# Graduate route visa

## Employer Information Leaflet – from 4 April 2024

- The UK Government introduced a **Graduate route post-study work visa** from 1 July 2021. This is an unsponsored route.

### WHAT

An unsponsored visa which allows an international student on student visas, of any nationality, to work full-time without any restrictions – no salary requirement, can work full/part time, any role, any skill level and any type of contract.

### WHEN

International students can apply for this visa after successfully completing their degree, once the award is confirmed and before their student visa expires.

### WHY

It will help employers to delve into international graduate-level talent and skillset whilst benefiting from the flexibility. Equally, it will help international students to gain work experience after their degree.

### Did you Know?

International students may start full-time work whilst still on their student visa, once they have completed all their academic work. They can obtain a letter from the university as proof to meet your ‘Right to work’ check requirements.

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## Timeline and how long will the Graduate Route Visa be granted for?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Undergraduate Students</th>
<th>Postgraduate Students</th>
<th>Postgraduate Research (PhD) Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Timeline for application for most of Warwick students?</td>
<td>July-November in year of graduation</td>
<td>November-January in year of graduation</td>
<td>Any time of year, as they are awarded throughout the year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How long will this visa be?</td>
<td>2 Years (from the date their visa is granted)</td>
<td>2 Years (from the date their visa is granted)</td>
<td>3 Years (from the date their visa is granted)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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## Benefits of the Graduate route visa for employers: access to dynamic international talent

- **Streamlined process**
  - Avoid lengthy sponsorship applications

- **Economic growth**
  - Recruiting international students fosters economic development.

- **Diverse Talent Pool**
  - Easy as recruiting a British candidate but with the added bonus of benefitting from the diversity, extensive knowledge they bring, and delving into the international skill set at no cost.

- **Cost-effective hiring**
  - There is no cost to the employer, as it is an unsponsored route.

- **Address Skill Gaps**
  - Fill vacancies efficiently with no complex administrative procedure.

- **Temporary assessment period**
  - A stepping stone to decide if you want the student permanently. The flexibility of this visa means that it is a very helpful tool for you to assess a candidate’s suitability for the role before deciding if you want to retaining them permanently using another visa.
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Student Visa

Visa timelines
- Student Visa for length of Course

Salary Requirement
- National Minimum Wage

Brief Visa Information
- Employers can employ students to start working full-time in temporary roles as soon as academic requirements are complete but no earlier than 4 weeks before the official course end date. Students can provide letters from the university to confirm their working rights once their academic requirements are complete.
- Click here for detailed information about what work a student can do on a Student Visa.

Graduate Visa

- Visa for 2 or 3 years
- National Minimum Wage
- Students can obtain a 2/3 years Graduate Visa after they have received their academic award. Employers have the flexibility to employ any students on this visa without sponsoring them.
- There are no salary requirements, they can work full/part-time, in any role, at any skill level, and on any type of contract.

Skilled Worker Visa

- Apply as new entrant*- Visa for up to 4 years including any time already spent on Graduate Visa
- New Entrant salary: Minimum £30,960
- Switching from Graduate Visa to Skilled Worker visa – applicants can qualify as a new entrant and benefit from lower salary threshold of £30,960.00 and 70% of going rate for the SOC 2020 occupation code.

Skilled Worker Visa extension after New Entrant

In the future - option to extend Skilled Worker to take it up to 5 years and above – at that point, the salary must equal or exceed £38,700.00 and be the going rate for SOC 2020 or if the job is on the Immigration Salary List it would need to be at least £30,960.00 and the going rate for SOC code 2020.

Where can I find further information?
- UKCISA - Employer Guide to Recruiting International Graduates
- UKCISA - Graduate Route
- UK GOV webpage
- University of Warwick - Graduate Route Visa

The above information is provided in good faith and consistent with UK Government stated policy intentions at time of publication. Updated: 22nd April 2024

*Applicants can qualify as a new entrant and benefit from lower salary threshold: if granting their application would mean their combined permission on either a Skilled Worker visa, or Graduate visa would not exceed four years in total, including forthcoming permission. To benefit from this, employers may consider issuing a shorter contract initially, as the visa should be issued for the duration of the contract. We recommend student’s and employers seek independent legal advice.