

Internships and placements

As well as going to the UK to study, you can also travel there for an internship or placement. After the UK's exit from the EU the rules have changed considerably, so make sure to be prepared and know what you need to arrange before you travel to the UK.

Temporary Work – Government Authorised Exchange visa¹

The Temporary Work – Government Authorised Exchange visa (previously known as the Tier 5 visa) needs to be requested for any placements or internships. There are some exceptions to this rule, such as research internships up to 6 months (see information below). With this visa you are allowed to work or do an internship in the UK for either 12 or 24 months, and you are allowed to arrive 14 days before your start date. In order to apply, you must have a sponsor (see information below), meet the [eligibility criteria](#), and have a paid or unpaid internship/placement offer from a UK-based company.

You can apply for a visa up to 3 months before the day you are due to start your work in the UK. As part of your application, you will need to prove your identity and provide the required documents. Make sure to allow extra time to arrange everything that is needed to submit your request. Once you've applied online, proved your identity, and provided your documents, you'll usually get a decision on your visa within 3 weeks if you're outside the UK.

The application fee for this visa is £259 for each person applying. In addition to this, you will need to pay the Immigration Health Surcharge, which is £624 per adult per year (with a discounted rate of £470 for students and their dependents). You will also need to prove you have enough personal savings; more information on this can be found in the [eligibility criteria](#).

Certificate of sponsorship

To do an internship or placement in the UK you will need a Certificate of Sponsorship from a licensed sponsor as part of your visa request. The organisation where you will do your internship or placement needs to be part of the UK government's [list of organisations licensed to sponsor workers on the Worker and Temporary Worker immigration routes](#). It can take some time to have an organisation added to the list, so make sure to start this process on time. The organisation that is sponsoring you will need to request the Certificate of Sponsorship for you. Your work, training or research in the UK must relate to the work of your sponsor organisation. Your sponsor can be any of the following: an organisation running an approved exchange scheme; a higher education institution (if you are a sponsored researcher, visiting academic or examiner), or a government department or agency.

If your internship or placement is part of Erasmus+, the Erasmus+ coordinator at your school will be able to request the certificate for you, either through British Council (higher education) or Ecorys UK (MBO).

¹ The British Council is not a visa advisory service. Please refer to official UK governmental websites for guidance.

Research internship

If you are going to the UK for a research internship at a UK higher education institution for no longer than 6 months, in some cases it is possible to use the Standard Visitor Route. This means you will not need to request a visa. It is important the UK higher education institution you will be visiting recognises your research internship as 'research as study', and not 'research for work' (in which case the Tier 5 visa will need to be requested). For research internships longer than 6 months, the Tier 5 visa will need to be requested.

Find more information on studying in the UK on the [Study UK website](#).