

Recruiting international students and graduates in Tasmania

An employers guide





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International students in Tasmania

International students and graduates make a significant contribution to Tasmania economically, socially and culturally with positive flow-on effects for tourism, business, jobs, population, skills and workforce needs in our state.

The number of international students studying in Tasmania totalled 8,340 in November 2024 (YTD), representing a one per cent share of international students nationally.

As of November 2024, the top international student nationalities represented in Tasmania were India, Nepal, China, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Australian Government Department of Education

The top five fields of study by enrolments were:



Management and commerce

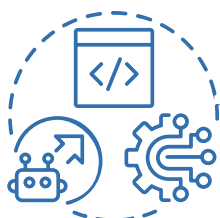


Society and culture

(which includes law, social work, aged and disability care)



Food, hospitality and personal services



Engineering and related technologies



Information technology



Study Tasmania supports students to prepare for employment with online career coaching modules, industry-specific webinars, and free hospitality training courses to enhance part-time employment prospects while studying.

The Study Tasmania International Student Ambassadors Program offers student leadership and personal development opportunities, while the annual Study Tasmania International Education Awards celebrates exceptional students, staff, and community contributions to the sector.

International students and graduates in your business

International students and graduates form a valuable talent pool, bringing high levels of skill, qualifications and motivation to pursue career opportunities in Australia.

International students and graduates can play a key role in addressing skill shortages across various sectors, including management and commerce, information technology, engineering, natural and physical sciences, health, and education among others.

However, misconceptions about their work rights and visa status, and requirements involved in employing visa holders often create barriers for students and employers.

Tasmanian employers of all sizes can enjoy a range of advantages by employing international students and graduates.

Benefits for employers

- 1. Workplace diversity:**
Promoting a multicultural environment that can bring fresh perspectives, innovative ideas and multilingual skills.
- 2. Staff development:**
Offering training opportunities for existing employees to enhance their ability to manage a culturally diverse workforce which can be beneficial for all workplaces.
- 3. New ideas and approaches:**
Gaining innovative insights and new approaches to business operations, driven by diverse experiences and global perspectives.
- 4. Enthusiasm and motivation:**
International students and graduates often bring high energy and a strong passion for their roles, their organisations and their new surroundings.
- 5. Strong work ethic:**
International students and graduates have a high level of dedication and appreciation for opportunities, developed through the experience of studying and living abroad. They also have an ability to adapt and overcome challenges, often developed through diverse life experiences which can be transferred to the workforce.



Misconceptions and concerns

International students and graduates are highly motivated, dedicated, and eager to gain experience in local workplaces. To help dispel some common myths, here are the facts prospective employers should know.

International students don't have good English language skills.

International students are required to meet English language proficiency standards to obtain a student visa (subclass 500) and enrol in academic programs at universities, vocational education and training (VET) courses and schools.

They complete their studies and assignments in English and often have well-developed language skills for the workplace.

International students and graduates can only work if I sponsor them.

International students on a student visa are permitted to work up to 48 hours per fortnight while their courses are in session, and unlimited hours during course breaks.

For students who have studied, graduated, and continued to live in Tasmania, they may be able to work for up to five years on a graduate visa, depending on their qualification and the overseas passport they hold.

Employers often mistakenly believe that students need to have permanent residency to be eligible for a job or that they must 'host' the students.

There may however be instances where an employer might like to sponsor a high-performing graduate beyond their temporary visa period.

The time spent training an international student and graduate outweighs the benefits.

The benefits are numerous including enhancing diversity in the workplace and providing new innovative solutions due to a difference in cultural background. International students also open doors to global markets and insights.

International students invest in their education in Australia through high tuition fees and are committed to building their careers. They approach any opportunity for professional development with strong enthusiasm to gain experience for long-term employment.

Employing international students and graduates also helps address skills shortages due to an ageing population and older people existing the workforce.

Ultimately supporting and investing in staff regardless of country of origin will only contribute to more financial success than losses in a business.

