence permit, the visa serves no purpose.

You should only apply for your Belgian residence permit once you have found long-term accommodation (even if you receive instructions from the Belgian consulate to register at the town hall within 8 days of arrival).

Long stay visa – financial resources

In order to be eligible for a long stay student visa, you need to prove that you have [sufficient regular financial resources](#) to cover accommodation, living and medical expenses during your stay in Belgium. We anticipate the minimum amount required by the Belgian authorities for the 2024-2025 academic year to be 850€ per month, but this amount may be subject to indexation.

Please note that while financial resources of 850€ per month will render you eligible for a student visa, this amount is not sufficient to cover all your accommodation and living expenses in Belgium. Your monthly expenses are likely to be around 1200€.

It is essential to enclose proof of sufficient financial resources with your visa application.

Students who do not have a scholarship or who will not continue to receive their salary while in Belgium can apply for a visa on the basis of:

- a guarantor **OR**
- a blocked account with Solvay Lifelong Learning.

Visa applications on the basis of a blocked account are generally more successful and are processed more quickly.

Long stay visa – financial resources - guarantor

Your guarantor must be:

- of Belgian nationality **OR**
- a citizen of the European Union with right of residence of more than 3 months in Belgium or another EU country **OR**
- a non-EU citizen authorized to reside in Belgium or another EU country for an unlimited period of time **OR**
- a family member up to and including the 3rd degree.

Your guarantor will need to complete an Annexe 32 document certifying that they will cover all expenses during your studies in Belgium and prove (eg. via salary statements, work contract) that they have sufficient regular income. A monthly net income of at least 2850€ is currently required in order to serve as guarantor. This amount may be subject to indexation.

For further information regarding the conditions to be met by the guarantor, see the [immigration office website](#). The Belgian consulate at which you apply for your visa will verify whether your guarantor meets the solvency requirements.

Long stay visa – financial resources – blocked account with Solvay Lifelong Learning

Should you wish to set up a **blocked account** with Solvay Lifelong Learning, please contact visa@solway.edu at least 2 weeks before you plan to submit your visa application.

You will need to transfer to the bank account of Solvay Lifelong Learning a minimum of 850€ for each month to be spent in Belgium if you are coming to Belgium alone, or 2050€ per month if you are coming to Belgium with family members. Please note that these amounts may be subject to indexation.

On receipt of the money, Solvay Lifelong Learning will issue a blocked account certificate to be submitted with your visa application(s). Once you have arrived in Belgium, Solvay Lifelong Learning will transfer the money back to you in monthly instalments. The money can only be transferred to a bank account in your name in

Belgium, in another EU country in the Eurozone or an online account in euros. Transfers to an account in Belgium take 1-2 days, whereas transfers to accounts in other EU countries can take 5 days.

Further information about the setting up of a blocked account and the application form can be found in [APPENDIX 1](#).

If you wish to remain in Belgium until the graduation ceremony, you will need to block sufficient money to cover a stay of 14 months (1 September 2024 – 31 October 2025).

Long stay visa – visa charges

Students who apply for a long stay visa need to pay a visa handling fee to the consulate (currently 180€) and an administrative fee to the Immigration office in Brussels (currently 229€ for students at Solvay Lifelong Learning, which is considered a private higher education institution). Information about the administrative fee, and how this should be paid, can be found [here](#).

Long stay visa - documents to be submitted

Visa application forms and the list of documents to be submitted are available [here](#) and on the website of the Belgian consulate or external service provider at which you will be submitting your student visa application.

As a general rule, you will need to provide:

- a copy of your passport (valid until 3 months after your expected date of departure from Belgium)
- proof of payment of the administrative fee
- your certificate of enrolment at Solvay Lifelong Learning
- your secondary school diploma
- any previous higher education diplomas
- a transcript of marks obtained during your last year of study
- proof of sufficient knowledge of English (eg. certificate issued by your secondary school or previous higher education institution indicating the number of hours of English lessons you had per week and the level you reached, TOEFL certificate etc)
- proof of sufficient means of subsistence
- a medical certificate issued by a doctor approved by the Belgian consulate in your country of residence
- proof of medical insurance covering at least your first 3 months in Belgium
- a police clearance certificate (no more than 6 months old) issued by the authorities of your country of origin or current residence.

