

Important information for international students undertaking paid consultancy projects

If you are in the UK on a Tier 4 student visa, you are **restricted** in the type of work you can undertake whilst in the UK.

You can work a maximum of 20 hours per week during term-time and full-time in vacation periods OR full-time during term time if you are undertaking a work placement that is an assessed part of the course.

You can only work on a **temporary contract** and you CANNOT act as **self-employed**.

The UK Government gives some advice about how acting as 'self employed' can be defined:

"Someone is probably self-employed and doesn't have the rights of an employee if they're exempt from PAYE and most of the following are also true:

- they put in bids or give quotes to get work
- they're not under direct supervision when working
- they submit invoices for the work they've done
- they're responsible for paying their own National Insurance and tax
- they don't get holiday or sick pay when they're not working
- they operate under a contract (sometimes known as a 'contract for services' or 'consultancy agreement') that uses terms like 'self-employed', 'consultant' or an 'independent contractor'"

As a Tier 4 student you can only work if you are considered to be an 'employee' (rather than self-employed). The UK Government defines being an employee as follows:

"Someone who works for a business is probably an employee if most of the following are true:

- they're required to work regularly unless they're on leave, eg holiday, sick leave or maternity leave
- they're required to do a minimum number of hours and expect to be paid for time worked
- a manager or supervisor is responsible for their workload, saying when a piece of work should be finished and how it should be done
- they can't send someone else to do their work
- the business deducts tax and National Insurance contributions from their wages
- they get paid holiday
- they're entitled to contractual or Statutory Sick Pay, and maternity or paternity pay
- the business's disciplinary and grievance procedures apply to them
- they work at the business's premises or at an address specified by the business
- the business provides the materials, tools and equipment for their work
- they only work for the business or if they do have another job, it's completely different from their work for the business
- their contract, statement of terms and conditions or offer letter (which can be described as an 'employment contract') uses terms like 'employer' and 'employee'"

If you are not sure if you are being asked to work as self-employed, please check with the International Student Support team BEFORE commencing the work (international@imperial.ac.uk). Working in breach of your immigration permission is a serious offence and can have implications for your ability to remain in the UK.

