



EDINBURGH
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

International Students
Student Information

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This information is provided by the
International Students Advisor



A PARTNER INSTITUTION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

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Welcome to Edinburgh

We are delighted that you have decided to study in Edinburgh – it is a city of history, culture and literature. Many of the most famous events in Scotland’s history took place within walking distance of the Seminary.

This guide has been compiled to help you through most of the formalities and procedures both before and after your arrival. You will find information ranging from the important immigration regulations to instructions on how to claim a VAT refund. Also included in this handbook are the contact details of the many services which are available to support you throughout your stay.

After reading this handbook, if you have any unanswered questions, please feel free to contact the Seminary Secretary at: offices@ets.ac.uk.

I hope you enjoy your time in Edinburgh and your studies at the Seminary.

Iver Martin
Principal, Edinburgh Theological Seminary

Welcome to the Seminary

Arriving in Edinburgh was both exciting and daunting. Edinburgh was clearly a magnificent city with so much to see and do but I did not know anyone and couldn’t find my way around the city. Twenty-nine years have passed, and Edinburgh remains my home. No matter how long you are in Edinburgh, I hope you have a wonderful stay that is full of learning and excitement.

I have experienced Edinburgh Theological Seminary both as a student and now as a member of staff. Our desire is to make your study here as valuable and rewarding as possible.

We have been most fortunate to welcome students from all corners of the globe and the Seminary has been enriched by this diversity.

This guide is a brief introduction to some of the information you need to know as an international student. However, your best resources will be your fellow students and the staff and secretary at the Seminary. So please ask us. If we don’t have the answers, we’ll know who to ask.

I wish you every blessing and encouragement as you study at ETS.

Bob Akroyd
International Students Advisor, Edinburgh Theological Seminary

Disruptions Due to COVID 19 Pandemic – August 2020

Please note, ETS like every other higher education institution in the United Kingdom, has had to make necessary adjustments for health and safety in response to this global situation. If you have any questions, please contact the Seminary Secretary at: offices@ets.ac.uk.

Before You Leave Home

Applying for Your Student Visa

For up to date information, please consult <https://www.gov.uk/visas-immigration>

You must have a valid passport and remember that entry clearance (a student visa/ Biometric Residence Permit) is mandatory for all nationals who intend to stay in the UK for longer than six months. You apply for this at your nearest British Embassy, High Commission, Consulate or Visa Application Centre in your country of residence. A full list of contact details can be found on <https://www.gov.uk/visas-immigration>

To apply for your entry clearance, you will need the Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies (CAS) which you have received from Edinburgh Theological Seminary. You will also have to show the originals of any documents named on the CAS as being used as evidence to obtain the offer.

Money

Before you commence study at Edinburgh Theological Seminary, you must have adequate funds available to finance yourself to the end of your course. In addition to tuition fees, you must take into consideration board and lodgings, books, equipment, clothing, travel, holidays and entertainment. There is no limit to the amount of money you can bring into the UK, but your own country may operate exchange controls.

Additional Information

Consult the following websites to find valuable information on a wide range of subjects, including travel to the UK, accommodation, banking, budgeting, medical care, employment while a student, telephone and internet connections, the cost of a haircut and the price of fish-and-chips:

The University of Glasgow: www.gla.ac.uk/international/

British Council Education UK: www.educationuk.org

Edinburgh Classifieds: www.edinburgh.gumtree.com

Tuberculosis Screening

If you are coming to the UK for more than six months, you may be required to provide a certificate (from an accredited clinic) to show you are free from infectious Tuberculosis (TB) before applying for your visa. Please check <https://www.gov.uk/visas-immigration> for up-to-date requirements.

When You Arrive in Edinburgh

Edinburgh is a small city but it does have its [own public transportation system](#), including a new tram system built in 2014. You can take a bus, tram or a taxi from Edinburgh Airport into the city centre.