International students and graduates are only interested in short-term opportunities.

Research has shown that international students and graduates place a high value on gaining in-country experience and long-term employment.

This experience is valuable for them to pursue either permanent residency and build a career in Australia or improve job prospects in their home country.



Working opportunities

Internships

Internships, also referred to as work placements, work experience, work-integrated learning, or industry placements, offer students practical, hands-on experience through short-term placements during their studies. Internships are available in a variety of fields, including accounting, aged care, community services, early childhood education, engineering, information, and communication technology (ICT), hospitality, management, and social media marketing. They are open to students enrolled in vocational education and training (VET) courses, as well as undergraduate, master's, or PhD programs in higher education.

The hours spent on internships do not count toward the 48 hour per fortnight work restriction for international students, provided the internship is a compulsory part of the student's course.

Both paid and unpaid internships for international students are governed by the same legal requirements as for Australian students. These include:

- The internship must primarily benefit the student, not the employer.
- Adequate insurance coverage must be in place, either provided by the employer or the education provider.

Internships provide an opportunity to assess a student's skills and their potential as a future employee through a short-term commitment, while also fostering connections with educational institutions.



Part-time or casual work

- International students can work up to 48 hours per fortnight while courses are in session and unlimited hours while courses are not in session (such as during semester breaks).
- Students undertaking postgraduate research have no restrictions on the hours they can work, even during their study.
- immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/getting-a-visa/visa-listing/student-500



- International student graduates on a Temporary Graduate visa (subclass 485) have no work restrictions and can work full time hours for the duration of their visa.

Volunteering

Volunteering is a great way for international students to develop soft skills, social networks and gain practical experience. Often it can also lead to an employment opportunity after they have graduated.

Voluntary, unpaid work is not included in the visa limit of 48 hours per fortnight if it is:

- of benefit to the community
- for a not-for-profit organisation
- genuinely voluntary, that is, not paid either in cash or in-kind, however board and lodging is acceptable
- if the voluntary work could have been undertaken by an Australian resident who would have received a wage, then this is included in the 48 hours per fortnight visa restriction.
- www.fairwork.gov.au/tools-and-resources/fact-sheets/unpaid-work/unpaid-work-unpaid-work



Employing international students once they have completed their study

Did you know that it is common for students to want to remain in Australia once they have completed their study? International graduates make up a significant portion of Australia's skilled migration program and contribute to various industries.

- Many international graduates already have full work rights, and for those who need a pathway, there are established options that don't require employer sponsorship.
- Tasmanian Government nominates hundreds of graduates annually for skilled migration, providing clear pathways to stay and work in the state.
- International graduates with these visas have the same workplace rights and protections as Australian citizens and permanent residents.
- Employers can check a candidate's work rights using the Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO) system.
- Help is available – the Business, Industry, and Regional Outreach (BIRO) Service offers free advice to employers on skilled migration pathways.

Key tips:



Advertise roles as open to all qualified candidates.



Ask candidates about their visa status – they can easily provide details, and you can verify through VEVO.



Consider employer-sponsored pathways if you wish to retain high-performing graduates beyond their temporary visa period.



Reach out to the BIRO Service for guidance on skilled migration options for your business.

immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/employing-and-sponsoring-someone/business-industry-and-regional-outreach



Ensuring international students and graduates get an equal and valuable experience

Here are seven tips to help maximise student productivity and integration into your organisation.

