Working in the UK after completing your studies

The information provided in this guide is correct at the time of publication (March 2016) however it is subject to change without notice. For the most up-to-date information, please check the online version of this guide at www.nottingham.ac.uk/internationalstudents/guides

This guide explains some of the schemes that may be relevant to you if you are thinking about remaining in the UK after your studies to work.

Most of the schemes listed allow you to make a visa application while you are already in the UK providing you meet the criteria within your current period of leave. You must make your application before your current permission to be in the UK runs out.

Please ensure you have the most accurate and up-to-date information by checking the relevant policy guidance linked to the visa which you may apply for.

If a government or international sponsorship agency has wholly sponsored your studies and living costs in the UK within the last 12 months, it is essential that you have a consent letter from them for you to remain in the UK. This consent must be unconditional and give you permission to remain in or re-enter the UK.

If you have dependants, they will be eligible to stay with you if you show that you can afford to support them financially as detailed in the PBS Dependant Policy Guidance.

The Tier 4 Doctorate Extension Scheme

This scheme is for PhD/Doctorate level students who wish to stay in the UK to work for up to 12 months following the successful completion of their course. Candidates wishing to apply to extend their visa under this scheme are required to use the Tier 4 immigration route.

Please follow the guidance on the pages opposite for information on how to qualify and apply.

Qualifying for the Doctorate Extension Scheme

Eligibility Criteria - UKBA

The following criteria must be met in order to submit a successful Tier 4 visa application:

- You must be in the UK and have current Tier 4 leave to study a PhD or Doctorate level programme.
You must have had your viva and be in a position to submit your visa application within the last 60 days before your course completion date. The completion date is defined by the University.

You cannot apply under this scheme if you have already completed your programme.

You must have a CAS from The University of Nottingham.

You must have the necessary financial evidence to show that you can support yourself under this scheme (£2030 in your account for a period of 28 days)

**Eligibility criteria – The University of Nottingham**

The following criteria must be met in order for the University to act as an immigration sponsor on behalf of a student under the Doctorate Extension Scheme:

- You must expect to complete your PhD/Doctorate level programme within five years of the official start date (excluding any periods of official suspension where you left the UK and have evidence confirming this)

- You must have express written consent from any official financial sponsor to remain in the UK under this scheme where you have been fully or partially funded by the sponsor (e.g. government, company, educational institution)

- You must have acted within the Immigration Rules at all times during your studies (including any periods of suspension).

- You must agree to fulfil your responsibilities under this scheme. Your responsibilities will include providing the University with a copy of your visa and passport, up to date contact details, details of any employment that you secure under this scheme and timely responses to University communications.

Please note that immigration sponsorship will be withdrawn where a student takes up employment outside the UK or moves away from the UK on a permanent basis.

**How to apply**

CAS requests should only be sent through once you have had your viva and know the outcome. If you have no corrections or minor corrections you should request your CAS as soon as possible. If you have major corrections you should not apply for a CAS until you have resubmitted your thesis and it has been examined. If, at that stage, you have no corrections or minor corrections you should request a CAS.

To request a CAS see: www.nottingham.ac.uk/go/DES

If you are extending your visa in the UK you will need to complete the Tier 4 student online application form. Please see our guidance notes for more information: www.nottingham.ac.uk/internationalstudents/guides

It costs £448 for a standard (postal) application. Premium in-person applications cost £948. This fee also applies for each dependant family member.

**Dependants**

Dependants extending their visa with you can be included in the Tier 4 online form once the main applicant has registered to use the online application system.

You need to show an additional £1360 for each dependant and you need to show that this has been in place for a consecutive 28 day period before making the visa application.

**Further information**

If you have questions, please email: international-support@nottingham.ac.uk
Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur)

The Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) visa will allow 2000 eligible students each year to remain in the UK for up to two years to start new business ventures.

Please note that Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) applicants must not intend to run a business in property development or property management if the aim is to generate income from rent or the increased value of property.

At The University of Nottingham, the programme will be run through the Institute for Enterprise and Innovation (UNIEI).

For further information and details on how to submit your business plan, please visit: www.nottingham.ac.uk/go/Tier1GEV

Those holding Tier 4 and pre-Tier 4 student visas are eligible to apply to the higher education institution which awarded their degree, as well as to other higher education providers. Please note that The University of Nottingham will only endorse its own students. Each higher education institution involved in the scheme will be allowed to endorse 20 students. The University is responsible for choosing the applicants and monitoring the development of their businesses throughout the year.