Your visa application can be submitted up to 3 months before your expected date of travel to Belgium. Visa processing times are very unpredictable, and it can take between 2 weeks and 3 months for your application to be processed and your visa approved.

We therefore advise you to submit your visa application as early as possible and to only book your flight to Belgium once your visa has been issued. You can follow up your visa application [on the immigration office website](#) and [check the status](#).

Information about **family reunification visas** can be found on the website of the Belgian consulate or external service provider at which the visa applications will be submitted and [on the immigration office website](#).

Family members should apply for their visas at the same time as the student joining Solvay Lifelong Learning (even if the consulate or external services provider advises you to the contrary). If they do not do so, you risk being separated from your family for several months. You will need to provide proof that you have [adequate housing](#) for your family and [sufficient financial resources](#) to support them before their visa applications can be processed.

It is possible for non-EEA students (and family members) who do not need a short-stay visa to enter Belgium (eg. because they have a valid residence permit for another country in the Schengen zone or are exempted from the short-stay visa requirement) to dispense with applying for a long-stay visa and apply directly for a residence permit at the town hall in Belgium (by providing all the documents required for a long-stay visa). A list of non-EEA countries whose nationals do not need a short-stay visa to enter Belgium can be found [here](#). This procedure is generally not recommended, as it then takes considerably longer to obtain a Belgian residence permit. However, in some cases it may prove a good option. We suggest that you consult the consulate at which you would be submitting your visa application.

APS certificate – additional requirement for Chinese students

Chinese students whose previous diplomas were awarded by a Chinese higher education institution need to obtain a certificate from the Center for Academic Assessment (APS) in Beijing in order to apply for a student visa and study at Solvay Lifelong Learning.

The APS procedure consists of two phases:

- verification of the authenticity of documents (diplomas, certificates) presented by the Chinese student
- plausibility interview; based on the student's academic transcript, the examiner questions the student on their course content and verifies that the skills and knowledge expected from the student have been acquired.

Students should contact the APS organisation as early as possible to initiate the procedure and schedule their appointment for the interview. Please note that the waiting time for the interview can be several weeks. Further information about the APS procedure can be found [here](#).

ADMINISTRATIVE FORMALITIES AFTER ARRIVAL IN BELGIUM

[Do I need to register at the town hall and apply for a residence permit?](#)

As your stay in Belgium will exceed 90 days, you need to register at the town hall of your municipality of residence and apply for a residence permit.

It is mandatory to obtain a Belgian residence permit, including for citizens of EEA countries and Switzerland, and you must always carry this with you.

For non-EEA citizens, the residence permit replaces the entry visa and enables you to travel around the Schengen zone and re-enter it (for example, if you go home for the holidays).

[For how long will my residence permit be valid?](#)

The validity of your residence permit will depend on your nationality.

EEA and Swiss citizens

You will receive a 5-year residence permit.

Non-EEA citizens

Your residence permit will be valid until 31 October 2025, providing you have sufficient funding to cover you until then. If your funding (eg. guarantor, blocked account) ends earlier, your residence permit will expire earlier.

[How do I obtain a residence permit?](#)

In theory, you need to register at the Foreigners' Desk (*'bureau des étrangers'*) at your local town hall (*'maison communale'*) within 8 days of arrival in Belgium. In practice, however, you only need to register once you have found long-term accommodation. Should you opt for short-term accommodation on arrival, you should aim to find long-term accommodation within a maximum of one month. The registration procedure, and the time this takes, varies from one municipality to another. In some municipalities, you need to queue in person very early in the morning in order to initiate the procedure; in others you need to call in advance to make an appointment, send an email or request an appointment via the town hall's website.

Before signing a long-term rental contract, it is essential to receive confirmation from the owner that you are allowed to register at the town hall using the address of the accommodation.

Please ensure that you put your name on your letterbox and/or doorbell. Within two-three weeks of initiation of the town hall registration procedure, a police officer will stop by to check that you do indeed live at the address you have given.

