



Guidance on Working Hours for students with a Student Visa

Students in UK campuses

Definition of a Working Week

The working week starts on a Monday and ends on a Sunday in any given week, as defined by The Home Office for students undertaking work when on a Student Visa

Students studying for a qualification AT LEAST at degree level but below PhD

You are eligible to work up to a maximum of 20 hours per week during term time. The hours cannot be averaged out, and all hours worked, regardless of employer, type of contract or paid/unpaid are combined together for the weekly total.

Term-time is defined by the University Calendar Dates: <http://www.hw.ac.uk/student-life/how-to-apply/academic-calendar.htm>

Retuning students who are asked to support Welcome Week are able to work more than 20 hours during this week if it is outside defined “teaching time” according to the academic calendar.

Students studying for a PhD

You are eligible to work up to a maximum of 20 hours per week whilst studying. The hours cannot be averaged out, and all hours worked, regardless of employer, type of contract or paid/unpaid are combined together for the weekly limit.

PhD students are only entitled to 6 weeks “holiday” from their studies per year, as agreed with your Supervisor and reported to the HR Recruitment Team for our records. During these 6 weeks, you may undertake unlimited work, but the holiday must be clearly noted on the timesheet, otherwise the 20-hour limit will be applied. The UKVI does not define “unlimited work” but as holiday is specifically granted under the Working Time Directive to recover and rest, we recommend that sensible and reasonable hours are offered during these periods and certainly no more than the university standard working week of 35 hours.

PhD students who take a part-week “holiday” from their studies, are restricted to 20 hours work during that week. We will only allow more than 20 hours work if the whole week is taken as “holiday” and confirmed accordingly.

For example:

- Booking 5 days “holiday” from your studies starting Monday and ending Friday in the same week **allows you to work full time during this period**
- Booking 5 days “holiday” from your studies starting Wednesday and ending Tuesday the following week **restricts you to 20 hours work in each of those two weeks.**

Students who have completed their PhD

If the Student visa is still valid, you may work full time until your visa expires, or you switch into a different visa category once you have completed your PhD.

This means having achieved all of the following:

- Handed in your thesis
- Completed your viva exam
- Completed and submitted the corrected version of your thesis after the viva

You will be asked to produce written confirmation of the above if you wish to undertake casual work or employment at Heriot-Watt University on more than 20 hours per week. An email from your Supervisor will be sufficient.

Students studying for a qualification BELOW degree level, e.g. foundation or pre-sessional English language programmes including some Global College Students.

The maximum limit is 10 hours per week during term time. If you are a student attending, for example, a 2-semester English programme, you may undertake casual work up to this limit. The entitlement to work and the limits will be clearly stated in your passport and visa stamp or Biometric Card.

NOTE that some students studying at the Global College may, depending on their degree package, only be eligible to work 10 hours per week during term-time. It is very important that Global College Students are aware of their own visa restrictions and that careful attention is given to the visa terms when offering casual work to this group.

Exchange Students e.g. former ERASMUS or Turing Fellowships

Students coming on an exchange such as the new Turing Fellowship to study for a period of up to six months **are not eligible** to carry out casual work as their visa will not permit them to do so.