

# Starting work

March 2013  
Leaflet 11-15

## Work and training

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*It's a big step, moving from full-time education into a job. You may need some advice to deal with the change in your lifestyle and in understanding your rights and your responsibilities. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Everybody was new once; they'll understand.*

## Settling into your new job

You are bound to feel a bit strange at first. There's so much to learn - people to get to know, names to remember, buildings to find your way around... You should already have done some homework about the employer before you went for the job interview but there will be lots more for you to learn when you start work.

Your employer should provide you with an induction programme. This should be designed so that you can gradually learn about the work and the organisation, including the responsibilities of employees, and health and safety issues.

## Here are some tips for your first day or two

- Dress fairly formally; you can always relax your style later, when you've discovered what's acceptable.
- Find out if it's usual to call colleagues and supervisors by their first names.
- Remember, you've got to spend every day with these people. Be friendly, but not pushy.
- If nobody is giving you any work, ask politely for something to get on with. If that fails, use your time constructively, e.g. by reading up on the company or the industry. Don't just wait to be given something to do or, even worse, start playing computer games!
- If you are starting halfway up the career ladder, you may find that some people lower down resent you. Win them round by proving how good you are at the job - and by showing respect for their views and experience.
- If you make mistakes - and everyone does - admit to them, and ask for advice on putting things right.
- Why not offer to make the tea!

If you feel overwhelmed or unhappy in the first few weeks, give the job a chance before deciding it's not for you. If you have any particular worries, talk to the person who is looking after your induction. Find out how the role will develop in the future. The employer chose you for the job, as they believed you had what was needed. They have already spent time and money recruiting and training you, so it's in their interests to help you to settle in successfully.

# Training and development

As part of your induction, you should receive training to enable you to do your job properly. You will probably also receive ongoing training, either in the workplace or through attending courses, to help you to become skilled at your work.

As you get more familiar with the organisation and the various opportunities it offers, you may want to take advantage of any training that would allow you to develop in a particular direction. If you have any special areas of interest, make that known to your manager. Nearly all organisations have formal staff appraisals, reviews or evaluations, where you can discuss your training needs and future career plans.

Training can lead to recognised qualifications - anything from a work-based qualification at level 1 to professional qualifications or a degree, taken through part-time study.

## Time Off for Study or Training (TfST)

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland there has been, for some years, an entitlement for 16- and 17-year-olds in employment who do not hold level 2 qualifications (i.e. GCSEs at grades A\*-C or equivalent) to 'reasonable' paid time off for education and training, to achieve an approved qualification at that level. What is considered 'reasonable' depends on your own needs, and the circumstances of your employer. In order to gain a level 2 qualification, you could be eligible for one day a week at college, time spent training for a job-related qualification, or time off to study by distance learning.

As the age of participation in education and training is being raised in England, soon this entitlement will no longer be relevant. However, TfST will continue to apply in Wales and Northern Ireland.

Certain employees who are aged 18 and already working towards a level 2 qualification, have the right to complete it.

## Your rights at work

Over the years, a number of laws and regulations have been passed that protect people's rights in the workplace. For example, you have the right to:

- a statement of your main terms and conditions of employment
- protection against unfair dismissal
- redundancy pay and notice
- protection from discrimination on grounds of age, religion and beliefs, sexual orientation, disability, gender, race and transgender
- a safe and healthy working environment so that you do not suffer avoidable injury or ill health in the workplace
- sick pay if you have to take more than a few days off work due to illness
- a minimum wage (see below)
- work no more than an average of 48 hours a week (unless you choose to opt out, or work in certain sectors); there are further restrictions on workers aged 17 and under
- at least 5.6 weeks' paid leave each year (this can include bank or public holidays)
- maternity, paternity and adoption pay and leave

- request flexible working arrangements if you care for a child or an adult in your home.

Most of these laws have been around for some time, so your employer should be familiar with them. Some legislation, such as the right to redundancy pay, does not apply until you have been in a job for a certain length of time.

## **Minimum wage entitlement**

From October 2012, the National Minimum Wage for workers is:

- £2.68 per hour if you are an apprentice aged under 19 or, 19 or over and in the first year of your Apprenticeship
- £3.72 per hour if you are under 18
- £5.03 per hour if you are aged 18-20
- £6.31 per hour if you are 21 or over.

