



British  
High Commission  
Pretoria

## Press Release: UK introduces Priority Visas in South Africa

---

11 November 2011

The UK Border Agency in South Africa will be introducing a Priority Visa Service in South Africa from 14 November.

Customers will now be able to pay an additional fee to fast track their visa application and have it processed ahead of others. Only a limited number of Priority Visas will be sold each day on a first come, first served basis.

The Priority Visa Service will be available for UK visit visa categories only. To apply for a Priority Visa customers must complete and submit a UK visa application online as normal and visit one of the UK's Visa Application Centres operated by VFS Global in Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth or Pretoria where they will be able to obtain further details about the Priority Service.

The British High Commissioner in South Africa, Dame Nicola Brewer, said:

"I'm delighted that we will be enhancing our already excellent UK visa service to customers in South Africa. We turn around most visa applications very quickly but inevitably some people have to travel at the last minute and this Priority Service will speed up the process even further. Along with the ability to track progress of applications online, request SMS updates and courier returns, the Priority Service makes our visa operation one of the most modern and effective in South Africa."

The VFS Global Country Manager in South Africa, Mr Rishen Mahabeer, said:

"We are proud to partner with the British High Commission in providing this innovative service, which we are confident will add significant value to applicants."

Notes for editors:

The cost of the Priority Visa Service will be R675, in addition to the visa application fee itself. This fee can be only paid at the Visa Application Centre by Debit/Credit Card (Visa/MasterCard)

This service does not imply or guarantee in any way that applicants using the Priority Service will be successful in their visa application. All visa applicants must meet the requirements of the UK immigration rules.

Applicants should be aware that they may experience extended processing times if any of the following factors apply:

1. Have previously been refused a visa for the UK, and/or;
2. Have previously been refused leave to enter the UK, and/or;
3. Have previously been deported, removed, or otherwise required to leave the UK, and/or;
4. Have overstayed a period of leave in the UK, and/or;
5. Have been refused leave to remain in the UK by the Home Office, and/or;
6. Have previously been refused a visa for Australia, Canada, New Zealand, United States of America or the Schengen countries.
7. Have been convicted of a criminal offence in any country.

UK Border Agency's published global customer service target for processing visit visa applications is 15 working days. Applicants in South Africa generally receive a quicker service with most application processed in around 5 working days. The Priority Visa Service will offer an even faster service, though a specific turnaround time will not be guaranteed.

Further details on applying for a UK visa in South Africa are available at:

<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/countries/south-africa/?langname=UK%20English>

ENDS

Contact:

Gary Benham  
Head of Communications,  
British High Commission

012 421 759646  
083 252 8431  
[gary.benham@fco.gov.uk](mailto:gary.benham@fco.gov.uk)

Isabel Potgieter  
Deputy Head of Communications  
British High Commission

012 421 7646  
083 391 1606  
[isabel.potgieter@fco.gov.uk](mailto:isabel.potgieter@fco.gov.uk)