

# International Students

## Tier 5 Government Authorised Exchange

For most international students who want to secure a graduate job in the UK, the Tier 2 (General) Visa is the main route. However, if you are unable to obtain a job offer under Tier 2 and are prepared to consider alternatives, or you just want to stay in the UK for a limited period to do an internship, then the Tier 5 visa is a route worth exploring further.

### **Key features of Tier 5 Government Authorised Exchange (GAE)**

- This programme is aimed at students/graduates who wish to do a period of work experience or training in the UK.
- The time duration is usually up to 12 months for work experience but can be up to 24 months for specific research or training. The length of time will depend on the scheme applied for.
- The visa is organised through a GAE sponsor on behalf of students (and employers).
- The GAE sponsor must issue a certificate of sponsorship before the individual can apply for the visa.
- There is a list of approved GAE sponsors on the government website- [www.gov.uk/government/publications/tier-5-government-authorised-exchange-schemes](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tier-5-government-authorised-exchange-schemes)
- **The post must be a skilled role, supernumerary (i.e. not a vacant job), temporary, and pay at or above the level of the national minimum wage.**
- Students/graduates can apply from within the UK to switch from a Tier 4 student visa to a Tier 5 GAE visa if the job is **directly relevant to their degree**.
- Students/graduates can do a Tier 5 role not directly related to their degree but they must apply from their home country.
- Students/graduates have to pay a fee for the visa - this is £230.
- Students/graduates must also have 'proof of support' funds of at least £945. These savings must have been in your bank account for at least 90 days before application.
- The individual must leave the UK on completion of the period of work experience and cannot switch to Tier 2 within the UK. However if a Company wants to offer the person full-time employment in the UK, they can apply for a Tier 2 visa for them once they have returned to their home country, but the more stringent version of the rules will apply (i.e. the 'Resident Labour Market Test' and the cap on numbers of visas).
- *(This information is not relevant to students wishing to do a placement as part of their degree course. For this, check information on the Careers Service and Student Union Advice Centre websites regarding taking a placement whilst on the Tier 4 student visa.)*

Please note regulations can change so always check the current position at:-

<http://su.sheffield.ac.uk/student-advice-centre/immigration/working-after-studies/tier-5-visas>



There is a full list of approved GAE sponsors on the government website:-

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/tier-5-government-authorized-exchange-schemes](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tier-5-government-authorized-exchange-schemes)

Some of these programmes are very specific to particular groups or purposes of the internship. You should check out the full list because there could be a programme that perfectly meets your situation/needs. However at the Careers Service we have researched the larger/ more general schemes that are likely to be of interest to the majority of international students /graduates of the University of Sheffield. This information is summarised below for your use but these are only examples of schemes, please check the list for full details of all schemes.

## Tier 5 Government Authorised Exchange

### Examples of Schemes/Sponsors

Name of Scheme/ Sponsor Contact Details and general info.	Number of Places	Length of Placement	Eligibility Criteria	Policy re Finding Placements	Student Costs (in addition to the £230 visa fee)	Employer Costs
<b>AIIESEC Internships – Access Tier 5</b>  <a href="http://www.accesstier5.com">www.accesstier5.com</a> Contact person - Zenia Chopra Tel: 02075491801 Email <a href="mailto:enquiries@accesstier5.com">enquiries@accesstier5.com</a>	400	Minimum 1 month up to a maximum of 12 months. (A placement can be extended to 24 months in certain circumstances, but the individual must leave the UK at the end of 12 months and apply for the visa again.)	Degree gained within the last 3 years. No age limits.	The student/ graduate has to find their own placement. They and/or the employer then contact AIIESEC.	IHS fee of £200	Employer pays a one-off registration fee of £600 and then fees of £100 a month per placement (in addition to paying the trainee's salary.)

Name of Scheme/ Sponsor Contact Details and general info.	Number of Places	Length of Placement	Eligibility Criteria	Policy re Finding Placements	Student Costs (in addition to the £230 visa fee)	Employer Costs
<p><b>BUNAC - The BUNAC Blue Card Internship Program</b>  <a href="http://www.bunac.org/usa/intern-abroad/professional/britain">www.bunac.org/usa/intern-abroad/professional/britain</a>            Tel: 0207 870 9570</p> <p>Information for Employers is at  <a href="http://www.bunac.org/usa/intern-abroad/professional/britain/employer-info">www.bunac.org/usa/intern-abroad/professional/britain/employer-info</a></p>	No limit on numbers.	Up to 6 months.  (In certain circumstances BUNAC will approve voluntary internships but there are conditions that must be met. See the BUNAC website for clarification.)	<p>The scheme is open to full time students and recent graduates* of any nationality outside the EEA.            *Within 12 months of completing their course.</p> <p>On BUNAC's scheme applicants cannot switch direct from Tier 4 to Tier 5 in the UK. Must apply from outside the UK and been out of the UK for 2 months before starting the internship. Applications can take 8 weeks and the internship must start within 3 months of the visa being approved.</p>	BUNAC do not provide the placements but offer advice and resources to help applicants find and secure their own placement. They also offer a placement service which can connect you with the type of employer you are looking to intern with and have links from their website to several work placement agencies that can help students and graduates secure placements for a fee.	<p>Programme fee: £540</p> <p>Proof of adequate insurance.</p>	None.

