

Checklist: Work Permits for International Students

Secondary employment

Students holding a B residence permit for the purpose of education must observe the following regulations before taking up secondary employment. These rules apply to EU/EFTA nationals as well as, in particular, to students from third countries. The provisions apply to both external employers and internal employment at ZHdK.

EU/EFTA Nationals

Students from EU/EFTA countries holding a B residence permit for the purpose of education may:

- work up to 15 hours per week during the semester,
- work full-time during semester breaks.

This employment is not subject to notification or authorization, as long as the weekly working time during the semester does not exceed 15 hours.

If this limit is exceeded, a residence permit for the purpose of employment is required. Registration must be carried out independently with the residents' registration office of the municipality of residence.

Non-EU/EFTA Nationals

Students from third countries holding a B residence permit for the purpose of education may:

- not work during the first 6 months after entering Switzerland,
- after the 6-month waiting period and upon receipt of a work permit:
 - work a maximum of 15 hours per week during the semester,
 - work up to 100% during semester breaks.

The work permit must be applied for by the respective employer with the competent cantonal migration office before employment begins.

In addition, a confirmation from the university is required stating that the employment does not delay the course of studies. This confirmation can be requested by email from ZHdK at: studierenden.admin@zhdk.ch

Further information can be found in the directives of the competent cantonal [migration office](#) and the [Office for Labor and Economic Affairs](#).

Internal Employment at ZHdK

For an internal job at ZHdK, students should contact the respective study administration offices or the responsible HR staff of the departments.

Processing by the authorities may take at least three months. Employment may only begin after the work permit has been granted.

Internships (Mandatory and Voluntary)

From a migration law perspective, internships are generally considered employment and are therefore subject to special regulations.

EU/EFTA Nationals

Students from EU/EFTA countries holding a B residence permit for the purpose of education may undertake:

- mandatory internships (in accordance with the study regulations), as well as
- voluntary internships

within the 15-hour rule during the semester and full-time during semester breaks.

If the internship exceeds these limits, a permit for employment may be required.

Third-Country Nationals

The following rules apply to students from third countries:

- Mandatory internships that are an integral part of the degree program may be approved within the first 6 months after entry, provided they are necessary for academic progress.
- Voluntary internships are only permitted after the 6-month waiting period, provided they do not delay the studies.

In all cases, the following applies:

- A **work permit is mandatory**.
- The application must be submitted **before the start of the internship** by the internship provider to the competent cantonal migration office.
- A confirmation from the university is required stating that the internship is part of the degree program or does not delay the studies.

Further information can be found in the directives of the competent cantonal [migration office](#) and the [Office for Labor and Economic Affairs](#).

Withholding Tax

Students holding a B residence permit for the purpose of education who engage in dependent employment are subject to withholding tax, which is deducted directly from the salary.

Self-Employed Secondary Employment

EU/EFTA Nationals

Students from EU/EFTA countries holding a B residence permit for the purpose of education do not require a work permit for self-employed activity.

Anyone wishing to register as self-employed on a secondary basis must register with the Social Insurance Office [SVA](#) and demonstrate that their living expenses can be financed independently.

Third-Country Nationals

Students from third countries holding a B residence permit for the purpose of education are not permitted to engage in self-employed activity, including on a secondary basis.

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