



## Working after your studies – October 2020

This guidance is based on frequently asked questions. It is not intended to be used on its own and you should use it in combination with the detailed guidance available on our [website](#).

### Do I need a sponsor or permit to work after my course ends until my Tier 4 / Student visa expiry date?

No. Your Tier 4 / Student visa permits you to work during that time. You must ensure that all work is in accordance with the conditions of your Tier 4 / Student visa; refer to our [Info Sheet](#) and detailed guidance about [working during studies](#) on a Tier 4 or Student visa for further information.

### Can I work full-time after my course ends?

You can work full-time after the official course end date stated on your CAS. However you cannot be employed in a full-time permanent position. This means that the work you do whilst on your Tier 4 or Student visa must be temporary or fixed term.

### I have a Tier 4 / Student visa but have been offered full-time permanent employment; is this ok?

Full-time permanent work is prohibited on a Tier 4 or Student visa. If you have been offered a full-time permanent contract, you can only begin working on that basis after you have applied to switch to Tier 2 and have been awarded your degree unless your Tier 4 or Student visa was issued on or after 1 October 2019. In all other cases you cannot start your permanent role until the Tier 2 visa has been granted.

You should discuss employment contracts with your employer; you may be able to work on a temporary or fixed-term basis until you have your Tier 2 decision.

### My employer has asked LSE to provide a letter confirming that I am able to work. Can you provide this?

Your visa is your evidence of the number of hours you are permitted to work. However, employers are required to do checks for illegal working. The documents we are able to provide are listed on our [working during your studies page](#). You may also find our [guide for employers](#) helpful.

### Can I extend my Tier 4 / Student visa for work or to enable me to find a job?

No. The LSE will only sponsor students on Tier 4 visas or Student visas when they have genuine studies to undertake.

### Does my Tier 4 / Student visa permit me to work in other countries?

No. Your Tier 4 / Student visa only provides you with the right to work in the UK.

### Will I automatically be eligible for a work visa at the end of my studies?

No, eligibility is not automatic. There are a number of working routes available, but many require you to find a sponsor to employ you at the end of your studies.

The UK government is also planning to introduce a Graduate Route visa in Summer 2021. This is not currently part of the Immigration Rules, but when introduced, will allow eligible students to apply for a 2 year visa to work in the UK without being sponsored by an employer. There is more information about what we know so far on the Graduate Route on our [working after your studies web pages](#).

### What is the difference between Tier 2 and Tier 5?

Tier 2 is for full-time long-term/permanent employment in the UK. Tier 5 is for temporary work primarily on a supernumerary basis (e.g. internships).

### Is it compulsory for employers to have a licence to sponsor work visas?

No. An employer can choose to apply for a sponsor licence if they wish to provide sponsorship for work visas for non-UK/EEA nationals. However, this can be an expensive commitment (in terms of both cost and administrative time) so some employers may choose not to apply for a sponsor licence. If they do not have a sponsor licence and are not willing to apply for one, you will not be able to apply for a Tier 2 visa to work for that employer.

### How do I know which employers have a Tier 2 or Tier 5 sponsor licence?

You can find a list of Tier 2 and Tier 5 sponsor licence holders on the [Home Office](#) website.

### Can you advise my prospective employer how to apply for a Tier 2 sponsor licence if they don't have one?

We provide advice about the student immigration rules and are unable to provide advice about applying for a Tier 2 sponsor licence. Regulated advisers can be found on the [ILPA](#) or [OISC](#) webpages.

### How do I apply for a Tier 2 visa?

Full details about applying for Tier 2 are available in the Home Office's [Tier 2 Policy Guidance](#).

### Can an employer refuse to sponsor me even if they have a Tier 2 sponsor licence?

It is at the employer's discretion. Even if an employer holds a sponsor licence, this does not guarantee they will be able to sponsor you. For example, they may only offer sponsorship for senior level roles.

