

Tips for foreign students all over the country!

✧ **TOP-10** frequently ✧  
**asked questions from**  
**foreign students** ✧



Q. Can I leave Korea during leave of absence period?

If there are changes in your studies, like graduation or leave of absence, your university is required to notify the relevant immigration office. The immigration office receives the notification and considers the student no longer has any studies and guides him/her to leave the country. If the student has already left the country, regardless of the remaining period of stay, his/her foreign student visa will be canceled. Thus, to enter Korea, the student must get a new visa.



Q. I graduated in February, but my period of stay ends in March. Can I leave a country for a little and return before my period of stay ends?

Through the notification from the student's university, the Immigration Office will get the information about graduation and check the student's status of stay. If the student has already left Korea, regardless of the remaining period of his/her stay, his/her foreign student visa will be canceled. Therefore, if the student is planning to enter a higher level course or preparing for a job in Korea, we recommend obtaining visa extension permission or change your status of residence before leaving Korea.



Q. I left the country after submitting an application to Immigration Office. Can you review my application while I am abroad or wait for me to re-enter the country before processing it?

If it is confirmed that the applicant has left the country during the application review process, the application may be suspended or closed at the discretion of the reviewing authority. This is because the application cannot be resolved without knowing if the applicant will re-enter the country. Additionally, if supplementary documents are needed, it will take longer to reach the applicant for verification. Therefore, please consider your travel plans carefully before submitting an application. In unavoidable circumstances, we recommend that you re-enter the country and submit your application again.





Q. If I plan to return home after graduation and my visa expires during that time, how can I return to Korea for work?

After graduation, if you plan to look for a job in Korea or already have a confirmed job offer, it is advisable to obtain a 'Permission to Change Status of Stay' before departing. If you don't have enough time, you can apply for a Job-Seeking (D-10) Visa after leaving and return. For first-time applicants of the Job-Seeking (D-10) Visa if applied within one year after graduating from a Korean university, benefits such as 'exemption from the points system' are granted.



Q. I have already stayed in Korea for the maximum permitted duration of 6 years as an undergraduate student, but I still have my thesis review pending. Can I extend my stay beyond the limit?

Since international students have a maximum stay limit set for each degree program, it is not possible to extend your stay beyond the allowed period. However, if you took a leave of absence for two consecutive semesters (1 year) or more and returned within 3 years, that period may be excluded from the total stay calculation. Please refer to the maximum stay limits below when planning your studies:

Degree program	Maximum stay period limit
Associate Degree	Up to 3 years (4 years for 3-year programs)
Bachelor Degree	Up to 6 years (7 years for 5-year programs)
Master Degree	Up to 5 years (6 years for 3-year programs)
Doctoral Degree	Up to 8 years (7 years for 2-year programs)



Q. I want to transfer to a different university.  
I have already been accepted, so can I just  
apply for a school change?

In principle, transferring to another school within Korea is restricted. You must exit the country and re-enter with a new visa. However, if there is a justifiable reason for changing schools during your studies in Korea, you may apply for a school change. At this time, the total duration of study (previous + new university) must not exceed the maximum stay limit for your degree program. Plus, school changes may be restricted if you are dropped out or expelled from the existing school.



Q. I am currently on a language training (D-4) visa but plan to enter university. I want to apply for a 'Gap Visa' - what are the requirements?

If the gap between your visa expiration date and the start of the new semester is within 3 months, you may apply for a 'Gap Visa' (temporary stay permit). Approval requires meeting all 3 conditions below:

1

Being enrolled in language training program with satisfactory attendance, meeting visa extension requirements

2

After completing language training program, entering an associate degree or higher program at the same university or a general program if transferring to another university

3

Proof of Korean language ability: TOPIK Level 3 or at least 1.5 years of language training in Korea





Q. I have already applied for alien registration, but I moved to a friend's place and my address changed. What should I do?

If your address changes, you must report your new place of stay within 15 days of the change. Additionally, if you did not sign the lease directly and are staying as a guest, you must submit: (1) a rental agreement (if applicable), (2) a proof of residence, and (3) a copy of your friend's ID within the report. However, if your alien registration is still pending, you can only report the change in person at your local immigration office. Bring your alien registration application receipt to assist the officer with processing.



Q. My school is under Seoul jurisdiction, but I live in Incheon. I want to extend my stay - which immigration office should I visit?

For international students, if your school and residence are under different jurisdictions, the responsible immigration office is determined by your school's 'Certification Committee Evaluation Result'. If your school is an 'accredited university', you can apply at either your school's or residence's immigration office. If it is below the 'general university' level, you must apply at the immigration office overseeing your school's location. Refer to the jurisdiction table below to ensure you visit the correct office.

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# Jurisdiction Guide for Immigration Services

Service Type	Type of Jurisdiction		
	Accredited universities or above	General universities	Lower-Tier universities
Alien Registration Card	Residence or University Jurisdiction		
Change of Status	Residence or University Jurisdiction	School Jurisdiction Only	
Extension of Stay	Residence or University Jurisdiction		School Jurisdiction Only
Change of address, Part-Time Work Permission	Residence or University Jurisdiction		
University Transfer Application	School Jurisdiction Only		



Q. I want to start working part-time,  
however my boss wants me to start  
right away. Is it possible?

International students in Korea cannot legally work under standard visa conditions. However, part-time jobs (typical student-level work) are permitted only if your university approves the employment, and you obtain prior 'Part-Time Work Permission' from the immigration office.

Thus, if you want to start a part-time work, apply for the permit in advance at your local immigration office and get a permission first.





If the information was helpful, please,  
share it with your friends!

**We support international  
students for a happy  
life in Korea**