The visa is normally granted for one year and can be extended for a further year if the higher education institution confirms that the student has made satisfactory progress in developing their business. Whilst holding the Tier 1 (GE) visa you are also able to work full time elsewhere in addition to your business development, but your key activity still needs to be on the business.

You will need to show financial evidence that you have held £945 (or £1890 if applying overseas) for at least 90 consecutive days in order to meet the maintenance requirement. Full details are available in the Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) Policy Guidance.

Qualifying for Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur)

Applications can be made from within the UK or overseas.

You must have at least 75 points for your attributes to be able to apply for a Tier 1 (GE) visa. You can check your eligibility online: www.gov.uk/tier-1-graduate-entrepreneur-visa

50 points – from the letter of endorsement issued by The University of Nottingham once you have submitted an approved business plan

25 points – if you have been awarded a recognised bachelor degree, masters degree or PhD from the UK

You will then also need to secure 10 points for English and 10 points for maintenance.

10 points – automatically awarded for English if you have completed - or will complete - a degree at bachelor level or above from The University of Nottingham or another UK HEI

10 points – for maintenance if you have £945 (or £1890 if applying overseas) in available funds that you have had in your bank account for 90 days before the date you apply

This list does not give full details – please refer to the Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) Policy Guidance.

How to apply

If applying in the UK, the Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) application form is available at: www.gov.uk/tier-1-graduate-entrepreneur-visa/switch-to-this-visa

This application form is still currently paper-based and not available as an online application. It costs £465 to apply by post in the UK. This fee also applies for each dependant family member.

In person applications in the UK are not available under this category.
Dependants

There are separate application forms for dependants who are applying to switch into Tier 1 with you. Dependents should use the PBS dependant application form.

You need to show an additional £630 for each dependant (or £1260 if applying overseas) and you need to show that this has been in place for a consecutive 90 day period before making the visa application.

Tier 2 (General)

In order to obtain a Tier 2 visa to take up full-time employment in the UK, you must have:
- an employer who will pay you the minimum salary required for your sector
- a valid certificate of sponsorship (CoS)

A sponsor is an employer who is licensed to employ migrant workers. This means you must already have a job offer with a company who are willing to sponsor you to work under Tier 2. For a list of Tier 2 sponsors see www.gov.uk/government/publications/register-of-licensed-sponsors-workers

A CoS is a unique reference number that holds information about the job and your personal details. Your CoS must be given to you by your sponsor – your employer – no more than three months before the date you apply for the visa.

A Tier 2 visa is issued for you to do a specific job with a particular employer for a limited period of time. Tier 2 visas can now be issued for up to five years but the period will be less if the contract with the employment is shorter. You may spend a maximum of six years in Tier 2. If you change jobs, your new employer should provide a new CoS for you and you will need to apply for a new visa. After five years on a Tier 2 visa, you may be able to apply for settlement (Indefinite Leave to Remain) in the UK if you meet certain requirements.

Annual limit

If you are applying from outside the UK under Tier 2 or are a student dependant switching into Tier 2 in the UK, there is an annual limit on the number of certificates of sponsorship available. Students or those switching from Tier 1 (Post Study Work) visas into Tier 2 from within the UK before their current leave expires are not subject to the annual limit. Those filling a vacancy with a salary of £155,300 or above are also not affected by the limit. Certificates of sponsorship for these applications are known as ‘unrestricted’.

Qualifying for Tier 2 (General)

You must have at least 70 points for your attributes to be able to apply for a Tier 2 visa. You can check your eligibility online here: www.gov.uk/tier-2-general

30 points – if you have current immigration permission under the Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) visa route, these points will be automatically awarded. These points will also be awarded if you have current student immigration permission (this includes Tier 4 and pre-Tier 4 students, Student Union sabbatical officer and postgraduate doctor or dentist leave under the rules that preceded Tier 4) and the following also applies:
- You have completed and passed a UK recognised bachelor or postgraduate degree or have completed at least 12 months of study in the UK towards a PhD. If you do not have your degree certificate at the time of making the application, you can submit other evidence, such as an academic transcript.
- You must have studied the course at a UK recognised or listed body or at an institution that holds a Tier 4 sponsor licence.
- You must have studied the course during your most recent period of immigration permission or during a period of continuous leave that includes this most recent period of immigration permission.
- You carried out your studies when you had immigration permission that did not prevent you from studying in the UK.
Please note, if you are currently sponsored by a government or international scholarship agency or if you have been sponsored by a government or international scholarship agency within the 12 month period before you apply under Tier 2, you are able to provide a letter from your financial sponsor consenting to this application.

