

# Recent NUS, NTU grads can head to Britain to find job with new visa

## Scheme offers visa to recent grads of top unis outside Britain in bid to attract global talent

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Recent National University of Singapore (NUS) and Nanyang Technological University (NTU) graduates will be able to head to Britain to look for jobs under a new visa designed to give British businesses access to graduates from the world's top universities.

According to the British High Commission in Singapore, the United Kingdom's High Potential Individual (HPI) visa, which will be open to applicants from today, was introduced as part of a broader post-Brexit government strategy to be more globally competitive.

The scheme offers visas to people who completed a degree from

top universities outside Britain within the last five years.

NUS and NTU appear on the British Home Office's Top Global Universities list, which includes Harvard University, Stanford University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the United States, the University of Toronto in Canada, Peking University and Tsinghua University in China, and the University of Tokyo in Japan.

International students in British universities are not included in the scheme, as they come under the UK graduate visa scheme, which allows those who have completed a degree in Britain to stay for at least two years after graduating.

To be included in the HPI visa list, the universities must have been placed in the Top 50 positions in at least two of the following world rankings: Times Higher

Education World University Rankings, QS World University Rankings and the Academic Ranking of World Universities by Shanghai Jiao Tong University.

In the latest Times Higher Education world ranking, NUS was placed 21st, while NTU was placed 46th.

Besides having a bachelor's, master's or a PhD from one of the universities on the list, applicants also have to meet English language requirements and have at least £1,270 (S\$2,200) available in cash.

Applicants need not have a job offer to qualify for the HPI visa.

After arriving in Britain, visa holders with a bachelor's or master's degree will have two years to look for a job, while those with a PhD will be given three years to look for jobs. Visa holders can look for jobs in any industry.

Mr David Leong, who heads recruitment firm PeopleWorldwide Consulting, said that local graduates would find the visa scheme attractive, and added that it should

### BRAIN GAIN FOR SINGAPORE

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economies. In some industries such as finance, there are many exciting opportunities in London."

He said British firms will be keen on Singapore graduates as they are well trained and have a good work ethic.

They also have skills, such as the ability to speak Mandarin and other Asian languages, which will give them an edge.

Recent NUS law graduate Desmond Lee said he is likely to apply for the visa later this year.

The 27-year-old, who is working in a law firm, is interested in going into the finance industry and has been thinking about heading to London.

"I do corporate law and I am interested in going into fintech because I see many opportunities there.

"It will be great if I can go to London for a few months, network and look for a job there, instead of trying to do it from here," he said.

NUS president Tan Eng Chye said he was heartened that NUS

graduates are eligible for the new visa and called it a strong validation of the global competitiveness of NUS graduates.

He added: "We will continue to champion interdisciplinary teaching and learning to nurture highly skilled, adaptable and resilient graduates who can make positive contributions as global citizens of the future."

NTU's deputy provost for education Tan Ooi Kiang said: "NTU graduates will be well placed to reap the benefits of this new scheme, having been exposed to various overseas offerings as part of the NTU experience, where our students get the opportunity to go on overseas internships and immersion programmes to expand their horizons and develop global perspectives."

But Associate Professor Jason Tan from the National Institute of Education questioned the qualification criteria used for the visa.

"The students from the other local universities have similar and, in some disciplines, even better job outcomes. But because their universities do not appear in the top 50 list, they are left out," he said.

"There are many good universities in Singapore and around the world that will not do well in these rankings because they are not large, comprehensive universities with high research output, which is given significant weightage in these rankings."

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