



Working in the UK after completing your studies

The information provided in this guide is correct at the time of publication (June 2019) 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/go/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. See www.gov.uk/browse/visas-immigration/work-visas

If a government or international sponsorship agency has wholly sponsored your studies (tuition fees 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.

Tier 4 Doctorate Extension Scheme (DES)

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.

[Qualifying for the Doctorate Extension Scheme](#)

Eligibility Criteria – UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI)

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 up to 60 days before your course completion date. The completion date as defined by the University for the purpose of this scheme will be the date when your corrections are due plus an additional period of one month to allow time for the corrections to be approved. If you submit your corrections earlier than expected, this will bring your expected completion date forward to your corrections approval date, plus one month. You cannot apply under this scheme if you have already completed your programme.
- You must have a new CAS from the University of Nottingham (see below)
- You must have express written consent from any official financial sponsor to remain in the UK under this scheme where you have been fully funded by the sponsor (e.g. government, company, educational institution etc) within the last 12 months
- You must have the necessary financial evidence to show that you can support yourself under this scheme (£2,030 in your account and for a period of 28 consecutive days) plus £1360 for any dependants

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 voluntary suspension where you left the UK and have evidence confirming this)
- If you were sponsored by a government/international scholarship agency more than 12 months ago you must take personal responsibility for any contract you signed with your financial sponsor. Although you do not need their consent for undertaking the DES we will inform them you are applying when you request a CAS. The University reserves the right to withdraw immigration sponsorship (and your CAS) following sponsor objection
- 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 up to date copies of your visa and passport, up to date contact details, details of any employment that you secure under this scheme including name and contact details of your employer, 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

Once you have had your viva and received formal confirmation of the outcome, you can request a CAS number. 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, follow the instructions here: www.nottingham.ac.uk/go/DES

You must apply for the visa from within the UK – you cannot apply overseas. You will use the Tier 4 online visa application form. There is one question which asks if you are applying under the Doctorate Extension Scheme, to which you will answer yes.

Please see our guide to 'Extending your Tier 4 student visa in the UK' for more information: www.nottingham.ac.uk/go/guides

It costs £475 to apply for the visa, plus a biometric enrolment fee of £19.20. If you want to get a decision more quickly than the standard 8 weeks, you can pay an extra:

£500 for the priority service to get a decision within 5 working days

£800 for the super priority service to get a decision within 1 working day

Whichever service you choose, you need to allow an additional 5 – 7 working days for your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) to be sent to the correspondence address used in your application form.

You must pay the Immigration Health Surcharge as part of the application, which costs £300 for 12 months.

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.

Dependants will pay same application fees and IHS fees as the main applicant.



Further information

www.nottingham.ac.uk/go/DES

Start-up visa

The Start-up visa allows eligible students to remain in the UK for up to two years to start new business ventures. This immigration route expands on the previous Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur visa category.

You must have plans to set up an **innovative, viable** and **scalable** business in the UK. This is a one-off visa which is valid for two years. Whilst holding the Start-up visa you are also able to work elsewhere in addition to your business development, but you are expected to spend the majority of your working time in the UK on developing the business.

In order to be sponsored by the University of Nottingham for a Start-up visa, you must agree that any other employment you take up will be limited to no more than 20 hours a week, in order to demonstrate that you will spend the majority of your time on your own business.

Please note that Start-up visa applicants must not have had any business in the UK under previous visas, with the exception of the Tier 4 Doctorate Extension Scheme visa.

Step 1 – get your business plan assessed and endorsed by an authorised body

An authorised endorsing body needs to assess and endorse your business plan, and will be responsible for monitoring how your business develops. The University of Nottingham is an authorised body, and business plans are assessed by the Ingenuity Lab, part of the Haydn Green Institute for Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

The University of Nottingham can only endorse:

- current students who will graduate from the UK campus within six months*
- former students who graduated from the UK campus within the last 12 months
- Tier 4 (Doctorate Extension Scheme) visa holders are eligible to switch into this visa route, providing they meet the other requirements
- The University may endorse non-University of Nottingham graduates who are business partners of University of Nottingham graduates in limited circumstances. Please seek advice from an Immigration Adviser if you would like to discuss this possibility.

*you can apply to have your business plan assessed, but you will only be able to apply for the Start-up visa once you have completed your course.

For further information and details on how to submit your business plan, please visit:

nottingham.ac.uk/go/startup

If you currently hold a Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) Visa valid for one year and wish to extend it by a further year, you will need to be endorsed in the Start-up category. However, your business plan will be assessed under the previous Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) Visa criteria.