Please note that if your visa has expired or if you have to apply for a Tier 2 visa from outside the UK, the previous conditions do not apply and you will be subject to a ‘restricted certificate of sponsorship’. Your sponsor will need to prove that your position is either on the shortage occupation list or that they have completed a Residence Labour Market test to show that there is no one in the European Economic Area (EEA) who can reasonably fill the role.

For more information on the shortage occupation list see [www.gov.uk/government/collections/migration-advisory-committee-recommended-shortage-lists](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/migration-advisory-committee-recommended-shortage-lists).

20 points – for having a salary of £20,800 or the appropriate salary as outlined in the Codes of Practice for Skilled Workers document, which can be found on [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

You will then also need to secure 10 points for English and 10 points for maintenance.

10 points – for meeting the English language requirements. You can satisfy this requirement if you:

- hold a degree that was taught or researched in English which must be equivalent to a UK bachelors degree or above or
- are a national of a majority English speaking country or
- pass an English language test at the appropriate level

10 points – for maintenance and can do so if you have:

- £945 in available funds that you have had in your bank account for 90 days before the date you apply or
- A CoS from a recognised sponsor confirming that they will maintain and accommodate you up to the end of your first month of employment in the UK if required. This must be to the value of at least £945

This list is not exhaustive – please refer to the Tier 2 Policy Guidance.

How to apply

Your sponsoring employer may assist with the application and should be able to answer most of your questions.

If you are applying for your visa in the UK you will need to complete the Tier 2 online application. Please refer to the Gov.uk website for links to the online application system.

If you are applying for Tier 2 for up to three years, it costs £664 for a standard (postal) application. Premium in-person applications cost £1164. This fee also applies for each dependant family member.

If you are applying for Tier 2 for over 3 years, it costs £1328 for a standard (postal) application. Premium in-person applications cost £1828. This fee also applies for each dependant family member.

Dependants

Any dependants extending their visa with you can be included in the Tier 2 online application form once the main applicant has registered to use the online application system. You need to show extra funding of £630 per dependant at the time you apply.
Other immigration routes

We are including some information on other schemes which may be relevant to a small minority of students.

Tier 1 (Investor)
You do not need a job offer to apply in this category. The Home Office will assess your application based on your ability to invest £2,000,000 or more in the UK. Visit: www.gov.uk/tier-1-investor

Tier 1 (Entrepreneur)
You must have £50,000 or £200,000 (depending on your circumstances) of your own money available to make a fresh investment into business in the UK and be able to demonstrate a genuine business plan. Visit: www.gov.uk/tier-1-entrepreneur

Tier 5 (Youth Mobility Scheme)
You need to apply from overseas for this visa. If you are a national of Australia, Canada, Japan, Monaco, New Zealand, S.Korea, Taiwan, or a British overseas citizen, a British overseas territories citizen or a British national (overseas) you can come to the UK under this scheme and you will be free to do whatever work you like, but you must leave the UK at the end of your stay: www.gov.uk/tier-5-youth-mobility

Tier 5 (Government Authorised Exchange)
You can switch from Tier 4 within the UK, or apply overseas for this visa. You need an over-arching body to act as your immigration sponsor. For example, under sponsorship by an over-arching body, you should be able to complete an internship/work placement with an employer in the UK, under this scheme. For full information, visit: www.gov.uk/tier-5-government-authorised-exchange

Representative of overseas business
If you are intending to set up a wholly owned subsidiary or register a UK branch for an overseas parent company (e.g. the family business) this route may offer an opportunity: www.gov.uk/representative-overseas-business

We’re here to help, get in touch:

We offer a professional and confidential advisory service to all international and EU students both before they join the University and once they have arrived.

You can contact us by email, telephone or in person. We run a regular service where you can meet an Immigration Adviser, Monday to Friday throughout the academic year. To find out more about our service times and locations, please visit: www.nottingham.ac.uk/internationalstudents/advisers

The International Office is located at:
C Floor, YANG Fujia Building
Jubilee Campus
Wollaton Road
The University of Nottingham
NG8 1BB

t: +44 (0)115 951 5247
f: +44 (0)115 951 5155
e: international-support@nottingham.ac.uk

The information in this leaflet is given in good faith and correct at the time of writing. It has been carefully checked in line with UKCISA and Home Office guidance, 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 us. The advisors, Rosemary Gibson, Melanie Bentham-Hill, Ruth Hudson, Amy Newham, Meg Quinn-Edmondson, Hong Sun 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 Visa and Immigration Team in the first instance you should raise this with the Immigration Process Manager or the Head of Specialist Services. 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