

# Working after studies: visa options

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# Working after studies: visa options

- Graduate visa (GV) for someone with a UK degree
- Skilled worker visa (SWV) for a sponsored job
- Other work visas
- Work you can already do with your Student visa
- Not covering other student visa matters, or switching to family visa, ILR, EUSS

# Graduate visa

**The Graduate immigration route is now open for applications**



# Graduate visa: Basics

- For someone who has a UK degree, PGCE, foundation programme in Medicine or Dentistry or a specific law qualification (Appendix Graduate paras 5.1 and 5.2)
- Apply in the UK after LSHTM has notified UKVI that you are eligible, and before SV expires
- 2 years (3 years for PhD), not leading to settlement
- Any work except professional sport, including self-employment
- Cannot extend GV, but can switch to other visas
- Can switch back to SV but you cannot do GV again

# Preparing to apply for the Graduate visa

Excerpt from  
"Reducing Net  
Migration",  
Home Office  
Factsheet,  
1 Feb 2024

No further  
information

## **Graduate route review**

- We will be asking the MAC to review the graduate route to ensure it works in the best interests of the UK, to prevent abuse and protect the integrity and quality of UK higher education.

## **Why aren't you abolishing the graduate route?**

- It is right that we continue to allow the best and brightest to come to the UK. Our Manifesto committed to establishing the graduate route. Over 100,000 people last year (YE Sept 2023) were issued visas for the graduate route.
- We have also asked the Migration Advisory Committee to review the graduate route to prevent abuse and protect the integrity and quality of UK higher education.
- It needs to work in the best interests of the UK, supporting the pathway into high quality jobs for global talent but reducing any opportunities for abuse.

## **When will the MAC begin its review of the graduate route?**

- The Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) will be commissioned to undertake the review of the Graduate Route. We expect their review to run throughout 2024.

# Graduate visa: Planning ahead

- Complete and pass your eligible qualification
- Protect your Student visa:
  - comply with its conditions: work, public funds
  - get LSHTM's consent for any absence or travel during term-time
- Have enough money to pay the application fee and immigration health surcharge (next slide)
- Check when LSHTM will notify UKVI of your qualification and hence when you can apply
- Check any local rules eg. debts to LSHTM

# Graduate visa: Dependants

- Partner and child who are already your SV dependant can apply in the UK as your GV dependant
- Partner and child <18 who are outside UK need to first come to UK as your SV dependant, then apply as your GV dependant
- Recent change to who can bring SV dependants affects only those studying a taught Masters where course start date was on or after 1 Jan 2024
- No new dependants once your GV is granted, including new spouses and babies born in UK

# Graduate visa: Costs

- No maintenance for applicants or dependants
- Application fee is £822 (increased on 4 Oct 2023)
- Immigration Health Surcharge is £2070 for most people, £3105 for PhD (increased on 6 Feb 2024)
- Fees and living costs scholarship from a government or international scholarship agency: you need their written consent to apply
- Other type of scholarship: no consent required, but check whether its T&Cs allow you to apply without a penalty

# Graduate visa: Application

- Standard processing time is “8 weeks”
- Earliest: when LSHTM has notified UKVI
- Latest: expiry date of your SV. You are not an overstayer if it expires while app is pending ("section 3C leave")
- **Before** applying, you can leave and re-enter UK on your SV anytime while it is still valid. Confirmed in Student route caseworker guidance, page 89
- **After** applying, leaving UK and Ireland will withdraw application (Immigration Rules, paragraph 34K)
- Issued as an e-visa, plus (until 31 Dec 2024) a BRP for visa nationals

# More information

- [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) > Visas & Immigration
- [ukcisa.org.uk](https://www.ukcisa.org.uk) > Info & Advice > Working > Graduate route

# Any questions?



# Skilled worker visa



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# Skilled worker visa: basics

- Visa for UK employers to sponsor a non-UK national to do a specific skilled job for them
- Minimum skills level RQF 3 (A level)
- Minimum salary depends on going rate for that job
- Reduced "new entrant" 70% going rates for those switching from SV or GV, or <26 years old.
- Salary must meet the reduced going rate, or "new entrant" minimum (currently £20,960) whichever is higher
- List of eligible jobs and "new entrant" going rates: Immigration Rules Appendix Skilled Occupations  
[tinyurl.com/skilledworkersalaries](https://www.tinyurl.com/skilledworkersalaries)

