

Using your Student visa to live, study and work in the UK

International orientation

Student Visa Advice



Disclaimer

All content in this presentation has been prepared for the 2025/26 academic year and is subject to future updates or modifications.

All information in this presentation is up-to-date as of 19/09/2025.

Aims and objectives

The information presented is for students who have been granted permission to come to or stay in the UK under the **Student visa route** sponsored by the University of Leeds.

The Student Visa Advice team will:

- Explain how to get access to your eVisa, and how to use your eVisa to view and prove your UK immigration status.
- Explain the rights and responsibilities attached to your Student visa.
- Provide useful information about working in the UK during and after your studies.



Student Visa Advice team

The Student Visa Advice team provide free study-related visa and immigration advice for international students and postgraduate researchers. We do not provide support with applications for work visas.

- For information and advice [email the Student Visa Advice team at StudentVisaAdvice@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:StudentVisaAdvice@leeds.ac.uk).
- Please include your Student ID number in the email.



[Beech House Grove](#)

eVisas



Your eVisa

An eVisa is an online record of your immigration status replacing old paper visa documents. Your eVisa will show the details of your immigration status, including when it is valid until and your visa conditions (what you can and cannot do with your visa).

You can use your eVisa to:

- Prove your immigration status, your right to rent, and your right to work in the UK.
- Create a share code, so that other people can check your status and your rights.



GOV.UK View and prove your immigration status

Beta This is a new service - your [feedback](#) will help us to improve it.

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Your immigration status

Name	MIHAELA STEFANIA POPESCU
Date of birth	1 January 1980
Nationality	USA
Status	Student Route
Valid from	3 October 2020
Valid until	12 April 2027

[Rotate U](#)

If any of the information displayed on your status is incorrect, [contact UK Visas and Immigration](#).

Prove your status

If you need to prove your immigration status to someone, you can do this online with a share code.

[Get a share code](#)

After your visa is granted

After your visa is granted, you need to:

1. Create a UKVI account.
2. Link your eVisa.

If your passport is linked to your account, your immigration status will be digitally checked when entering the UK.

You can use your UKVI account to access your eVisa and update your personal details.



GOV.UK View and prove your immigration status

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[Get a share code](#)

How to create a UKVI account

To set up a new UKVI account:

1. Go to www.gov.uk/evisa
2. Tap [‘Set up a UKVI account to access your eVisa’](#)
3. Tap the green button ‘Create a UKVI account’ and follow the instructions.

If you have already set up a UKVI account, enter your credentials and sign in.

Create a UKVI account

To create an account, you’ll need a phone number and email address that you can use each time you sign in.

You’ll also need one of the following, if you have them:

- a valid passport and your visa application number - this is a global web form (GWF) number or unique application number (UAN)
- a valid passport and your BRP number
- your expired BRP card - you can use it for 18 months after the expiry date printed on the card

After you create your account you’ll be asked to confirm your identity and link your account to your eVisa.

You’ll need access to a smartphone so you can install an app to confirm your identity. You’ll be able to confirm your identity another way if you either:

- do not have a valid passport or an expired BRP card
- cannot access a smartphone or use the app

Create a UKVI account >

How to link your visa to your UKVI account

When you have UKVI account, start the 'Link your eVisa to your account' application.

1. Confirm your identity using the UK Immigration: ID Check App.

You will need your passport and a smartphone for this step.

2. After confirming your identity, you will need to enter your visa application number and answer some questions.

3. After you submit the 'Link your eVisa' application, you will need to wait for UKVI to process it.

Create a UKVI account

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- cannot access a smartphone or use the app

[Create a UKVI account >](#)

When your eVisa is ready (1)

You will receive an email telling you when your eVisa is ready to view.

To view your eVisa:

1. Go to the [eVisas: access and use your online immigration status - GOV.co.uk](#).
2. Click on the green '[View your eVisa and get a share code](#)' button.

View your eVisa and get a share code

You'll need the details you use to sign in to your UKVI account. This could be your:

- passport
- national identity card
- biometric residence card (BRC) - this can be valid or expired
- expired biometric residence permit (BRP)
- UKVI customer number

You'll also need access to the mobile phone number or email address you use to sign in to your UKVI account.