Two-three weeks after the police officer's visit, you will receive an appointment to complete the registration procedure at the town hall and order your residence permit, along with a list of documents to be provided.

It is essential that you attend this appointment (and arrive on time) and take with you all the required documents. You will also need to pay a fee for the residence permit (25€-50€ depending on the municipality).

[Which documents will I need to provide?](#)

The documents generally requested are:

- valid identity card or passport (with visa, if applicable); your passport should be valid until three months after your expected date of departure from Belgium
- four ID photos (on white background)
- proof of accommodation (eg. signed rental contract)
- proof of enrolment at Solvay Lifelong Learning
- proof of sufficient financial resources.

Non-EEA students who enter Belgium without a long-stay student visa will need to submit all the documents required when applying for a long stay student visa (see above) and indicated [here](#). The medical certificate can be completed by any general practitioner in Belgium.

If your family moves with you to Belgium, the following additional documents will be requested:

- Valid identity card or passport (with visa, if applicable) for all family members
- Four ID photos per family member.
- Birth certificates for all family members and marriage certificate (plus certified translations, if applicable).

This list is not exhaustive and may vary according to your country of origin.

Please note that, in some cases, copies of birth and marriage certificates must be legalised by the Foreign Affairs ministry and then by the Belgian consulate in your country of origin. In other cases, you will need to obtain an apostille. Certificates in any language other than French or Dutch must be accompanied by a certified translation. Please contact the Belgian consulate in your country of origin or residence to check legalisation and translation requirements **before travelling to Belgium**. It may be much more expensive to get the documents translated in Belgium than in your country of origin. **Should you not have the required legalisations and certified translations, the town hall registration procedure will be considerably delayed.**

Further information about legalisation of official documents can be found [here](#).

If you are a non-EEA citizen, please request an [Annexe 15](#) document (proof that you have initiated the registration procedure) at your first visit to the town hall, as this will facilitate the opening of a bank account. Citizens of countries under embargo will only be able to open a bank account on completion of the town hall registration procedure and receipt of their Belgian residence permit.

[How do I initiate registration at the foreigners' desk at the town hall?](#)

Instructions on how to initiate the registration procedure can be found on the website of each municipality. While few of the websites provide information in English, there is generally someone at the Foreigners' desk who can speak English.

Anderlecht

Rue Georges Moreau 1A, 1070 Brussels

[Registration of non-EEA citizens](#)

[Registration of EEA citizens](#)

Auderghem

Rue E. Idiers 12, 1160 Brussels

[Registration of non-EEA citizens](#)

[Registration of EEA citizens](#)

Berchem-Sainte-Agathe

Avenue du Roi Albert 33, 1082 Brussels

[Registration of EEA and non-EEA citizens](#)

Bruxelles

Bureau de liaison 'Louise', Avenue Louise 240, 1000 Brussels

Centre administratif, rue des Halles 4, 1000 Brussels

[Registration of non-EEA citizens](#)

[Registration of EEA citizens](#)

Etterbeek

Avenue d'Auderghem 113, level -1, 1040 Brussels

[Registration of non-EEA citizens](#)

[Registration of EEA citizens](#)

Evere

Square Hoedemaekers, 10, 1140 Brussels

[Registration of EEA and non-EEA citizens](#)

Forest

Rue de Liège 1, 1190 Brussels

[Registration of non-EEA citizens](#)

[Registration of EEA citizens](#)

Ganshoren

Avenue Charles Quint, 140, 1083 Brussels

[Registration of EEA and non-EEA citizens](#)

Ixelles

Chaussée d'Ixelles 124, 1050 Brussels

[Registration of EEA and non-EEA citizens](#)

Jette

Chaussée de Wemmel, 100, 1090 Brussels

[Registration of EEA and non-EEA citizens](#)

Koekelberg

Place H. Vanhuffel 6, 1081 Brussels

[Registration of non-EEA citizens](#)

[Registration of EEA citizens](#)

