



Find your way to work

International students: working in the UK 2009-10

www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk
www.educationuk.org

With no earning experience at all, I did my first part-time job in Next plc as a stockroom helper. Lifting heavy boxes was tough but also satisfactory; it was the first time in my life I was earning and I was also learning patience, endurance and humbleness. On finding out that an Urdu teacher was required in Belfast, I switched my job and became a teacher, teaching Urdu to the kids in Belfast. I was not only earning but was also educating others. I learnt there about child psychology, teaching methods and techniques. Later, I got a job as a call adviser at British Telecom. New skills to learn this time were customer relationship management, working in a target driven environment, and analysing and working out best possible solutions to problems. Being a call adviser, I got to know a lot about people living in other parts of the UK.

An outstanding investment for your future

UK qualifications are recognised and valued all over the world – in academic institutions, in commerce, industry and government.

This is a direct result of the UK's lengthy tradition of high-quality education, its continuing commitment to innovation and modernity, and the value it places upon the individual.

For all of these reasons a UK education represents a great investment in the future – an investment in opportunity,

earning power, advancement, career and personal fulfilment.

But you can now make your UK experience work even harder for your future by getting some valuable work experience, improving your language skills and enhancing your CV.

Your future employer will be looking for smart, creative, team-orientated people who can contribute experience and skills to the success of their business.



The facts you need to know

The information contained in this booklet is endorsed by the UK Border Agency and can be used to explain your rights to work to an employer. It tells you the facts you need to know about working in the UK as well as giving you links to other valuable sources of information.

It explains the permissions or visas you may need, and your freedom

to work in the UK for up to 20 hours a week in term-time, and full-time during the holidays, and on work placements.

It also gives you details about the opportunity to work in the UK after you've finished studying through the new points-based immigration system. This includes the post-study work category within Tier 1.

Putting your abilities to work

We hope that these opportunities will help you to get to know British people and society better, put your abilities to work, and help you develop personal and practical skills.

There will be a careers service and/or job shop at your place of study to help you connect to the world of work. They will provide a wide range of help and support for students and graduates, including access to job adverts, help to write CVs and job applications, tips to

prepare for job interviews, and information about what it's like to work in the UK.

They will also enable you to get first-hand experience of the workplace, consider career choices, make professional contacts and gain the kind of experience that will help you stand out from the crowd.

It's all part of the multi-dimensional learning experience that the UK offers.



International students working in the UK 2009

I am an international student.

Can I work in the UK?

Yes, but your nationality will determine what conditions you need to meet so that you can work in the UK. Please read the following information carefully.

I am an international student from a European Economic Area (EEA) country. I'm a national of:

Austria	Belgium
Denmark	Finland
France	Germany
Greece	Iceland
Ireland	Italy
Liechtenstein	Luxembourg
Malta	Netherlands
Norway	Portugal
Spain	Sweden
Switzerland	UK
Republic of Cyprus	

Can I work in the UK?

Yes. As a student from a European Economic Area (EEA) country, you don't need permission to work in the UK. Be ready to show an employer your passport or identity card as proof that you are a national of one of the above EEA countries.

The remainder of this booklet doesn't apply to you.

I'm a national of:

Czech Republic	Estonia
Hungary	Latvia
Lithuania	Poland
Slovakia	Slovenia

Can I work in the UK?

Yes, but check whether you need to register under the Worker Registration Scheme on the UK Border Agency website at: www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk Follow the links for 'Working in the UK' and for 'European Economic Area and Swiss nationals'.

The remainder of this booklet doesn't apply to you.

I'm a national of:

Bulgaria
Romania

Can I work in the UK?

Yes, but check whether you need to apply for a registration certificate first on the UK Border Agency website at: www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk Follow the links for 'Working in the UK' and for 'European Economic Area and Swiss nationals'.

The remainder of this booklet doesn't apply to you.

I'm a student from outside the European Economic Area.

Can I work in the UK?

