

Appendix C: Visa Information for Clinical Training in the US, UK and Grenada

The majority of the University's clinical programs are in the US and the UK. Students who are not nationals will need visas to enter these countries for the purpose of clinical training. The Office of Clinical Education Operations will provide students, at the time their hospital placement is confirmed, with the most current supporting documentation necessary to facilitate the pertinent visa application process. Students should not apply for a visa for the purpose of clinical training without first following guidelines issued by the Office of Clinical Education Operations and securing the appropriate supporting documentation from the school.

For clinical training in the US, the appropriate classification is the B1 (Visitor for Business) Visa. As a non-US school, St. George's University is unable to issue Form I-20 A/B to support an application for an F-1 student visa. SGUSOM clinical students qualify for the B1 visa in the category of a medical student studying at a foreign medical school who seeks to enter the US temporarily in order to take a medical clerkship at a SGU affiliated hospital without remuneration. The US hospital must be affiliated with a US medical school. Students should be aware that this is a temporary visa classification that has a limit on the duration of stay (generally six months) once the student enters the country.

For entry into the US, it is always easier to obtain a visa from one's home country.

Canadian students apply for the US visitor visa at the border crossing or the airport. You do not apply at the US Consulate or Embassy in Canada for this visa. Canadian students who plan to reside in Canada while training in Michigan may want to look into the NEXUS Pass for expedited border crossings. For information go to:

http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/trusted_traveler/nexus_prog/nexus.xml

SGUSOM clinical students who wish to train in the UK for longer than 6 months can be sponsored by SGISM Ltd to obtain a Tier 4 (General) visa. SGUSOM clinical students who wish to train in UK for less than 6 months will need **either** a Short Term Study Visa **or** No visa.

Further details can be found on the University website under Clinical UK Program.

There is no guarantee that a visa will be issued. Visa determinations are granted at the discretion of the individual immigration officers in the various embassies, border crossings and airports. **Incomplete or missing documentation can jeopardize a student's visa application.** Visit the Clinical Website and the UK Clinical Program portion of the University website for additional information regarding visas for clinical training in the US and UK.

RECOMMENDATIONS

International students who enroll in a USMLE preparatory course conducted in the US may qualify for sponsorship for a US student visa by the educational institution running the preparatory course. St. George's students who enter the US on a student visa need to apply for a change of visa classification while in the US to continue into their clinical training.

Do not apply for your visa or attempt to enter the US for your clinical training without the 3 required letters from the Office of Clinical Studies. These letters are issued only when placement is confirmed. The letters are:

- The permanent placement letter.
- The visa support letter from the University Registrar
- The visa support letter from the hospital.

These letters state that the student is a bona fide student in good standing at SGUSOM and explain the program in medicine. They also state the dates and hospital information.

An immigration officer's main concern may be that medical students wish to earn a salary and thus not leave the US. It is important that students stress that they will not be earning a salary while in the US for their clinical training and that they have strong ties and/or obligations to return to their home country. In addition, students will need to provide proof of financial support for duration of stay in the US and proof of intent to return to home country upon graduation. Once you receive your visa, be sure to have your updated visa support letters from the school and hospital with you whenever you cross the border/enter the country. Although a student may hold a valid visa, an immigration officer may not be aware that it is the appropriate visa classification when questioning the student about the purpose of the visit.

The B1 Visa may be issued for a number of years and may allow multiple entries. However, the entry permit (I-94) for the visa has a finite lifespan of usually no more than six months. It is very important that students remember to renew the visa and/or entry permit before it expires. Students in the US on an expired visa are considered officially "out of status" and can be banned from the country for up to 10 years.

US CITIZENS VISA INFORMATION FOR CLINICAL TRAINING IN CANADA

US Citizens do not require any kind of study visa to enter Canada for the purpose of clinical training provided their stay is less than 6 months. For more information:

<http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/study/study-who.asp>

For any immigration questions, please contact: ImmigrationSupport@sgu.edu.