Overall, the UK has great public transportation, but it can be expensive. Train travel is the best and easiest way to travel around the UK. Students, no matter your age, are all eligible for a [16-25 rail card](#), which gives 1/3 off fares. Within the UK, you can also use [National Express](#) or [Megabus](#) for reasonably priced bus journeys. Both services also offer student discounts.

Accommodation

Edinburgh Theological Seminary is non-residential and students are expected to source their own accommodation. You will be required to sign a lease. This is a binding contract, which means that you must remain in the accommodation and pay the agreed rent for the period stated.

Carrubbers Christian Centre, a local evangelical church, runs a helpful website to connect people and places to live in Edinburgh, www.carrubbers.org/resources/accommodation

Other accommodation web-sites include:

Studentpad Edinburgh: <http://www.studentpad.co.uk/Company>

Edinburgh University Students' Association: <http://www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/adviceplace/accommodation/>

Edinburgh Solicitors' Property Centre (ESPC): www.espc.com

Edinburgh Classifieds: www.edinburgh.gumtree.com

Cost of living

The British Council has very helpful advice at: <https://study-uk.britishcouncil.org/planning/money-costs>

Money

One pound sterling (£1) is divided into one hundred pence (100p). Coins issued are 1p, 2p, 5p, 10p, 20p, 50p, £1 and £2 and notes to the value of £5, £10, £20, £50, £100. Scottish banks issue their own notes and you can also use Bank of England notes. Sometimes Scottish notes are not acceptable outside Scotland, so if you are travelling, ask your bank for Bank of England notes.

Banking

If you are studying at Edinburgh Theological Seminary for more than one semester, you should be eligible to open a basic bank account. Contact your local bank for more details.

Internet Services and Mobile Phones

All Edinburgh Theological Seminary students have email and internet access via the Seminary's own Computer suite. If you would also like to have internet in your flat, please consult: www.uswitch.com
For mobile phones, you may wish to consult: <https://www.moneysupermarket.com/mobile-phones/>

Postal Services

Letters and parcels are carried by the Royal Mail. For more information, see www.royalmail.com. You can also buy postage stamps at newsagents, supermarkets and other shops.

VAT refunds

If you are normally domiciled or live outside of the UK, but have a visa to remain in the UK to complete a period of study, you may be able to claim a VAT refund on certain goods that you personally export from the UK. For more information, visit www.hmrc.gov.uk.

Insurance

If you have not already done so before leaving your own country, you are strongly advised to take out some form of insurance policy to cover the cost of your personal property should it be lost or stolen. You may wish to consult: <https://www.comparethemarket.com/home-insurance/contents/>

Photographs

After your arrival, you will need some passport-style photographs. There are automatic photo machines at main railway stations and some post offices. Specialist photo shops also provide this service quickly.

Electricity

Electrical current in the UK is 240 volts at 50 cycles. If you come from a country which operates on a different voltage, you should ensure that you are equipped with the appropriate transformer.

National Health Service (NHS)

Please consult the NHS Scotland website: www.show.scot.nhs.uk. Shortly after you arrive in Edinburgh, you must register with a doctor or GP (General Practitioner) near where you live. When you applied for your Visa, you would have had paid a Health Surcharge. If you are a full-time student in Scotland and have paid your surcharge, then you will not have to pay NHS medical charges.

Dental Treatment

For a list of local NHS dentists, visit www.nhs24.com/findlocal. Please note that you must be registered with a doctor/GP before being entitled to be treated by a dentist under the National Health Service.

Eye Treatment

If you want to have your eyesight tested, make an appointment for a test with any qualified optician. The eye test is free, and costs will vary depending on what you may require (eyeglasses, contact lenses, etc).