### When can I apply for a Tier 2 visa?

You can choose to apply to switch from your Tier 4 or Student visa to Tier 2 from within the UK:

- Within three months of the expected completion date of your programme; or
- Once you have completed your degree. This means you must have sat all exams and submitted all academic papers; or
- You can choose to wait until your degree has been awarded to apply. For details of publication results see [here](#).

*\*PhD students offered a Tier 2 position at post-doctoral level can apply to switch from their Tier 4 or Student visa to a Tier 2 after completing 12 months of their PhD programme.*

### Can I get a letter confirming I've completed my degree before my results are released?

Yes, [the Visa Compliance Team](#) can issue you a letter after you have completed all assessments for your degree. However, you will need to show evidence of your employment contract in order to receive the letter. Alternatively, you can choose to wait until your degree results are released, in which case you can use either a [confirmation of award letter](#), [official hard-copy transcript](#) or [degree certificate](#) for Tier 2 application purposes.

If you are applying from three months before the expected end date of your programme, a Certificate of Registration will confirm your end date and you can use this for your Tier 2 visa application.

### What is the Resident Labour Market Test and am I exempt?

The Resident Labour Market Test (RLMT) is something your employer may need to complete to prove that they were unable to recruit a UK/EU national for the position. However, if you apply to switch to Tier 2 from within the UK after your degree, you will be exempt from the RLMT.

### Can I apply for a Tier 2 visa from my home country?

Check with your employer. Whilst you would not need to have completed a UK degree to apply from overseas, it may be more difficult to get the visa because you will be subject to the RLMT and your employer will need to obtain a restricted Confirmation of Sponsorship (COS) for you to apply.

### I haven't found a sponsor. What's the latest date I can stay in the UK and work?

You are only permitted to work and remain in the UK until the expiry date of your visa. Once this has passed, you become an "overstayer" and lose the right to work. Overstaying is a breach of the immigration rules. Once you are an overstayer, you will need to declare the number of days you overstayed on future immigration applications to the UK. There is no 'grace period' of overstay in the UK.

### Do I need to pay for my Tier 2 visa application and show evidence of funding or will my employer cover the costs and confirm funds?

Ask your employer because it is their choice; some employers cover the cost of the application fees and some don't. Employers may also confirm that they will be responsible for your maintenance costs (which could mean that you may not need to show evidence of your own funds) but it is not compulsory for them to do this.

### Do I have to be sponsored to be able to work in the UK?

Not in all cases. There are some routes available which may not require you to have a sponsor such as [Tier 5 Youth Mobility](#), [Ancestry](#) and [Turkish workers](#). Unfortunately, these are not open to all nationalities and it is not possible to apply for some of these visa types within the UK. [This webpage](#) contains details of all work visa options.

### Am I eligible to apply for the Tier 5 Youth Mobility visa?

This will depend on your nationality and age. For details of the eligibility requirements, please see [this Home Office webpage](#).

### Does LSE sponsor students for the Tier 4 Doctorate Extension Scheme / Student visa Doctorate Extension Scheme?

Yes. PhD students can find out more about the scheme on our [working after your studies](#) information or by contacting us.

### Does LSE participate in the Start-up Visa Scheme?

Yes. Successful candidates are chosen through the [LSE Generate competitions](#). We have more detailed information for those who are offered a visa endorsement.

### Do I need a National Insurance number?

You do not need a National Insurance number until you begin working. However, you must apply for one when you start your job. You can find more information on National Insurance and tax on the [UKCISA website](#) and also [Tax Guide for Students](#).

### I'm an alumnus. How long can you advise me about my immigration options for working in the UK?

We are able to advise you on your immigration options whilst:

- You hold a valid Tier 4 or Student visa for LSE;
- You are sponsored under Tier 4 (Doctorate Extension Scheme) or Student visa (Doctorate Extension Scheme) by LSE;
- You are sponsored under the Start-up Visa by LSE.

**Who do I contact for help?** For further immigration advice [contact ISVAT online](#). You can also refer to the [UKCISA website](#) for more information about work options after study.