View your eVisa and get a share code >

When your eVisa is ready (2)

Now you can access your eVisa, make sure to check that your details are correct including:

- Personal details
- Visa type (Student or Student route)
- Sponsor licence number: **H3GNC03A4**
- Work conditions
- Expiry date

View your eVisa and get a share code

You'll need the details you use to sign in to your UKVI account. This could be your:

- passport
- national identity card
- biometric residence card (BRC) - this can be valid or expired
- expired biometric residence permit (BRP)
- UKVI customer number

You'll also need access to the mobile phone number or email address you use to sign in to your UKVI account.

[View your eVisa and get a share code >](#)

Checking your expiry date

Your expiry date will depend on the length of your course.

Course length	Visa expiry date
12 months or longer	4 months after course end date
Between 6 and 12 months	2 months after course end date
Shorter than 6 months, and not a pre-session course	7 days after end date
Pre-session course shorter than six months	1 month after course end date

eVisa errors

After checking your details, if you notice errors that need correcting:

- Follow the guidance on the [Report an error with your eVisa](#) tab on the Government website.
- If you get stuck or need help, the Student Visa Advice team can help - [Email the Student Visa Advice team](mailto:StudentVisaAdvice@leeds.ac.uk)
StudentVisaAdvice@leeds.ac.uk

Report an error with your eVisa

You should report an error if:

- your eVisa details are wrong - for example it's showing the wrong date of birth or immigration status
- you can view your eVisa but you cannot use it to get a share code
- you cannot view your eVisa because of a technical error when you're signed into your UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) account
- the Home Office set up your UKVI account and you've never been able to sign in to it

You'll need to give:

- an email or UK postal address that UKVI can use to contact you
- your name, date of birth and nationality

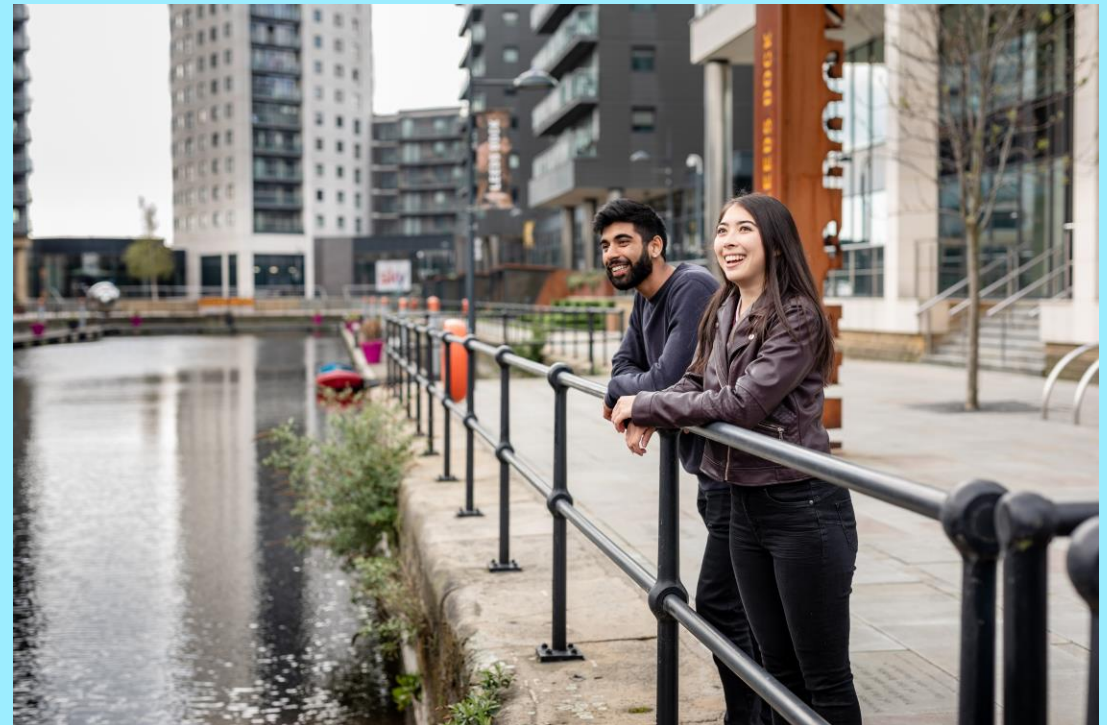
If you're reporting that your name, date or birth or nationality are wrong, you'll need to give them as they appear in your eVisa.

