

New China Visa Process in the UK

Frequently Asked Questions

General

1) What has changed?

The government of China now requires all visa applicants in the United Kingdom to submit fingerprints. Applicants may submit fingerprints at Visa Application Centres in London, Manchester, and Edinburgh. Many countries require applicants to submit fingerprints or other biometric data as part of their visa process. The UK does not require that Chinese nationals provide fingerprints to get a visa to come to the UK.

2) How does the process to get a Chinese visa now work?

As before, you must complete a Chinese Visa application form, submit a photograph, provide a valid passport and supporting documentation to CIBT. (Up to date requirements are found at CIBTvisas.co.uk). Once these materials are complete and received at our office, CIBT will schedule an appointment for you to provide fingerprints at a Chinese Visa Application Service Centre in London, Manchester, or Edinburgh. When you get to the Visa Application Centre for your scheduled appointment, a CIBT representative will guide you through the fingerprint submission process.

3) When I go to the Visa Application Centre, will they ask me any questions as well as take my fingerprints?

Staff at the Visa Application Centre may wish to confirm certain answers or details of your application.

4) Will this delay the speed of getting a visa issued?

No, the processing speeds offered by the Consulate will remain the same. When you place your order with CIBT, you will select the speed of consular processing. Note that the speed selected will begin when the completed application, including fingerprints, is submitted to the Visa Application Centre and is ready for consideration by Chinese officials.

5) What do I do when I get to the Chinese Visa Application Service Centres?

London – You should plan to arrive at the Visa Application Centre (12 Old Jewry, London, EC2 8DU) 20 minutes before your scheduled appointment. Bring a photo ID and a copy of the email from CIBT confirming your appointment time. When you arrive at the facility, proceed to reception. You will be asked your name to confirm that you have a scheduled appointment. Please mention that you are a customer of CIBT and proceed down the stair located to the right. A member of our staff will then greet you and assist you through the fingerprint collection process. Please note that only applicants with a scheduled appointment will be allowed into the facility.

Edinburgh – Please come directly to the CIBT office at (19 Canning St, Edinburgh, EH3 8EG) which is conveniently located on the ground floor of the same building as the Visa Application Centre. Please report to CIBT reception and a representative will escort you upstairs to the Centre and guide you through the process. Please note that we can only assist applicants who have a scheduled appointment.

Manchester – At the time of your appointment, a CIBT representative will meet you at the Visa Application Centre (71 Mosley St, Manchester, M2 3HR). Our representative will ensure that all of your materials are in order and will guide you through the fingerprint process and remain at the Centre until the process is complete should have questions arise.

Appointments—General

6) Do all applicants, including children and the elderly, have to give fingerprints?

No, children under 14 years old and adults over 70 years old do not have to submit fingerprints at the point of submitting their application. If this exemption applies to you then submit all your materials to CIBT and we will process your visa without the need to schedule an appointment.

7) Do applicants of all nationalities have to give fingerprints?

Yes, applicants of all nationalities applying for a China visa in the UK are now required to submit fingerprints on the day their application is submitted. Up to date instructions which often differ depending on the nationality of the applicant can be found at our website: CIBTvisas.co.uk

8) Do applicants have to give fingerprints every time I apply for a Chinese visa?

Yes, at present the Chinese Consulate is not storing your fingerprints so will be required you to submit fingerprints whenever you apply for a Chinese visa.

9) Does this requirement exist in other countries/markets?

The Chinese government requires fingerprints for some nationalities, for different visa types and now for all applicants in the UK.

10) Are you paying the consulate for this? Are you paying government officials for this special treatment?

As the largest and best respected visa agency in the UK, CIBT is honoured to be able to support the Chinese Visa Application Centre by providing this service to our clients. By maintaining a high standard of work we have developed a good working relationship with the Centre over the years. We adhere to all UK and global regulation regarding bribery and do not make any payments to Chinese governmental officials.

Appointments—Process

11) When are appointments available?

In London, CIBT is able to offer appointments to clients between 10am and 1pm every day. Clients will have a set appointment time and should get to the Visa Application Centre 20 minutes before

their scheduled appointment. Please do not arrive earlier as there is limited space within the Visa Application Centre.

In Manchester and Edinburgh we will work with you on an appointment time that works for your schedule within traditional business hours.

12) I submitted my application through another agency, can I get an appointment with you?

CIBT can only schedule appointments and assist clients who have submitted their application through us.

13) The line here at the Visa Application Centre is really long, can I get an appointment with you right now?

We can only assist clients who have initiated their request and booked their appointment with us.

14) Can other visa agencies book appointments for me?

We understand a couple other agencies have been afforded a similar privilege.

15) Do we have to have a client's passport before the appointment? Can they deliver it to us when he/she comes to the consulate? If not, why not?

A complete application, including all required forms, documents, photographs and the passport must be in our office the evening prior to an appointment. We cannot accept any materials at the time of an appointment. If an application package is incomplete the evening before a scheduled appointment, it will not be submitted and the appointment will need to be rescheduled for a later date

16) Can CIBT "pull my passport" early?

