International Students – working after your studies

This is a brief summary of the employment and recruitment of graduates in the UK, and advice for navigating the UK recruitment process. It does not provide official advice on UK visa regulations.

For advice on permission to work in the UK, contact:

- The City University Student Centre’s International Student Advisors:
  phone 020 7040 7040 or email visaadvice@city.ac.uk
- The UK Council for International Student Affairs (UKCISA), an independent, non-profit making organisation: www.ukcisa.org.uk

UK Graduate Employment

If you are a finalist, on a one-year postgraduate course or looking for a placement or internship, start your job search early.

- Many large organisations recruit annually and have very early closing dates for application, some up to a year before the job starts e.g. September/October 2014 for jobs starting in September 2015. Recruitment for training contracts with law firms can be two or more years in advance.
- Particular degree subjects may not be necessary. Often the classification of degree is important (e.g. 2:1 or above) and employers may look for particular skill sets.
- Relevant experience may be helpful and for some jobs may be essential. You can gain experience by undertaking an internship, work placements or volunteering during study.
- Research your job choices thoroughly as requirements vary according to the nature of the work and the individual employer. Use the resources in our careers library and consider booking to see a Careers Consultant to discuss your options.
- IT user skills are important e.g. Microsoft Office, email and the internet.
- For information on what you can do with your degree, check out Prospect’s Options with your Subject: www.prospects.ac.uk/options_with_your_subject.htm

UK Recruitment

Applying for jobs

Many jobs are advertised on job websites or the careers or HR section of the employer’s website. The employer will stipulate how to apply. They may request a CV (often with a cover letter) or completion of an application form (usually online). Sometimes both are required.

If your application convinces the employer that you meet the job requirements, you may be selected for the next step of the process. This will often be an interview. If this is successful, other stages may include further interviews and/or invitation to an assessment.

Tests are often used in selection, and can be at any stage of the process.

We offer resources and support, such as CV checks, practice interviews and access to our online vacancies via www.city.ac.uk/careers.

Qualifications gained outside of the UK

UCAS Points and A-levels are secondary school qualifications in the UK. If you are asked for these, you can provide your secondary school
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qualifications from your home country along with the scale (i.e. 70/100, 8/10, etc).

NARIC is the official information provider in the UK on the comparability of international qualifications. There is a fee for NARIC reports. You should only purchase one if you are specifically asked to.


For postgraduate students with a first degree from your home country (or another non-UK country), you can find an Overseas Grade Comparison document on CareersHub. Search for Grade Comparison under Resources.

Work experience

Highlight how your experience provides skills that are sought after in the UK. If your previous job is unusual in the UK you may need to explain it clearly. Experience in a family business is valued by employers and voluntary work can be too. Also include any work in your country of origin.

Compulsory National Service

Many employers value this but avoid using military terms. The skills gained from this experience and the achievements, tasks and responsibilities can be of interest e.g. leading and managing others, working in a team.

References

You may be asked to provide contact details of referees. These should be individuals who can answer questions about you or write an assessment of your abilities if requested by an employer who is interested in employing you. Ideally, give contact details of an academic member of staff and a previous employer, having first obtained their agreement to this.

Gaps

Clarify what you were doing if there are any large gaps in your education or work history when you make job applications. An employer may think the worst unless you briefly explain e.g. military service, travel, unemployment.

Your experience of relocating to the UK can demonstrate that you have developed valuable skills, which may be useful when answering some application.

Postgraduate Qualifications

In the UK, postgraduate qualifications do not always attract a higher salary and might not be an entry requirement for some jobs. However, there are jobs where further study is necessary. In some areas of work, postgraduate qualifications are increasingly common.

Careers services at City

Our services are open to all City University students and graduates. If you require communication or access support, please contact us.

Our resources include:

• Online Vacancies can be accessed via www.city.ac.uk/careers.
• Going Global is an international vacancy search engine with opportunities, country profiles and country specific job search and CV advice. To create a personal login, please visit the Careers Service.

• Career Guidance is offered by our Careers Consultants who can check CVs, application forms and cover letters as well as practice interviews. Book an appointment online.

• Workshops are run regularly on job search topics. These include short briefings on subjects from CVs and applications to longer sessions of practice selection tests and mock assessment centres. Register for workshops online.

• Recruitment Fairs and Employer Presentations are organised throughout the year by the Careers Service. They are an excellent opportunity to meet recruiters in person and get useful tips about applying. Register for events online.

• Workshops/Employer Events/Presentations can be booked online.

• Careers Guides are available on our website and include: Writing a CV, Covering Letters, Application Forms, Action Words, Interview Technique, Succeeding at Assessment Centres, Psychometric Tests, and more.

Other services at City University London

• The Student Centre, Level 2, University Building

• Academic Learning Support, provides advice and support for current students with disabilities. Level 2, University Building.

• City University London Students Union provides information on City sports clubs, special interest societies, social events and more.
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The Students Union is located to the right of the main entrance at Northampton Square.

What is a National Insurance number and how do I get one?

Your National Insurance number (NINo) is a unique personal number which is used to record your National Insurance contributions. You do not need to have a NINo whilst looking for work, but you must obtain one when you get a job.

The government website HM Revenue and Customs provides more information: [www.gov.uk/national-insurance/overview](http://www.gov.uk/national-insurance/overview)

You can apply for a National Insurance Number by calling 0845 600 0643 to make an appointment. Ask what documents you will need to bring to the appointment. You usually need to take your passport, payslips or a letter from your employer confirming that you will be working for them. Your appointment will take place at your nearest Jobcentre Plus office.

Outside sources of information and advice

UKCISA

A charity offering advice and information to international students.

[www.ukcisa.org.uk](http://www.ukcisa.org.uk)

The UK Border Agency

Government department providing information on working in the UK.


For detailed lists of UK Registered Sponsors login into CareersHub and search the “resources box” for International Students.

[The Prospects website](http://www.prospects.ac.uk)

Vacancies and careers information appropriate for graduates and undergraduates. Includes information on selection processes and a dedicated section for international students.
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