You'll also be asked to give one of the following:

- passport number
- expired biometric residence permit (BRP) number
- global web form (GWF) number from your visa application
- unique application number (UAN) from your visa application
- UKVI customer number

Start now >

Roles and responsibilities



Student Visa responsibilities (1)

Student visa holders must comply with certain conditions, in addition to the responsibilities that apply to you all students:

- Remain registered as a full-time student on the course listed on your CAS.
- Attend and engage with your timetabled classes - If you are not able to attend, then you should inform your school and seek authorisation for the absence.
- If you are a Postgraduate student, keep GRAD up-to-date with details of your supervision meetings.
- Do not access public funds.
- Do not work outside your work conditions.
- Do not overstay your visa – make sure that you know your visa expiry date and remember it.
- If your course requires ATAS, apply for new ATAS approval if there is a significant change to your course, if your course end date is delayed by 3 months or more, or if you need to apply for a new visa.

Student Visa responsibilities (2)

Student visa holders must also ensure that their record is always kept updated:

- Keep your UKVI account up-to-date and use it to tell the Home Office about any changes to your personal details, contact details, or if you get a new passport.
- Notify the Home Office if you acquire any criminal convictions.
- If there is any change to your immigration status, or if you get a new passport, notify the University by [emailing the Visa Expiry team at visa_expiry@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:visa_expiry@leeds.ac.uk).
- Tell the University if you change your address or contact details by updating Student Services (Minerva).

If you breach any of these conditions, your immigration status and ability to stay in the UK or apply for future visas may be affected.

University responsibilities as your sponsor

As a licensed Student visa Sponsor, the University of Leeds is required to:

- Keep a record of the current immigration status of all our international students.
- Have up-to-date contact details for all students on a Student visa.
- Inform UKVI about any students who fail to register for their course; who interrupt or withdraw from their programme of study; who breach their visa conditions.
- Monitor the attendance of our sponsored students and report to UKVI any students who fail to meet our attendance and engagement monitoring policies.
- Tell UKVI about any significant changes to a student's circumstances or programme of studies(e.g. if a student starts a work placement, or completes their course early).
- Notify UKVI when a Student visa holder successfully completes their course.

Working in the UK and your visa



Student Visa work conditions (1)

Work includes paid and unpaid employment, voluntary work, and working remotely for an overseas employer while you are in the UK.

- Work placements that are part of your degree don't count towards the weekly limit.
- You can work full-time during the period remaining on your visa after your course has finished.



Student Visa work conditions (2)

In terms of the number of hours you can work:

- **Maximum 20 hours work per week during term-time** for full-time students studying at degree level or above.
- **Maximum 10 hours per week during term-time** if you are studying below degree level.



When is term-time

Term-time is when you are expected to be studying your course. Vacation periods, when the University is closed, or the time after your course has ended, do not count as term-time.

Taught postgraduates (Masters):

- The dissertation/writing-up period during the summer, until your course end date, is still considered 'term-time'.

Postgraduate Researchers:

- You can work up to 20 hours per week - Discuss with your supervisor before taking up any work commitments.
- You can work full-time during your holiday period. Your holiday entitlement is 26 days per year in addition to bank holidays and the days when the University is closed.

