

Working during your studies

Can I work while I'm in the UK?

If you hold a **Tier 4** visa, and your visa states that work is permitted, then you can work.

If you are doing a full-time degree-level course, then you should be able to work 20 hours per week during term time, and full-time during your vacations.

If you are doing a course that is below degree level (such as a foundation course or Pre-session English course), then you should be able to work 10 hours per week during term time, and full-time during your vacations.

The key is to *check your visa sticker and/or Biometric Residence Permit*. If you think there is a mistake, [let us know](#).

If you are in the UK as a **Standard Visitor** or as a **Short-term Student**, you will **not** be able to do any work.

What kind of work can I do?

If you're allowed to work, then you can do most kinds of work. However, you can't be self-employed, be a professional sportsperson or entertainer, be a doctor or dentist in training, and you can't take a full-time, permanent job.

It's also useful to remember that "work" includes both paid and unpaid work. The UKVI makes a distinction between "voluntary work" (which is regular work that is compensated in some way) and "volunteering", which is more casual and occasional, and often not compensated. If you have questions about whether the kind of work you want to do is permitted or will contribute to your weekly limit, get in touch with us.

When can I work full-time?

As above, you can work part-time during term time, and full-time during your vacations.

"Term time" refers to the teaching dates and exam periods as laid out in the [Academic Calendar](#), available on the King's website.

However, if you're a Master's student or a PhD student, you will need to note the following:

- Master's students can work full-time during the winter and spring vacations, but are restricted to working 20 hours per week during the summer. This is because you are expected to be working on your dissertation during this time, and so the summer is not a vacation for you.
- PhD students are working on their research all year round! Therefore, term time doesn't really apply to you. Instead, you have an annual leave entitlement each year of up to 8 weeks. This annual leave entitlement includes UK public holidays and College closure days. You can only work full-time during your annual leave periods, as agreed in writing with your supervisor.

I want to do a work placement / internship...

You can work full-time on a work placement at any time during your course if your work placement is an *assessed and integral part of your course*. Usually, the placement would have been mentioned on your CAS when you applied for your Tier 4 visa; you should also be able to find details of the placement in the course handbook or the prospectus. If your work placement forms a part of your course, the employer will need to monitor your attendance and report this to King's.

Some UK companies offer students an opportunity to undertake a full-time internship during their vacations. UG and taught postgraduate Master's students who hold Tier 4 visas are permitted to undertake an internship during the Christmas and Easter holidays. However, only undergraduate students can undertake a full-time internship (i.e. working more than 20 hours per week) during the summer vacation.

What about once I've completed my course?

Your Tier 4 student visa is likely to continue for up to 2-4 months after your course end date. Your end date will be as follows:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Undergraduate students | The end of the summer term as specified in the Academic Calendar |
| Postgraduate Taught Master's students | The Course End Date that was listed on your CAS |
| PhD students | The award date of your PhD (as confirmed by the Research Degrees team) |

Upon reaching your course end date, you can start working full-time on a temporary contract up until your visa expiry date, for a maximum period of 4 months. It's therefore important that *before* you reach your visa expiry date / the 4 month period after your course end date (whichever is sooner), you apply to switch into another immigration category or otherwise leave the UK.

Proof of eligibility to work in the UK

Your employer has a duty to check that you are allowed to work in the UK. The UKVI website contains further details of how they do this: <https://www.gov.uk/check-job-applicant-right-to-work>

King's cannot write letters confirming your right to work- employers need to use the link above to check this themselves. If your employer has any further questions about your eligibility to work in the UK, they can contact the UKVI Employer helpline on 0300 123 4699.

Please be aware that any breach of your Tier 4 student visa conditions (such as working more than 20 hours per week when you are not permitted to do so) is a criminal offence. Any criminal convictions must be declared on any future UK visa applications.

National Insurance Numbers and Income Tax

National Insurance (which is completely separate from the NHS and UK healthcare system) is a charge all workers automatically have deducted from their wages, to contribute to state benefits such as a state pension. International students who work in the UK are liable to pay National Insurance contributions, and it is not possible to obtain a refund of any of these contributions even if you are here for just a short time.

In order to work in the UK for the first time, you will need to apply for a National Insurance Number. This number is allocated to you- and you should usually only need one of these numbers for all of the employment you undertake in the UK throughout your lifetime (even if you leave the UK for a while and then come back). You should apply by calling HMRC on 0845 600 0643. You may be sent a form to fill in, or you may be asked to attend an interview at the local Jobcentre Plus. If you have to attend an appointment, do check what documents you will need to bring- you will usually need to take your passport, payslips and/or a letter from your employer confirming that you will be working for them. You can start work before your National Insurance number arrives, but you should tell your employer that you've applied for one and give it to them once you receive it. More information on applying for a National Insurance Number is available at gov.uk.

International students are liable to pay income tax on earnings- however, you need to be earning more than a certain amount before you need to pay any tax. See the [gov.uk webpage on Income Tax rates](#) for further information on this, as well as the percentages of your money that is taken by income tax, depending on your salary. In practice, most full-time students are unlikely to earn enough money in the UK to end up being taxed. If you end up being taxed and you think you shouldn't have been, you can apply for a tax refund online to claim back the money: <https://www.gov.uk/claim-tax-refund/overview>

Last but not least: [UKCISA's webpage on employers, income tax and National Insurance](#) is very useful.

Special information for Croatian nationals

If you are a Croatian national in the UK as a student for your first UK degree-level qualification, then you will need to apply for a [yellow registration certificate](#) using the application form available on the gov.uk website. Once you have received your yellow registration certificate, you can work for up to 20 hours a week during term time, and full-time during your vacations. Once you have completed your degree (or if you already have a UK degree-level qualification), you will need to apply for a [blue registration certificate](#) within 12 months of the degree award date to demonstrate that you are allowed to work freely in the UK as a highly-skilled migrant.

Applying for either of these registration certificates costs £65. Once you hold a blue registration certificate, you are no longer restricted to working 20 hours a week during term time.

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