



# Student visa changes in effect - now



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**N**ew immigration rules published on 17 July 2023 brought into immediate effect changes to student visas originally due to start from January 2024.

These changes mean that student visa holders are now ineligible to switch to a skilled worker visa and some other work visa types before either of the following:

- Completing the course of study for which their confirmation of acceptance for studies was assigned
- Being within three months of their course completion date, in which case the work



start date on the Certificate of Sponsorship (COS) must be after the course completion date.

PhD-level students are eligible to switch after two years or more of study.

UK Visas and Immigration has confirmed that a student does not need to have successfully

completed a course to switch visas.

Pre-existing allowances under the immigration rules and sponsor guidance for starting work earlier than the COS start date are still in effect:

- A student within three months of their course completion date may start in full-

time, permanent employment once they submit a valid application for permission to stay as a skilled worker. Although the start date for sponsorship stated on the COS cannot be earlier than the course completion date, the actual work start date can be earlier than the course completion date.

- Once the skilled worker permission to stay application is approved, the individual can start in the sponsored skilled worker role before the start date on the COS. In addition, as of 17 July 2023, a student cannot rely on being the dependant of a skilled worker or of some other work visa holders, before completing their course of study.