## **Your responsibilities**

Your main rights at work have been described - but you have responsibilities too. If you are persistently late, absent, uncooperative or idle then, of course, your employer has the right to discipline you. However, there are certain procedures that the employer has to follow - in most circumstances, giving you verbal and written warnings, for example - before you can be dismissed. You also have responsibilities to your fellow workers too. For instance, you must not do anything that affects other employees' health and safety at work.

## **If you have problems**

If you ever have problems in your job, the best course of action is always to talk to someone within the organisation. Ideally, this should be your supervisor or manager but, if for any reason this is difficult, perhaps you could speak to someone in the human resources department if there is one, or to another manager or supervisor whom you trust. If you are still not satisfied, then try your trade union (if you're a member), the Citizens Advice Bureau or Acas.

As with all laws, employment legislation isn't always straightforward, for instance, there are some exemptions, so get advice before threatening to take your employer to an employment tribunal! Disputes are usually settled long before they reach that point.

If things go really wrong and you and your employer part company for whatever reason, the National Careers Service/Careers Wales or Jobcentre Plus will be able to offer you advice and help you to find your next opportunity.

## **Managing your money**

### **Budgeting**

One of the biggest changes having a job brings to your life is that you now have a regular income. You may be tempted to rush out and buy all the things you haven't been able to afford before - please don't!

It will pay you in the long run to work out a budget. You will almost certainly have to pay either rent on a place of your own, or a contribution to housekeeping expenses if you are living with your family. Then there are transport costs, lunches, and perhaps some smart business clothes to buy. Try to list all your outgoings and balance them against your income. It may be a bit of a shock but, if you persevere, you will find a way of meeting all your expenses - eventually. Careful budgeting should allow you to put a bit aside for socialising, holidays, presents, clothes, DVDs, your mobile and so on.

Check out different types of savings accounts, and find which is best for you. Your pension is no doubt the last thing on your mind at the moment, but remember that the earlier you start paying into a scheme, the more money you should be able to retire on!

## Pay

If you haven't already got one, you'll probably need to open a **bank account** as, generally, your wages will go directly into it.

You will be given a **wage slip** outlining how much you have been paid each week or month. Don't be shocked if you find that there are a number of 'deductions' for things like pensions (if you are in your employer's scheme), Income Tax and National Insurance.

**Income Tax** is collected by the government to help pay for public services. You have a basic 'personal allowance' - an amount you are able to earn each year before paying tax. In the financial year 2012/13, this is set at £8,105, so you'll pay tax on anything you earn over this. Income Tax is normally collected by PAYE (Pay As You Earn), so the tax is taken out of your pay before you get it.

In addition to Income Tax, you also pay **National Insurance** contributions. These build up your entitlement to certain benefits, including a state pension. This is also taken out of your wages directly.

## A day to remember

### *Louis - the new administrative assistant*

*I'd had work experience in an office, and part-time work in a shop at weekends. But somehow that just isn't the same as turning up on the first day at what - you hope - is going to be your future career. In school, I'd taken part in role-plays on starting work. That helped.*

*On the first day, I made sure I arrived a few minutes early. I wore my suit and tie, but from what I noticed other people were wearing, it looked like I could dress a bit more casually if I wanted. I was surprised how many people were there earlier than they needed to be. That meant they were able to unwind with a cup of coffee and a chat before the day officially started. The bloke I had to report to was already at his desk, so I was shown into his office. He was quite pleasant, but not all that friendly, so I took my lead from him and just tried to be pleasant and polite myself.*

*Everyone who joins the department has what they call an induction week. I was given a timetable, so I knew where I had to be and when. But first of all, I was shown around the building and introduced to people. I'll never remember all the names, but I suppose everyone has that problem when they first start. Then I was given a rundown of health and safety*

*procedures. I was told where the fire extinguishers and fire exits are, how to lift, not to leave things on the floor in case I trip people up, how I've got to report all accidents - even if I so much as cut myself on a bit of paper, etc.*

*Every day this week I've been introduced to a different team or unit, and they have shown me what they do. Today it's the marketing team. I've learned a bit about market research and how that links to product development, customer services and so on. By the end of the week, I should know quite a lot about the organisation.*

*I've been given some glossy brochures about the company - and some less glossy but very important notes on how to do my particular job. I can look at these, and other information on the intranet, whenever there's a gap in the induction programme.*