Molenbeek-St-Jean

Rue du Niveau 7, 1er étage, 1080 Brussels

[Registration of EEA and non-EEA citizens](#)

Saint-Gilles

Place M. van Meenen 39, 1060 Brussels

[Registration of EEA citizens](#)

[Registration of non-EEA citizens](#)

Saint-Josse-ten-Noode

Avenue de l'Astronomie 12, 1210 Brussels

[Registration of non-EEA citizens](#)

[Registration of EEA citizens](#)

Schaerbeek

Place Colignon 2, 1030 Brussels

[Registration of EEA and non-EEA citizens](#)

Uccle

rue Auguste Danse 3 (1st floor), 1180 Brussels

[Registration of non-EEA citizens](#)

[Registration of EEA citizens](#)

Watermael-Boitsfort

Place A. Gilson 1, 1170 Brussels

[Registration of EEA and non-EEA citizens](#)

Woluwe St Lambert

Avenue Paul Hymans 2, 1200 Brussels

[Registration of EEA and non-EEA citizens](#)

Woluwe St Pierre

Avenue Charles Thielemans, 93 1150

[Registration of EEA and non-EEA citizens](#)

Graduation ceremony

Non-EEA students who wish to attend the graduation ceremony in October 2025 should ensure that they have sufficient financial resources to cover them until then, so that they are eligible for a Belgian residence permit valid until 31 October 2025. Please contact visa@solvay.edu for further information.

ACCOMMODATION

Various accommodation options are available close to the Solvay campus (private halls of residence, student rooms, studios and apartments rented by private owners, shared apartments etc.). Information about some of these options is provided below.

Non-EEA students who need a long stay student visa are advised not to book or pay for accommodation until they have obtained their visa. As you need to register at the town hall using the address of your accommodation, it is essential that you check with the owner (before signing a rental contract) that this is permitted.

Private student halls of residence:

- [Studeo Living](#)
- [The Link](#)
- [365 rooms](#)
- [Delta campus](#)
- [Diggit](#)

Student rooms rented by private owners

- [Brukot](#)
- [Brik/Mykot](#)
- [Studapart](#)
- [Student.be](#)

Shared apartments

- [Ikoab coliving](#)
- [Appartager](#)
- [Coliving](#)
- Various Facebook pages (Bruxelles à louer, Colocations Bruxelles...).

General accommodation website (furnished and unfurnished studios and apartments)

- [Immoweb](#)

If you want to look for accommodation via Immoweb, Appartager or Facebook pages, we recommend that you only do so after arrival in Brussels (due to the large number of scams) and that you book short-term accommodation (eg. hotel, aparthotel, airbnb, youth hostel...) for the first week or two.

The municipalities closest to the Solvay Lifelong Learning campus are:

- Ixelles (postcode 1050)
- Bruxelles-Ville (postcode 1000)
- Etterbeek (postcode 1040)
- Saint Gilles (postcode 1060)

- Auderghem (postcode 1160)
- Watermael-Boitsfort (postcode 1170).

Whatever the kind of accommodation you opt for, you will need to pay for utilities (gas, electricity, internet, water) in addition to your rent. Some owners charge a fixed amount for utilities, others charge on the basis of consumption. Check how you will be charged before signing the rental contract. Utility costs can amount to as much as 150 euros per person per month. If you rent a studio or an apartment, you may also need to pay ‘*charges communes*’ (shared building costs). Make sure that you identify the ‘*charges communes*’ in the rental contract and take them into consideration when calculating the total monthly cost.

Always read the rental contract carefully before signing it and making any payments. If you have any questions about the clauses of the contract, please contact visa@solway.edu before signing.

The first month’s rent must be paid on signature of the rental contract. Before you receive the keys, you will need to arrange the rental deposit (up to 2 month’s rent) and tenant liability insurance (unless the owner arranges this). We recommend that you also take out insurance for your own belongings. The insurance can often be arranged through your Belgian bank.

