

**Dear Students,**

This Frequently asked question (FAQ) is prepared on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2021, to clear your common queries related to your travel to the UAE. All the guidelines given below for your travel are subject to change from time to time due to the prevailing Covid conditions around the world. You have to check concerned government announcements, websites, media and your airlines since they are the main sources that provide the most recent updates.

### **Frequently asked questions**

**Is it safe to travel to the UAE?**

The UAE is one of the few most vaccinated nations in the world. In terms of COVID safety, the BITS Pilani Dubai Campus has devised and implemented protocols that strictly adheres to the UAE Government guidelines.

**Can we enter the Country after 180 days?**

Yes. The UAE Government has announced extension of residence visa and permission to travel even after the lapse of 180 days. However you need to take mandatory approval and follow the procedures to travel back.

**What are the mandatory approval and procedures to be followed for returning to the UAE?**

According to the information collected by us regarding return of residence visa holders to the UAE, please note that the following steps that are needed to be followed.

Step 1. Getting Entry Approval from **General Directorate of Residency and Foreign Affairs- Dubai (GDRFAD) for Dubai Visa holders or from ICA for other Emirates' visa Holders.**

Step 2. Book your Air Ticket

Step 3. Health Declaration Form

Step 4. Undergo COVID RT- PCR Test

Step 5. Rapid test at the Airport of departure

### **Getting Return Entry (GDRFAD) Approval**

**What is GDRFAD?**

The GDRFAD is **the abbreviation for the General Directorate of Residency and Foreign Affairs, Dubai.**

**Why do we need to apply for Getting Return Entry GDRFAD approval?**

It is mandatory to get the **Return Permit** for entry for Dubai residence visa holders.

**How can we apply for GDRFAD approval?**

**Entry Approval can be obtained from the General Directorate of Residency and Foreign Affairs- Dubai (GDRFAD) only for Residence Visa holders of Dubai.** You need to register for getting GDRFAD through the link [https://smart.gdrfad.gov.ae/Smart\\_OTCServicesPortal/ReturnPermitServiceForm.aspx](https://smart.gdrfad.gov.ae/Smart_OTCServicesPortal/ReturnPermitServiceForm.aspx) under the head {Registration for residents outside UAE}.

### **The GDRFAD application Process**

**Student has to apply with following information:**

- Type File no (Residence No. xxx/xxxx/xxxxxxx) – See the UAE resident visa stamped page in your passport for file No.
- Nationality: Select (For example Code 205 for India)
- Year of Birth: xxxx
- Then click **continue**
- In the next page you have to indicate your country of departure and select Dubai as the arrival airport. Provide your email id and contact information, then click the undertaking for quarantine.
- Click **continue** and in the third page you can attach documents
- Attach Passport first page, visa page, last page, Emirates Identity Card (front & back) and Vaccination card (if available). You have to upload each document as individual attachment.
- Then click submit
- You will get submission confirmation. You will get **Return Permit** by email along with a health declaration form within two days.

**Print the permit and carry it during your travel along with the filled up forms attached with the permit.**

**What should I do in case of GDRFAD rejection?**

In case of any application getting rejected, you need to apply again. In some instances, people have got approval from the authorities after their requests were rejected multiple times. Hence no need to panic and do keep applying until you get the approval.

**Which Airport do I need to take to travel to the UAE?**

We advise students with the Dubai Residence Visa to land at Dubai Airport.

### **Health Declaration Form**

**Where can we get the Health Declaration Form?**

You will receive the form along with the Return entry approval (GDRFAD) explained above. **Fill the Health Declaration form and print to carry with you.**

### **What answer do we need to provide in the health declaration form with regard to Accommodation Information if we are BPDC Hostellers?**

The following five questions are asked in the form and you can answer as per the bold underline

1. What type of accommodation? - **Single Accommodation Flat**
2. If shared accommodation, how many people are living in the shared accommodation? **Not applicable**
3. Will I be able to self-isolate - **yes**
4. Do I have a separate toilet ----- **It is a shared toilet**
5. Will I be able to fund my stay if isolation is required? - **Yes\***

(\*you can write yes if you have the valid medical insurance coverage applicable to UAE. If you don't have medical insurance then, either apply for the medical insurance through BPDC or personally. Make sure the medical insurance covers the COVID-19.)

