



International students represent a valuable resource for Australian businesses who are looking to expand their workforce and to provide opportunity to students who want work experience in their chosen fields.

Generally, international students who are permitted to work in Australia have the same employment entitlements as ordinary employees. However, the engagement of international students often requires consideration of a number of factors – this factsheet will inform employers of key benefits and matters to be aware of when engaging international students.

BENEFITS OF HIRING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS



DIVERSITY & COMMUNICATION

Hiring international students encourages a workplace that is culturally diverse and able to communicate with a wider range of clients and customers.



WORKPLACE CULTURE

International students bring a level of enthusiasm to the workplace that is built on young employees who are eager to learn and take full advantage of their international education.



NEW PERSPECTIVES

It also creates opportunity for different skill sets, attitudes and ideas to be shared in the workplace from employees with different cultures and backgrounds.



Misconception 3 - There are language or communication barriers when employing international students



International students are required to have a certain level of English proficiency in order to participate in university or vocational education and training study programs. In any event, having a multiplicity or diversity in languages within the workplace can have significant benefits for Australian businesses.



Misconception 4 - International students won't stay on in employment when they have finished studying



International students who finish their education and obtain Australian-recognised education qualifications are able, and are likely, to stay in Australia to seek employment.

International students are able to apply for post-study work visas which enable them to perform work without study restrictions for lengthy periods.

COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS



Misconception 1 - International students aren't allowed to work in Australia / It is too difficult to employ international students because of their visa



Most student visas will allow the visa holder to work (at most) on a part-time basis to ensure that they have adequate time to complete their studies. International students can be employed in the same way that a business would employ any other person - as long as it is in compliance with the conditions of their visa such as limiting the number of hours that the visa holder can perform during certain periods such as school semesters or exam periods.



Misconception 2 - Australia's workplace laws don't apply to international students



All employees who are employed in Australia under the national workplace relations system have the same employment entitlements. This includes Australian citizens, permanent residents and those residing in Australia on visas.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS

1. Regularly Review & Comply

The Department of Home Affairs does review and enforce compliance with visa conditions. It is therefore important that employers comply with the conditions of a student's visa and also regularly review the visa status and conditions, as the consequences of engaging an international student in breach of their visa conditions can be quite serious for employers and attract heavy penalties.

2. Rights & Protections

As with other employees, international students who are employed by an employer have basic rights and protections under Australian workplace laws.

Accordingly, employers should ensure that they;

- comply with their obligations under Australian employment laws; and
- that international students are provided with the employment information necessary for them to understand the exact terms and conditions of their employment.

3. Placements or Internships

If you have employed an international student on a placement or internship while they are studying, you may also have obligations in respect of reporting to their education or course provider about the student's work or performance.

FURTHER INFORMATION - If you have any questions about engaging international students in your business, you can contact the Fair Work Ombudsman who can provide further information and advice. <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/>