Some owners require an official entry inspection to be done by a surveyor before you move in, and an official exit inspection to be done when you move out. The cost of the inspections is then shared between tenant and owner (and can amount to several hundred euros). Other owners are willing to do a more informal inspection, without a surveyor. In this case, you should take plenty of photos of the property and carefully check the inventory list provided by the owner (if applicable). The purpose of the inspection is to document the condition of the property when you move in, in such a way that wear & tear and/or damage costs can be calculated fairly on your departure.

A few tips....

- **Never send money to the owner of a room via Western Union, Moneygram or by post.**
- **Never make any payments before you have signed a rental contract.**
- **Before signing a rental contract, check that you can register at the town hall using the address of the accommodation.**
- **Never pay anything in order to visit a property.**
- **Do be careful, as there are scams on all accommodation websites. If you have any doubts about a property (eg. If the rent seems very low), please contact visa@solway.edu before making any payments.**
- **Make sure you sign a contract that covers no more than the period you intend to spend in Belgium.**
- **Try to use the special [student rental contract](#), which is more flexible than the standard Belgian rental contract.**
- **Put the rental deposit (generally the equivalent of two months’ rent) in a blocked account in your name at a Belgian bank, rather than give it directly to the owner.**

HEALTH INSURANCE

All students need to register for health insurance (covering out-patient care and hospitalisation) with a Belgian mutuality for the full duration of their stay in Belgium.

The Belgian mutuality will cover most of your medical expenses in Belgium but **will not** repatriate you to your home country in the event of illness or accident. You may therefore like to take out additional private travel and repatriation insurance in your home country. Should you do so, please read the small print carefully (particularly as regards the number of months outside your home country for which coverage is provided).

When registering with a Belgian mutuality, students have two options:

- register with student status immediately on arrival in Belgium (cost: around 13 euros per month plus 60 euros per quarter)
- providing your gross taxable income was less than 25,630€ the previous year, register with 'BIM' status on completion of the town hall registration procedure (cost: around 13 euros per month); **students who wish to do this must take out travel insurance in their home country to cover at least their first 3 months in Belgium.** 'BIM' status would entitle you to a higher rate of reimbursement of medical expenses and a cheap public transport pass.

Students can choose to register with whichever mutuality they want. Solvay Lifelong Learning has a privileged partnership with [Partena](#) as it has an English-speaking customer service centre and can provide registration forms and documentation in English.

To register with a mutuality, you will need to provide:

- completed application form
- copy of passport
- if you wish to register with student status, proof of enrolment at Solvay Lifelong Learning
- if you wish to register with 'BIM' status, family composition document issued by the town hall on completion of the registration procedure and document attesting to your financial resources.

The mutuality will provide you with a European Health Insurance Card (EHIC) entitling you to receive medically necessary and urgent healthcare during short trips to any country in the European Union, Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. The EHIC card does not cover non-EU citizens in Denmark, Norway, Switzerland, Iceland and Lichtenstein, however.

If you have any questions regarding health insurance, please contact visa@solvay.edu.

BANK ACCOUNT

In order to open an account at a Belgian bank, students need to provide:

- passport or identity card
- proof of enrolment at Solvay Lifelong Learning

- rental contract
- proof that you have initiated registration at the town hall (Annexe 15).

As it can often take several weeks to get the Annexe 15 document, students can try to open a 'non-resident' account in the first instance on the basis of official proof of residence in their home country (eg. address in passport, driving license, social security card or other official document that mentions your home address). As soon as you have completed the town hall registration procedure, you will need to give the bank a copy of your Belgian residence permit and change your account to a 'resident' account.

Students who have a bank account in euros in another EEA country do not necessarily need to open an account in Belgium.

Non-EEA students who are citizens of countries under embargo will only be able to open a Belgian bank account on completion of the town hall registration procedure and receipt of their Belgian residence permit.

The following banks offer a specific expat service:

[ING](#)

[BNP Paribas Fortis](#)

[KBC](#)

and, in some cases, allow clients to initiate the opening of an account before they arrive in Belgium.

Students who have difficulty opening an account at a Belgian bank may be able to open an account at a digital bank such as [Revolut](#) or [N26](#).

BELGIAN TAX FORM

In Belgium, everyone over the age of 18 must complete a tax form, even if they are not working. You will therefore need to complete a tax form for 2024 and for 2025. For further information, see [here](#).