*So far, it hasn't gone too badly, although it's been tiring trying to take everything in. There are one or two people around my age who look friendly. I'll try to get chatting to them over lunch tomorrow. Everyone's been nice to me so far. Let's hope it lasts!'*

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## For further information

**Acas** - helpline: 08457 47 47 47. A wide range of information on your rights at work is available on:

[www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk)

**Citizens Advice Bureau** - find the contact number of your local bureau in the telephone directory or search on:

[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)

For general information, you can also go to:

[www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk)

**Health and Safety Executive** - lots of information about health and safety at work can be found on:

[www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)

**Pay and Work Rights Helpline:** 0800 917 2368; textphone: 0800 121 4042. Information on your rights at work is also available on the following website (click on 'Work, pay and pensions'):

[www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

**workSMART** - the TUC's website, includes information on workers' rights:

[www.worksmart.org.uk](http://www.worksmart.org.uk)

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## Related Leaflets that may interest you

- [1.10 - Choices at sixteen \(has information on the participation age and TfST\)](#)
- [6.02 - Your rights as a young person - an introduction](#)
- [7.01 - You and your money](#)
- [9.01 - Getting your own car or motorbike](#)
- [11.19 - Under school leaving age and working. What's legal?](#)

- [11.20 - Part-time work \(\*has more information on your right to request flexible working\*\)](#)
- [11.31 - Information for people with disabilities](#)
- [11.35 - Equal opportunities: your rights](#)

Equal opportunities:

Seek advice if you meet discrimination due to age, disability, race, religion, sex or sexual orientation.

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## Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)

**2. What you'll get** You can get £86.70 a week Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) for up to 28 weeks.

You get SSP for the days you would normally have worked. It's not paid for the first 3 days you're off, unless you've been paid SSP within the last 8 weeks and are eligible for it again.

If you have more than one job you may get SSP from each employer.

**How you're paid** SSP is paid by your employer in the same way as your normal wages (eg weekly or monthly).

Tax and National Insurance will be deducted.

If you don't think you're getting the right amount of SSP, talk to your employer. If you're still not happy, contact the HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) employees' enquiry line.

**3. Eligibility** To qualify for Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) you must:

- be classed as an [employee](#) and have done some work for your employer
- have been ill for at least 4 days in a row (including non-working days)
- earn at least £109 (before tax) per week
- tell your employer you're sick before their deadline - or within 7 days if they don't have one

Agency workers are entitled to Statutory Sick Pay.

**Exceptions** You won't qualify if you:

- have received the maximum amount of SSP (28 weeks)
- have taken 3 years or more 'linked periods' of sickness - where 4 or more days of sickness happen within 8 weeks of each other
- are getting Statutory Maternity Pay

You can still qualify if you started your job recently and you haven't received 8 weeks' pay yet. Ask your employer to find out more.

**Fit notes (or sick notes)** You only have to give your employer a doctor's [fit note](#) if you miss more than 7 days of work.

**If you're not eligible** If you don't qualify for SSP, your employer must give you form SSP1 within 7 days of your illness.

You can use this to apply for [Employment and Support Allowance \(ESA\)](#) instead.

## Agency workers: your rights

**Fees:** Recruitment agencies can't charge you a fee for finding or trying to find you work

**Additional paid services:** Agencies can charge you for certain services such as CV writing, training or transport.

If your agency offers you additional services they:

- can charge you for them
- must give you full written details - including your right to cancel and the notice period you must give
- can't make you use these services as a condition for finding you work

Different rules apply to [entertainment and modelling agencies](#).

**Cancelling paid services:** You can cancel paid services without a penalty. You must give a minimum of:

- 10 working days written notice to the agency to cancel living accommodation
- 5 working days notice for all other services

You can make a complaint about the agency. Contact the [Pay and Work Rights Helpline](#).

**Basic information you should receive:** Recruitment agencies must give you written terms of employment before looking for work for you.

These should include:

- whether you are employed under a contract for services or a contract of employment
- your notice period
- details of your [pay](#)
- your holiday entitlement

An agency can't change your terms and conditions without telling you.

If you agree to changes you must be given a new document with the full details of the changes and when they apply.

An agency cannot give information about you to any third parties (including current employers) without your permission - except for legal purposes or to a professional body to which you belong.

### Workers under the age of 18

If you are under 18 and expected to work during school hours, your agency must check that you have received advice from the local careers service.