- 1 Provide a comprehensive induction:** Introduce the student to your company's mission, history, values, challenges, occupational health and safety procedures, facilities, protocols and local norms.
- 2 Clarify expectations:** Brief the student on your expectations, the types of tasks and projects they will work on, and the teams they will collaborate with.
- 3 Offer training and support for mentors:** Ensure mentors assigned to students receive the necessary training and guidance to effectively support them.
- 4 Make the student feel welcome:** Actively include the student in social activities and foster a sense of belonging within the company.
- 5 Offer industry exposure:** Provide opportunities for the student to attend meetings with clients, presentations, and industry events to broaden their understanding of the field.
- 6 Regularly monitor progress and provide feedback:** Check in frequently to assess the student's progress, offer constructive feedback, and support their development. Focus on key employability skills such as initiative, teamwork, communication and problem-solving.
- 7 Review the learning agreement:** Go over the agreement with the student, ensuring that both their rights and responsibilities, as well as their learning objectives are clearly understood.

These practices will help ensure a successful, productive experience for both the student and your company.



Important things to know when employing international students and graduates

Rules and regulations

Employers in Australia are required to follow Australian laws, regardless of whether their employees are international students and graduates, domestic students, temporary visa holders or citizens. Fair Work Australia sets forth conditions that apply to all individuals working in Australia, which include fair wages, breaks, leave entitlements and other employment rights.

www.fairwork.gov.au/



Checking work rights

It is the employer's responsibility to make sure that any prospective employees have the legal right to work in Australia before making an offer of employment. Information on work rights can be found via the free 24-hour online service, Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO).

immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/visas/already-have-a-visa/check-visa-details-and-conditions/check-conditions-online



Recruitment process

Many international students and graduates may not have participated in a formal interview in Australia before, so it's important to consider their potential nerves when evaluating their interview performance. Additionally, students from certain cultures may display specific behaviours, such as avoiding direct eye contact with senior colleagues, which is a sign of respect in their home countries.





Amber, Hydro Tasmania graduate student

"My name is Amber Nguyen, and I'm a Graduate IT Analyst at Hydro Tasmania. As an international graduate at Hydro Tasmania, I have always felt valued, supported, and free from discrimination.

The company's strong support network, led by dedicated leaders and a Graduate Program Coordinator, ensures all graduates, regardless of background, receive equal opportunities for growth and success.

On top of that, Hydro Tasmania has a well-structured IT department, recognising the importance of technology in solving complex problems. The graduate program has been invaluable, allowing me to explore diverse areas within IT.

Tasmania offers a welcoming environment and excellent opportunities for growth. To me, working in the renewable energy sector means that every day I'm at work, I know I'm creating a more sustainable future and making a positive impact on the environment for our future generations."

Hydro Tasmania

Hydro Tasmania is Australia's largest generator of clean, renewable energy.

We operate 30 hydroelectric power stations, one gas power station, and are joint owners in three wind farms across Tasmania.

At Hydro Tasmania, we're committed to supporting young talent through our graduate program, apprenticeships and internships.

Our experience with hiring international students has been positive, contributing not only to our company's growth but also to Tasmania's goal of attracting and retaining skilled professionals in the renewable energy sector.



Contact details

Career Connector

The Career Connector program is a free service designed to help individuals find employment or take the next step in their career journey.

The Career Connector program will get individuals ready for work faster with personalised career advice, and the support needed to confidently access training, connect to local Jobs Hubs, employment opportunities, service providers, and other programs to assist you on the employment journey.

There are two providers of the career connector program, Searson Buck and Youth, Family and Community Connections (YFCC).

Employers can also access the Career Connector program, which may be able to assist with introductions to potential workers, including international students who have been in Tasmania for six or more months.

Regional Jobs Hub Network

Regional Jobs Hubs bring local employers together with job seekers providing dedicated employment support services including career counselling, advice on how to get job ready, and transport options.

www.jt.tas.gov.au/regional_jobs_hub



Searson Buck - north or south

- searsonbuck.com.au/careerconnector/
- Phone: 1800 151 331



Youth, Family and Community Connections - north west or west coast

- yfcc.com.au/careerconnector/
- Phone: 0466 508 557



A scenic view of a harbor with boats, a sandy beach, and a grassy foreground under a tree branch.

Study Tasmania

 www.studytasmania.tas.gov.au

 info@studytasmania.tas.gov.au