The tax form for 2024 will be sent to your Belgian address in April-May 2025 and will need to be sent back to the tax office by the end of June.

It is now mandatory to indicate on page 4 of the tax form whether you have any bank accounts outside Belgium.

If you do have bank accounts outside Belgium, you need to:

- tick the box on the tax form confirming that you have informed the Belgian national bank about the accounts
- complete the form available at [Communication des comptes étrangers au PCC](#).
- send the completed form, along with a copy of both sides of your Belgian residence permit, to: *Banque nationale de Belgique, Point de contact central, Boulevard de Berlaimont 14, 1000 Brussels, Belgium.*

Before leaving Belgium at the end of your study programme, you should go to the tax office (address indicated on your tax form for 2024) and complete a special tax form covering the period in 2025 up to your departure.

Instructions about how to proceed can be found [here](#).

NON-EEA STUDENTS: RESIDENCE PERMIT RENEWAL

If your study programme extends over more than one academic year, you will need to [renew your Belgian residence permit](#) at the town hall of your municipality of residence **at least 15 days before your student residence permit expires** (and preferably earlier).

You will need to provide the following documents:

- a passport valid for at least 12 months
- your current Belgian residence permit
- proof of re-enrolment at Solvay Lifelong Learning
- proof of health insurance (eg. document confirming your affiliation to a Belgian mutuality)
- proof of sufficient means of subsistence; this can take the form of a new guarantor document (Annexe 32) or a new blocked account with Solvay Lifelong Learning (with at least 850€ per month)
- the [standard form](#) completed by your programme manager at Solvay Lifelong Learning
- the [progress certificate](#) completed by your programme manager at Solvay Lifelong Learning.

If your application to renew your residence permit is not submitted at least 15 days before your permit expires, or your rate of progress in your study programme is regarded as insufficient, the Immigration Office may refuse to renew your residence permit.

If your application is submitted within the deadline, but not all required documents are provided, the municipality will inform you in writing and you will then need to submit the missing documents within 15 days. If you do not do so, the Immigration Office may refuse to renew your residence permit.

NON-EEA STUDENTS: EXTENDING YOUR STAY IN BELGIUM IN ORDER TO LOOK FOR A JOB OR SET UP A BUSINESS

It is now possible for non-EEA students to apply for an [orientation year](#) on completion of their studies, in order remain in Belgium for a period of 12 months to actively look for a job or set up a business. Should you wish to avail yourself of this opportunity, you need to apply to the town hall of your municipality of residence **at least 15 days before your student residence permit expires (and preferably earlier).**

You will need to provide the following documents:

- a passport valid for at least 12 months
- your current Belgian residence permit
- proof of graduation from Solvay Lifelong Learning (eg. diploma)
- proof of health insurance (eg. document confirming your affiliation to a Belgian mutuality)
- proof of sufficient means of subsistence; this can take the form of a new guarantor document (Annexe 32) or a new blocked account with Solvay Lifelong Learning (with at least 850€ per month).

If your application to renew your residence permit is not submitted at least 15 days before your permit expires, the Immigration Office may refuse to renew it.

If your application is submitted within the deadline, but not all required documents are provided, the municipality will inform you in writing and you will then need to submit the missing documents within 15 days. If you do not do so, the Immigration Office may refuse to renew your residence permit.

If your student residence permit expires while your application is being processed, the town hall will issue an Annexe 15 document. This document entitles you to look for a job with an employer who is willing to apply for a single permit for you, or to apply for self-employed status.

If the Immigration Office approves your application to remain in Belgium, the town hall will issue a residence permit valid for a maximum of 12 months (an 'A card') which cannot be extended. The period covered by the Annexe 15, during which you have been able to start looking for a job, will be deducted from the period of validity of the A card.

During this period:

- you must actively search for a job for which you would be able to obtain a single permit (ie. a permit entitling you to both live and work in Belgium) OR take the necessary steps to set up a business
- you can work legally and have unrestricted access to the labour market.

