

Guidance for Students on Paid Employment

1. Introduction

- a. This guidance applies to students who are currently Normally Registered on a programme of study offered by the University of Birmingham. This applies where paid employment is not a part of the programme of study.
- b. It is your responsibility to determine the extent of any paid employment that you undertake. You **must** take into account the potential effects that employment may have on your studies, and you should liaise with your School regarding your individual circumstances.
- c. You normally cannot use the consequences of paid employment as extenuating circumstances. Guild Advice can offer advice for students experiencing financial hardship.
- d. You **must** also be aware of any limitations imposed by funding bodies (such as Research Councils) or visa requirements on the amount of paid employment you can undertake.
- e. International students must contact the International Student Team (IST) if they have any queries about their visa requirements.

2. Study hours expectation

- a. Whilst we recognise that you study at your own pace, we calculate each credit of academic study to represent 10 hours of engagement. The table below shows the hours we expect our students to commit to studying.

| Level of Study | Amount of credit per year | Total weeks per year | Hours per year | Hours per week (approx.) |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Undergraduate | 120-credits | 30 weeks | 1,200 hours | 40 hours |
| Postgraduate (Taught) | 180-credits | 44 weeks | 1,800 hours | 40 hours |
| Postgraduate (Research) | Not applicable | 44 weeks | 1,800 hours | 40 hours |

3. Key dates and vacation periods

- a. Your key dates (i.e. your semester dates) and vacation periods will depend on the type of programme you are studying. You should always seek confirmation from your Principle Academic Unit (PAU) as to when the vacation periods fall within your programme.
- b. In general, the following applies¹.

¹ Key dates can be found on the [University website](#).

| Level of Study | Key dates |
|---|--|
| Undergraduate | <u>Semester dates</u> : As published by the University. These will total 30-weeks ² . |
| | <u>Vacation</u> : Three periods per academic session, normally around Christmas, Easter and summer. |
| Postgraduate (Taught) [normally 1-year] | <u>Semester dates</u> : As published by the University. These will total 44 weeks ³ . |
| | <u>Vacation</u> : Two periods per academic session, normally around Christmas and Easter. There is no vacation period over the summer as this is considered term time and you are expected to be working on your dissertation throughout this period. Any paid employment during this period is legally restricted to a maximum of 20 hours per week. Paid employment offered by the University is subject to the restrictions set out in section 4 below. |
| Postgraduate (Research) | <u>Semester dates</u> : Do not apply. Expected to study for 44-weeks per year. |
| | <u>Vacation</u> : Permitted to take up to 8 weeks holiday per year (inclusive of Bank Holidays and University Closed Days). Holiday must be agreed with your supervisor in advance. ⁴ |

² Some Undergraduate programmes may have longer semester dates and shorter vacation periods. Please check with your programme for details. The 30 week period for Semester 1 consists of 11 weeks of learning and teaching (weeks 2-12), one assessment support week (week 13) and 2 assessment weeks (weeks 17-18). Semester 2 consists of 11 weeks of learning/teaching (weeks 20-27 and 31-33), 2 assessment support weeks (weeks 34-35) and 3 assessment weeks (weeks 36-38). The final 2 weeks of semester 2 (weeks, 39-40) should not be included.

³ 44-weeks includes 30-weeks published semester dates by the University (detailed above) and an additional 14-week period for your dissertation (weeks 39-52).

⁴ International PGR students who are intending to work full-time during any part of their vacation must apply for Authorised Absence. More details can be found on the [Authorised Absence for International Students](#) web-page.

4. Working time restrictions

- a. As an employer, the University (via Worklink) will only offer employment based on the limits specified below. These limits are set by the University, taking into account the limits permitted by law.

| Level of Study | Recommendation during periods of study | During vacation periods |
|---|--|--|
| Undergraduate | 15-hours per week | No restriction |
| Postgraduate (Taught) | 15-hours per week | No restriction (with the exception of the summer vacation for 1-year PGT students and 2 nd year 2-year PGT students), as this is considered term time when students will be working on their dissertation |
| Postgraduate (Research) | 15-hours per week | No restrictions |
| Postgraduate (Research) – <i>Thesis Awaited</i> | 15-hours per week | No restrictions |

- b. We recommend the above restrictions for full-time Home students are not exceeded, regardless of the employer.
- c. It is however acknowledged that, from time to time, students may seek employment in addition to the recommended hours above and that individual students are best placed to judge their own limits when seeking paid employment. You **must** consider the impact upon your studies and the restrictions of your visa when taking up employment whilst studying, and should liaise with your School regarding your individual circumstances.

5. International Students

- a. Your current visa will state if you have permission to work and, if so, the maximum number of hours per week that you are permitted to work. It is your responsibility to check your visa for hours permitted and to ensure you do not work beyond this.
- b. If you are employed by the University via Worklink (see section 4, above), your Hiring Manager will submit relevant right to work checks on the Home Office's online Right to Work Checking Service. This will either be done face to face or through a separate meeting to verify your identity. This creates a document stating hourly restrictions, term times and holiday restrictions and when full time work is possible and any conditions such as ineligible types of work. The document also contains details of employer responsibilities, and a reference number is created.



The document is then uploaded to the Worklink portal by the manager and verified by the Worklink administrator. No new worker will be set up on the system without a right to work check.

If your visa is due to expire within the next month, you will be contacted directly to advise you that a further visa must be obtained or work must cease. Worklink will end any assignments if a new visa is not obtained.

- c. **Working over the permitted hours in your visa is a serious breach of your visa conditions. This may result in a report being made to the Home Office and possible implications for your visa, such as you having to return to your home country - and being withdrawn from your programme or the University.**
- d. A week will be defined as a period of 7 days, starting on a Monday.