

Fall 2020 Discover France
Visa Application Checklist and Details
Requirements of VFS Global

Read these important notes before getting started on the French Visa Application Checklist on page 2:

1. Discover France semester students are required to submit their visa application directly to a VFS Global Center. Students may submit their visa application to any of the following VFS Global Center locations:
 - New York City
 - Washington DC
 - Atlanta
 - Boston
 - Chicago
 - Houston
 - Los Angeles
 - Miami
 - San Francisco
2. Start looking now for VFS Global visa appointment. **Schedule a visa appointment that is between May 27-July 13** and then submit the appointment date on your OIE student portal under “Visa Appointment Date”.
 - **Note that students...**
 - i. are not allowed to begin their program after the program start date of August 25, 2020. *Late arrivals are not permitted.*
 - ii. who choose to schedule their French visa appointment after July 13 should review [OIE's refund policy](#).
 - iii. who do not have a visa appointment scheduled by July 13 may want to consider switching to the [Western Europe Semester \(WES\)](#) program.
2. OIE is here to help you prepare for your visa application appointment. **Follow the steps below** and you'll be on your way to getting your visa in no time:
 - **Make an RDR (required document review) appointment** to have OIE review your completed documents before your visa appointment.
 - **May 8, 2020 is the RDR appointment deadline**, so make your appointment before the spring semester ends! *Note: all visa items listed on page 2 need to be completed prior to your RDR.*
 - If you have **any questions** as you prepare your visa materials prior to your RDR appointment, you can email us at studyabroad@stjohns.edu.
3. Do not plan any travel outside the U.S. from **late-May 2020 to departure in August 2020** until you know the date of your French visa appointment and confirm processing time with your VFS Global Center.
4. Questions? Email studyabroad@stjohns.edu for answers!

The French government does not issue a standard set of requirements for study abroad students. It is critical that you follow the instructions generated for you by the France-Visas website. This Guide serves as an explanation for the most common requirements generated by the France-Visas website.

French Visa Application and Pre-Departure Requirements CHECKLIST

The charts below contain a summary of the **most common** items required to complete your French visa application and the steps required to complete your OIE Pre-Departure Requirements. Further instructions for each item are provided in the pages following.

1. My visa appointment date with VFS Global is _____ . Don't have one? Start looking now!		
2. My RDR appointment date with OIE (in Marillac Hall 210) is _____ . Schedule one before May 8!		
3. Register for Campus France and submit registration number to OIE by April 6, 2020* *Students that <u>do</u> submit their reference number by April 6, 2020 do not need to pay the Campus France fee. *Students that <u>do not</u> submit their reference number by April 6, 2020 must pay the Campus France fee.		
Action Item	Student to Complete	OIE Review Completed
4. Campus France Confirmation Email (Copy)		
5. Campus France Payment Receipt (Copy)		
6. Visa Application Form (Printed and signed)		
7. Three Passport Photos (Originals)		
8. Passport (Original + Copy) (+ 2 Copies of Proof of Legal Residence in U.S. for non-U.S. citizens)		
9. Student ID Card (Copy)		
10. Round Trip Flight Itinerary (Copy)		
11. OIE Acceptance Letter (Original + Copy)	OIE to provide to students	
12. Proof of Financial Support (Original, if document includes signature + Copy)		
13. Visa Fee Payment Receipt (Copy)		
14. Attend your visa appointment		
15. Pick up Passport & Visa from VFS Global		
16. Upload a copy of your French visa & Passport to OIE		
17. Bring copies of OIE Acceptance Letter & Proof of Financial Support to Paris		

☐ Student needs to schedule a follow-up Required Document Review Session with an OIE advisor by (date) _____

☐ Student has completed all French visa application documents! 

Additional Pre-Departure Requirements

Action Item	Student to Complete	OIE Review Completed
Post Decision Questionnaires: Flight Information, Visa Appointment Date, International Phone Number, Emergency Contact Information, Health Disclosure Form, & Passport Information		
Upload copies of your student visa and passport		
Class Registration (questions? Email oieregistration@stjohns.edu)		
OIE Orientation Course (on your OIE student portal)		
Attend a Cultural Mentorship Program Session – dates listed on the Confirmed Students page		

The steps below are the FULL DETAILS of each step of the checklist on page 2:

1. **Schedule** your appointment with VFS Global as soon as possible – they always book up fast! Once scheduled, **submit** your visa appointment date through the Confirmed Visa Appointment Date Questionnaire in your online study abroad student portal.
 - The first possible date for your appointment is 90 days prior to the start of your Paris semester program: May 27, 2020, **but can and needs to be booked now**. OIE encourages you to book a visa appointment as soon as possible after May 27, 2020, but no later than July 13, 2020.
 - Processing time should be between 4 and 6 weeks. Please confirm processing time during your in-person appointment.
 - To book an appointment with VFS Global you will need to create a VFS Global account. Please note that it could take several hours to receive the account activation email.
 - Go to https://france-visas.gouv.fr/en_US/web/france-visas
 - Select Step 3 “Submit your application”
 - You will then need to select the Americas region and pick United States of America
 - Click on “English” on the upper right hand corner of the page to translate the page to English (do not use the Google translate feature)
 - Select “Whom should I contact?”
 - Select “Book an appointment,” this can be the link under any of the locations
 - Select either “New User” or login
 - Once logged in, click “Schedule Appointment”
 - From here you can see the earliest appointment available at the VFS Global locations
 - Purpose of Travel: Long Stay Visa
 - Add yourself as the applicant: you will be required to enter your passport information during this step, which must be valid until at least June 21, 2021
 - Proceed to review the earliest available date and book the appointment
 - Pay the appointment-booking fee.
2. **Sign up** for a Required Document Review Session starting March 23, 2020.
 - All fall 2020 Paris Semester participants are required to meet with an OIE advisor to have your completed French visa application documents and Pre-Departure Requirements reviewed between March 23 and May 8, 2020.
 - Students can sign up for a Required Document Review Session on OIE’s website by clicking on “Contact Us” and then “Required Document Review Session.”
3. **Campus France Reference Number Due to OIE by April 6, 2020**
 - Students are strongly encouraged to use the Campus France Registration guide posted on the [Apply for a Visa Page](#) to help walk you through the steps needed to complete the online Campus France registration.
 - Use the Campus France Reference Number Form Questionnaire found on your OIE student portal to submit your Campus France Reference Number no later than **April 6, 2020**. If you meet this deadline to complete your Campus France online registration, OIE will submit a \$190 payment to Campus France for you.
 - *****Note: If you miss this deadline, you will need to submit payment on your own to Campus France for either \$190 (regular processing: 3 weeks) or \$340 (expedited processing: 3 business days), depending on the date of your visa appointment with VFS Global.***
4. **One Copy, Campus France Confirmation Email**
 - You will receive this by email directly from Campus France
 - Note: Depending on when you submit your Campus France application, you may not receive the Campus France Confirmation Email prior to your Required Document Review Session. It takes approximately two weeks for Campus France to process applications (after payment has been submitted by OIE) and generate the Confirmation Email.
5. **One Copy, Campus France Payment Receipt**
 - You will receive this by email directly from Campus France
6. **One Original, Completed, Signed, Visa Application Form**
 - Use the Online Visa Application Form Guide and the Johnny Thunderbird Sample Visa Application (posted on the [“Apply for an Entry Visa Page”](#)) as a guide to complete your visa application.
 - The completed Visa Application Form must contain **no** mistakes, errors, cross-outs, or white-out.
 - Sign and date the Visa Application Form at the bottom of [page 3](#). This portion of the Visa Application Form needs to be completed by hand, in either blue or black pen. It cannot be typed.

- Be sure to use European date format (DD/MM/YYYY, so March 5, 1998 would be 05/03/1998).

7. **Three Original, Recent Passport Photos**

- Standard passport photo format (2 x 2 inches in size, with your face comprising 70% of the photo)
- Taken within the last 6 months
- This does not need to be the same photo included in your passport.
- You cannot be smiling (and your lips must be closed)
- The picture must be front facing, in color, on a white background, and on photo-quality paper. Photos with an off-white or grey background will not be accepted by the French Consulate.
- Please note you cannot have your hair covering your eyes and if you have long hair you need to tuck it behind your ears, and you cannot be wearing glasses, a scarf, a hat or other head covering in these photos. (Please contact the Office of International Education if you wear a head covering for religious reasons.)

8. **One Original + One Copy, Passport**

- Your Passport must (1) be valid until at least June 21, 2021, (2) have been issued in 2011 or later, and (3) include at least 2 blank pages (or more if you plan to travel!)
- **Non-U.S. Citizens:**
 - In addition to providing your *Original, Signed Passport and Bio Page Copy*, you need to provide **Two Copies of your Proof of Legal Residence in the United States**: for permanent residents, a Green Card (valid until at least June 21, 2021). For international students, a U.S. visa (valid until at least June 21, 2021) and a Form I-20 signed in May 2020 or later (valid through date of SJU graduation). I-20 travel signature is valid for one year.
 - One set of copies will be for the French Consulate and the second set of copies will be for OIE.
 - All international students must make an appointment with ISSSO to discuss studying abroad and their Form I-20.