You are not, however, eligible for Belgian unemployment benefits. Should you apply for unemployment benefits, the Immigration Office will cancel your 'A card'.

If, during the 12-month period, you no longer meet the conditions for residence, or it looks as though you have no real chance of finding a job or of setting up a business, the Immigration Office may cancel your 'A card'.

Once you have found a job, your employer must apply for a single permit for you. More information on the single permit can be found [here](#).

If you wish to set up your own business in Belgium, you need to apply for a **professional card for foreigners**. A professional card will only be granted if the Belgian authorities consider that your proposed activity provides added value to the Belgian economy. More information about setting up a business in Brussels and the professional card for foreigners can be found [here](#).

FORMALITIES TO BE COMPLETED BEFORE LEAVING BELGIUM

- Cancel your rental contract at least 3 months before your expected departure date, by sending a registered letter to the owner.
- Schedule the exit inspection
- Make sure your accommodation has been thoroughly cleaned before the exit inspection.
- Request return of your rental deposit.

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- Go to the tax office and complete a 'déclaration spéciale' covering the period up to your departure. Instructions about how to proceed can be found [here](#). The contact details of your tax office can be found in the tax offices guide ([guide des bureaux](#) Particuliers > Déclaration > Déclaration à l'impôt des personnes physiques > votre commune > catégorie « Particuliers »).
- Deregister at the town hall and request a Modèle 8 document.
- If you registered for health insurance with a Belgian mutuality, send a copy of the Modèle 8 to the mutuality and ask to cancel your affiliation.
- Cancel home insurance.
- Inform your bank that you are leaving Belgium, but only close your account after payment of final bills.

APPENDIX 1

BLOCKED ACCOUNT WITH SOLVAY LIFELONG LEARNING

Instructions regarding the setting up of a blocked account with SOLVAY LIFELONG LEARNING (non-EEA students only)
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1. GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR SETTING UP A BLOCKED ACCOUNT WITH SOLVAY LIFELONG LEARNING
2. HOW TO DEPOSIT MONEY IN A BLOCKED ACCOUNT WITH SOLVAY LIFELONG LEARNING
3. DETAILS OF THE SOLVAY LIFELONG LEARNING ACCOUNT TO WHICH MONEY SHOULD BE TRANSFERRED
4. TRANSFER OF YOUR MONEY TO YOUR BELGIAN BANK ACCOUNT
5. CANCELLATION/WITHDRAWAL - REFUND

1. GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR SETTING UP A BLOCKED ACCOUNT WITH SOLVAY LIFELONG LEARNING

- a. Only students enrolled in an **Advanced Master or EMBA programme** organised by Solvay Lifelong Learning are eligible to deposit money in a blocked account with Solvay Lifelong Learning. The money must be deposited in the student's own name.
- b. No interest will be paid on the money deposited in the blocked account.
- c. Solvay Lifelong Learning blocked accounts are administered in euros – EUR - €.
- d. The student must cover all exchange and international transfer charges.
- e. Solvay Lifelong Learning cannot guarantee that the blocked account will enable students to obtain a visa and takes no responsibility should visa applications be refused.
- f. Should the student be unable to join the Solvay Lifelong Learning programme because their visa application has been refused, the money deposited in the blocked account will be transferred back to the foreign bank account from which it was received, minus any exchange and international transfer charges – and ON CONDITION THAT the student provides evidence that their visa application has been refused. Should the visa application have been refused due to submission of fraudulent documentation by the student, the money placed in the blocked account with Solvay Lifelong Learning will not be refunded and no further applications to study at Solvay Lifelong Learning will be taken into consideration.
- g. Once the student has arrived in Belgium, the money will be transferred in monthly instalments to the bank account opened in their name in Belgium, in another EU country in the Eurozone or to the euro account opened in their name with a digital bank. The bank account details must be communicated to visa@solvay.edu.
- h. Should the student cancel their participation in the Solvay Lifelong Learning programme during the course of the academic year, the money remaining in the blocked account can be transferred back to the Belgian bank account opened in the student's name. The Belgian immigration office will then be informed that the student is no longer enrolled at Solvay Lifelong Learning and their residence permit will be cancelled.
- i. All issues, questions and disputes concerning blocked accounts with Solvay Lifelong Learning shall be governed by and construed in accordance with Belgian law and shall be submitted to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of Brussels.
- j. **Please note that while a blocked account with 850€* per month renders you eligible for a student visa, you will need around 1200€ per month to cover all your living and accommodation expenses in Brussels.**

* This amount may be subject to indexation.

