

# Stay Legal, Stay Free

Bonus 3 — Compliance & Protection Abroad

- Comply

- Renew

- Protect

A Japa Without Wahala Companion



# Bonus 3

STAY LEGAL, STAY FREE



Getting the visa is not the finish line. Every year, people who cleared the hardest part of the process put their status at risk through compliance mistakes that had nothing to do with their original eligibility.

## Student Visa Work-Hour Limits - By Country

| Country | Term-Time Limit                                    | Holiday Period                                |
|---------|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| UK      | 20 hrs/wk (degree-level); 10 hrs/wk (below degree) | Unrestricted                                  |
| Canada  | 24 hrs/wk off-campus                               | Unrestricted                                  |
| Germany | 140 full days/year (~20 hrs/wk avg)                | Annual cap still applies                      |
| Ireland | 20 hrs/wk                                          | Up to 40 hrs/wk (Jun-Sep, mid-Dec to mid-Jan) |

### THE DETAIL THAT CATCHES PEOPLE OUT

In the UK, this is a strict weekly limit measured Monday to Sunday - you cannot 'average' hours across a month. Working 21 hours one week and 10 the next is still a breach in the week you exceeded the limit.

**What a breach actually costs you:** In the UK, exceeding permitted hours can lead to visa curtailment, a requirement to leave the country, and a re-entry ban of 1-10 years. Employers face fines up to GBP60,000 per worker.

# Switching Visa Categories Legally

- UK: The Graduate visa (2 years bachelor's/master's, 3 years PhD) removes all work restrictions, bridging to Skilled Worker without leaving the UK.
- Ireland: CSEP and GEP holders can switch employers after 9 months in their original role.
- Germany: The Opportunity Card is specifically designed to convert into a standard work permit or EU Blue Card once you secure qualifying employment.

## THE UNIVERSAL RULE

Never assume a switch is automatic or informal. Working or studying outside your current permission while a switch application is pending is a common compliance trap - confirm your interim rights in writing before acting on an assumption.

## What Actually Triggers Serious Status Problems

- Working beyond permitted hours or in a prohibited category.
- Failing to maintain the basis your visa was granted on.
- Overstaying, even briefly - never rely on an assumed grace period.
- Providing false or misleading information at any stage, including by an agent on your behalf without your full knowledge.

# If Something Goes Wrong



## Legal aid and support contacts:

- Your country's immigration authority directly - Home Office/UKVI (UK), IRCC (Canada), the relevant Ausländerbehörde (Germany), INIS (Ireland).
- The Nigerian High Commission or Consulate in your host country.
- A registered, regulated immigration lawyer - verify their registration independently (e.g., the UK's OISC register).

### BRIDGE

Staying legal protects your ability to stay at all. Bonus 4 covers what happens once your status is secure: credit, housing, community, and realistic PR timelines.