



Working after your studies - June 2016

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 visa expiry date?

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

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

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; full-time permanent work is prohibited on a Tier 4 visa.

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

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 working during your studies page. You may also find our [guide for employers](#) helpful.

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

No. The LSE will only sponsor students under Tier 4 who have genuine studies to undertake.

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

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

Can I get a letter confirming I've been awarded my degree before my results are released?

No. Registry can provide you with a letter to state that your course has ended but results have not yet been ratified. You can obtain [evidence of qualification](#) when the results are officially released by Registry only (not your department).

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.

What is the difference between Tier 2 and Tier 5?

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

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

An employer can choose to apply for a sponsor licence if they wish to provide sponsorship for work visas for non-UK/EEA nationals. A sponsor licence 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?

No. We specialise in providing advice about the student immigration rules and are unable to provide advice about applying for a Tier 2 sponsor licence. Your prospective employer may wish to seek legal advice. Specialists can be found on the [ILPA](#) or [OISC](#) webpages.

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, it is not guaranteed that they will be able to sponsor you.

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](#).

What are the application fees and processing times for a Tier 2 visa?

That will depend on the duration of the visa you are applying for and also how quickly you want it to be processed. The fees are listed on the [Home Office website](#).

Can you (LSE) help me apply for my Tier 2 visa?

We are able to offer basic information about switching into Tier 2 from a Tier 4 visa. However, you should ask your employer for assistance in completing your application for Tier 2. As a Tier 2 sponsor, they will need to know the requirements of the application.

When can I apply for a Tier 2 visa?

Unless you have completed at least 12 months of a PhD, you can only apply to switch from Tier 4 to Tier 2 from within the UK once you have officially been awarded a UK degree. For details of publication results see [here](#). Provisional results are not acceptable for visa purposes.

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 being awarded 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 been awarded 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 for you to apply.

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 so.

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 until the expiry date of your visa. Once the expiry date of your visa has passed, you become an "overstayer" and you 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 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](#). Unfortunately, these are not open to all nationalities and it is not possible to apply for the visa within the UK.

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?

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

Does LSE participate in the Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) Scheme?

Yes. Since its introduction, the LSE has been able to sponsor students through the Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) scheme. Successful candidates are chosen through the [Generate at LSE](#) Careers competitions.

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](#).

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 visa for LSE;
- You are sponsored under Tier 4 (Doctorate Extension Scheme) by LSE;
- You are sponsored under Tier 1 (Graduate Entrepreneur) by LSE.