If your application for immigration permission to be in the UK as a student has been successful, you should be given a passport sticker or identity card that allows you to:

- work part-time up to 20 hours a week during term-time and work full-time during your holidays
- work full-time at the end of your studies, during the period when your course has finished but your immigration permission to be in the UK has not yet expired (normally for a maximum period of four months)
- take a work placement that is no longer than 50 per cent of the course length (unless there is a UK statutory requirement for it to be more than 50 per cent, as is the case, for example, with Post Graduate Certificate of Education – PGCE – courses) and is assessed by your institution

- work full-time or part-time while you wait for your application under Tiers 1 or 2 of the new points-based system to be processed, as long as you make the application before your student immigration permission expires

- work part-time up to 20 hours a week during term-time and work full-time during your holidays, while you wait for your application to extend your student immigration permission to be processed, as long as you make the application before your student immigration permission expires.

You should not work if your visa or entry clearance sticker or immigration stamp or UK Residence Permit or ID Card for Foreign Nationals states: 'No work or recourse to public funds' or 'No recourse to public funds. Work prohibited' or 'No work, no public funds'.

Please read the remainder of this booklet.



What conditions apply to the hours and types of work I can do?

As an international student from outside the EEA, you may not:

- work for more than 20 hours a week (paid or unpaid) during term-time, except in the case of an agreed work placement
- engage in business, self-employment or provide services as a professional sportsperson or entertainer
- fill a permanent full-time vacancy (other than on a recognised foundation programme).

Do I need to get permission to work?

No. All international students from outside the EEA who have been given immigration permission as students in the UK (not student visitors – see pages 9 and 11) are

authorised to work, subject to the conditions described previously. You don't need permission from a Jobcentre Plus office or individual permission from the Department for Work and Pensions or from the UK Border Agency.

What does a student visa or passport stamp or identity card state about work?

If you are in the UK with student immigration permission, check if your passport sticker (entry clearance or residence permit) or identity card states: 'Restricted work, p/t term time, f/t vacations' or 'Restricted work in term-time' or 'Work (and any changes) must be authorised' or 'Able to work as authorised by the Secretary of State'. If either your passport sticker or identity card says any of these things, you are allowed to work during your studies.



If you have been granted an extension of stay as a student by the UK Border Agency, the United Kingdom Residence Permit (UKRP) in your passport will state: 'Limited leave to remain in the UK. No recourse to public funds. Able to work as authorised by the Secretary of State'. The permit will state the date on which your permission to remain in the UK will expire.

Consent or authorisation on an individual basis from the UK government is no longer required.

You are authorised to work in the UK, subject to the conditions described previously.

Applications for an extension of stay as a student made on or after 25 November 2008, which are granted, will be issued with an ID Card for Foreign Nationals and there will be no endorsement in your passport.

The card will state: Type of permit: 'Student/Tier 4 Student leave to remain'; remarks: 'Restricted work'; 'Part-time term-time'; 'Full-time vacations'.

I'm on a short course (six months or less). Does my entry clearance or passport stamp allow me to work?

Check the third line of your entry clearance sticker:

- If it says that it is a 'student visitor' type of entry clearance, you must not work in the UK (paid or unpaid) or do any work placement as part of your course (paid or unpaid). It will not be possible for you to get the condition changed.
- If it says that it is a 'student' type of entry clearance you are allowed to work (subject to the conditions described previously).

'Working on an internship in Invest NI (Northern Ireland) was just amazing! Every day was a challenge, but totally meaningful and enjoyable. As a marketing assistant, my job was highly related to Invest NI's strategy: to advance the economy by encouraging internationalisation, innovation and entrepreneurship. I did my utmost in my job and received great appreciation from my colleagues. Because of my capability, I was even delegated a project where I had significant involvement in the decision-making process relating to a multimillion pound inward investment! To maximise my contribution, I served on the Sports and Social Committee within Invest NI voluntarily. Due to my performance and voluntary work, I was voted as 'Best Newcomer of 2006' by the entire staff and was rewarded at the annual staff conference.'

