



SOME NOTES AND TRAVEL INFORMATION POST COVID-19 AND THE LIFTING OF TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

This is an update on travel for school groups that we recommend prior to travel, as appropriate. It is essential that if new documentation is required, it is not left until the last minute....

COVID-19:

The UK has lifted all its travel restrictions regarding testing on departure and on arrival together with quarantine unless a person tests positive for Coronavirus. At the time of writing, it is anticipated that the Passenger locator form will also be a thing of the past by Easter 2022.

However, it is important to note that by the time the group intends to travel, the situation may have changed. Whilst the UK does not require testing on arrival and a passenger locator form, other countries in Europe still do. It will be essential that **whatever entry requirements are in place for the destination country, that these are complied with**; the UK does not have any control over the entry requirements set by another country. Failure to do so could result in either quarantine or refusal of entry.

Similarly, regarding vaccination, it is also necessary to comply with the standard of the destination country. At present the standard fully vaccinated status across Europe is that all persons aged 12 and over shall have received TWO vaccinations, and in many cases a booster too. It is likely that a booster vaccination will be required for winter 2022-2023.

POST BREXIT PASSPORT CHANGES:

Following the exit from the EU there are now different rules for the validity of a passport at the time of travel.

Previously, when a passport was renewed in the UK any spare time left on the expiry date was added to the new document. **This is no longer the case.**

1. a passport is only deemed valid for 10 years **from the date of issue.**
2. there must be a **minimum of 3 months left on the passport after the return date of the trip.**

Please leave ample time to renew a passport if a new document is required.

EHIC CARDS:

EHIC cards are no longer valid since the UK left the EU. It is now possible to get a UK GHIC card (Global Health Insurance Card) that is valid in all EU countries, but not Iceland, Norway, or Liechtenstein. It is not valid for private hospitals and should be accompanied with personal travel insurance.

The UK GHIC card is valid until its expiry date and is free. It can be obtained through the NHS website.

VISAS:

Again, because of Brexit, the visa position has changed and affects both holders of UK and non-UK passports.

1. UK PASSPORT HOLDERS:

As we are no longer part of the EU, there is no longer unlimited and free movement across the borders of EU member states. To facilitate a freedom of movement and to enhance security, the European Travel Information and Authorization System (ETIAS) visa waiver is being introduced to enter the Schengen Area.

The ETIAS visa waiver is expected to be in place by May 2023 (but may be sooner) and all individuals will require the document to travel to Europe. It is designed for Tourism and Business travel for a period up to 90 days. All travellers will be expected to have an approved ETIAS when they travel.

The cost of an ETIAS visa waiver is 7€ and it lasts for a duration of 3 years. It will be available online and applicants should allow a week for the application to be processed. Do not travel without this document.

2. NON-UK PASSPORT HOLDERS:

If a person is travelling with a non-UK passport it is important to do the following:

- a. Check with the Embassy or Consulate regarding the visa requirements for entry to the EU and where to apply for the documentation.
- b. In most cases it will be necessary to apply for a **Schengen Visa** for entry into countries of the EU.
- c. The cost for a Schengen Visa at the time of writing is 80€ for anyone 12 years and older.

29th June 2022