

Working During Your Studies



INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICE GUIDES

Working During Your Studies

Student visa holders - permission to work

Students studying a course of degree level study or above, or a foundation degree course are usually permitted to work **20 hours per week** in term-time and full-time in vacation periods.

Students studying a course of study below degree level, that is not a foundation degree course are permitted to work no more than **10 hours per week** in term-time and full-time in vacation periods.

Student visa holders cannot:

- engage in business or self-employment,
- work as a professional entertainer or sports person
- pursue a career through a permanent full time vacancy

If a student, having completed his/her course, makes an application for leave under the Points Based System before his/her existing leave expires, he/she will be permitted to work full-time, within the limits described above, until his/her application is decided.

It is very important that you abide by the conditions of your visa. For example, you must not work more than the permitted hours per week during term-time as this is a serious offence and may jeopardise your stay in the UK.

If you have either of the following two forms of words in your visa you have a prohibition on working. **You are not allowed to work at all in the UK.**

- i) No work or recourse to public funds*
- ii) Leave to enter/remain in the United Kingdom on condition that the holder maintains and accommodates himself and any dependants without recourse to public funds, does not enter employment paid or unpaid and does not engage in any business or profession, is hereby given for/until (date).*

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Income

Many international students in the UK do find part-time or vacation work. It is a good way of meeting new people, practising English and gaining useful transferable skills. However, you must not rely on finding a job to form a substantial part of your income. According to the immigration rules, you should have access to sufficient funds to accommodate and maintain yourself in the UK without needing to work. It can be quite difficult to find suitable employment to fit in with your University timetable and most students earn on average only about £200 per month through a part-time job. A job may make a significant contribution to your costs, but it must not be your only source of income.

What do we mean by vacation time?

Guidance on the immigration rules indicate that vacation time is specific to the course you are on.

Undergraduate students can consider that their vacation period falls in line with the university vacation periods, see [here](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/About/Datesandcampusinformation/Keydates/dates0910.aspx) for more information:
www.nottingham.ac.uk/About/Datesandcampusinformation/Keydates/dates0910.aspx

Unlike the undergraduate course structure, the study period for postgraduate students does not follow the term-time/vacation pattern and postgraduate students are required to maintain a study commitment throughout the year.

Students following a Masters course should note that the summer months between June and September are not considered as vacation time. Please see below under "Graduation" for information on working once your course is complete at the end of September.

Students following a PhD programme wishing to work part time (up to 20 hours) should be aware of University regulations which stipulate that full-time research students can only take paid employment with the permission of the Head of School, in consultation with the Supervisor and in accordance with any scholarship requirements and immigration rules. PhD students wishing to work full time would need to take note of the above and, in addition, would need to agree holiday time with their supervisor. They should also obtain a letter of permission from their supervisor relating to the holiday, before starting to work full time.

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Proving you are allowed to work

Employers will usually ask to see your passport and, if you have one, your ID card, to check that they can legally employ you. If they ask for more evidence than that shown by your visa stamp or ID card, you can refer them to the governmental policy on International students working in the UK at www.nottingham.ac.uk/internationaloffice/documents/finding-way-to-work.pdf. You may also collect a leaflet about the regulations from the International Office.

Internships / Work Placements and Industrial Experience

An **internship** is a short period of paid work, which an employer may offer a potential employee. Within the standard student visa restriction on working, you are permitted to undertake an internship. An undergraduate student could do this during the summer months or, like Masters students, they can undertake an internship after graduation in the 4 month period remaining on the visa.

Students in the UK on Tier 4 visas under the Points Based System are able to undertake **work placements** if the placement is an assessed part of the course, the student remains registered with the University during the placement and the placement is no more than 50% of the course in the UK. In these circumstances the School will have a responsibility to monitor the attendance of students on work placement.

Under the immigration rules, it is not possible for students wishing to take a year out to work to suspend their studies in order to do so. For international students on Tier 4 student visas a suspension would need to be reported to the UK Border Agency. The student's visa would then be cancelled and they would be required to leave the UK.

Graduation

During the period spent waiting for graduation, providing this is not more than four months, it is possible to work full time as your registered studies have come to an end.

For an undergraduate student this might be the period in between June and October or for a postgraduate student this is usually the period between September and January. If you have a different length of time on your visa, please seek advice from the International Office about your working restrictions.

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Dependants

If the student's visa is granted for less than 12 months the family member will not be allowed to work whilst in the United Kingdom.

Also, if the main applicant's grant of leave is for a course of study below degree level, that is not a foundation degree course, the family member will not be allowed to work whilst in the United Kingdom.

In all other cases, the dependant should be able to work full time without restriction whilst accompanying the student to the UK.

