

How many hours can I work on a Student route visa?

Your student visa states that you must not work more than 20 hours per week **during term time** (or 10 hours per week if you are studying below degree level). If you do work too many hours, you could be required to leave the UK or face other serious consequences. You can work full-time during formal designated holidays, or while you are on a work placement (an assessed, required part of your sandwich course), or on a short internship after your course ends.

What is considered term time and holidays?

Not every student with a student route visa is able to work full time during designated University holidays. Your situation depends on the course you are studying. For **Undergraduate students** you would be able to work full time during formal designated holidays (Christmas, Easter and Summer). **Your FT work can only start when the term has finished - irrespective of when your last exam or submission may be.**

Taught Masters students, are normally granted the standard Christmas and Easter vacation periods. However, the summer vacation is not automatically granted, as students should usually be working on their dissertation or may even have some taught classes to attend. You should ask your Faculty if you have any formal Summer vacation period and, if so, whether they can provide you with written evidence of this formal vacation.

Research students are expected to undertake research for a large part of the year and over the normal University holiday periods. If you want to work full-time during a specific period, you should get your supervisor's agreement in writing that you are on holiday.

All final year students must not work full-time until the course end date which is stated on your CAS.

Your visa length is based on that date and if you finish early, this should be reported to the UKVI, and your visa will be curtailed (shortened) to ensure that you only have the permissible 2 or 4 months added on to your course end date. If your finish considerably early (more than a few weeks), this may automatically be reported to the UKVI and the University will notify you of this.

What type of work can I do?

You can undertake most types of work, but you must **NOT**

- engage in business or self-employment
- be employed as a professional sports person, entertainer or doctor in training
- fill a permanent vacancy

There is a useful blog post available from UKCISA - [Navigating work and study with a Student visa](#) that should help you to decide if the job you would like to take up is allowed under a Student visa.

Volunteering

Volunteering offers great opportunities for students to undertake a wide range of activities and gain valuable experience and skills. For activity to count as volunteering, it must meet the conditions set out in the [Student Route caseworker guidance](#). You will see here that volunteers do not have a contract and must not be a substitute for an employee. Volunteers are not paid, though it is possible to receive reasonable travel and subsistence expenses.

Volunteering is not included in the 10-20 hours work allocation of a student visa if it meets the requirements outlined in the UKVI guidance above. However, unpaid employment or voluntary work has a different definition and is counted towards the work hours so please ensure that you are clear on what type of activity you are undertaking.

You can find out more about the volunteering opportunities in Swansea by visiting [Discovery - Swansea University](#).

University regulations on employment

Even though your student visa allows you to work up to 20 hours per week, the University regulations and guidelines may restrict you to fewer hours. Check the “Other University Regulations” section of the Academic Guide at [Academic Regulations - Swansea University](#)

Proof of right to work

If your employer asks you for confirmation of your right to work, see [Working as an international student](#) and direct them to the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) website [Checking a job applicant's right to work - GOV.UK](#)

Please note that the University cannot give you a personalised letter stating your right to work. You should use a Student Statement and/or a list of term dates from the University website to indicate whether you are; in term time (reduced working hours), on vacation, on placement (sandwich year) or that the end of your course has been reached (unlimited working hours).

Students on Standard Visit Visas (SVV), Short Term Student Visas (STSV) or courses of less than 6 months

Students who applied for a Student Route (visa) before coming to the UK and are on ~~courses~~ lasting six months or less, are usually given a ‘prohibition’ stamp in their passports. This means they cannot work. If you entered the country on an SVV or a STSV, you are not allowed to work or take up a work placement (either paid or unpaid work).

Students under the European Settlement Scheme (EUSS)

Students who have settled or pre-settled status under the EUSS are able to work without limitations. EU/EEA/Swiss students who do not have EUSS will be subject to the work restrictions of the immigration category they have entered the UK under (usually Student or a Standard Visit visa as outlined above)

National insurance (NI)

When you start work you will be asked for a National Insurance (NI) number. You can apply for an NI number when you are starting work or when you are looking for work. There is no legal requirement to have an NI number before starting work.

How to apply for an NI number

To get a National Insurance number you need to apply online here: [Apply for a National Insurance number: How to apply - GOV.UK](#). You’ll need to prove your identity when you apply.

What documents do I need to apply for an NI number?

If you have any of the following documents, get them ready before you start:

- a passport from any country
- a national identity card from an EU country or from Norway, Liechtenstein or Switzerland

You might need to enter information from one or more of these documents. You can still apply if you do not have any of these documents, but you may need to attend an appointment in person to prove your identity.

Income tax

You will be liable to pay UK income tax on the same basis as UK residents and there are no exemptions for international students. If you are only working during the holidays and don’t expect to earn over the annual personal allowance, your employer can give you form P38(S) so that tax is not deducted. If tax is deducted and you think you have paid too much tax, it may be possible for you to get a refund of any overpaid tax. See <https://www.gov.uk/claim-tax-refund/too-much-tax-taken-from-your-pay>

What about being paid cash in hand?

It is illegal for your employer to pay you cash in hand without deducting tax and National Insurance contributions from your wages. If you accept money in this way, you risk losing your employment rights. In addition, you could end up having to pay the tax and National Insurance contributions yourself.

Further information

For details about tax and national insurance, you can get free leaflets and further detailed advice from the local Tax Office at HM Revenue and Customs, Ty Nant, 180 High Street, Swansea SA1 5AP, by telephoning 0300 200 3300 or see <https://www.gov.uk/personal-tax> . For further information about working in the UK (e.g. your employer's obligations towards you, working after completing your studies and whether your family members can work, see www.ukcisa.org.uk