Step 2 – apply for the Start-up visa

If your business plan is approved by the Ingenuity Lab, you will be referred to the Visa and Immigration team. We will be able to issue you with an endorsement letter subject to the following:



- confirmation that you have never owned a business in the UK
- confirmation that you have completed your course
- consent from any official financial sponsor which wholly funded your studies
- evidence that you hold the required funds (see below)

You will need to show that you have held £945 in your bank account for at least 90 consecutive days in order to qualify for the visa.

Your knowledge of English will be assessed by UK Visas and Immigration. Completing a bachelors, masters or PhD degree from a UK university is acceptable evidence of English language ability.

Endorsement letters are valid for three months, so you must apply for the visa within those three months.

You must agree to fulfil your responsibilities under this scheme. Your responsibilities will include providing the University with up to date copies of your visa and passport, up to date contact details, and attending regular meetings with The Ingenuity Lab to monitor your progress and the continued development of your business.

Applying in the UK

You can apply from within the UK, providing that you do this before your current visa expires. The online application form is available here: www.gov.uk/start-up-visa/switch-to-this-visa

The application fee is £493. You will also be required to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge at a cost of £400 per year.

You will be asked to book an appointment to give your fingerprints and have your photograph taken for your new Biometric Residence Permit. A decision will normally be made on your application within 8 weeks.

Applying overseas

You can apply from overseas in your home country, if you wish. The online application form is available here: www.gov.uk/start-up-visa/apply

The application fee is £363. You will also be required to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge at a cost of £400 per year.

You will be asked to book an appointment to give your fingerprints and have your photograph taken for your new Biometric Residence. A decision will normally be made on your application within 3 weeks.

Dependants

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

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

They will need to pay the same application fee as you, and are also required to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge (£400 per year).

For more information please see: www.gov.uk/start-up-visa/family-members



[Further information](#)

www.gov.uk/start-up-visa

nottingham.ac.uk/go/startup

Tier 2 (General)

Tier 2 is the main visa category for skilled workers. There are concessions which aim to make it easier for Tier 4 students to switch to Tier 2 from within the UK, when they are close to completing their course, or have recently graduated.

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 be issued for up to five years but the period will be less if the employment contract is shorter. You may spend a maximum of six years in Tier 2. If you change jobs, 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.

Qualifying for the Tier 2 (General) visa:

In order to obtain a Tier 2 visa to take up full-time employment in the UK, you must:

- have an **offer of employment** from a Tier 2 sponsor. A sponsor is an employer who is licensed to employ non EEA/Swiss workers. You can see the list of registered sponsors here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/register-of-licensed-sponsors-workers
- have a **salary offer** from that employer of at least £20,800, or the [appropriate rate](#) for the job you are offered, whichever is higher
- have a **valid certificate of sponsorship (CoS)** issued by the employer. A CoS is a unique reference number that holds information about the job and your personal details. You must apply for the Tier 2 visa within 3 months of your CoS being issued
- **have evidence** that you have either:
 - completed at least 12 months of study in the UK towards a UK PhD. You can use a standard student status letter; or
 - completed and been awarded a recognised UK bachelors or masters degree, or Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). You will need evidence that you have completed your degree, e.g. degree certificate; or
 - you are expected to complete your recognised UK bachelors or masters degree or Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) within the next 3 months. You can use a letter from the University confirming your course details and your expected course completion date – the exact requirements are detailed in the [Tier 2 policy guidance](#). You must have studied your course at a UK recognised or listed body or at an institution that holds a Tier 4 sponsor licence, during your most recent period of immigration permission (leave), or during a period of continuous leave that includes this most recent period of leave. You must have studied the course when you had immigration permission that did not prevent you from studying.
- satisfy the **English language** requirements. This can be demonstrated simply by having a previous grant of Tier 4 leave based on a CAS issued on or after 21 April 2011.
- If you are applying in the UK, you also need to have a **current** Tier 4 visa, Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) visa, or Start-up visa



Applying from overseas or switching from Tier 4 PBS Dependant visa – additional requirements

If you are applying outside the UK or if you currently hold a Tier 4 PBS Dependant visa and are switching into Tier 2 in the UK, there are additional requirements in order to be sponsored under Tier 2.

- Your employer will need to request a ‘restricted’ Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS), of which there are only a limited amount available from the Home Office.
- Your employer must carry out the Resident Labour Market Test (RLMT) which requires the job vacancy to be advertised to the UK resident labour market (i.e. British citizens, EEA nationals and those with indefinite leave to remain in the UK).
- Your employer will need to pay an Immigration Skills Charge

There are some exceptions to some of the above requirements in certain circumstances, for example, if a job is on the shortage occupation list, it is a PhD level job, or if your salary will be £159,600. You should discuss these with your employer.

If you are switching from a Tier 4 PBS Dependant visa and have never had a Tier 4 visa, you will need evidence of your English language ability. See the [Tier 2 policy guidance](#) for acceptable evidence.