Finding a Job

a) Centre for Career Development

The Centre for Career Development at the University advertises part-time and temporary work for students studying at Nottingham. The service is free, and they also offer advice on how to apply for employment opportunities and how to combine work sensibly with studying. The office is located in the New Portland Building, Level D West, and more information is available at www.nottingham.ac.uk/careers

ii) Job Centres

57-59 Upper Parliament Street
Nottingham NG1 6AX
Tel: 0845 606 0234

Crown Buildings
Station Road
Beeston NG9 2AH
Tel: 0845 606 0234

124-126 Radford Road
Hyson Green NG7 5FW
Tel: 0115 909 5906

b) Small adverts in local shops

c) In local newspapers e.g. The Nottingham Evening Post on a Wednesday

d) Employment Agencies- see www.yell.com for contact details

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National Insurance Numbers

Everyone who works in the UK must pay equal National Insurance contributions to the government. This payment funds social services such as healthcare, state pensions and social security.

You must apply for a National Insurance number if you have started or are about to start work. For these applications you should telephone the Department for Work and Pensions, JobCentre plus on **0845 600 0643** between 8.00am and 6.00pm, Monday to Friday. Jobcentre Plus will check to make sure that you need a NI number and you don't already have a NI number.

You will then be asked to attend an interview at a local job centre plus. To the interview, take your passport, police registration certificate (if applicable), student ID card, proof of your UK address (e.g. tenancy agreement or bank statement) and a payslip or letter from your employer confirming your job details.

You will receive your National Insurance number by letter. You are allowed to work during this waiting period and the number that you receive will be transferable from job to job.

See here for more information:

www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits/Taxes/BeginnersGuideToTax/NationalInsurance/index.htm

Income Tax

International Students are subject to the same Tax regulations as UK citizens. When you start work you must complete a P46 form (available through your employer). This enables the Inland Revenue (responsible for income tax) to give you a tax code number so that you will not pay an emergency tax rate until you receive your National Insurance number.

Basic Earning Limit for Tax and National Insurance

The basic earning limit for income tax contributions is £7,475.per year (for tax year April 2011-April 2012). This equates to £143.75 per week. If you earn less than this, you do not have to pay income tax. If you only work during vacation periods and you think you will not earn above the annual limit you should complete form P38S so that your employer will not deduct income tax from your wages. See here for more information:

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www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/UniversityAndHigherEducation/LifeAtUniversityOrCollege/DG_10035694

If you have any questions regarding income tax, you can contact the HMRC, contacts available through the link above. You can also contact your local tax office, your employer should have this information.

If you earn less than £102 per week (for tax year April 2011 – April 2012) then you are exempt from paying NI contributions but you will still need an NI number.

EU Accession Countries Worker Registration

If you are a national of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia or Slovenia ('A8' Accession State Countries) you were previously required to register under the 'Worker Registration Scheme' with the UKBA. The Worker Registration Scheme closed on 30 April 2011. Nationals of the above countries are still allowed to work after this date.

After 1 May 2011, A8 nationals will not be required to apply for an EEA Registration Certificate to confirm their right of residence.

Following the closure of the Workers Registration Scheme there are no mandatory documents an A8 national has to apply for in order to show their right of residence in the UK, but employers will need to see evidence of your nationality. A8 nationals will no longer have any restrictions placed on their employment.

Bulgarian and Romanian Students

If you are a national of Bulgaria and Romania, it is likely you will have to register for something called the 'Worker Authorisation Scheme'. If you are in the UK as a student, this means you might have to apply for a registration certificate as a student before you can start work. Any employment is limited to 20 hours a week in term time, but you can work full time in your holidays and on approved work placements, and for up to four months after your studies end. This application is free.

For more information on the regulations relating to Bulgaria and Romania and how to register as workers please see www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/workingintheuk/eea/bulgariaromania/applying.

You can also download the application form, the BR1, which most students need to register.

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We offer an appointment service between 2pm and 4.20pm Monday to Thursday at the Student Services Centre on University Park Campus. Appointments must be booked at the Student Services Centre in Portland Building or via telephone on: 0115 951 3710. This is term time only.

We also offer a drop in service, no appointment needed at the International Office on Jubilee Campus between 1pm and 4pm Monday – Friday throughout the year.

In addition, we offer a series of workshops on a range of topics which can be booked online. See www.nottingham.ac.uk/international/current_students/student_support for further information.

The information in this leaflet is given in good faith and correct at the time of writing (**May 2011**). It has been carefully checked with UKCISA and The Border and Immigration Agency, but the University of Nottingham accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of the information.

If you would like any further information or assistance, please contact the International Support Services Team. The Advisers, Rosemary Gibson, Hong Sun, Ruth Hudson, Helen Rylands and Deborah Webb, are authorised to provide immigration advice and services by an order made under Section 84 (4) (d) of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.

If at any time you are not happy with the advice you have been given by the International Support Services Team, in the first instance you should raise this with the Head of the International Support Services Team or the Director of the International Office. If the matter is not resolved or you are still unhappy, you can make a complaint to the OISC (Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner) via their website www.oisc.gov.uk

International Office, Jubilee Campus, Wollaton Road, Nottingham, NG8 1BB
www.nottingham.ac.uk/international/current_students/student_support
Tel. 0115 951 5247

Email: international-support@nottingham.ac.uk