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<p><b>IAESTE</b></p> <p><b>-Reserved Offers Tier 5 Scheme (for students transferring from Tier 4 to Tier 5)</b></p> <p><b>-BOND Scheme (for graduates applying from outside the UK)</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.iaeste.org">www.iaeste.org</a> Tel: 02890 192251 Email – <a href="mailto:ciara.murray@britishcouncil.org">ciara.murray@britishcouncil.org</a></p>	Not specified.	Up to 12 months	<p><b>Reserved Offers Scheme:</b> UK degree in any subject. Must apply for Tier 5 visa before Tier 4 visa expires. Placement cannot start until visa confirmed- can take up to 8 weeks - candidates should be aware of this before fixing start date with their placement provider.</p> <p><b>BOND scheme:</b> graduates with UK degree in any subject who are applying from outside the UK. No time limit re course completion. (Can have graduated several years ago.)</p>	Students are required to find their own placement. The employer can then contact IAESTE who can arrange a Tier 5 visa on their behalf.	Immigration health surcharge of £200 for 12 month placement or approx. £100 for 6 months. Placements of less than 6 months do not incur this charge.	£1000 + VAT per graduate recruited.

Name of Scheme/ Sponsor Contact Details and general info.	Number of Places	Length of Placement	Eligibility Criteria	Policy re Finding Placements	Student Costs (in addition to the £230 visa fee)	Employer Costs
<p><b>International Internship Scheme</b>  <a href="http://www.fragomen.com">www.fragomen.com</a>             Email:  <a href="mailto:tier5internship@fragomen.com">tier5internship@fragomen.com</a></p>	<p>Number not disclosed</p>	<p>Up to 12 months taken in one block or in shorter periods of time over several years.</p>	<p>Have a bachelor's degree or above or currently be enrolled in or about to embark on a bachelor's degree course or above; or have completed their most recent degree in the last 5 years; and be under 35 years old, or under 40 years old if undergoing a change of career; and able to speak a sufficient level of English.            Eligibility criteria for employers:            Must be Tier 2 sponsors already and/or have a trading presence in at least 2 countries.</p>	<p>Applicant finds their own placement.</p> <p>The employer can contact this scheme who will then administer the Tier 5 visa application on their behalf.</p>	<p>Fee £2050 +VAT +5% out of pocket expenses (paid either by graduate or employer.)</p> <p>£21 government fee +VAT.</p>	<p>See student costs.*</p>

Name of Scheme/ Sponsor Contact Details and general info.	Number of Places	Length of Placement	Eligibility Criteria	Policy re Finding Placements	Student Costs (in addition to the £230 visa fee)	Employer Costs
<b>Tier 5 Intern Scheme (GTI Recruiting Solutions)</b> <a href="http://www.tier5intern.com">www.tier5intern.com</a> Tel: <a href="tel:02070611916">02070611916</a> Email <a href="mailto:admin@tier5intern.com">admin@tier5intern.com</a>	No fixed limit.	No minimum up to a maximum of 12 months.		The scheme is employer-led. They do not deal with students/graduates directly. The student/graduate has to find their own placement and then the employer contacts the Tier 5 Intern Scheme directly (GTI Recruiting Solutions).	None	Registration fee of £750 + VAT which includes the cost of the first Certificate of Sponsorship. Thereafter, each Certificate of Sponsorship issued is charged at £750 +VAT.

If you want advice on deciding whether Tier 5 is the appropriate visa route for you to stay in the UK to work please contact the Student Advice Centre in the Students Union Building - <http://su.sheffield.ac.uk/student-advice-centre>. The Student Advice Centre can also help you with checking your Tier 5 visa application form.

**Attached are two examples of covering letters that you could adapt if you were contacting employers on a speculative basis in regard to Tier 5 Internships.**

***Note – You must modify these letters to suit your own situation, needs, and those of the Company applied to.***

Address line 1  
Address line 2  
Postcode

Name  
Company address 1  
Date

Dear Sir/Madam

*Introductory section - example below*

I am currently a Chinese international student studying for an MSc in International Management at the University of Sheffield. I am writing to enquire about the possibility of undertaking an internship with your organisation for a period of X months.