If you are **currently sponsored** or if you have been **sponsored within the last 12 months** by a government or international scholarship agency, you will need your sponsor’s written consent giving you their permission to remain in, or re-enter, the UK. You will need this letter to submit with your visa application supporting documents.

For Tier 2 purposes the definition of ‘sponsored’ is that you were fully funded for both fees and living costs.

How to apply

You will need make an online application – please see here for a link to the form and full information on the Tier 2 application process: www.gov.uk/tier-2-general

We recommend reading the [Tier 2 policy guidance](#) to fully understand the Tier 2 requirements, including supporting documents.

Your Tier 2 sponsor (employer) may assist with the application and should be able to answer most of your questions. The Visa and Immigration team does not provide a checking service for Tier 2 applications. However, if there is anything you do not understand about the information in this guide, we are happy to answer general enquiries.

The **visa application fee** depends on where you are applying (inside or outside the UK), and for how long.

Up to 3 years

Who you’re applying for	Apply from outside the UK	Switch from within the UK
You	£610	£704
If you’re a citizen of Turkey or Macedonia	£555	£649



Up to 3 years - shortage occupation

Who you're applying for	Apply from outside the UK	Switch from within the UK
You	£464	£464
If you're a citizen of Turkey or Macedonia	£409	£409

More than 3 years

Who you're applying for	Apply from outside the UK	Switch from within the UK
You	£1,220	£1,408
You - as a citizen of Turkey or Macedonia	£1,165	£1,353

More than 3 years - shortage occupation

Who you're applying for	Apply (outside the UK)	Extend or switch (in the UK)
You	£928	£928
You - as a citizen of Turkey or Macedonia	£873	£873

You will also be required to pay the **Immigration Health Surcharge** at a cost of £400 per year.

Dependants

Dependants extending their visa with you can be included in the Tier 2 online form once the main applicant has registered to use the online application system.

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

Dependants will pay same application fees and IHS fees as the main applicant.

Starting work

If you apply for the Tier 2 visa before completing your course, you will need to wait until receiving the outcome of your Tier 2 application or officially completing your course successfully (whichever is earlier), before you can start working full-time. Whilst your application is pending, you are still restricted to the Tier 4 visa work conditions; usually 20 hours per week in term-time.

If you apply for the Tier 2 visa after you have officially completed your course, you can start working full-time as soon as you have made the Tier 2 application, providing that you are not filling a permanent job role. However, your employer may prefer that you wait until receiving the outcome of your Tier 2 application before starting work.

Other immigration routes

We are including some information on other schemes which may be relevant to a small number 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 (Innovator)

You must have £50,000 of your own money available to invest into a business idea, and an endorsement from an authorised body. This route has replaced Tier 1 (Entrepreneur) for new applicants. Those with current Tier 4 leave can only apply in their home country. Visit:

www.gov.uk/tier-1-entrepreneur

Tier 1 (Exceptional Talent)

Applicants must be endorsed by a designated body as being internationally recognised or likely to become world leaders in arts and culture, humanities and social sciences, natural sciences and medical science research, engineering or digital technology. Visit: www.gov.uk/tier-1-exceptional-talent

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, Hong Kong, Republic of 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 for up to two years. 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. 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. Visit: www.gov.uk/representative-overseas-business

Turkish Worker

Turkish nationals who have legally worked in the UK for at least one year under certain visa routes may be able to apply to remain in the UK to work for one to three years, depending on their circumstances. This includes Tier 4 students who were allowed to work up to 20 hours a week during term and worked for at least a year. Visit: www.gov.uk/turkish-worker

Turkish Businessperson

Turkish nationals who want to start a new business in the UK or come to the UK to help run an established business may be eligible for this visa. Visit: www.gov.uk/turkish-business-person

UK Ancestry

Commonwealth citizens who have a grandparent who was born in the UK, Channel Islands, Isle of Man, on a British-registered ship or aircraft, or the Republic of Ireland (before 31 March 1922 only) may be eligible for this immigration category. Visit: www.gov.uk/ancestry-visa



We're here to help, get in touch:

We offer a professional and confidential immigration 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: nottingham.ac.uk/internationalstudents/advisers

+44 (0)115 846 6125

immigration-support@nottingham.ac.uk

nottingham.ac.uk/internationalstudents/advisers

We are always looking for ways to develop and improve our support service and welcome feedback from staff and students.

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 advisers, Ruth Hudson, Melanie Bentham-Hill, Rebecca Gillespie, Amy Hewitt, Sofia Markopoulou-Moore, Hong Sun, Josie Tanvir and Rebecca van der Steen 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 Visa and Immigration Team 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