# Skilled worker visa: upcoming changes

UKVI factsheets (5 Jan 2024 and 1 Feb 2024) announced upcoming changes, still to be confirmed in changes to immigration rules:

- 11 Mar 2024: New applicants for the Health & Care worker visa version of Skilled worker visa cannot bring dependants
- 4 Apr 2024: Skilled worker visa general minimum salary to increase by 48% to £38,700 (not including Health & Care worker)
- Minimum salaries for specific jobs will also increase. No detail.
- *"Discounts for those towards the start of their careers will still exist"* = "new entrant" discount on minimum salaries for those switching from Student or Graduate visa or who are under 26.
- Currently "new entrant" must earn either the 30% discounted going rate for specific job, or £20,960, whichever is higher. No detail on if or how these figures will change.

# Skilled worker visa: application

- Employer issues a Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS)
- You can switch from GV at any point
- You can switch from SV after you have completed your course. No requirement to have passed the course, but employer may require it
- You can apply in your home country as a "new entrant" up to 2 years after SV or GV, or until age 26
- Scholarship consent same as for GV
- Up to 4 years GV + SWV combined permission as a "new entrant", up to 5 years permission as SWV

# Skilled worker visa: more information

- Your employer who is sponsoring the visa
- [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) > Skilled worker visa
- [ukcisa.org.uk](https://ukcisa.org.uk) > Working after studies > Skilled worker
- 1 Feb 2024 "Reducing net migration" HO factsheet
- Avoid non-professional sources of supposed intel, eg. friends, Reddit, Quora, WhatsApp and Telegram groups. Or at least ask for their source.

# Any questions?



# Visas with no employer sponsorship

- High Potential Individual: graduates of specific top non-UK universities
- Innovator Founder: entrepreneurs with business plan endorsed by an approved business body
- Global Business Mobility: employees of overseas businesses
- Global Talent: potential world leaders in their field
- UK Ancestry, Youth Mobility: restricted to certain nationalities plus other criteria (apply in home country only)
- [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) > Visas and immigration > Work visas

# Working on your Student visa

- Student visa work conditions
- Work placements
- Volunteering
- Work you cannot do on a Student visa

# Student visa work conditions

- You can only work for an employer, not for yourself
- Max 20 hrs/wk during term-time, paid or unpaid.
- “Week” means Monday to Sunday
- Term dates, course end date set by university
- Dissertation period is term time
- No limit on working hours in vacations, including the +4 months at the end of your visa
- Restriction is on hours you spend working, not on what you are paid

# Role of the employer

- Contract, visa compliance, schedule, payroll, tax and NI all handled by employer
- Visa compliance: they need to see your passport, BRP, term dates, course end date as per CAS
- Working for more than one employer: fine but you need to monitor your work hours
- Working for an overseas employer: fine but you need to monitor your work hours and visa compliance. You also need to check re: income tax liability in UK and in the other country, and any non-UK laws.

# Work placements

- A work placement that is an assessed part of your course
- It can be paid or unpaid
- Not counted in the 20 hours a week allowance, so it can be part-time or full-time
- You can work up to 20 hours a week as well as doing your assessed work placement
- A work placement or work experience that is **not** an assessed part of your course must come within the 20 hours allowance, unless done in a vacation.

# Volunteering

- Volunteering is not counted towards the 20 hours maximum during term-time
- Volunteering means for a charity, voluntary organization, public sector organisation
- No contract, no pay, expenses are okay
- Unpaid work is not always volunteering
- Check with the provider whether they consider it to be volunteering or unpaid work
- Strong network of volunteering in the UK, a great opportunity

# Work you cannot do

- No self-employment or business activity (eg. being a sole trader, and working for a business where you are a shareholder or a director)
- No professional sports or work as an entertainer (although that is normally self-employment anyway)
- No work as a doctor or dentist in training
- No permanent full-time job, unless you have already applied for a Graduate or Skilled worker visa
- Takeaway: most work and activities that generate income are prohibited except working for an employer

# Any questions?