Yu Huai Zhang (Queen's University Belfast and winner, International Student of the Year, 2007)



If you are unsure of the type of entry clearance you have, you can get advice from an international student adviser at your place of study, or, if there is not one, telephone UKCISA's advice line (+44 (0)20 7107 9922 – Monday to Friday, between 1300 and 1600).

I intend to travel to the UK to take a short course (six months or less). How can I get conditions that will allow me to work in the UK?

You must apply for a (Tier 4) student entry clearance if you would like to be allowed to work in the UK. This applies even if you are not a 'visa national'. The entry clearance officer will then check if you meet the immigration rules for students. If you do, you will be given conditions that allow you to work (subject to the conditions described previously). If you apply for an entry clearance as a student visitor you will not be

allowed to work, or extend your immigration permission, in the UK.

Can my family members work while I study in the UK?

Your husband, wife or civil partner or children will receive immigration conditions that will allow them to work if your leave (permission) to enter or remain in the UK as a student lasts for 12 months or more. This is the case even if the family members' leave is less than 12 months. They should make sure they have a copy of your passport if they are travelling after you as the entry clearance officer will need to see the pages showing your name, entry clearance sticker and how long your permission lasts.

If your permission was granted for less than 12 months your family members will not receive immigration conditions that will allow them to work.

'The opportunities we're given as students [in the UK] are incredible. Establishments in the field are so very willing to take us on for work tasters . . . These placements inspire me to study hard and contribute similarly to society back home. So far, I have worked with a high-street chemist and been to several hospital pharmacies to see what it is like. To me, that says a lot about the attitude over here; believing, rather than not, in the abilities of a person, and always ready to give others a chance – while holding yourself to the highest standards. My working experiences are probably the highlight of my stay here in the UK.'

Sook Meng Chung (Cardiff University)



Do I need a visa to study in the UK?

Yes, you will normally need a (Tier 4) student entry clearance before arriving in the UK. A student entry clearance is required by all nationalities other than EEA nationalities. If, however, you are studying in the UK for six months or less and:

- do not wish to take part-time or vacation employment (paid or unpaid), and
 - do not intend to undertake a work placement (paid or unpaid) as part of your course, and
 - know that there is no possibility you will want to extend your stay in the UK,
- you may qualify for permission to enter under the student visitor category.

Visa nationals require a student visitor visa (see next page) before travelling to the UK; non-visa nationals can apply for this permission on arrival at a port or airport by producing the required documents. People who enter as student visitors are not allowed to extend their stay in the UK as students.

For further information see the UK Border Agency visa services leaflet Guidance – Students (INF5). This is available from: www.ukvisas.gov.uk/en/howtoapply/infs

If you have not yet travelled to the UK, a printed copy can be obtained free from any British Embassy, High Commission or Consulate that operates an entry clearance service.

What are the immigration rules for students?

The rules relating to Tier 4 students and other general information about students can be found on the UK Border Agency website at: www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk

Working while studying

Applicants who meet the requirements of the immigration rules for students are normally given immigration conditions in their passports that allow them to work part-time up to 20 hours a week during term-time and full-time during vacations.

'I worked as a market researcher at Think Tank at Millennium Point in Birmingham. I was part of an intensive four-day project to develop a renovation plan for the complex according to visitors' feedback from interviews. Through this experience I've learned how to approach people of different ages and backgrounds. I also have learned how to work in a team efficiently and how to deliver work on deadlines under pressure. Generally, having a part-time job alongside my studies enhanced my managerial and administrative skills.'

Ola Doudin (University of Birmingham)





Students on courses of six months or less who do not wish to take part-time employment, undertake a work placement/internship (paid or unpaid) as part of their course or extend their stay in the UK can enter the UK under the category of 'student visitor'. Such students are given immigration permission that prohibits employment. If a student, on a short course of six months or less, wishes to work (subject to the conditions described previously) the student will need to apply for a student entry clearance before arriving in the UK.

