



Nottingham Trent
University

Employability

Employing our International Students and Graduates

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1. Introduction

Nottingham Trent University is proud to offer employability opportunities to our thriving international student community. This document provides guidance to employers on the **Immigration Rules** that allow international students to work during and after their studies are completed.

With students from over 150 countries enrolling on courses throughout our campuses, we have a large pool of international talent that could make a real impact on your business.

Equipped with language skills and knowledge of overseas business, our students possess intercultural awareness that enables them to identify new opportunities, build new contacts and help employers achieve new commercial goals and grow their business.

There are various ways you can recruit international talent into your business:

1. During their studies
 - a. Part-time work on a student visa
 - b. Placement or year in industry

2. After their studies
 - a. Graduate Immigration Route
 - b. Skilled Worker Route

2. Recruiting our international students during their studies

2.1 Part-time work on a student visa:

NTU students enrolled on courses at degree level or above are able to work for a maximum of 20 hours per week during term-time. This equates to a maximum of 20 hours in total in any one week, with the inclusion of paid or unpaid work and for one or more organisations.

Under the rules, the 20 hours cannot be averaged over a longer period. UKVI defines a 'week' as a period of 7 days beginning with a Monday. These rules relate to both paid and unpaid work.

International students in the UK on a student visa can work full-time during NTU vacation periods. However, international students on a student visa cannot take on a full-time permanent position until the completion of their degree.

International students on a student visa are allowed under the rules to volunteer with registered charities and the hours volunteered are not counted towards the 20 hours per week rule. However, to be considered as a volunteer there must not be a contract of employment, the role should not be a substitute for an employee and there must not be any payment given (including payment in kind).

2.2 Recruiting international students enrolled on sandwich degrees:

Students enrolled on a sandwich course are sponsored by the University and are therefore eligible to work in the UK. However, these placements should not go over 12 months in duration.

In the case of a postgraduate or master's course, an international student is able to work for you as part of their work placement the duration of this placement should be 9-12 months depending on the total length of the course. The student will continue to be sponsored on a Student Visa (previously known as the Tier 4 visa) by NTU during the work placement and will be able to work for you fulltime.

Find out more about [Postgraduate Placements here](#).

3. Recruiting our international graduates after their studies

3.1 Graduate Immigration Route:

The new Graduate route is a work visa that will allow graduates to stay and work in the UK, initially for 2 years (3 years for PhD graduates).

- International students must have completed an eligible course at a UK higher education provider, with a track record of compliance with the government's immigration requirements to apply to the Graduate route.
- Students on the Graduate route will be able to work or look for work after their studies for a maximum period of 2 years, or 3 years for Doctoral students.
- Does not require sponsorship
- Can switch to the Skilled Worker Route

3.2 Skilled Worker Route (previously known as Tier 2 Visa):

The Skilled Worker Visa replaced the Tier 2 Visa. This offers more benefits to the employer:

- No issues regarding skill levels (above A-level) most graduates will qualify for the positions
- No limits on length of time and no cooling off period, which helps employers have better control of staffing plans
- 8-week processing period
- Minimum salary of £26,200, based upon 39 hours per week
- Visa can be issued for 5 years initially but can be extended
- Leads to settlement (indefinite leave to remain) after 5 years

Find out more in our [Recruiting International Graduates guide](#).

4. Sponsor License

Below are a few points suggested by Paragon Law, to keep in mind when applying for a Sponsor License:

- Web based application process.
- Fee to register:
 - £536 for a small business or charity

- £1476 for medium or large businesses
- Must demonstrate why a skilled worker license is required.
- Must file the required documentation requested by the UKVI.
- The business may be audited during the UKVI decision making process and therefore it is important that the business prepares for this.
- The business will gain access to a web-based portal, which will be used to request and issue certificate of sponsorships and report updates about the business or the sponsored worker.
- License needs to be renewed every 4 years.

You can find more information regarding sponsor licenses on the government [website](#).

5. Additional resources

The [Midlands International Group](#) are a collection of regional UK universities dedicated to helping international student careers.

"We recognise the complexities and concerns which can arise for employers wanting to hire international students and graduates, but we are also firmly committed to supporting all our students to gain the experience and careers they aspire to."

In response to feedback and common queries from employer partners, the group put together a free information event with the aim of providing a better understanding of the processes, costs, and benefits of the main visa routes.

Joel Alex from the NTU Employer Engagement Team delivered the session, in collaboration with immigration law specialist, [Paragon Law](#). Thal Vasishta (CEO) and Kirin Abbas (Director) shared their expertise, along with practical scenario examples. NTU alumni, Seema Nair, who is the Founder and CEO of [CalibreCode Solutions](#), also joined the session to talk about her experiences hiring international student talent via a placement, and the Graduate Route Visa.

Click the video thumbnail to access the webinar recording. The presentation slides from Paragon Law can also be [downloaded](#).

(Information correct as of 12.09.2023).

