



**MINISTER
OF HIGHER EDUCATION,
RESEARCH
& INNOVATION**

*Liberty
Equality
Fraternity*

n° 20-0012
Your contact:
François HEQUET
Email : francois.hequet@enseignementsup.gouv.fr

**Directorate General of
Higher Education
& Professional Insertion**

Paris, **- 7th JULY 2020**

Minister of Higher Education,
Research & Innovation

1, rue Descartes
75231 Paris SP05

To all:

Higher Education Principals

Principals of the Academic Region,
University Chancellors and
Vice Principals of Higher
Education, Research & Innovation

Subject: welcoming International Students - specifications concerning the delivery of visas and access to the territory

Dear Sir/Madam,

In a letter dated June 9th, after consultation with the Ministers of Europe and Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior, I shared with you some possible directions that could be taken to welcome International students and how to organize mobility for the next academic year, indicating the border rules that are diverse and subject to change.

Since then, certain elements have been specified. The majority of consulates have now started issuing visas. Student visas are considered a priority and the arrival of international students onto the French territory, is now possible for students coming from countries in the green zone and will be possible for students coming from countries in the red zone, the exact conditions for these areas will be announced and specified shortly. These requests will be organized as such to enable students to prepare for the upcoming academic year as soon as possible and, for those who will not be able to come onto French territory immediately, to be able to finalize their inscription and follow their training remotely until they are able to come to France².

Concerning the crossing of borders, instructions from our Prime Minister on June 14th concerning the opening of national borders in the Schengen area, were preceded by the announcement from the Ministry of the Interior from June 13th¹ which had already been widely communicated. Since June 15th (June 22nd for Spain), people coming from the European area (members of the European Union as well as Andorra, Iceland, Lichtenstein, Monaco, Norway, the UK, Saint Marin, Switzerland and the Vatican) can therefore come into French territory without any COVID-19 restrictions, as was the case before March 18th 2020. These travelers are notably no longer required to provide an exemption certificate for international travel to enter onto French territory. For information, people coming from the European area are not required to respect the quarantine upon arrival in France.

¹ <https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/Actualites/L-actu-du-Ministere/La-levee-des-restrictions-de-circulation-aux-frontieres-interieures-europeennes-de-la-France>

Following the recommendations of the Council on June 30th, 2020, France has also proceeded in opening its external borders as from July 1st without quarantine measures for the residents from the 13 countries in the green zone, excluding people who have COVID-19 symptoms³. This list will be updated every fortnight at the latest.

Moreover, international students coming from countries in the red zone should benefit from an exemption to the closure of borders, as they figure amongst the people whose position and needs are classified as essential by the European Council. In these conditions and subject to any further specifications regarding quarantine measures applicable for people coming from the red zone, students coming from countries outside the European area will be able to come back to France if they already hold a valid residence permit in France or if they obtain a student visa in the next few weeks. To facilitate the crossing of borders, the student must provide an exemption certificate for international travel⁴ as well as a signed statement of oath declaring the absence of symptoms. (<https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/Actualites/L-actu-du-Ministere/Attestation-de-deplacement-et-de-voyage>).

Students holding a permit that has expired between March 16th and June 15th, 2020 must provide a document of general information on the prolongation measures of the duration of validity of these permits⁵ which, presented along with the resident permit that has expired, will help them to cross borders or to complete necessary formalities.

Students whose residence permit has expired after June 15th, must ask for a return visa from the French consulate of their country of residence. We must also remind you that it has been advised to take a direct return journey from France without transiting through another country in the Schengen area.

These announcements and the current crisis organization, has granted priority to international students and researchers, given by the Minister of the Interior, which has been the case since the beginning, suggests that foreign students will have fewer difficulties to come to France in the coming months than it was initially thought. However, the uncertainty of the health situation is still present and the opening of the borders, as well as the quarantine measures, remain subject to change and all previous transport solutions have not yet fully been reinstated. We therefore must continue our efforts and notably those of the teaching teams, who are already very involved, to develop or bring together resources, whenever possible, to find solutions to support the students and to teach remotely for international students, in case these difficulties persist at the beginning of the new academic year.

I would really like to thank you once again for your involvement and of course, my team and I, remain at your disposal.

Yours faithfully,

The Director-General of Higher Education and Professional Insertion

Anne-Sophie Barthez

² Subject to approval of specific conditions applicable for travelers coming from the UK. See the latest information on the French Embassy site in the UK: <https://uk.ambafrance.org/COVID-19-Conditions-de-deplacement-entre-la-France-et-le-Royaume-2895>

³ http://circulaire-legifrance.gouv.fr/pdf/2020/07/cir_45013.pdf

⁴ As soon as the student has a valid permit, *this certificate* of continuing studies is not formally required ; it does however provide an extra guarantee

⁵ <https://www.immigration.interieur.gouv.fr/immigration/Information-generale-sur-la-prolongation-des-documents-de-sejour-General-information-on-the-extension-of-residency-documents>