*Section explaining about the Tier 5 visa - example below*

The UK government has created a visa, the **Tier 5 Government Authorised Exchange (GAE)**, under which international students can work in UK companies for up to 12 months. The visa is administered by a Sponsoring Organisation (further details attached\*), which undertakes all the paper work re the visa. **The requirements of the visa are that the internship must be a skilled role, supernumerary (i.e. not a vacant job), temporary, and paid at or above the level of the national minimum wage.**

*Section explaining about why you want to do an internship - example below*

I would be very interested in undertaking such an internship with your company which is directly related to my Management degree. This could possibly be on a project that your company is interested in carrying out. I am keen to do an internship in order to gain practical managerial experience and to make a contribution to UK industry and commerce.

*Section explaining about what you have to offer - example below*

I have studied Management for four years, including a three year undergraduate degree in China, and all my marks are at the 2:1 equivalent level. Key modules I have taken are ... (*select modules of relevance to the company*). In addition to my business management skills I bring a range of other skills and experiences such as team working and leadership from my work experience in ... I have excellent communication and written abilities developed during my course assignments and presentations and high level English language skills. As an international student I have knowledge of my home country's culture and working practices and am fluent in Mandarin which may be of benefit to your company if it is looking to develop/expand its overseas markets.

*Section explaining about why you have applied to the company - example below*

Having researched a number of organisations I am particularly attracted to ... (*name of company*) because..... A chance to work with a company that has recently ..... would be a significant opportunity for me. I believe that because of my educational qualifications, experience, qualities and enthusiasm I can make a strong contribution to your organisation. I have attached my CV with further details.

*Concluding section explaining - example below*

If, after looking at my CV and further details about the Tier 5 Government Authorised Exchange programme, you would be interested in discussing this matter further please contact me.

I hope to hear from you in the near future.

Yours faithfully

\*To be attached to the letter

Further details of the Tier 5 Government Authorised Exchange are available at:-

[www.gov.uk/tier-5-government-authorised-exchange](http://www.gov.uk/tier-5-government-authorised-exchange)

Examples of Sponsoring Organisations are:-

- AISEC Internships – Access Tier 5 [www.accesstier5.com](http://www.accesstier5.com)
- BUNAC Blue Card Internship Program - [www.bunac.org/usa/interninbritain/about](http://www.bunac.org/usa/interninbritain/about)
- IAESTE - [www.iaeste.org](http://www.iaeste.org)
- International Internship Scheme -[www.fragomen.com](http://www.fragomen.com)
- Tier 5 Internship scheme (GTI Recruiting Solutions) [www.tier5intern.com](http://www.tier5intern.com)

(Please note some sponsoring organisations require the employer to pay a fee in addition to the salary, others require the student to pay a fee.)



Address line 1  
Address line 2  
Postcode

Name  
Company address 1  
Company address 2

Date

Dear Ms/Mr ...

**Project / Internship 2014:**

*Introductory section- example below*

I am currently a final year Mechanical Engineering student at The University of Sheffield and expecting to achieve a 2:1 when I graduate in July this year. I am keen to apply the knowledge gained from my studies into a practical work environment and am therefore writing to enquire about the possibility of undertaking a graduate internship with your company.

*Section explaining about what you have to offer -example below*

As you will see from my attached CV, I have specialised in the area of... completing modules in... all giving me a thorough knowledge of... My dissertation applied this knowledge and focused on.... Having enjoyed these aspects of my course I am therefore keen to apply my knowledge to an engineering project in industry. As... is a company that specialises in this particular industry sector I would be keen to undertaking a project of benefit to you that would also provide me with the first stepping stones on my way to achieving my longer term career goals.

*Section explaining about why you have applied to the company -example below*

I am particularly impressed by.... involvement in... and your innovation into... Ultimately I aspire to work for a successful and driven company such as... which is expanding into international markets. Hence why as an international student from China fluent in Mandarin and English, with strong technical skills and knowledge of my home country's culture and working practices, I would relish the opportunity to work within ... and support your mission to expand into international markets.

*Paragraph section explaining about the Tier 5 visa-example below*

Ideally I am seeking a placement of up to ... months and am eligible to legally undertake this experience under a Tier 5 Governments Authorised Exchange Scheme offered by a Sponsoring Organisation (further details attached\*). The conditions of this programme are that I work for up to 12 months, am paid at least minimum wage and am appointed into a supernumerary temporary appointment.

*Concluding section explaining -example below*

I hope that you will consider me for a potential internship within your company as I believe that I will bring not only technical skills but also enthusiasm, commitment and an international perspective to the role and am keen to apply my skills to address world-leading engineering innovations.

Yours sincerely

\*To be attached to the letter

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- IAESTE - [www.iaeste.org](http://www.iaeste.org)
- International Internship Scheme -[www.fragomen.com](http://www.fragomen.com)
- Tier 5 Internship scheme (GTI Recruiting Solutions) [www.tier5intern.com](http://www.tier5intern.com)

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