



# **An Employer's Guide to Hiring International Students**

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## Quick Tips

- Internationally trained workers (ITWs) are a valuable source of skills and talent for Canada's employers because they:
  - Are often highly motivated, dedicated, hard-working employees
  - Help meet your labour needs
  - Can increase your competitiveness
  - Help develop new markets
  - Make your organization more effective
  - Connect you with other valuable workers and organizations
- Employers can hire eligible students while they study or after they graduate.
- Study permit holders may be eligible to work off campus without a work permit as soon as they begin their studies in Canada.
- Students can work **up to 20** hours a week while class is in session and full-time during scheduled breaks (reading week, between semesters and summer).
- To be eligible, students must:
  - Have a valid study permit
  - Be enrolled as a full-time student at a designated learning institution at the post-secondary level
  - Be studying in a program that is:
    - Academic, vocational or professional training
    - Leads to a degree, diploma or certificate
    - Is at least 6 months' long
- **Students** are responsible for making sure they meet these criteria and apply for a Social Insurance Number
- **Employers** are responsible for ensuring the student has a valid study permit

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## ***How to Create an Inclusive Workplace***

- Employ workers with different backgrounds.
- Create a vision that brings together workers from all cultures.
- Create a climate where all workers are welcomed by their colleagues and managers, and let all workers know this is important to your organization.
- Provide a formal orientation program that makes new workers feel valued and included.
- To put newcomers at ease, pair them with existing staff members, if possible with people who share the same cultural backgrounds.
- Connect newly arrived ITWs with people and community supports that will help them and their families settle.
- Provide diversity and cross-cultural training to all staff.
- Celebrate your cultural diversity in posters, newsletters or other communications. Hold social events that celebrate different cultures.
- Create opportunities to communicate the value of diversity, with specific mention of ITWs.
- Participate in and support initiatives related to hiring, mentoring, promoting and retaining ITWs. Encourage everyone in your organization to participate.
- Identify workers to champion diversity in your organization. Include them in decision making, and give them the scope and resources to implement special initiatives to create an inclusive culture.
- Ensure access to management and higher-level opportunities for ITWs.

## ***How to Break Down Perceived Barriers***

- Make sure everyone involved in hiring is aware of the value of international skills and credentials.
- Provide diversity and cross-cultural training to all employees, including those involved in hiring.
- Focus on the skills and job experience of the candidates rather than on where they came from or where they gained their education and experience.
- Outline the selection and interview process in your job postings.
- When advertising jobs, let workers know that you value international credentials and competencies.
- Let potential candidates know that your workplace is inclusive and that it welcomes diversity.
- Post health, safety and employment standards in multiple languages to make employees feel welcome.

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## *How to Successfully Hire, Train and Retain International Workers*

- Become familiar with – and use – available tools and services that can help you assess international qualifications.
- Get involved in language and job or skills training.
- Implement diversity and integration programs.
- Focus on what it takes to do the job.
- Don't underestimate international credentials and experience because they are unfamiliar.
- Be aware of barriers related to international credentials, Canadian work experience and language skills.
- Make more effective assessments by focusing experience or in performing tasks (you may have them demonstrate their skills in a practical test or written assessment)
- Write effective job descriptions by:
  - Defining essential skills required for the job
  - Defining duties, responsibilities and other requirements of the job
  - Using information available in your industry
  - Clearly stating the licensing or certification requirements
  - Asking for **relevant** work experience instead of Canadian work experience
- Determine the importance of language skills in the workplace by assessing what language skills are really needed for the job (language barriers can be overcome through language training or on-the-job experience) – don't be fooled by accents
- Prepare your workplace to embrace diversity – an inclusive workplace benefits everyone
- Your assessment and selection process should be designed to help you determine if the worker can do the job regardless of cultural background.