

Note No: A097/05

Protocol Division of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office presents its compliments to all Diplomatic Missions and has the honour to refer to immigration procedures for members of missions on first arrival in the United Kingdom.

All members of Missions accredited to the United Kingdom, and members of their families who form part of their households, are exempt from all provisions of the Immigration Act 1971 (as amended), including the visa requirements. They do not therefore require a visa to enter or re-enter the United Kingdom while they are still in their post and performing their duties. However, in order to facilitate their entry to the United Kingdom, the Division strongly recommends that members of missions and their dependants from countries whose nationals require visas to enter the United Kingdom, obtain an 'exempt' visa before their arrival from a British diplomatic/consular mission overseas. This will help to establish their position immediately with the United Kingdom authorities and avoid any risk of misunderstanding on the part of the airlines.

Members of missions and their dependants from countries whose nationals do not require visas to enter the United Kingdom may also apply to a British diplomatic/consular mission overseas for an 'exempt' visa prior to their first arrival. 'Exempt' visas for members of missions and their dependants are issued gratis. Should they decide to travel without a visa, they should carry with them, for production at Immigration Control, a letter (or other document) from their Mission in London or their Ministry of Foreign Affairs giving details of their appointment or, in the case of dependants travelling separately, their relationship to the member of the mission. Those members of missions in this category who are already accredited here, may produce their Foreign and Commonwealth Office Identity Card.

Protocol Division of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office avails itself of this opportunity to renew to all Diplomatic Missions the assurance of its highest consideration.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH OFFICE
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