

UK announces 2-year post-study work visa for international students

The new 'Graduate' immigration route will be open to all international students – including those from China – who have valid UK immigration status as a student and have successfully completed a course of study at undergraduate level or above, at an approved UK Higher Education Provider. The visa will allow eligible students to work, or look for work, at any skill level or subject, giving them valuable work experience at the start of their careers.

This will build on government action to help recruit and retain the best and brightest global talent, but also open up opportunities for future breakthroughs in science, technology and research and other world-leading work that international talent brings to the UK.

It follows recent announcements, such as the creation of a new fast-track visa route for scientists and the removal of the limit on PHD students moving into the skilled work visa route, which collectively aim to cement the UK as a science superpower and a world-leader in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) sector.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

The new Graduate Route will mean talented international students, whether in science and maths or technology and engineering, can study in the UK and then gain valuable work experience as they go on to build successful careers.

It demonstrates our global outlook and will ensure that we continue to attract the best and brightest.

Dame Barbara Woodward, the British Ambassador to China said:

This is great news for Chinese students! The new Graduate visa will give students a 2 year opportunity to find work that builds on their degree qualification and gives them valuable international work experience.

The UK is a popular choice for Chinese students because it is home to three of the top ten universities in the world. Last year alone over 100,000 Chinese students came to the UK to study and this number grows each year.

The UK remains open and welcoming for Chinese students, visitors and business people, with over 100 direct flights per week between the UK and China.

Notes

- This follows a shake-up of immigration rules [announced by the Prime Minister](#) in August to encourage the world's top scientists to move to the UK.
- The new route will launch for the 2020/21 intake of students to university. After the two years, they will be able to switch onto the skilled work visa if they find a job which meets the skill requirement of the route.
- The UK has seen a strong increase in Chinese student numbers in recent years. The latest available statistics are [on the Home Office website](#).
- The status of each institution will be shown in the register of licensed sponsors, which is publicly available [on the GOV.UK website](#).