All Tenants

Council Tax is a tax on where you live. Students are not automatically exempt but may qualify for an exemption. Please consult: http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20111/discounts_and_exemptions

TV Licence

If students watch or record programmes as they're being shown on TV or live on an online TV service, they need to be covered by a TV Licence. That includes a TV, laptop, tablet, mobile phone, games console, digital box, DVD/VHS recorder or anything else. For more information: <http://www.tvlicensing.co.uk/>

Car Owners

If you own a car in the UK, you must pay road tax and car insurance. You may require a parking permit from Edinburgh City Council. Please consult: <http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/info/20275/parking>

Some non-UK Nationals: Registering with the Police

Your passport will be endorsed on entry to the UK if you are required to register with the police. If your passport is endorsed in this way, then you must register with the Police within 7 days of your arrival in the UK. For more information, please see: <https://www.gov.uk/register-with-the-police>

In Edinburgh, you can register with the police at:

Nationality Department, Police Headquarters, Fettes Avenue, Edinburgh EH4 1RB

Tel: 0131 311 3171

<http://www.scotland.police.uk/your-community/the-lothians-and-scottish-borders/>

Working in the UK while You Study

If you can work while studying, this will be clearly detailed on your visa. The following government website is helpful: www.bia.homeoffice.gov.uk.

Student Welfare

The Seminary assists international students during their period of study. Your first point of contact is our Seminary Secretary or our International Students Advisor. You can also access support services through our partner institution, the University of Glasgow, <https://www.gla.ac.uk/study/studentlife/support/>

Directors of Studies

Every student is allocated to a Director of Studies whose prime responsibility is to guide students in their course of studies.

Disability Service

The Seminary welcomes enquiries from any international student applicant who has a disability. This includes dyslexia; or any other specific learning difficulty, a chronic medical or mental health condition, sensory impairments or access and mobility difficulties. Please contact the Seminary Secretary directly for further advice: offices@ets.ac.uk.

English Language Support

All International students are required to attain at least IELTS 6.5 or equivalent level to at least B2 on the Common European Framework for Reference (CEFR) before they are accepted for our main undergraduate and postgraduate programs. Members of staff can help students with their writing and a writing lab is also available to all students at no additional charge. If you require additional courses to increase your English proficiency, please contact the Seminary Secretary. Please note, you are responsible for the cost for any additional English tuition.

UK Visa and Immigration

ETS is a sponsor of international students within the UK immigration system (Student route) and is required to evidence UKVI student attendance and engagement. ETS is required to demonstrate that UKVI students are **attending** and **engaging** in their programme of study and that there are active procedures in place to identify and address attendance/engagement patterns of concern.

The **ETS Student Attendance and Engagement Policy** outlines how ETS will do this. This is available on the ETS Portal.

This policy also supports the improvement of the overall student experience by identifying where students may be experiencing difficulties and ensuring timely intervention and appropriate support.

All international students are required to bring their passports, when registering at ETS. We need to take a photocopy of the pages containing the Passport Number and photograph and also photocopy the Biometric Residence Permit (BRP). These copies will be kept by the Seminary Secretary. **You must collect your BRP from the designated Post Office branch within 10 days of arrival in the UK.**

UKVI Student Responsibilities

1. Students with a Student visa must ensure they have obtained the appropriate visa for studying in the UK in advance of enrolling at ETS.
2. Students with a Student visa must ensure the Seminary holds their most up to date contact details on the student record. This can be updated via the student's profile on the Portal.
3. Student visa holders are expected to be in attendance on their chosen programme and actively engaged with it, as required by relevant Degree Regulations, and Programme Handbooks.
4. The attendance and engagement of UKVI visa students will require a minimum of ten contact points for each academic year of their study. For this reason, you must ensure that you do not miss any of the required 'Contact Points' as an undergraduate student (Registration, Semester Visa Checks, Weekly Lecture/Seminar Attendance, Submission of Course Work and Examinations) or as a postgraduate student (Registration, Semester Visa Checks, PG Seminar Attendance and logged meetings with your supervisor).
5. These 'Contact Points' are detailed annually in the **ETS Attendance and Engagement Monitoring Plan for UKVI Students**.
6. If there are any concerns regarding this, students should approach the ETS Office who may contact the Programme Leader for the Bachelor of Theology or the Director of Postgraduate Studies as required.