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2. HOW TO DEPOSIT MONEY IN A BLOCKED ACCOUNT WITH SOLVAY LIFELONG LEARNING

- a. If you wish to set up a blocked account with Solvay Lifelong Learning and accept the terms and conditions outlined above, please complete, sign and scan the application form and email it to visa@solway.edu, along with a copy of your passport and certificate of enrolment at least two weeks before you intend to submit your visa application. Keep a copy of the form for your own reference.
- b. As soon as you have emailed the Blocked Account application form and copy of your passport, please transfer the sum of 11,900€* (= 14 months x 850€ per month), to cover the period between 1 September 2024 and 31 October 2025) and email the proof of payment (screenshot or bank statement) to visa@solway.edu. If you plan to stay less than 14 months (ie. and leave Belgium before the Graduation Ceremony), please let us know the number of months and we shall adapt the total amount accordingly. Should you plan to come to Belgium with your family, you will need to transfer 2050€ per month*.
- c. **Please ensure that you cover all exchange and international transfer charges, in such a way that the full amount reaches the Solvay Lifelong Learning bank account.**
- d. Please indicate the following information when making the bank transfer: **First name - Surname + name of your Advanced Master programme + 2024-25.**

3. DETAILS OF THE SOLVAY LIFELONG LEARNING ACCOUNT TO WHICH MONEY SHOULD BE TRANSFERRED

IBAN: BE17 7320 3816 6521 – SWIFT/BIC: CREGBEBB

Account holder/Beneficiary: Solvay Lifelong Learning

Account name: Deposit Account – International Students

Address: Avenue Franklin Roosevelt, 42 – 1050 Brussels – Belgium

Solvay Lifelong Learning will send you a blocked account certificate to be used for your visa application.

4. TRANSFER OF YOUR MONEY TO YOUR BELGIAN BANK ACCOUNT

- a. Once you have opened an account at a bank in Belgium (or in another EU country in the Eurozone or at a digital bank) and communicated the account details to visa@solway.edu, your money will be transferred to this account in monthly instalments.
- b. In order to facilitate the opening of a Belgian bank account, please bring with you an official document confirming your address in your home country (if this is not indicated in your passport).
- c. Solvay Lifelong Learning can only transfer money to a Belgian bank account in your name, to an account in your name in another EU country in the Eurozone or to a euro account in your name at a digital bank.
- d. Students cannot withdraw money personally and directly from the blocked account with Solvay Lifelong Learning.
- e. The money can only be transferred to your account in monthly instalments of 850€ (or 2050€ if you come to Belgium with your family).

5. CANCELLATION/WITHDRAWAL - REFUND

Should you set up a blocked account with Solvay Lifelong Learning and be unable to start your studies as planned, please contact visa@solway.edu. The money will be transferred back to the bank account you indicated in the application form, minus exchange and international transfer charges. Please note that due to fluctuations in exchange rates, the amount you receive may be different from the amount you transferred to Solvay Lifelong Learning.

* This amount may be subject to indexation.

Blocked account for non-EEA Students

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that I have read, understood and agree to the General Terms and Conditions for setting up a blocked account with Solvay Lifelong Learning.

Surname: _____

First name(s): _____

Date of birth: _____

Nationality: _____

Passport number: _____

Address in home country:

Please indicate below the details of your current personal bank account onto which the money can be reimbursed should your visa application be refused.

IBAN number of your account: _____

Bank BIC/Swift code: _____

Name and address of bank: _____

Date:

Signature:

Please complete, sign, scan and email this application form to visa@solvay.edu at Solvay Lifelong Learning as soon as possible – and at least two weeks before you intend to submit your visa application.