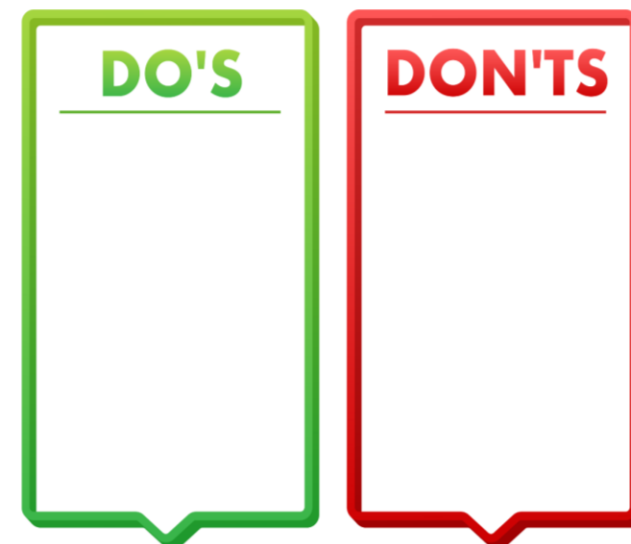


Work you cannot do with a Student Visa

You cannot do any of the following types of work while on a Student visa:

- Be self-employed or engage in business activity.
- Work as a professional sportsperson (including as a sports coach).
- Work as an entertainer.
- Work in a position which would fill a full-time permanent vacancy.

(unless you have submitted a valid application to switch to the Skilled Worker or Graduate route)



Know the difference:

Voluntary work VS Volunteering (1)

Voluntary work

It's likely to be voluntary work if:

- There's an obligation on you to carry out the work (e.g. an expectation to attend at certain times and carry out specific tasks). There doesn't need to be in a written contract
- you are rewarded for the work, either through money or payments in kind.

Voluntary work counts towards your 20 hours per week limit.



Know the difference:

Voluntary work VS Volunteering (2)

Volunteering

Volunteers don't have a contract, are not a substitute for a paid employee, and don't receive payment in kind (although they can be reimbursed for reasonable travel/subsistence expenses).

Volunteers usually help a registered charity, voluntary organisation or public sector organisation.



Avoid illegal working

There are serious consequences if you are found to have breached your work conditions.

- Your Student visa can be cancelled
- You can be detained and removed from the UK
- You may be banned from applying for a new visa.



How to stay compliant

Here are some things you can do to stay compliant:

- Keep your own record of how many hours you are working each week (Monday-Sunday), and include unpaid work and voluntary work.
- Know your [term dates](#).
- Don't work more than 20 hours per week during term-time.
- Know the difference between voluntary work and volunteering.
- Avoid doing anything that could be seen as self-employment or business activity.
- If you're studying a Masters, remember that the dissertation period in the summer counts as term-time.



Work placements

Your Student visa allows you to do a work placement that is an **integrated** and **assessed** part of your degree.

- **The placement must be approved by the University**, and it must be part of your degree.
- **For undergraduate students**, the placement is usually taken after year two (or after year three if you are on an integrated Masters course).
- **Each faculty has a dedicated employability team** who can help you find and apply for placements.



Work placements considerations

- Work placements **don't count** towards the 20 hours per week.
- If you have been issued a Student visa to study a three-year degree programme, and then you transfer to the industrial version of your programme, you will need to extend your Student visa to cover the extra year.
- Please note, there is a five-year time limit on Student visas at degree level.



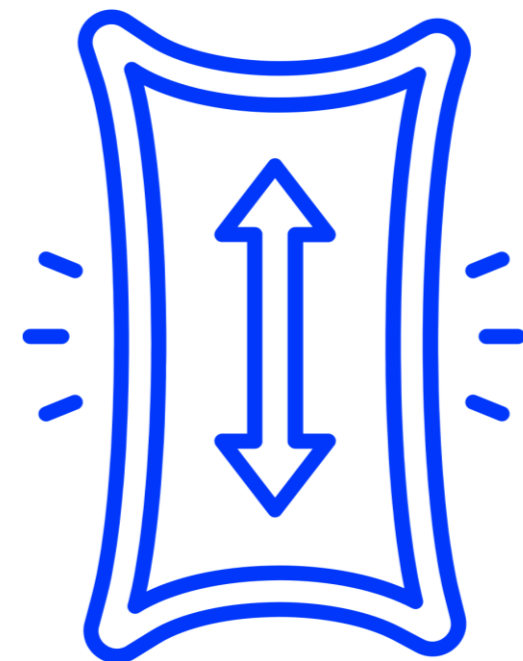
How to extend your visa for a work placement

Before you can extend your visa, you must:

- [Request a new Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies \(CAS\)](#).
- Pay Immigration Health Surcharge and Visa Application Fee to extend your visa.