### **COVID 19 PCR TEST**

#### **Why should I need to take COVID test from the place where I live now?**

It is mandatory to get yourself tested for Covid-19 (PCR Test) in approved centers to enter the UAE.

#### **Which Covid-19 test RT PCR Centers are recognized by UAE?**

For the details regarding checking centers in general, please see the link <https://c.ekstatic.net/ecl/documents/health-screening-documents/approved-laboratories.pdf>

At India you are required to take the test at any ICMR approved laboratory nearest to your home town. Link to list of approved laboratories by ICMR is also given. [https://www.icmr.gov.in/pdf/covid/labs/COVID\\_Testing\\_Labs\\_04082020.pdf](https://www.icmr.gov.in/pdf/covid/labs/COVID_Testing_Labs_04082020.pdf).

All passengers should have the negative PCR result issued by approved Centers not more than **48 hours prior to arrival in the UAE.**

#### **Take the original RT PCR Test Report with QR Code**

#### **Whether the COVID test should have 48 hours prior to travel?**

Yes, it is mandatory to do the Covid -19 test 48 hours prior to travel. Also you can check about the same with your Airlines.

### **Rapid Test at the Airport of Departure**

#### **What is the Covid Rapid Test?**

Though you have taken COVID 19 PCR test at centers approved by the government, you must take a rapid test four hours (six hours is applicable for certain countries including India) prior to your travel at the Airport of Departure. **Once you get the negative result you will be allowed to board the flight to travel to the UAE.**

### **Take the original Rapid PCR Test Report**

## **General**

**Is there any document I should submit at Airport of Departure and the UAE Airports?**

**Yes. The documents listed below should be submitted at the UAE Airport on arrival. However we advise you to take copies before submitting the documents for your perusal later.**

- GDRFAD Approval and/or ICA approval
- Health Declaration Form
- Original RT PCR test with QR Code done maximum 48 hours prior to your travel
- Original Rapid PCR test Report

**Where is the COVID - 19 (PCR) Test done in Dubai, UAE after landing?**

Upon your arrival, you will be tested for **Covid-19 at Dubai Airport as well**. You will be given instructions related to Covid-19 by the UAE Airport authorities, after which you will be allowed to return to your residence/hostel.

After leaving the Airport, stay self- isolated until you receive the **negative test result** from the PCR test done at the Airport.

**What Should I do after getting the negative report if I am a BPDC Hosteller?**

You are required to send the screenshot of the negative RT PCR report from the UAE Airport Authority to the hostel Administrator.

**Do I need to quarantine after arrival?**

The quarantine is required only if the clinical assessment of the individual shows the Covid-19 Symptoms or if the PCR Test is positive. If none of these conditions exists then quarantine is not required.

**Is it necessary to take medical Insurance?**

Medical Insurance is mandatory for visa stamping in UAE. Also BPDC has facilitated a comprehensive medical insurance coverage with the direct billing facility which covers COVID-19 as per the coverage, terms and conditions of the medical insurance service provider. In addition, BPDC follows the normal guidelines of the Health Authority of UAE, especially Dubai.

**What are the vaccines approved by the Government of UAE?**

- Sinopharm vaccine
- Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine
- Sputnik vaccine
- Oxford-Astrazeneca vaccine (Covishield)

- Moderna vaccine

**Do I need to take Covid Vaccine to travel to the UAE?**

Though Covid vaccine is mandatory for residents and visitors to come to the UAE, it is not the mandatory requirement for the student to travel to the UAE.

**Am I allowed to travel with a New Visa (Entry Permit)?**

Yes, you are allowed travel with the New Visa (Entry Permit). **However check with your airlines before booking the ticket**

**Do I need to get the GDRFAD approval If I am travelling with the New Visa (Entry Permit)?**

The GDRFAD approval is not applicable for New Visa (Entry Permit) holders.

**What should I do to get ICA approval?**

ICA approval is necessary for visa holders from Abu Dhabi. However, check your airlines. Please see the link for ICA webpage for seeking return approval is

<https://smartservices.ica.gov.ae/echannels/web/client/guest/index.html#/registerArrivals>

**Do I need to take Travel insurance if I am travelling to the UAE on a New Visa (Entry Permit)?**

Yes, though it is not mandatory still it is recommended that you should take a travel Insurance for one month covering Covid treatment.

**For latest updates on travel whom I should contact?**

You have to check concerned government announcements, websites, media and your airlines since they are the main sources that provide the most recent updates to travel to UAE.