ETS Attendance and Engagement Monitoring Plan for UKVI Students 2020-2021.

Undergraduate Students

Semester 1	Date	Semester 2	Date
Registration	01/09/2020		
Visa Check	01/09/2020		
Director of Studies	Twice per semester as arranged	Director of Studies	Twice per semester as arranged
Weekly Attendance. While daily attendance is recorded Tuesday	01/09/2020 08/09/2020	Weekly Attendance. While daily attendance is recorded Tuesday	26/01/2021 02/02/2021

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-Friday during teaching weeks in each semester, each week will count as one contact point.	15/09/2020 22/09/2020 29/09/2020 06/10/2020 13/10/2020 27/10/2020 03/11/2020 10/11/2020 17/11/2020 24/11/2020	-Friday during teaching weeks in each semester, each week will count as one contact point.	09/02/2021 16/02/2021 23/02/2021 02/03/2021 16/03/2021 23/03/2021 30/03/2021 07/04/2021 13/04/2021 20/04/2021
Course Work	As per Assessment Timetable	Course Work	As per Assessment Timetable
Examinations	As per Examination Timetable	Examinations	As per Examination Timetable

Postgraduate Students (Research)

Semester 1	Date	Semester 2	Date
Registration (Sep)	01/09/2020	Registration (Jan)	26/01/2021
Visa Check	01/09/2020	Visa Check	26/01/2021
Director of Postgraduate Studies	Once per semester as arranged	Director of Postgraduate Studies	Once per semester as arranged
PG Seminar Attendance	As per PG Seminar Timetable (usually, five per semester)	PG Seminar Attendance	As per PG Seminar Timetable (usually, five per semester)
Supervision Meetings	Supervision Logs taken at regular intervals (usually, four times a semester)	Supervision Meetings	Supervision Logs taken at regular intervals (usually, four times a semester)

Postgraduate Students (Taught)

The 'PG Taught' programmes are not classroom based, but delivered by and directed reading and one-to-one supervision

Semester 1	Date	Semester 2	Date
Registration (Sep)	01/09/2020	Registration (Jan)	26/01/2021
Visa Check	01/09/2020	Visa Check	26/01/2021
Director of Postgraduate Studies	Once per semester as arranged	Director of Postgraduate Studies	Once per semester as arranged
PG Seminar Attendance	As per PG Seminar Timetable (usually, fortnightly)	PG Seminar Attendance	As per PG Seminar Timetable (usually, fortnightly)

Supervision Meetings	Supervision Logs taken before and after submission of Assignments as per Programme Assignment Timetable	Supervision Meetings	Supervision Logs taken before and after submission of Assignments as per Programme Assignment Timetable
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Your Responsibilities

Important Contact Addresses & Phone Numbers

Emergency and Ambulance Service

Dial 999 (free call) for immediate assistance from fire brigade, police or ambulance.

NHS24 is a branch of the National Health Service which provides 24-hour telephone access to medical advice from qualified professionals. www.nhs24.com, 08454 24 24 24

Citizens Advice Bureau, www.cas.org.uk

58 Dundas Street, EH3 6QZ

Trained volunteers give advice to the general public on any matter.

Department of Transport, (DVLA Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency), www.dvla.gov.uk

DCS Correspondence, Team, Swansea SA6 7JL, 0300 790 6801

UK Visas and Immigration, <https://www.gov.uk/visas-immigration>

Lunar House, 40 Wellesley Road, Croydon CR9 2BY, 0870 606 7766

Scottish Refugee Council, www.scottishrefugeecouncil.org.uk

5 Cadogan Square (170 Blythswood Court), Glasgow G2 7PH, 0141 248 9799

United Kingdom Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA), www.ukcisa.org.uk

9-17 St Alban's Place, Islington, London N1 0NX, 0203 131 3576

Embassies and Consulates in Scotland and the UK

Please see: <https://www.visitscotland.com/about/practical-information/embassies-consulates/>

