

# Employer guide to recruiting international students



## Unlock the potential of international students in your business

Adelaide is home to thousands of international students from over 130 nationalities, studying at universities, vocational education providers, and English language colleges.

These students bring fresh ideas, strong work ethics, and global connections – a powerful combination for any workplace!

Most graduates can stay and work in Australia for up to three years after completing their studies, no employer sponsorship required. While studying, they can work up to 48 hours per fortnight and unlimited hours during study breaks.

By employing international students, South Australian businesses can tap into a pool of skilled, motivated, and culturally diverse talent.

“

I think international graduates are a bit of an unsung hero of the Australian workforce.”

– Tim Gentle,  
Founder of Think Digital

Bringing international students  
and business together

Visit [\*\*Employment Connect\*\*](#) to find out more  
about hiring international student talent



**Employment  
Connect**

By StudyADELAIDE

## Why hire international students?

# Hiring international students isn't just about filling roles, it's about gaining a competitive edge.

## Here's why:

### A diverse workforce drives innovation

International students bring different perspectives and experiences, helping businesses think outside the box. In fact, diverse teams are 9.5 times more likely to be innovative\*.

They bring fresh ideas and problem-solving skills

Having lived and studied across cultures, international students approach challenges with creativity and adaptability - qualities every business needs.

### Strong work ethic

International students are driven to succeed. They're highly motivated and eager to gain work experience in Australia. In fact, they're 2.5 times more likely to go the extra mile for their team and 8.5 times more likely to collaborate effectively.\*

### Multilingual and globally connected

If you're working with international clients or suppliers, bilingual or multilingual employees give your business a competitive edge in the global market.

### Long-term workforce benefits

Most international graduates can stay in Australia post-study with full working rights, giving employers the opportunity to work with skilled, committed talent in a real-world setting before considering longer-term options.

## Telling the truth about hiring international students

### Truth #1

International students must meet strict English requirements to study in Australia.

However, some employers assume international students have poor English skills.

This isn't true. While they may need time to adjust to the Australian accent, slang, or technical language, their English language skills are strong. And their other language skills may end up an asset to your business!



### Truth #2

With the right support and development, international graduates are just as stable as local hires.

However, some employers believe international students leave before training pays off.

This is misleading. International graduates can stay and work for up to four years after graduating – longer than the average tenure range of 1.6 years to 2.6 years for professionals under 35 years.\*\*

### Truth #3

Hiring international students does not require sponsorship.

However, some employers think they must sponsor international students.

That's incorrect. International students can work part-time on a student visa and, after graduation, can stay and work in Australia on a post-study work visa with no additional costs or paperwork required from the employer. They can be employed just like a local.

### Truth #4

International students gain local experience through internships and placements while studying.

However, some employers assume international students lack relevant skills.

That's not the case. Many bring prior experience from their home countries. When it comes to soft skills like resilience and problem solving, you won't find better candidates.



“

If companies aren't hiring international students, they're missing out on access to a global workforce.”

– Sarah Drew, Group People & Culture Manager at REDARC Electronics

## Ways to engage international talent

### Part-time and casual work

International students can work up to 48 hours per fortnight during their studies and unlimited hours during holidays. Hiring international students in part-time or casual roles helps businesses fill workforce gaps with resilient and motivated employees.

### Internships

Internships offer international students hands-on experience in their field of study. These placements can be paid or unpaid and do not count toward the 48-hour fortnightly work cap if they are a mandatory part of the student's course. Hosting an intern allows you to support emerging talent while gaining fresh perspectives in your workplace.

### How do I keep a student long term?

The Temporary Graduate visa (Subclass 485) gives employers access to career-ready graduates with Australian qualifications and local experience, without the need for sponsorship. It provides international graduates with post-study work rights of up to four years and offers employers an effective way to assess their potential before exploring longer-term options. If a graduate is thriving and keen to stay in South Australia, there are two main pathways:

#### — State Nomination

Graduates with relevant qualifications and professional experience may be eligible to apply for permanent residency through South Australia's skilled migration program.

#### — Employer Sponsorship

If you've found a graduate who's a great fit for your team, Employer Sponsorship offers a direct way to retain them. It supports their skilled visa pathway and potential permanent residency.

For more information on visa options, visit [www.migration.sa.gov.au](http://www.migration.sa.gov.au)

## Post-study work rights

International students apply for a Temporary Graduate visa (subclass 485) after completing their studies allowing them to work and live in South Australia for up to:



**18 months**  
**Vocational Education & Training graduates**



**3 years**  
**Bachelor's and Master's by coursework graduates**



**4 years**  
**Master's by research and PhD graduates**

Before hiring an international student or graduate, you can verify visa work rights using the free Visa Entitlement Verification Online (VEVO) system, a free 24-hour service.



“

International graduates  
are very hardworking  
and resilient.”

– Del del Fierro  
Water Security at SA Water  
(international graduate)



## Tips for engaging international students

To create a positive and productive experience  
when employing international students:

- Provide a structured induction covering company values and policies - set clear expectations.
- Assign a mentor or buddy to help students adapt to the workplace.
- Offer hands-on experience, client interaction, and networking opportunities.
- Encourage cultural conversations, sharing of stories and food – it’s a two-way street.
- Give regular feedback and career development guidance.

### Get started today

Adelaide businesses looking to tap into this diverse talent pool can connect with universities, vocational institutions, and education providers.

Many institutions have dedicated career services to assist with student placements and recruitment.

For more information on employing international students in Adelaide, visit StudyAdelaide’s Employment Connect or email [enquiries@studyadelaide.com](mailto:enquiries@studyadelaide.com).

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