

## **ADVISORY FOR INDIAN STUDENTS GOING ABROAD FOR EDUCATION**

### **RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

About 4000-4500 Indian students are currently enrolled in various medical and technical institutions in the Russian Federation. About 95% of them are pursuing Medical studies in about 20 universities/ academies spread across the country. You and your parents should be aware of the following points while deciding upon admissions:

#### **I.**

- Requirement of 'No Objection' certificate from the Medical Council of India (MCI) and Screening Test at end of course.
- Recognition of institutions by Indian authorities.
- Validity of certificates and their equivalence in India.
- Lgalization and attestation/legalization of Diplomas.
- Reliability of 'contractors' and intermediaries as source of information and facilitation.
- Full medical examination, insurance etc.

#### **II.**

- Background information on Russia.
- System of education in Russia.
- Particulars of Russian educational institution where you desire to join.
- Courses offered, award of diplomas/degrees, equivalence of diplomas/ degrees.
- Medium of instruction.
- Eligibility for admission.
- Admission Process.
- Fee structure/mode of payment.
- Facilities and provision for post-graduate studies, scholarships.
- Visas/Tickets.
- Accommodation/hostel/food facilities.
- Safe custody of Passports and original certificates.
- Transfer from one institution to another.
- Health care, medical facilities and insurance.
- Tips on what to carry and list of items prohibited from being carried.
- Attacks on Indian Students
- Tips on personal security.

#### **Background information on Russia :**

Background knowledge on Russia, particularly geography, climate, people, customs and traditions, food, transport facilities, law and order situation, travel facts,

cost of living, medical facilities, Indian community etc. of the locality where the university/academy is located would be useful in assimilating into the social milieu.

### **Admission Process in Russian Medical Institutions**

While it is possible, in principle, for you to apply direct for admission, most Russian medical institutions have appointed 'contractors' or intermediaries for recruiting students from different countries and insist on using this channel for admission. Most universities prefer to work through the 'contractors' for provision of hostel facilities, general welfare of the students, and even collecting fee. This is ostensibly for the convenience of students, who are new to the environment and do not speak the local language. These 'contractors' have their sub-agents in India. In many cases, senior Indian students themselves function as contractors and agents.

### **Reliability of 'contractors' as source of information/facilitation**

The 'contractors' get large commissions for recruiting students. They can make false promises and give false/misleading information. There are also complaints from students/parents against them of cheating, high-handed behavior, etc. It is, therefore, in the interest of prospective students to make enquiries from the medical institutions directly about the courses/facilities available. In one case, a student signed a contract to study a particular specialization in post-graduate course, but he found that such specialization is not offered by the concerned university after joining the institution. Another signed up for a course in English but on arrival found there were no courses taught in the language and had to return home.

### **Medium of instruction**

There is a rumour in India that English medium courses in medical studies are available in the Russian Federation. **This is not correct.** Medium of education in Russian institutions is mostly in the local language. They need special license to teach in English. Many of the institutions have started the so called English medium courses in medical education for foreign students, without such a license. In practice, they try to teach first three years in English medium, while simultaneously teaching the Russian language to the students. From the fourth year, the students are expected to study in the Russian language. You should be prepared for this dual medium of instruction. Some institutions, which have introduced such dual medium courses, are not fully equipped to teach in English even for the first three years. Students may insist on seeing Russian Ministry of Education license for teaching in English medium. Students who have passed from recognized medical institutions, in either medium of instruction, are eligible for appearing in the Screening Test conducted by the Indian Board of Examinations.

## Payment of Fees

While 'contractors' collect the fee from students for the first semester on their arrival in Russia, it is advisable that you pay the fee directly to the University from subsequent semesters. Where the fee is paid through the 'contractor', students must insist on getting a proper receipt. There are a number of complaints of the contractors collecting the money, but not depositing with the university, which has led to termination of enrolment.

Russian universities do not accept cheques, drafts, etc. Money has to be deposited in cash in local currency in bank. If students bring cash in dollars or any other acceptable foreign currency, it is advisable to get it declared to the customs at the airport on arrival, which makes it easier for depositing the money into their accounts here. Banks will ask for the source of foreign currency for bigger amounts, and if it is brought from abroad, they need customs declaration form.

## Hostel facilities

It is in your interest to check in advance about the hostel facilities available at the university in which admission is sought. Hostels at many universities are inadequate and do not offer any boarding facilities. You would be generally expected to cook your own food.

## Transfer from one institution to another

While transfer from one institution to another is possible, you could find it very difficult due to various legal procedures. Since the visa invitation for students is issued by a particular university to which admission is sought, if you desire later to transfer to a different university you may have to first return to India, and seek a fresh invitation from the new university/institution. Such transfers are generally discouraged by the Russian Ministry of Health, whose permission is needed for more than one transfer. There are cases, where the transfer students are given visa invitations by concerned university, but had to return home without admission because of the denial of permission by the Ministry. **It is, therefore, advisable to select the university carefully before seeking admission.**

## Postgraduate studies

Medical graduates from India, who wish to pursue post-graduate studies in the Russian Federation, need to apply to the Russian Ministry of Education for certification of equivalence of their degrees to pursue higher, studies. **You would yourself be responsible for submitting your application for equivalence certificate from the Ministry.** Contractors promise to help out, but they rarely do. In recent cases, the Ministry has ruled that the Indian bachelor medical/ dental degrees do not qualify for post -graduate courses in the Russian Federation in view of lesser number of years of study. The issue has been taken up by our Embassy in Moscow with the Ministry.

