

## **Tips on how to switch from Tier4 to Tier2 visa**

In order to obtain a Tier 2 visa or work permit, you must be employed and sponsored for this visa by a company which is a Tier 2-registered sponsor. You should check which companies are Tier 2 registered sponsors on this list before applying. One thing to take into consideration is that there is a minimum starting salary below which you can't get a work visa. When switching from a student visa to Tier 2, the minimum value is lower and varies between professions. Also, you can remain on a work visa for up to 5 years. Once this period is up, you can apply for Indefinite Leave to Remain. This is a residence permit which does not require sponsorship from a company. The level of degree which you are studying for can make a significant difference.

When studying for a bachelor's degree, there is more time available to secure a job with a company that is a Tier 2-registered sponsor. Whereas, when studying for a master's degree, your chances at securing a Tier2 sponsoring job are better than those studying for their bachelor's. However, the workload tends to be more time consuming.

So, if possible, apply for a master's degree with a programme that includes a placement year that is sponsored in your student visa.

This gives you two advantages:

One advantage is having more time to secure a sponsored job. The second one is that it allows you to get around the 20-hour/week working limit for Tier 4 students. This limit can make it impossible to land a full time job, as most roles require you to work around 40 hours/week. However, if your programme includes a placement year, you are permitted to work full time weeks.

You should start applying for vacancies as early as you can, rather than waiting till you finish all of your lectures and assignments. Take some time each day to apply and pursue interviews or other stages of applications. This makes you one of the first candidates and gives you more exposure over a longer period of time.

If you are employed on a work visa but would like to explore other job opportunities, don't leave your current employment until you have secured another sponsored job with a new employer. If you leave your current job under a Tier 2 visa, you are given just 2 months to secure another sponsored job before you are made to leave the UK.