Also, please note that:

- You can apply before or after the work placement (most apply after).
- Similar rules and process for Leeds students studying a year abroad / international year as part of their degree.



Proving your right to work

- Use your eVisa to [create a right to work share code](#).
- Your employer can use your share code to view your eVisa details.
- Your employer will also need evidence of your term-dates. You can [request a registration status certificate](#) that will confirm this information.



[Home](#) > [Working, jobs and pensions](#) > [Finding a job](#)

Prove your right to work to an employer

Contents

- [Overview](#)
- [Get a share code online](#)
- [Using immigration documents](#)

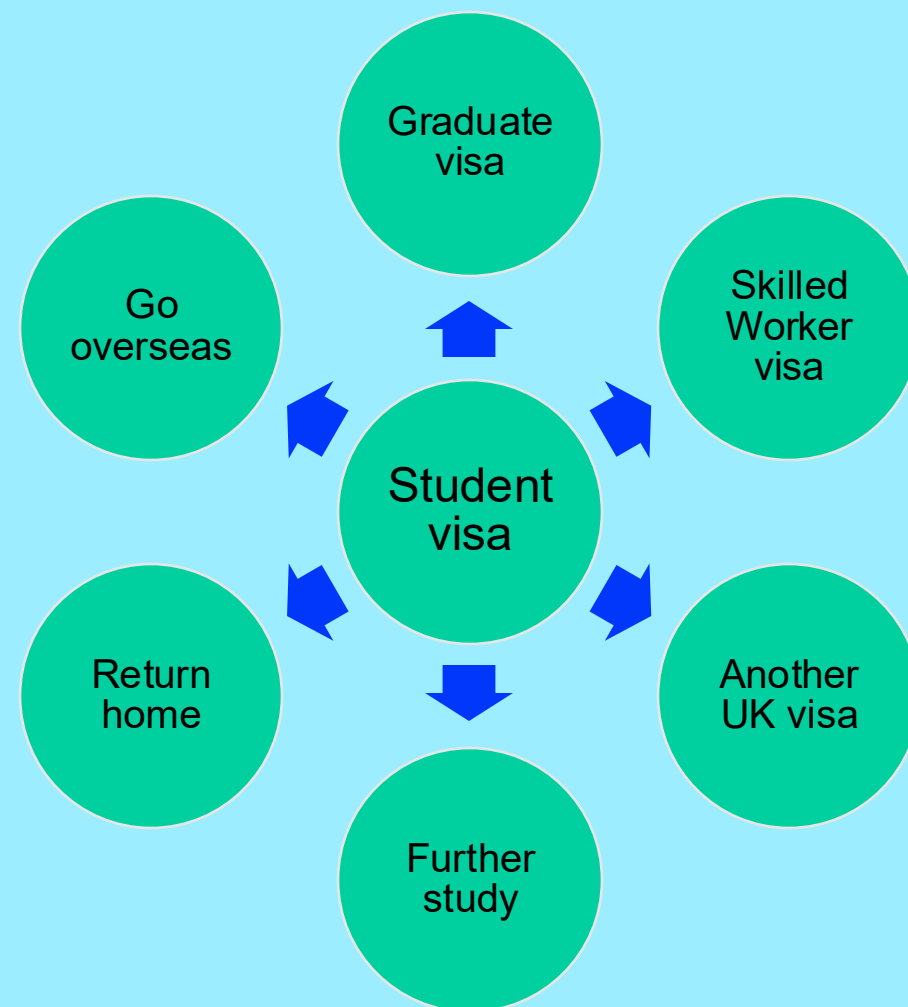
Get a share code online

Get a share code to prove your right to work in the UK if you're not a British or Irish citizen.

Your employer can use the share code to check:

- the types of job you're allowed to do in the UK
- how long you can work in the UK for

What will you do next?



Working on a Student Visa after your course is finished

- **You can work full-time during the time remaining on your visa** after your course end date.
- **If you complete your course early**, the University must notify the Home Office that you have completed early before you can start working full-time. Please be aware that this may result in your Student visa being shortened accordingly.
- **You can't work in a full-time permanent vacancy** unless you have submitted valid application to switch to a Graduate visa or Skilled Worker visa.



