



John Cabot University

The Ten (10) Documents You Must Have to Apply for a Student Visa: October 2011

Once you have paid the **\$500 Tuition Deposit**, as well as the **\$1,000 Housing Deposit**, the John Cabot University Admissions Office in Rome will send you the JCU Official Visa Packet. The packet will be sent to your permanent home address.

Note: Students coming to JCU from a U.S. College or University as semester-abroad, visiting students must provide additional documentation as noted in red ink and identified below—see number 10 (a), (b) and (c).

We have listed below the 10 documents typically required to apply for a student visa. However, please be aware that Italian Consulates do not all follow identical procedures. For this reason, while we will be happy to provide the guidance and assistance we can. **Ultimately, it is your responsibility to contact the Italian Consulate in the geographic area of your legal, permanent address and review the specific student visa requirements listed on the web site of that Consulate.**

Each Consulate has specific forms noted on their website which they require you to download and complete. Some of the forms sent to you from JCU are samples of these forms.

A STUDENT VISA IS FREE OF CHARGE.

Please prepare to attend your appointment at the appropriate Italian Consulate Visa Office with the original copy of each of the documents listed below, as well as at least one photocopy of each of the documents listed below. Immigration authorities abroad can ask you to show the documents that were submitted to obtain the visa, so you should also make a third copy for your own records to bring on your flight to Italy.

- 1) **Visa application form**—each Consulate Visa Office has its own form—you must log on to the respective web site, download the student visa application, complete it, and sign it. On the web site you will look for the form which is for a stay of longer than 90 days—it typically has the Italian flag on it on the top left corner of the application. *And the study visa document needed would be for technical and professional instruction beyond the level of compulsory education (over 18 years of age).* To find the Italian Consulate located nearest your home permanent address, go to this link:

http://www.ambwashingtondc.esteri.it/Ambasciata_Washington/Menu/Informazioni_e_servizi/La_rete_consolare/

- 2) **Recent standard, passport-style photos (at least 2).** Photos are best taken with a more serious, conservative look. One photo must be stapled/glued to the top right portion of the visa application. Make sure the passport has at least a blank page to affix the visa;
- 3) **Passport or travel document** valid for at least three months after the visa's projected date of expiration. Please make sure the passport has at least one blank page to affix the visa. If you do not currently have a valid passport, you will need to apply for one. Please note that this process can take up to two months.

4) **Proof of means of financial support** in Italy of not less than \$1,000 *per each month of stay for the first year*. This means that a full academic year bachelor's degree student must evidence financial support of at least **\$12,000**; a fall/spring semester visiting student must evidence financial support of at least **\$6,000**. You must demonstrate having an adequate level of support by providing all of these items:

- a. A notarized "**Affidavit of Support**" document included in the JCU visa packet (as a sample). It must be signed and notarized by the person providing the financial support.
- b. A letter from your bank official, written on the bank's letterhead, signed by a bank official, indicating your name and account balance (or that of your parents, if you are a dependent) for at least the amounts noted above. The Consulate office may require you to download its own Bank Statement form. You must determine this by reviewing a list of the visa forms on that Consulate's web site.
- c. JCU Official Receipt of full payment of tuition, housing and fees for the first semester at JCU—you may obtain this receipt from the JCU business office. Request this by sending an email to: accountsreceivable@johncabot.edu

If you have been awarded financial aid from John Cabot University, or are taking out any student loans, then you must bring an official letter from JCU stating the amount of financial aid and the time of disbursement. Visiting/study abroad students may also add to this documentation by securing confirmation of financial aid received through their home institution, or a copy of the Consortium Agreement prepared between their home institution and JCU.

5) **Evidence that you have the funds necessary to return to your home country.** The Consulate officials will require you to show a **round trip, return airline ticket** for this purpose. You may want to purchase an airline ticket which will allow for flexibility of the return flight, with no penalty charges. E-tickets are acceptable provided that they evidence a paid, return flight to the U.S.

6) **Health insurance valid in Italy:** You must demonstrate having adequate health insurance coverage by providing:

- a. A notarized "**Affidavit of Insurance**" document included in the JCU visa packet (as a sample) and
- b. A written statement/letter from your U.S. insurance company, written on the insurance company's letterhead, and signed by the insurance company official indicating:
 - your name,
 - full policy number,
 - effective dates of the policy,
 - that you either have unlimited coverage or a minimum of **\$50,000** for hospitalization and emergencies, and
 - that your coverage is valid in Italy and other Schengen countries, during the specific dates you will be overseas. Attached to this letter must be the policy coverage page and your health insurance card.

Please note that whether or not your U.S. health insurance covers you in Italy, not all U.S. policies are accepted by the Italian health authorities. We strongly suggest the purchase of an Italian health insurance policy to avoid possible complications. You may do so through a third party organization called *Eduitalia*. The website is: <http://secure.eduitalia.org/insurance>

On this website you may pay for the AMI Assistance (Gruppo Filo diretto) health insurance via a credit card and also download a copy of the *Terms and Conditions*, which should also be brought to the visa appointment.

For more information and costs of the insurance policy, please contact the administrator of the insurance program, Dr. Vittorio Careri, at v.careri@eduitalia.org or insurance@eduitalia.org. The cost should range between \$100 - \$200, depending on the length of coverage required.