All nationalities other than EEA nationalities require prior entry clearance as a student under Tier 4.

Do I need a National Insurance number?

You will need to apply for a National Insurance number but you do not need to have received your National Insurance number before you can start work. You can make an

appointment for a National Insurance number interview by telephoning 0845 600 0643, between 0800 and 1800 Monday to Friday. If you are hard of hearing, or have speech difficulties, call 0845 600 0644.

At the interview you will need to prove your identity (for example, by providing a document such as your passport, birth certificate or bank statement) and right to work in the UK and details of when you received a job offer or started work.

Your employer can allow you to start work, before your National Insurance number is issued and should deduct National Insurance contributions. It may take between six and 12 weeks after the interview for your National Insurance card to be issued.

For further information, go to: www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk and www.dwp.gov.uk



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The points-based system

Besides Tier 4 for students, there are various categories within the points-based system, but those that are of particular interest to students include:

Tier 1: Post-study work

The post-study work category allows us to retain the most able international graduates who have studied in the United Kingdom (those who have been awarded UK recognised bachelor's and postgraduate degrees and Postgraduate Certificates of Education (PGCEs) in the previous 12 months. In addition, students who have obtained a Higher National Diploma (HND) from an institution in Scotland are also eligible to apply).

Post-study workers are free to look for work without having a sponsor for the length of their leave (two years). You will need to show you have the required points, which includes providing evidence that you have the required maintenance funds for three months.

The category provides a bridge to highly skilled or skilled work. If you are granted permission to stay as a post-study worker, you will probably want to switch into another part of Tier 1 of the points-based system or Tier 2 (see next page) as soon as you are able to. You may also switch back to the student tier if you wish.



Who can apply as a post-study worker?

You can apply under the post-study work category:

- If you have successfully obtained a UK recognised bachelor's degree, postgraduate degree, or Postgraduate Certificate of Education at an institution in the UK or HND from a Scottish institution. Applications must be made within 12 months of obtaining the qualification.
- If you are in the United Kingdom as a student, student nurse, student re-sitting examinations, or student writing up a thesis, and want to switch into the post-study worker category.

For information about required points see:

www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/workingintheuk/tier1/poststudy

If you are applying from outside the United Kingdom you can get more details and application forms from: www.ukvisas.gov.uk

Tier 1: Highly skilled workers, investors and entrepreneurs

You do not need to have a specific job offer, but you will need to pass a points-based assessment to be eligible.

For more details go to: www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk

Tier 2: Sponsored skilled workers

Under Tier 2, UK employers are able to recruit international graduates for jobs where there is a shortage of qualified resident workers. If you are seeking employment in an occupation other than a shortage occupation, the employer is required to advertise the post to resident workers before you may be offered the post – so you cannot be sure that you will be sponsored under Tier 2.

For more details go to: www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk

Note to employers

Employing international students is legal, subject to the conditions outlined in this booklet.

In addition, you can employ an international student even if he or she has not yet received a final National Insurance number.

Employers need to ensure that they see either of the following original documents and that it relates to the person they wish to employ:

- a passport or national identity card showing that the person named is a national of the European Economic Area or Switzerland, or
- a passport or other travel document or identity card endorsed to show that the person named has current immigration leave in the United Kingdom and is allowed to do the type of work in question.

Employers should make a copy of this document.

This leaflet is for international students in the United Kingdom (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) and explains the rules on taking work in the UK. It is a guide and aims to answer frequently asked questions. For detailed information on your responsibilities as an employer and how to establish your employees' entitlement to work, please go to: www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/employers/preventingillegalworking



All information is correct at the time of publication (November 2009). However, as the immigration system is regularly subject to change – a review of Tier 4 is about to take place – it is important to visit the UKBA and UKCISA websites for the latest details.



The UK means the United Kingdom and consists of England, Scotland, Wales (Great Britain) and Northern Ireland.

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