Graduate route visa

What it is

- Sometimes called the 'Post-Study Work' (PSW) visa.
Introduced in July 2021.
- Currently lasts for 2 years (3 years if PhD or other doctoral qualification), but UK Government has announced they will shorten this to 18 months.
- It allows you to stay in the UK after your studies and look for work and work in most jobs at any skill/salary level.



Graduate route visa

What you can do

Under the Graduate route visa, you can

- Look for work
- Work in most jobs at any skill level/salary
- Be self-employed
- Do voluntary work
- Travel abroad and return to UK
- Study courses that would not be eligible for a Student visa
- Continue to sponsor dependents that already had permission as a dependent of a Student, and any children born inside UK



Graduate route visa

What you cannot do

Under the Graduate route visa, you cannot:

- Access public funds
- Work as a professional sportsperson
- Any study that could be studied under the Student visa route
- Bring new dependents to live with you in the UK



Graduate route visa

How it works

- You don't need a job offer to apply for the Graduate visa.
- You must be awarded an eligible qualification in the UK, which you must have studied with a valid Student visa.
- No new dependents.
- You can only get it once and cannot be extended.
- The Graduate route visa does not lead to settlement.

Cost (per applicant):

- Visa Application Fee: £822
- Immigration Health Surcharge: £1,035 per year



Graduate route visa Requirements

You can apply for a Graduate visa if you meet the following requirements:

- You must have a **valid Student visa or Tier 4 (General) visa**.
- You must be in the UK.
- You must have **successfully completed** your course and been awarded your degree.
- You must have been awarded a **relevant UK qualification**.
- You must have received a **confirmation email** from the University confirming you can apply for the Graduate visa.
- You must not have been previously granted a Graduate visa or a DES visa.
- You must meet the **Study in the UK** requirement.
- If you have been financially sponsored by a government or scholarship agency, your sponsor must have given you **written permission** to apply.



Graduate route visa

When to apply (1)



Graduate route visa

When to apply (2)

- You must not apply until **after you receive the University email** confirming your successful completion has been reported to the Home Office.
- You must apply **before** your Student visa expires.
- Application usually processed within 8 weeks.
- Your permission to stay in the UK is extended while you wait for your decision (section 3C).
- You must not travel outside the UK while your application is pending.
- Your dependents must apply at the same time as you, and they must already have Student dependents visas.
- Your Graduate visa will **start** on the date your application is **granted**.



Graduate route visa

Potential problems

- The Graduate visa is **not guaranteed**. You need to be **awarded your degree** and meet all the other requirements.
- If you are not awarded before your Student visa expires, you will likely **run out of time** to apply for Graduate visa.
- Reasons why official final results may be delayed: **Re-sits, repeats, deadline extensions, academic appeals, unpaid tuition fees**.
- If you fail your course and are awarded a **fallback award** (e.g. PG Diploma) you will **not** be eligible to apply for Graduate visa.
- Your degree will not be awarded if you have **overdue debts** to the University.



Skilled worker visa (1)

Overview

- Replaced the Tier 2 visa route in December 2020.
- Requires job offer and sponsorship by a UK-based employer with a Skilled Worker sponsor licence.
- Work in specific job stated on Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS).
- Visa can be granted for up to 5 years at a time, with unlimited extensions.
- Leads to settlement in the UK after 5 years.



Skilled worker visa (2)

Overview

- Changes of employment require a new visa.
- Sponsored workers subject to monitoring and UKVI reporting.
- Can switch to Skilled Worker from Graduate visa or Student visa (after completing course), or apply for a Skilled Worker visa from overseas.
- Dependent partner and children can join you (unless working as care worker or senior care worker).
- You can apply from outside the UK, or inside the UK if switching from another visa.



Skilled worker visa (1)

Requirements

In order to apply for a Skilled Worker visa, you need:

- A valid Certificate of Sponsorship from a licenced sponsor
- A job at appropriate skill level – job must be in an eligible degree-level occupation code listed on the [Appendix Skilled Occupations](#)
- Appropriate English language skills evidence (this is not needed if you met the required level of language as part of previous visa application, or if have a degree-level qualification).



