

Working in the UK

Working in the UK as an international student

Most international students who have a Tier 4 visa will be allowed to work in the UK. It is important to check your visa for your working permissions. It is your responsibility not to breach your working conditions on your visa. Certain courses have restrictions on the amount of work you can undertake while studying, that may be less than the hours permitted on your visa. Please check with your Hub for term dates and course restrictions. If you work without permission or if you work too many hours, any future visa applications can be refused or you could be removed from the UK. Remember that you have come to the UK to study, and work should not affect your studies.

How to Find Jobs

Depending on the type of job you want will affect where you look. My Career Central will have part time jobs, jobs on campus, volunteering, and jobs for after your course. You can also find part time work through websites such as the Evening News, EDP and jobs24.co.uk. The typical process for getting a job in the UK involves: Find a job to apply for, applying with a job application and CV, having an interview, checking your right to work in the UK, then starting work. The process can take 1-2 months from seeing the job vacancy to starting the job.

You can find a lot advice and resources available from CareersCentral and online at MyCareerCentral such as how to search and prepare for jobs, CVs, applications, interviews and more. www.uea.ac.uk/careers

Working on a Tier 4 Visa

If you have a Tier 4 visa, you will have work restrictions stated on your Biometric Residence Permit (BRP) card. Please note you must also follow any University regulation that affects you being allowed to work. You can speak with an International Student Advisor in the Student Support Centre if you have any questions or concerns.

UKVI defines a working week as “a period of 7 days beginning with a Monday”.

For the full official rules, read the UKVI Tier 4 Policy Guidance

www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-application-for-uk-visa-as-tier-4-student

Undergraduate Students

- You can work up to a **maximum of 20 hours** a week during **term-time**.
- You cannot average 20 hours of work over more than one week.
- You can work **full time during your course vacations** (Christmas, Easter, and Summer).
- You can work **full time after your course end date** (as in e:vision), until your visa expires.
- You can work full time on work placements that are an assessed part of your course and that are not more than 50% of the total length of your course.

Postgraduate Taught Students

- You can work up to a **maximum of 20 hours** a week during **term-time**.
- You cannot average 20 hours of work over more than one week.
- You can work **full time during your course vacations**, however these are limited and normally do not include summer. Check with your Teaching Hub for your course dates.
- You can work **full time after your course end date** (as in e:vision), until your visa expires.

- You can work full time on work placements that are an assessed part of your course and that are not more than 50% of the total length of your course.

Postgraduate Research Students

- Your visa allows you to work up to a maximum of 20 hours a week during your degree, however, the UEA Code of Practice for PGR students may restrict the amount you can work. The code states you “are not normally expected to do more than an average of 6 hours a week of paid employment, up to a maximum of 180 hours per year”) during your PhD.
- You cannot average 20 hours of work over more than one week.
- You can work full time during University closures and during your annual leave.
- You can work full time after you have completed your degree and you are included on the Pass List, until your visa expires. Please seek advice about when your visa will expire, as your visa may be curtailed (shortened) depending on your individual situation.

Students on Tier 4 Visas cannot

- Be self-employed
- Fill a full time permanent vacancy
- Be employed as a doctor or dentist in training
- Be employed as a professional sports person, coach or entertainer

Applying for a new Tier 4 visa

- You can continue to work if you applied for a new visa before your current visa expired.

Short-term Study Visa

- You cannot work in the UK, either paid or unpaid work.
- You can volunteer, but you cannot do voluntary work.
- You cannot enrol on a course that includes a work placement or work experience.

EEA Students

Most students from EEA countries can work in the UK unrestricted.

Students seeking Asylum

- You can work if you applied for asylum before your current Tier 4 visa expires, until a decision on your asylum application is made.
- You cannot work if you applied for asylum without permission (a visa) to stay in the UK legally.