Some Local Churches

There are many churches which are close to the Seminary. Here are some you may wish to attend:

St Columba's Free Church of Scotland

<https://stcolumbas.freechurch.org/>

Johnston Terrace, Edinburgh EH1 2PW

Buccleuch Free Church of Scotland

www.buccleuchfreechurch.co.uk

10 West Crosscauseway, Edinburgh, EH8 9JP

Leith Free Church

www.leithfreechurch.org.uk

9 Casselbank Street, Leith, Edinburgh, EH6 5HA

Charlotte Baptist Chapel

www.charlottechapel.org

58 Shandwick Place, Edinburgh, EH2 4RT

Chalmers Church

www.chalmerschurch.org

69b Morningside Road, EH10 4AZ

Niddrie Community Church

www.niddrie.org

12 Hay Drive, Edinburgh, EH16 4RY

Holyrood Evangelical Church

<http://holyroodevangelical.org/>

Carrubbers Christian Centre

www.carrubbers.org

65 High Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1SR

Cornerstone – Free Church of Scotland

<https://cornerstone-edinburgh.com/>

140 Morningside Road, Edinburgh EH10 4PX

Christchurch – Free Church of Scotland

<http://www.christchurchedinburgh.org/>

68, Britwell Crescent, Edinburgh, EH7 6PT

Grace Church Leith – Free Church of Scotland

<http://www.gracechurchleith.org/>

Ebenezer Church, 31 Bangor Road, Leith

Bruntsfield Evangelical Church

<http://bruntsfield.org.uk/>

70 Leamington Terrace, Edinburgh, EH10 4JU

Places of Interest

Explore and enjoy Edinburgh. Take the opportunity to visit Scotland and to meet its people.

Sightseeing in Edinburgh

Edinburgh Information Centre, 3 Princes St, Edinburgh, EH2 2QP
<https://www.visitscotland.com/info/services/edinburgh-icentre-p234441>

Edinburgh & Lothians Tourist Information, www.edinburgh.org

Edinburgh World Heritage Site, www.ewht.org.uk

Edinburgh Castle, www.edinburghcastle.gov.uk

Greyfriars Kirkyard & Greyfriars Bobby, www.greyfriarskirk.com/, Greyfriars Place, EH1 2QQ,

National Galleries of Scotland (Free Admission), www.nationalgalleries.org/

Scottish National Gallery, The Mound, EH2 2EL

Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, 75 Belford Road, EH4 3DR

Scottish National Portrait Gallery, 1 Queen St, EH2 1JD

National Library of Scotland (Free Admission), <https://www.nls.uk/>, George IV Bridge, EH1 1EW

National Museum of Scotland (Free Admission), www.nms.ac.uk/, Chambers St, EH1 1JF

Palace of Holyroodhouse, www.royalcollection.org.uk/visit/palace-of-holyroodhouse, Canongate, The Royal Mile, EH8 8DX

Royal Botanic Garden (Free Admission), www.rbge.org.uk, 20A Inverleith Row, EH3 5LR

Scotch Whisky Heritage Centre, www.scotchwhiskyexperience.co.uk, 354 Castlehill, EH1 2NE

The Scottish Parliament, <http://www.parliament.scot/index.aspx>, Canongate, The Royal Mile

Sightseeing in Glasgow

Tourist Information Office, 170 Buchanan Street, Glasgow, 0141 204 4400

Get the Most out of Glasgow Life: www.glasgowlife.org.uk/Pages/default.aspx

Glasgow Museums – Please see: <https://www.glasgowlife.org.uk/museums#venues>

Glasgow Science Centre, Pacific Quay, www.glasgowsciencecentre.org.

Some Helpful Websites for Travel and Tourism

Visit Scotland, www.visitscotland.com – Scotland's National Tourism Organisation,

The National Trust for Scotland, www.nts.org.uk/Home

Historic Scotland, www.historic-scotland.gov.uk