Upon arrival in Italy, proof of health insurance must be shown to the local Police Office (Questura), the authority in charge of issuing the “Permesso di Soggiorno per motivi di studio” (Permit to Stay). JCU will provide assistance with this process through a third party service agency during Orientation week.

- 7) **Official JCU Visa Request letter:** This letter is written in Italian. At the top of the letter it will have a heading such as “**AL CONSOLATO DI COMPETENZA GENERALE DI _____**” (the name of the Consulate, such as New York, Boston, Miami, Los Angeles, etc.).

It is signed and officially stamped by an official of JCU. This is probably one of the most important documents the visa official will review. The English translation of this document is as follows:

It states the dates you will attend JCU, that you have satisfied all the academic requirements needed to study at JCU; identifies the major you are currently enrolled in (if you are coming as a degree student); indicates the standard hours of study per week (full time enrollment is at least 20 hours per week) and the planned duration of your academic studies (usually 4 years if you are coming as a degree student); and attests that either your private health insurance coverage is valid abroad or you will purchase an Italian Health Insurance policy. It also states that you have a place to live while at JCU secured through the JCU Housing Office; and that you can provide proof of sufficient financial support for your stay in Italy and that the program related costs have been paid.

The Official JCU Visa Request letter is a legal document. Once your visa is granted, the Italian Consulate typically returns this official letter to you (it will be attached either to your passport or to the other documentation you filed with your visa application). You will need the original Official JCU Visa Request Letter to obtain a Permit to Stay in Rome upon arrival. Be sure you remember to bring it with you to Italy and to the Mandatory Permit to Stay Workshop during Orientation.

Note: Visa requirements ask you to prove that you have “appropriate lodgings in Italy”: The declaration that you will have access to appropriate lodgings in Italy is included in the JCU Official Visa Request letter. This means you will or have already secured housing through the JCU Housing Office by submitting your JCU housing reservation form and paying the \$1,000 non-refundable Housing Deposit. The JCU Admissions office may also issue you a more specific **Proof of Lodging document**, if the Consulate requires it.

In case the applicant will be staying with friends/family, a letter of invitation is required along with a copy of the host's ID (“Permit of stay” for non-European Union citizens). The letter of “Invito” may be downloaded from the Consulate website.

In the case where students decide to secure their own apartment outside of JCU housing, it is required that the students obtain from the landlord with whom the contract the following information:

- the Rent Lease Contract with all details of the contract including the full name of the landlord, the address of the apartment, the apartment/house description, all accessory costs (electricity, gas, central heating, condo management, etc.) and the full names of the tenant(s) responsible for all of these items.
 - The Rent Lease Contract, must be signed by all parties, and must have been registered at the Roma Public Records Private Building Contracts Office. There must there be an official seal or stamp provided by this Office on the Rent Lease Contract. (It's not enough to simply provide a letter by the landlord who will declare his/her commitment to rent the apartment).
- 8) **JCU Acceptance letter:** JCU's Admissions Office sends you the Acceptance letter, written in English, once you are admitted to the University. Please keep this copy when it arrives at your permanent address! Do not throw it away or lose it!
 - 9) **Original birth certificate and current document of identity** (driver's license, or a student I.D.)—typically, both items are required as proof of residence in the jurisdiction of the specific Consulate General. If you recently moved and have not updated your I.D., you must submit another proof of current address (e.g., utility bills, bank statements, etc.);
 - 10) **Documentation of your educational history**—this means that you need to obtain an official copy of your high school and/or college transcript—for incoming degree students, the high school official transcript must show your date of graduation.

NOTE: Students coming to JCU as study abroad/visiting students for a semester or year abroad must also obtain and bring with them:

- a) **(1) an official copy of your transcript from your home institution;**
- b) **(2) a letter from your home institution (typically the Registrar's Office) in two copies (original plus one copy) confirming your enrollment status with that home institution. The letter must be addressed to the Consulate General of Italy and needs to confirm that the student is a full-time student at the home institution, will complete a study abroad semester (or year) at JCU, will return to the home institution for the following semester (or year), and what the anticipated graduation date and major are. This information must be presented to the visa officer in official form, i.e. in a sealed envelope with the university seal.**
- c) **(3) Your current student I.D. from your home institution.**

After the visa interview, your passport will be kept by the visa official and returned to your permanent address with the student visa, if approved. To expedite the processing and return of your student visa, you should bring a self-addressed copy of a paid express envelope to leave with the Consulate official who interviews you. Please note which mail carrier the Consulate lists on their web site. Some only want you to use the U.S. Postal Service; others will allow you to use Federal Express. Still others will not mail back the visa and will make you come in person to pick it up. *Make a copy of your tracking label or envelope, should you need to follow up on the return of your documents.*

Please note that an acceptance to John Cabot University is not a guarantee that you will obtain the required student visa to attend JCU. The Italian Embassy and its Consulate Offices set their own requirements and it is imperative that you read these requirements on the appropriate web site. You should approach your visit at the Consulate as you would any professional interview. Be well dressed, well prepared, respectful of those you will be dealing with, and please be on time. For questions or assistance with this process, contact admissions@johncabot.edu or call the JCU U.S. Office toll-free at: **1-866-457-6160**.