Volunteering

All students can volunteer, but it is important that you understand the difference between volunteering and voluntary work. Generally volunteering can be defined by:

- You do not have a contract of employment
- You must not take the place of an employee
- Must not receive payment, but reimbursement for reasonable travel and subsistence expenses is allowed
- You usually help a charity or voluntary or public sector organisation

Voluntary Work

If you have permission to work in the UK, then you can do voluntary work. However, this employment counts towards the 20 hours per week you are permitted to work. If you are not allowed to work in the UK, then you cannot do any voluntary work. Generally, voluntary work is defined by:

- Often has a contract with an employer
- Employers must provide work
- You must attend at particular times and carry out particular tasks
- You are usually compensated in return for your work

Other Types of Visas

There are many types of visas, all with different permissions regarding working. For example, most dependant visas allow work. You should always check your visa. If you are still not sure, see an International Student Advisor who can help check your working conditions.

Working After Your Course

You are normally allowed to work in the UK until your visa expires. However, if you wish to continue to work in the UK long term, you will need to apply for an appropriate visa. For more information: www.ukcisa.org.uk/International-Students/The-next-stage/Working-after-your-studies/.

National Insurance Number

What is a National Insurance (NINO) Number?

It is a unique number allocated to you and you must have one if you are working. You can only apply for your NI number after you have a job. You do not need a national insurance number before starting to work, but you must apply for it once you have a job. NINO is not proof of your identity. It records the National Insurance Contributions (NICs) and taxes you pay.

How do I apply for a National Insurance Number?

You need to call National Insurance Number Application Line on 0800 141 2075 (8am - 6pm Monday to Friday). They will ask you a number of questions. They may send you a form to complete and send off and they may arrange an 'evidence of identity' interview at the Jobcentre Plus in Norwich, Cambridge or Kings Lynn, which you must attend.

At the interview, you will need to be able to prove your identity. They will ask you to bring as many documents that you can to prove your identity. They must be originals.

Some examples are:

- Valid passport
- National Identity card
- Residence permit or residence card including BRP
- Full birth or adoption certificate
- Full marriage or civil partnership certificate
- Driving license

If you do not have any of the required documents to prove your identity, you must still go to the interview. The information you are able to provide might be enough for you to get your NINO.

What happens next?

In most cases, at your interview they will let you know if your application was successful and inform you of your National Insurance number. Your NINO will be sent to you in the post shortly after your interview. You will need to give your employer your NI number as soon as possible. Keep your National Insurance number safe. Do not give your details to anyone who does not require your information.

What is the National Insurance Number?

The National Insurance number is sent in a letter, which is issued after you apply for your National Insurance number. It is meant to be a reminder of your number and nothing else. It does not provide proof of your identity and should not be used as such. Keep your NI number in a safe place.

How much do I have to pay toward my National Insurance Contributions?

This will depend on how much you earn. You must earn a minimum threshold, before you have to start paying National Insurance Contributions. To find out how much you will have to pay and what the current threshold is visit HM Revenue and Customs website

www.hmrc.gov.uk/ni/index.htm.

Income Tax

What is Income Tax?

Income tax goes towards government spending on services such as transport, health, and education. If you are working and earning a certain amount of money, then you will have to pay income tax. Each person is given a 'personal allowance' each year. This is the amount of money that each person is entitled to earn before they have to start paying income tax. You will be required to pay income tax on the money you have earned over your personal allowance. To find out the current personal allowance amount and for more information on income tax visit:

HM Revenue and Customs website www.hmrc.gov.uk/incometax/index.htm.

How do I pay income tax and National Insurance?

Your employer should take the amount of tax and NI contribution out of your pay automatically. This will be shown on your payslip that you get each time you are paid. At the end of the tax year, you will receive a P60 form from your employer. This will show the total amount of money you have earned and how much tax and NI you have paid.

Further help

The International Students Advisory Team will be happy to help you with any questions you might have about working in the UK. You can make an appointment by:

- Coming into the Student Support Centre reception
- By calling 01603 592761.
- Emailing jsat@uea.ac.uk