9. **One Copy, Current Student ID (Storm Card)**

10. **One Copy, Round Trip Flight Itinerary**

- Print out your complete, flight itinerary or ticket PDF

11. **One Original, OIE Acceptance Letter**

- OIE will provide this to you. It will include the details of your accommodation.

12. **One Original + One Copy of Proof of Financial Support**

All Proof of Financial Support documents must be recent. Recent means issued within 30 days prior to your visa appointment date. ***In prior semesters, many students have been asked to show a balance of \$2,880, please do so if at all possible.***

- **(1) 3 Student Bank Statements;**
 - Verifying student's personal checking and/or savings account has the equivalent of 2,460 Euros, or 615 Euros per month of stay in France. ***(As of February 2020, VFS Global in NY has determined that this is \$2,688)***. Proof of Financial Support must be provided to VFS Global as **3** actual bank statements ***for the 3 consecutive months prior to the date of the visa appointment***, not a screenshot printout from online. This can be a joint bank statement between the student and another person, so long as the student's name is listed on the bank statement.

or

- **(2) 3 Bank Statements of a Relative or Friend Supporting You Financially Plus Financial Guarantee Form;**
 - (A) **Guarantor Bank Statement**: verifying at least \$3,280 in the Guarantor's personal checking and/or savings account ***for 3 consecutive months prior to the date of the visa appointment*** (the Guarantor is your relative or friend who will support you financially); ***plus***
 - (B) A completed **Financial Guarantee Form**. The Financial Guarantee Form is posted on the [Apply for an Entry Visa Page](#) and must be ***notarized***. If the Guarantor's bank statement is a *joint account* held with another individual, the Financial Guarantee Form only needs to be completed by **one** person whose name is listed on that joint bank account.

or

- **(3) Office of Student Financial Services Letter** verifying that the student has a credit/remaining balance of at least 2,460 Euro ***(as of February 2020, VFS Global in NY has determined that this is \$2,688)*** that will be dispersed to the student **after** tuition and fees are covered;

- *Please be advised that VFS Global prefers Option 1 or 2 as some students who have shown proof of financial support via financial aid have been asked for alternative sources of funding*

Proof of Financial Support Tips!

- The bank statement cannot be a screenshot from your bank's website. However, if you receive your monthly bank statement electronically in PDF format, a printout of this PDF is acceptable. In addition, the printout from the internet will not be accepted by the French Consulate unless the name of the bank and the name of the account holder are clearly stated.
- Bank Statements for retirement accounts or stock portfolios are not accepted by the French Consulate
- What does it mean when it says the Financial Guarantee Form must be notarized?
 - When a document is notarized, it means that a Notary Public has watched you sign the document, and puts a stamp on it verifying that your signature is authentic.
 - The Notary cannot be someone you are related to.
 - Most bank branches have a notary, and will provide their services at no charge if you are a bank customer.

13. One Copy, Visa Fee Payment

- Submit payment for your visa directly to VFS Global during your appointment. Price: the U.S. dollar equivalent of 50 Euros paid by MasterCard, Visa Card or Debit Card - as of February 2020 this is \$54.
- If the France-Visas website indicates that the visa cost is 99 Euro – that is only for students who do not complete the Campus France registration process. Since you are required to register with Campus France, the fee is 50 Euros.

14. Attend your visa appointment at the VFS Global Center. The NY location is 145 West 45th Street, 4th Floor, New York, NY 10036. The address for other VFS Global Centers is available here: https://france-visas.gouv.fr/en_US/web/us/a-qui-sadresser.

15. Pick up your Passport and Visa

- At the end of your visa appointment, you will receive instructions on how you will be notified to pick-up your passport and visa. It generally takes 4 to 6 weeks for visas to be processed and ready for pick-up.
- Before leaving VFS Global, be sure to double check that your name is spelled correctly on your visa and that it is issued for the correct program dates.
- You will also be given an option to pay for your passport and visa to be returned to you via mail.

16. Upload a scanned copy of your French visa to your OIE "Visa Copy" Questionnaire.

17. Bring copies of your OIE Acceptance Letter and Proof of Financial Support to Paris an immigration official may request to review these as additional support for your visa.