No, once your passport has been submitted it has to go through the process.

Appointments—Scheduling

17) What if I need to cancel my appointment and reschedule?

If you need to cancel or reschedule your appointment, call CIBT as soon as possible. We will rebook the appointment on a convenient date for you subject to availability. If you need to alter your

appointment within 2 business days of your scheduled appointment, then cancellation and/or re-booking fees will apply.

18) What happens if my trip is cancelled and I no longer need to get a visa?

Contact CIBT if your travel plans no longer require a Chinese visa. If you cancel your fingerprint submission appointment within 2 business days of your scheduled appointment then cancellation fee will apply.

19) What if I have a last minute emergency and have to reschedule?

Contact CIBT as soon as possible if you need to reschedule your appointment. If you reschedule your fingerprint submission appointment within 2 business days of your scheduled appointment then re-booking fees will apply.

20) What happens if I am late to my appointment?

Please make every effort to come to the Visa Application Centre 20 minutes before your scheduled appointment. Depending on how late you are and the appointments available we may have re-book your appointment for another day. Re-booking fees will apply.

21) Why can't I book my appointment now vs having to wait until CIBT says my paperwork is complete?

Appointments can only be booked once a complete application has been received including all required documents, photos and your passport. Should your itinerary require fast turnaround, select our concierge service so that preparation of your application is expedited and the appointment can be scheduled as quickly as possible.

Appointments—Pricing

22) What is the difference between a standard, priority and premier appointment?

The majority of our daily appointments are "standard appointments" which are available at no extra charge as part of CIBT's visa service. Standard appointments are available on a first come basis. For those with urgent travel, a limited number of priority and premium appointments are available at an additional charge.

23) Why do I have to pay for a priority or premium appointment?

The majority of our daily appointments are "standard appointments" which are available at no extra charge as part of CIBT's visa service. Standard appointments are available on a first come basis. For those with urgent travel, a limited number of priority and premium appointments are available at an additional charge.

24) This seems really expensive...Can I do this cheaper?

The best way to minimize consular and processing fees is to apply for your visa well in advance of planned travel. Expedited visa processing and premium appointments are elective services to help those with important, last minute travel.

25) Why do I have to pay for an appointment on top of my concierge fee?

The Concierge service provides the guidance of a dedicated consultant and all the included additional services. A standard appointment is included in the cost of CIBT's services. Expedited visa processing and premium appointments are elective services to help those with important, last minute travel.

26) Why do I have to pay for a premier/priority appointment when I selected expedited processing at the consulate?

CIBT clients have the option of selecting the speed of processing at the consulate as well as scheduling the most convenient appointment time to have fingerprints taken. All CIBT visa services include a standard appointment. Expedited visa processing and premium appointments are elective services to help those with important, last minute travel.

27) Why are all the standard appointments booked? Isn't this a scam to just make everyone pay more?

The standard appointments are booked on a first come first serve basis. The majority of our allotted appointments are standard but we need to ensure that appointments are available for urgent travel. Expedited visa processing and premium appointments are elective services to help those with important, last minute travel.

28) Why do you charge a cancellation fee?

There are limited amount of daily appointments and these are often over-subscribed.

29) Why do you charge a re-booking fee?

There are limited amount of daily appointments and these are over-subscribed.

Client Questions

30) Why aren't I getting a discount on appointments since I have a discount on visa fees?

There are a limited number of appointments available which are often over-subscribed. CIBT clients have access to expanded appointments and a bespoke experience at the Visa Application Centre.

31) Why aren't I getting a commission on appointments since I get a commission on visa fees?

Channel partners will continue to receive commissions on the core visas service as they have in the past. Agreements will not be negatively impacted by the introduction of this new, bespoke service.

32) Will there be changes to other countries? Additional changes for China in the UK?

We are not been informed of definitive changes in any other markets.

33) When did you learn of this change? Why didn't you alert clients sooner so we could get our visas before the change went into effect?

CIBT has been working over the past week to develop a bespoke service offering for clients which was just finalized in the last 24 hours. As always, we seek to ensure our clients have the most accurate information and best service experience.

34) Why did our visa processing fee go up by £75?

The process to obtain a Chinese visa is now more complicated requiring more support from CIBT team members. We know our clients seek fast, compliant and convenient service. We are pleased to continue to offer bespoke service with this unique offering.

35) I don't want you to make my appointment, just to do my visa paperwork.

The service offered by CIBT includes checking the paperwork and attending the appointment with the applicant. We are confident that by using our service you will obtain your visa in the required time frame.

Fingerprint Data/Security

36) What do the Chinese do with my fingerprints?

They store them for the duration of your visa in order to verify your identity upon your entry into China.

37) I don't want to give them this data but still want my visa.

All applicants in the UK are now required to provide fingerprints to obtain a visa.