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Employer's Guide to Recruiting International Graduates

Visa Options and Benefits for 1. The Graduate route visa 2. The Skilled Worker route visa



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Graduate route

Hire international graduates without sponsoring for two or three years under the Graduate route visa. The work is not subject to a minimum skill level or salary threshold. This means that it is now much easier for employers to hire international talent.

- ¹ Visa responsibility lies with the graduate who applies towards the end of their student visa and switches directly into the Graduate route once the visa has been granted. No need for additional HR checks beyond the norm for any appointment.
- ² No additional costs to the employer beyond the normal costs of hiring staff.
- ³ This route is much more flexible than the previous Tier 2 visa system. At no cost to the employer, you can employ international graduate talent as a standard hire or on a fixed-term contract, for project-based work or for a short-term trial.
- ⁴ A fantastic opportunity for employers to gain specialist graduate-level talent, cultural understanding and language skills - with minimum HR and budget resource.
- ⁵ The Graduate route enables international students who have been awarded their

degree in the UK, to stay in the UK and work at any skill level for two years, or three years for doctoral students.

If employers decide to employ the graduate for longer, they can switch to the Skilled Worker route if they meet the relevant requirements.

- ⁶ Engage with graduate-level talent flexibly, without the constraints of specific salary requirements linked to a visa. As with national hiring guidelines, there is a preference that staff are paid at least the National Living Wage.



Skilled Worker route

Hire international graduates longer-term on the Skilled Worker route. The former Tier 2 visa has been replaced by the Skilled Worker visa, which offers more benefits to employers.

Employers will require a licence to sponsor an overseas national. This includes a straightforward application.

- ⁷ This route enables employers to sponsor an international graduate for up to 5 years. This can be extended and, after 5 years the employee may be eligible to apply for settlement, reducing any further visa sponsorship costs.

- ⁸ Salaries are more akin to UK graduate salaries, making it easier to choose the best graduate for the role, regardless of nationality (this route provides longer term employment without the constraints on salaries that came with previous visa routes).

- ⁹ This route requires paperwork from the employer but is significantly easier than the previous Tier 2 system. After their UK degree study, and with an appropriate job offer and salary, the international graduate will automatically meet the 70 points required for the Skilled Worker visa.

- ¹⁰ This requirement has been abolished and employers are no longer required to justify international hires. The strict job advert requirements have also been removed.



Benefits to Business

- ¹¹ Firms with high cultural and ethnic diversity on executive teams are 36% more likely to outperform their rivals on profitability, according to a study by McKinsey. <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion/diversity-wins-how-inclusion-matters>

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