

# Changing Your Status of Residence

## Application for Change of Status of Residence

Changing from "College Student" to a visa allowing you to work

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## Application for Change of Status of Residence

### Changing from "College Student" to a visa allowing you to work

Foreign nationals residing in Japan can conduct activities within a specified range under 27 types of residence status.

#### Residence status necessary for getting a job

In order to work in Japan, international students are required to change their status of residence from "College Student" to "Specialist in Humanities/International Services," "Engineer," or other status that allows them to work.

	Specialist in Humanities/International Services	Engineer
Activities	Services which require knowledge pertinent to human science fields. Services which require specific ways of thought or sensitivity based on experience with foreign culture.	Services which require technology and/or knowledge pertinent to physical science, engineering, or other natural science fields.
Main jobs and job types	Marketing, human resources, finance, treasury, planning, general affairs, legal affairs, product development, public relations, advertising, design, interpretation, translation, language instruction, etc.	Engineer, programmer, research and development, architectural design, application development, production technologies, quality management, system administration, etc.
Requirements and criteria	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The applicant must have graduated from a university or acquired equivalent education in a subject pertaining to the knowledge required by the relevant work, or have acquired such knowledge through at least 10 years of experience.</li> <li>In cases in which the applicant is to engage in work that requires specific ways of thinking or sensitivity grounded in a foreign culture, either of the following requirements must be fulfilled. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The applicant must have at least 3 years of experience in public relations, advertising, overseas transactions, clothing, interior design, product development, etc.</li> <li>In cases in which the applicant is to engage in work such as translation, interpretation, or language instruction, the applicant must have graduated from a university.</li> </ul> </li> <li>The applicant must receive no less compensation than a Japanese national would receive for comparable work.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The applicant must have graduated from a university or acquired equivalent education in a subject pertaining to the skills and/or knowledge required by the relevant work, or have acquired such skills and/or knowledge through at least 10 years of experience. (However, in cases in which the applicant is to engage in work related to information processing, the applicant is not required to satisfy the requirements listed above as long as he/she has passed the specified examination on information processing skills or has obtained certification for information processing skills.)</li> <li>The applicant must receive no less compensation than a Japanese national would receive for comparable work.</li> </ol>

Among those who apply for a change in visa status for the purpose of employment, 90% are made up of 2 visas: the Specialist in Humanities/International Services visa (approx 70%) and Engineer visa (approx. 20%).

#### Students at professional training colleges

A student who has completed a specialized course of study at a professional training college and got a diploma may be granted a change of residence status if his/her activities fall under the categories of "Specialist in Humanities/International Services," "Engineer," or other work visa, and if the job content at the place of employment is relevant to what he/she has learned at the professional training college.

# Preparing Required Documents

## Checking documents required for visa application

In principle, the person applying for permission to change their status of residence from "College Student" to a valid working visa must go in person to the immigration bureau with jurisdiction in the area they live in, immigration offices (excluding Narita, Chubu, Kansai Airport offices) or branch offices. Applications will be accepted from January (December for the Immigration Bureau in Tokyo) of the graduating year in order to allow graduates to start working from April.

Inspections for change of status of residence take from 1 to 3 months, so you should consult the immigration bureau with jurisdiction in your area regarding procedures for the application for changing status of residence when you receive a job offer.

You should check to see which documents are necessary and prepare them at an early stage.

### ■ Documents required for a change to a "Specialist in Humanities/International Services" or "Engineer" visa

- (1) Application form
- (2) Passport and alien registration card (to show)
- (3) Other documents to be submitted

For details, visit the Immigration Bureau website.

<http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/>

(From the website, click on "Click here to view application forms" under "Immigration procedures.")


In addition to documentation you must prepare and create, there are miscellaneous documents required from your future employer and school, so you should set aside ample time to request documents from related parties.

### ■ Screening points

- (1) Whether the applicant possesses suitable skills and knowledge based on his/her academic history (major, research content, etc.) and other background
- (2) Whether the content of the relevant job can utilize the applicant's skills and knowledge
- (3) Whether the applicant's treatment (remuneration, etc.) is sufficient
- (4) Whether stability and continuity can be expected based on the hiring company's size and performance, and whether the hiring company can actually provide opportunities for the applicant to utilize his/her job

### ■ Reapplication

Even if you are denied a work visa in the screening process, you can still reapply as long as your current visa is valid. You will not be able to obtain a work visa upon reapplication if the reasons for denying your visa application are not resolved. Check again to see if you satisfy all the requirements listed above as "Screening points," then prepare and submit the necessary documents.

	Websites giving the procedures for changing your status of residence	Immigration Bureau	<a href="http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/">http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/</a>
		Tokyo Employment Service Center for Foreigners:	<a href="http://www.tfemploy.go.jp/">http://www.tfemploy.go.jp/</a>

# Job Hunting Activities after Graduating

## Procedures for changing your status of residence to continue job hunting

In the event that you cannot find employment by the time you graduate, you may apply to change your visa from "College Student" to "Designated Activities (to continue seeking employment)" to continue job hunting activities for a year after graduating.

(This visa is valid for 6 months and may be renewed only once for a maximum of one year.)

### ■ Eligible individuals

- Those who have graduated from a university (including two-year colleges) or a regular course at a graduate school
- Those who have graduated from a professional training college and got a diploma

### ■ Documents required for application

- (1) Application form for changing status of residence
- (2) Passport and Alien Registration Card (must show)
- (3) Documents certifying the ability of the applicant to cover all expenses to be incurred during the stay in Japan (proof of money transfer or copy of a bank statement, etc.)
- (4) Certificate of graduation from university enrolled in just before application (in addition a transcript and diploma for students of vocational schools)
- (5) Recommendation letter from the university enrolled in just before application
- (6) Documents verifying you have continued job hunting (job hunt records, screening result document, etc.)

If you secure a job while on a "Designated Activities" visa, you will be required to change your residence status to "Specialist in Humanities/International Services" or "Engineer."

### ■ Notes

- You will have limited opportunities to find a job since many Japanese companies primarily target new graduates when planning their acquisition of human resources, and additionally, the period between April and September, in which you will continue job hunting, is when recruitment for the following year is underway.
- You may be asked to wait to join the company until April of the following year even if you are offered a position.
- It will be difficult to gather information because you will be required to conduct job hunting activities under a schedule that differs from the one for regular "new graduate hiring." In addition, it will be difficult to communicate your eagerness to apply for a job because of the delay in timing.

In the case you have been offered a position that starts in April of the following year, you may stay in Japan until you start work by changing your visa to "Designated Activities (for persons with job offers)" but you must change your visa because your residing purpose differs.

The necessary documents are as follows.

- (1) Documents certifying you can cover all expenses to be incurred during your stay in Japan
- (2) Documents required to change your status of residence to a work visa, such as "Specialist in Humanities/International Services" and "Engineer."
- (3) Documents certifying the job offer and the date the job offer was issued, such as a formal offer letter sent from the future employer
- (4) A declaration indicating compliance with the obligation to communicate information, etc.
- (5) Documents certifying the content of training sessions, etc., if you intend to participate in training at the future employer before placement in the company