

Working during your studies

Permission to work

Usually, if you have been granted a student visa valid for more than six months, you are permitted to take some employment during your course.

If you are able to work, your visa will usually state:

No recourse to public funds

Work (and any changes) must be authorised

With this confirmation, you are allowed to work up to 20 hours a week during term-time and full-time during vacations. You may also work full-time on completion of all requirements of your course. You must not pursue a career by filling a permanent full-time vacancy. It is important that you can afford to support yourself without needing to work.

If your visa or BRP shows the statement above, you do not need to seek further permission to be able to work in the UK.

If you have a student visa valid for less than six months, you are unlikely to have permission to work during your studies.

Internships – if here on a non-Points Based System (PBS) Student Visa

With a student visa issued before 31 March 2009, you can undertake an internship of up to three months. You should not have previously undertaken an internship with the employer; the internship must be an established part of the employer's recruitment procedure; pay and conditions must be comparable to those for 'resident' workers and the internship must be completed within the current visa period you have as a student.

Internships – if here on a Points Based System (PBS) Tier 4 Student Visa

With a Tier 4 student visa issued after 31 March 2009, any work placement you do has to be an assessed part of your course. You are therefore not able to take an internship during term time unless it is an assessed part of your course.

You can take an internship during the vacations as this will fit in with the working conditions linked to a Tier 4 student visa which state you can work up to 20 hours a week during term time and full-time during vacation. What you cannot do on any student visa is to take a permanent position.

Industrial placements / Intercalated years / Voluntary year out

With a Tier 4 student visa, you can undertake an intercalated year if it is an integral, pre-defined part of your course. It may also be possible for you to take a year out of your studies to work if you participate in the University of Warwick Voluntary Year Out scheme, if you are here on a non-PBS student visa. You must have gained approval from your department and from the Academic Office before taking a year out under this scheme. If you are here on a Tier 4 student visa then you are unable to take a voluntary year out as any work placement has to be an assessed part of your course. If you are not taking an intercalated year or permitted to participate in the Voluntary Year Out scheme, it is unlikely that you will be permitted to take a year out and stay in the UK to work full-time for a year with your student visa.

Job Hunting

There are various ways of finding out about job vacancies. You could use the University temping agency, Unitemps: www.unitemps.co.uk or use a JobCentre Plus in Coventry or Leamington, or look for local ads in newspapers or shop/restaurant windows. For more details, visit our website listed below. You may also use the Careers Centre at the University for information and advice: www.warwick.ac.uk/go/careers.

National Insurance Number

You will need an 'NI' number if you are undertaking any kind of work in the UK. You will need to apply for one from a local Social Security Office. In Coventry, this is based at Cofa Court, Cheylesmore. You should telephone 024 7623 2200 to make an appointment. Your NI number will be issued within a few weeks of your appointment. At your appointment you will be given a letter to show your employer, confirming that you have applied for an NI number so that the employer can still pay you whilst you wait for your number to arrive.

Income Tax

Income tax (and NI contributions) are automatically deducted from your pay once you reach a minimum level of earnings in the UK. The 2010/2011 tax free allowance is £6,475. If you earn below this level then you do not need to pay income tax or National Insurance. If you only work during university holidays and do not expect to earn more than the annual tax free allowance then you can complete a form so that your employer will not deduct income tax. See www.direct.gov.uk for more information.

EEA and Swiss Nationals

Nationals of Austria, Belgium, Republic of Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland, and their dependants, have no restriction on the hours and type of work they can undertake whilst studying in the UK.

Nationals of the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia and their dependants also have no limitations on hours or type of work. However, you may need to register under the Worker Registration Scheme. See www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk for details of how to apply.

Students from Bulgaria and Romania may also work during their studies, but usually must register under the Worker Authorisation Scheme. See www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk for details. Registration certificates issued to Bulgarian and Romanian students will state that they can work up to 20 hours a week unless they are following a course with vocational training and are working as part of that training or they are working during their vacation.

Further information and advice

For more details about working during your studies, visit our website at: www.warwick.ac.uk/go/immigrationadvice.

You may contact an Adviser in the International Office by emailing immigrationservice@warwick.ac.uk, telephoning 024 7652 3706 or visiting the Student Reception on the ground floor of University House.

Last updated 21 December 2010



Immigration advice and services regulated by the Immigration Services Commissioner.