

TOOLKIT 1

Tier 5 (GAE)

Careers
Developing your employability

Working in the UK after studies: A toolkit for international students

TIER 5 Temporary Worker (Government Authorised Exchange)

Section 1: Understanding the Tier 5 visa

Updated July 2016



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Introduction to the Toolkit

Many international students tell us that they would like to stay to work in the UK at the end of their academic course – and often have only heard about the Tier 2 General visa. However this is may not always be easy to obtain and does not meet the need for short term post study work experience (usually up to 12 months) that many students at York are looking for.

Our experience is that the UK Immigration rules can be difficult to understand in a practical way so we have developed this toolkit to provide practical guidance on how to find and apply for jobs that meet the requirements of the visa.

There are a number of different schemes under Tier 5 of the immigration rules but this toolkit focuses on the **Tier 5 Temporary Worker (Government Authorised Exchange)** visa only.

You should use this information alongside the information for international students on our website www.york.ac.uk/careers/international, the UKCISA site www.ukcisa.org.uk and the immigration information on www.gov.uk

(Updated July 2016)

Important

- **Careers staff are not immigration advisers, and while we can provide information, signpost you to other resources and answer questions, we are not able to give individual immigration advice.**
- **Students should be aware that immigration rules and details of schemes change regularly.**



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Comparison between Tier 2 and Tier 5 visas

If you are interested in applying for a Tier 2 visa please refer to our main website

www.york.ac.uk/careers/international

| | Tier 2 | Tier 5 (GAE) |
|--------------------------------|--|--|
| General purpose of visa | Visa for graduate level skilled work – generally (though not exclusively) longer term | A short term visa (usually up to 12 months) - specifically intended to allow you to gain work experience/internship related to your academic course |
| Salary required | Minimum salary of £20,800 or the New Entrant level shown in the Government SOC code tables (this is often higher) | At least National Minimum Wage - £6.50 per hour (April 2015) |
| Sponsorship provider | The employer sponsors the graduate directly and must be registered with UKVI to provide Tier 2 visa sponsorship | Sponsorship is provided by an “overarching sponsoring organisation” - not directly by the individual employer |
| Skill level required | NQF Level 6 – this is a skilled position at graduate level | NVQ Level 3 – a lower skills level than Tier 2, but there should still be an opportunity for learning, so not routine, menial work |
| Time allowed in UK | Up to 5 years | Is usually up to 12 months, depending on length of contract. Each overarching sponsor may have slightly different requirements – some offer sponsorship for up to 24 months |
| Type of work | Any, provided it meets the visa requirements | If applying in the UK, the work must be related to your course of study. In addition, if applying under the International Student Internship Scheme (ISIS), the company must do business with China in some way, or be genuinely intending to do so. Other overarching sponsor may have specific requirements on the type of work/industry sectors they will sponsor |
| Number of visas issued | 2015: 5639 (2014: 4175) | 2015: 379 (2014: 209) |
| Who pays? | Employer | Varies by provider – employer or graduate |



5 steps to staying in the UK with a Tier 5 visa:

Step 1

Understand everything you can about the Tier 5 visa. Use the resources in this toolkit to help you do your research. Book an Information Appointment with *Careers* to discuss further and ask questions.



Step 2

Find opportunities that meet the requirements of the visa – this can include advertised internships or through speculative approaches to employers.



Step 3

Apply for the position – and, if necessary, be ready to explain to an employer how the visa works. If making a speculative approach make sure you are clear why you are a good investment.



Step 4

Once you have a suitable job offer, approach an overarching sponsor to ask for sponsorship. If appropriate they will do the necessary paperwork to issue a Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS).



Step 5

Use your Certificate of Sponsorship to apply for your Tier 5 visa.

Understand the Tier 5 (GAE) visa

The Tier 5 Temporary Worker (Government Authorised Exchange) visa is specifically for graduates who want to work for a short period of time (typically up to 12 months) at the end of their course, to get work experience related to their course of study.

Since October 2013 it has been possible to switch to this visa from your Tier 4 visa in the UK – provided you, your employer and the job you are planning on taking, meet certain criteria. (Note – not all Tier 5 overarching sponsors allow you to switch in the UK.)

A number of organisations are permitted by the UK government to act as “**overarching sponsors**” to work with graduates and their potential employers to provide visa sponsorship. This is similar to the way the University is your sponsor for your Tier 4 visa. These overarching sponsors check that you are doing appropriate work under the visa, confirm that your employer is suitable and that you meet all the necessary requirements of the visa. If all these conditions are met the overarching sponsor is able to issue a Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) which allows you to apply for your Tier 5 visa.



In essence, it is a 3 way agreement between a graduating international student, an employer and an overarching sponsor is formed, with the right internship opportunity at its centre.