If the agency is arranging a job abroad, it must have written consent from your parent or guardian.

## When an agency offers you a job with a company

They should tell you:

- your start date
- the likely length of the work
- the type of work
- about any expenses that may be payable
- the location
- your hours
- about any health and safety risks, and steps the hirer has taken to control these risks
- about any experience, training or qualifications needed for the role

## Your rights as a temporary agency worker

As a temporary agency worker you're entitled to:

- [paid holiday](#) (bank holidays may be included in your holiday entitlement - check with your agency)
- rest breaks and limits on working time
- no unlawful deductions from wages
- the [National Minimum Wage](#)
- freedom from discrimination under equality legislation
- protection under health and safety laws
- details of job vacancies with your hirer
- the same access to shared facilities and services at work as other comparable employees

Shared facilities and services might include:

- access to a canteen or food and drinks machines
- a workplace crèche or mother and baby room
- car parking or transport services (eg local pick up service, inter-site transport)
- a staff common room
- a prayer room

Your hirer can only refuse you access to facilities if they can 'objectively justify' denying you access. Cost alone is unlikely to be a sufficient reason.

## Maternity, paternity and adoption pay

You may qualify for paid leave (eg [statutory maternity](#), [adoption](#) or [paternity pay](#)) if you take time off to have a baby or adopt a child.

## Statutory Sick Pay

You can get [Statutory Sick Pay \(SSP\)](#) like other workers. HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) can help decide what you are entitled to.

## **Redundancy pay**

Temporary agency workers are not entitled to redundancy pay or to claim unfair dismissal, which are rights available to employees.

### **After 12 weeks in the same job with the same hirer**

[If you qualify](#), you're entitled to the same basic terms and conditions as if you had been recruited directly, including:

- basic pay, including holiday pay, overtime and bonuses linked to your performance
- working time – eg not having to work more than 48 hours a week if comparable workers don't have to
- annual leave - you may get extra pay to cover this if it's above your legal entitlement
- night work
- rest breaks and rest periods
- paid time off for antenatal appointments

It doesn't matter if you are working full time or part time.

Your rights are based on those of a comparable worker - ie someone directly recruited by the hirer to do the same job at the same time.

If there are no comparable workers or employees you're not entitled to equal treatment.

You're entitled to find out the hirer's terms and conditions for someone directly recruited.

## Agricultural workers' rights

**What counts as an agricultural worker** An agricultural worker is someone who works in:

- farming and rearing animals
- growing produce including non-edible crops like bulbs, plants and flowers
- forestry, market gardens and nurseries
- maintaining meadow or pasture land, woodlands and reed beds

**Employment in England started after 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013 must receive at least the Minimum Wage**

**Employment in England started before 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013 must receive and employment in Wales;**

Workers, including those supplied by a gangmaster, are still entitled to the terms and conditions of their contract.

For example, this might mean workers are entitled to overtime rates, agricultural sick pay and dog allowance. Where accommodation is provided in a contract, workers can continue living in that accommodation.

These entitlements and any other terms and conditions already agreed will continue to apply unless the contract is changed by mutual agreement or it finishes.

Workers employed before the [rules changed on 1 October 2013](#) still have the right to the Agricultural Minimum Wage if it says so in their contract.

Agricultural workers in Wales must be paid at least the Agricultural Minimum Wage, or the [National Minimum Wage](#) if that's higher. The Agricultural Minimum Wage depends on the worker's job [grade and category](#).

**Agricultural Minimum Wage-Grades 1 to 6 If a worker's contract says they should work 39 hours a week (not including overtime) they must be paid the weekly rate, otherwise they must be paid the hourly rate.**

Grade of worker	Weekly pay	Hourly pay	Hourly overtime
Grade 1 (compulsory school age)	n/a	£3.11	£4.67
Grade 1 (above compulsory school age)	£242.19	£6.21	£9.32
Grade 2	£271.44	£6.96	£10.44
Grade 3	£298.74	£7.66	£11.49
Grade 4	£320.19	£8.21	£12.32
Grade 5	£339.30	£8.70	£13.05
Grade 6	£366.60	£9.40	£14.10

Agricultural Sick Pay (ASP) means you're paid at least the [Agricultural Minimum Wage](#) when you're off work sick. It includes any [Statutory Sick Pay](#) you might be entitled to.