Although universities might give admissions for post-graduate courses, this is subject to the approval of the Ministry that foreign Bachelor degrees are equivalent to the Russian ones. You are, therefore, advised to await the ruling of the Ministry before you arrive to take up your admission in post-graduate medical/ dental course.

### **Safe custody of Passports/original certificates**

Passport and original certificates are your property and should not be given to either contractors or any other foreign authorities for safe custody. No one has any authority to take away your passport. You must always keep your passport with you. Police officials can demand to see the passport, visa and registration at any time.

Any foreigner coming into the Russian Federation needs to register himself with the concerned authorities within a period of three days. The University concerned or 'contractor' generally takes care of the registration process for foreign students.

### **Screening Test**

Registration, for medical practice in India, of students graduating from foreign medical institutions is subject to clearing a Screening Test conducted by the Board of Examinations, New Delhi. The Screening Test is held twice a year, in the months of March and September. Dates are announced separately. Students, who have successfully graduated from Russian medical academies, have to submit an application for appearing in the Screening Test.

All diplomas/ certificates obtained in Russia have to be 'Apostilled' by "INTEROBRAZOVANIE" (Federal Agency on Education, Centre of International Education Activities). The Mission does not attest 'Apostilled' documents.

### **Security of Foreign Students**

There have been several incidents of violent attacks on Indian and other foreign students in different parts of the Russian Federation by racist elements/groups. St. Petersburg accounts for a third of all such attacks, according to police statistics. Moscow and Voronezh (about 500 km south of Moscow) come next with 25% and 10% respectively. Foreign students, especially those with dark skin or hair, are vulnerable to harassment and assault by such groups.

The Embassy of India in Moscow and the Consulate General of India in St. Petersburg have strongly taken up the question of security for Indian students in Russia with the Russian authorities/concerned universities. The Russian authorities have promised to take action against such groups and to adopt necessary measures to improve the security of foreign students. Some preliminary steps seem to have been already initiated in improving security conditions at the Mechnikov Medical Academy

and other universities. However, the problem of attacks on non-white foreign students in Russia requires a more comprehensive approach by the Russian authorities.

Consequently, You are strongly advised to take adequate precautions yourself for your personal security, particularly during all your outdoor movements. Avoid moving alone at nights and do not frequent areas where foreigners are not usually seen. It is emphasized that there can be no substitute for remaining vigilant and exercising due caution and prudence in your movements.

### **Health care and Medical Facilities**

You are advised that you should obtain full information on health care and medical facilities in the city of your study in Russia. It is also strongly recommended that you should obtain full medical insurance, including insurance cover for medical treatment and accidents, before entering Russia. You are also advised to seek medical advice before traveling to Russia and ensure that all appropriate vaccinations are taken and kept up-to-date. It is suggested that in case of any medical situation requiring complicated treatment or major surgery (particularly requiring general anesthesia), you should try and have the treatment done back in India.

### **Guidelines on carrying animal products into Russia**

- To prevent the spread of infectious diseases, the Russian Federation prohibits the import of animals, products of animal industries and forage, both in hand baggage and check-in-luggage, into its territory. Import of any such products into its territory is exclusively subject to clearance of the Main State Veterinary Inspector of the Russian Federation (Refer Article 14 of the Russian Federation Law "On Veterinary Service" dated 14.05.1993, No. 4979-1).
- In view of this, you are advised not to carry, either in hand baggage or check-in-luggage, such products without necessary clearance from concerned authorities as stated above.

## **INFORMATION FOR INDIAN STUDENTS IN RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

- India has become a signatory to the “Hague Convention” on Apostille.
- Consequently, the earlier system of legalization and attestation/legalization of Diplomas by Missions has been dispensed with.
- Respective countries could straightaway accept Apostilled documents.
- The Russian authorities have instituted the Apostille.

- The Mission is no longer attesting “Apostilled” documents.
- Mission does not attest any documents pertaining to the application for screening test of the National Board of Examinations for registration with the MCI/NBE.
- It is mandatory for all documents pertaining to educational qualification to be Apostilled in India, including Class X & XII Board Certificates / Bachelors degree / Masters Degree etc.
- For Graduate students wanting to pursue Post Graduate / Doctoral or higher studies, a Certificate of Equivalence is required from the Russian authorities.
- You must obtain the Equivalence Certificate before you arrive in Russia / get written clarification on this issue from the Agency through which you come for study in the Russian Federation / Institution of study.
- It is mandatory for all foreign students arriving for study in the Russian Federation to register with the State federal Agency “Interobrozovaniye”, Ministry of Science and Education of the Russian Federation by December 31 of the year of joining.

### **Embassy of India, Moscow - Contact Numbers**

For Any other enquiries, please contact the Education Wing of the Embassy of India in Moscow at the following tel. number and email id : Tel : 007-495-78-7535  
E-mail ID:cedu@indianembassy.ru; coneco@com2com.ru

<b>Indian Diplomatic Missions/Posts in Russian Federation</b>	
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**Russian Federation Diplomatic Missions/Posts in India**

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