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The basics of Tier 5

This visa is not very well known – fewer than 400 were issued in the UK in 2015. **In essence it is a work experience visa that will allow you, under certain conditions, to stay in the UK temporarily to get work experience/internship related to your course of study.**

[The information on the www.gov.uk website is confusing as it is focused more for people who are applying for this visa from outside the UK – however since 2013 it has been possible in many cases to apply for this visa in the UK if you are switching from Tier 4, and the proposed work is related to your course of academic study in the UK.]

+ What you need to know +

- There are a number of different visas under Tier 5 – the information here is only relevant to **Tier 5 Temporary Worker (Government Authorised Exchange)**
- It is the best visa to use if you are looking for a period of work experience/internship in the UK which is related to your academic course before you return home
- It is a temporary visa, available for up to 12 months in most cases, although this can vary depending on the employment contract and specific overarching sponsor scheme
- Provided you meet all the conditions and find a suitable job and employer, you can switch to this visa in the UK from your Tier 4 student visa (*Note: BUNAC scheme has different rules – for this you have to apply outside the UK)
- An employer does not need to sponsor you directly
- Visa sponsorship is provided by an **overarching sponsor** if you, the job and the employer meet certain conditions. The overarching sponsor issues a Certificate of Sponsorship.
- The overarching sponsor (non-profit making) makes a charge to the employer (or you) for its services
- You have to find a suitable vacancy that meets the requirements of the scheme, and, if you are offered the position, you need to approach the overarching sponsor to see if they will provide sponsorship. Some sponsors may include a placement service where they can help you find a position for an additional fee
- There are many organisations licensed to act as overarching sponsors (key ones are listed later)
- Many employers are not aware of this visa and find it confusing

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www.york.ac.uk/careers

YOUR CAREER



UNIVERSITY of York

Checklist - requirements of sponsorship under Tier 5 (GAE)

The **JOB** must be:

- Be directly related to your course of academic study ✓
- A full time, temporary position – usually up to 12 months, can be less ✓
- Paid at least National Minimum Wage ✓
- Position is supernumerary (outside of regular staffing arrangements – e.g. internship) ✓
- Work must be at NVQ Level 3 or above (not routine, menial work) ✓
- Meet any other conditions required by the specific overarching scheme sponsor ✓

YOU must:

- have a Certificate of sponsorship reference number from an overarching sponsor ✓
- have the correct maintenance (money) in your bank for the correct number of days – if this is required ✓
- have completed a course of study in the UK ✓
- have a valid Tier 4 visa and apply for Tier 5 before it expires ✓
- have an offer of an appropriate internship ✓
- pay the appropriate fee to the overarching sponsor (if this is required)
- pay the appropriate visa fee to UKVI ✓

The **EMPLOYER** must:

- Be a UK registered company, charity or Government department ✓
- Provide the company documents required by the overarching sponsor ✓
- Pay the appropriate fee to the overarching sponsor (if this is required) ✓
- Keep appropriate records and advise the overarching sponsor of relevant changes ✓

Note: This information is given as an overview of the requirements. Other criteria may apply and details may change – please check all details directly on the websites of the overarching sponsors (see Section 4 of Toolkit) and on www.gov.uk. Take legal advice if necessary.

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Key information sources

- Use the “Working in the UK after Studies” section of the International Student pages on the *Careers* website www.york.ac.uk/careers/international
- www.york.ac.uk/immigration University of York’s immigration Advice Service
- UKCISA – www.ukcisa.org.uk – a lot of useful information resources for international students
- www.Gov.uk official UK Government source of immigration information
- Read the information – for students and employers - supplied by individual overarching sponsors about their specific requirements
 - AIESEC: Access Tier 5 – www.accesstier5.com
 - GTI: Tier 5 Intern – www.tier5intern.com/
 - BUNAC: Intern in Britain (6 month scheme, apply outside the UK) www.bunac.org/usa/intern-abroad/professional/Britain
(May also be willing to sponsor voluntary internships)
 - IAESTE www.iaeste.org British Council run scheme
 - Twin UK Tier 5 Engineering www.workandvolunteer.com/tier-5-engineering-internships

The overarching sponsors highlighted in this toolkit are a small selection of all the schemes available, but they are the ones that we feel may be most relevant. They are either broad enough to include most situations, or narrow enough to be focused and relevant to our students or courses at York.

There are over 70 schemes and overarching sponsors available under Tier 5 (GAE) – some have very specific remits and conditions so you need to check all conditions carefully. You can find a full list online at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/tier-5-government-authorized-exchange-schemes

You can find out more about the key overarching sponsors in [Section 4 of the Toolkit](#).



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What next?

- You should now understand the basics of Tier 5 visa, and where to find out about some of the overarching sponsors that may be able to offer you sponsorship. If you have any questions please book a Careers Information appointment through Careers Gateway www.york.ac.uk/careers/gateway
- Download Section 2 of the Toolkit to learn more about finding opportunities or learn more about overarching sponsors in Section 4.

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www.york.ac.uk/careers

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