Skilled worker visa (2)

Requirements

In order to apply for a Skilled Worker visa, you need also need to receive a minimum salary:

- General minimum salary threshold of £41,700 per year or the job's standard 'going rate' (whichever is highest)
- Minimum salary requirement is reduced if certain conditions met, e.g. if you are a 'new entrant' – salary requirement is reduced to £33,400/70% of going rate.



Skilled worker visa

Costs

Visa application fee levels vary depending on:

- The type of job
- The length of visa
- Where you are applying

Some employers may cover part of these costs.



Skilled worker visa

Switching

- You can switch to a Skilled Worker visa inside the UK from most other types of visas, including Graduate visa
- You cannot switch from a Visitor or Short-term student visa
- If you currently have a Student visa, you can **only** apply to switch to the Skilled Worker visa if you meet one of the following conditions:
 - a) You must have finished your course.
 - b) You are studying at degree level and your Skilled Worker job will start after your course completion date.
 - c) You are studying a full-time PhD course and your Skilled Worker job will start no earlier than 24 months after the start date of that course.



Graduate and Skilled worker visa Comparison

- **Skilled Worker visa** is often best *if* you can get an eligible job offer from an employer that is willing and able to sponsor you.
- You can apply for Skilled Worker visa from overseas.
- The Skilled Worker visa is path to permanent residence in UK.
- You can bring new dependants to the UK (with exceptions for some categories of jobs).
- The Skilled Worker visa ties you to a specific job and employer.
- Unfortunately, recent changes to the requirements for Skilled Worker route have made it more difficult to get a Skilled Worker visa than before.
- **Graduate visa** is best if you need time to job search, explore your options, build work experience.
- Graduate visa is flexible – you can more easily switch jobs and do whatever type of work you want to do.
- Graduate visa allows you to be self-employed.
- Can use the time on the Graduate route to try find and secure Skilled Worker sponsorship – but there are **no guarantees** you will be able to switch.

The future of the UK immigration system (1)

12 May 2025 – the UK Government published a [white paper](#) setting out its proposals to change UK immigration system, with a focus on reducing the numbers of people coming to the UK.

It proposed major changes to the Graduate and Skilled Worker visa routes, including:

- Graduate route will be reduced to 18 months
- Increasing Skilled Worker salary thresholds
- Qualifying period for settlement on Skilled Worker route increased to 10 years



The future of the UK immigration system (2)

- These are just proposals, not legislation.
- We do not know yet when these changes will take effect, what the detail will be, and what changes (if any) will be applied retrospectively to people already in the UK.
- Despite the MAC's recommendation to keep the Graduate route, there is significant political pressure on UK Government to impose further immigration restrictions to cut net migration.



Global Talent visa

The [Global Talent visa](#) is the premier visa route for leaders or potential leaders in:

- Academia or research
- Arts and culture,
- Digital technology.

It requires eligible prestigious prize, or an endorsement from the approved endorsing body for your field.

There's a different application pathways and requirements depending on your field and endorsing body.



Other UK working visas

Innovator Founder visa

- For entrepreneurs with innovative business ideas
- Replaced the 'Innovator' and 'Start Up' routes

Government Authorised Exchange visa (Temporary Work)

- Work experience, training, fellowship, internship schemes
- Requires sponsorship

Find the full list at [Work in the UK - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/work-in-the-uk)



Further information

- [Visa information | Students | University of Leeds](#)
- [Careers | Students | University of Leeds](#)
- [Visas and immigration - GOV.UK](#)
- [Working - UKCISA](#)
- [Navigating work and study with a Student visa – UKCISA](#)
- [Student employability resources – UKCISA](#)
- [After your studies | Study UK](#)

The Student Visa Advice team cannot provide advice regarding work visas.

For further advice, please consult your employer or a regulated immigration lawyer.

- [Find an immigration adviser: Search for an adviser - GOV.UK](#)
- [Find a Solicitor - The Law Society](#)



[Contacts for international students](#)

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