

A guide to employment

For anyone starting out in employment

Written in consultation with those in the know...

Second edition, May 2012

The National Care Advisory Service (NCAS) is the national advice, support and development service focussing on young people's transition from care.

For further information and resources please email: ncas@catch-22.org.uk or go to www.leavingcare.org

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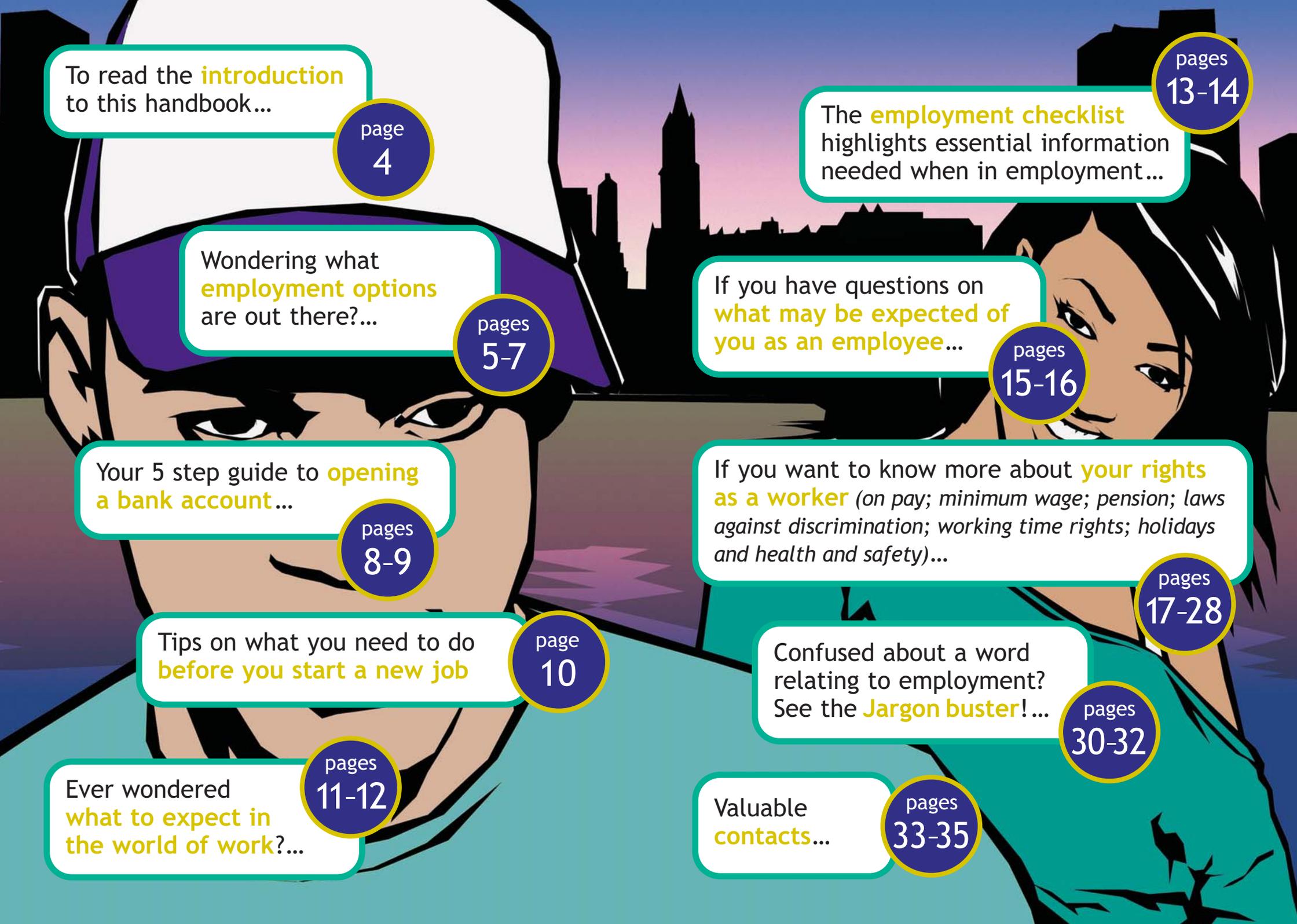


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● About this handbook

This handbook has been designed to prepare and support you into employment, and has been written in consultation with young people and care leavers who have experienced a variety of employability opportunities. This handbook has been produced as part of the *From Care2Work* Employability Project. The *From Care2Work* project is managed and delivered by NCAS (National Care Advisory Service), supported by young people's charity Catch22.

The first pages will help you get started, once you have successfully gained employment. Further on will be information on what to expect from your new employer, and what they will be expecting from you.

To help ensure you have all the information you need when beginning work with a new employer, to do your job safely, securely and to the best of your ability, page 13 outlines an *Employment checklist* for you to use.

The last few sections in this handbook will provide you with some useful contacts you may need as an **employee**. There is also a section to help you understand some of the jargon that is used in the world of employment. The words written in **red** will be referenced and explained in the *Jargon buster* section on page 30.

It is worth remembering that most jobs are not necessarily jobs for life – you can change or move on, and your learning should never stop.



● Employment options

Whether you are thinking about enrolling for an apprenticeship, or looking for your first job, this handbook will guide you through your first employment opportunity.



Below are some examples of other opportunities you may wish to consider other than applying directly for employment. Even if you don't choose one of the following, the information in this handbook is still relevant.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are a great way to work, earn and learn at the same time. Trades such as electricians, plumbers and mechanics are just a few that are part of the apprenticeship scheme. An apprentice will also study for a relevant technical skills certificate and a key skills certificate during the apprenticeship period.

Apprenticeships can take from 1–3 years to complete, but you will be paid for the work that you do from day 1. The minimum wage depends on how old you are and for how long you have been on your apprenticeship.

To search for opportunities in your local area follow the links on www.apprenticeships.org.uk and register to receive bulletins containing the latest vacancies. Your local Connexions services may also advertise such vacancies.

Employment and training

Many employers offer their employees training relating to their employment. If you would like to improve your existing skills or learn new ones that can improve your career prospects then speak to your employer about the learning and development opportunities they offer.

Work experience

Although work experience is not a permanent job, it will give you an opportunity to gain experience of a particular role. A work experience placement can therefore, help you to decide whether a career is right for you.

Work experience is also a great way to enhance your **CV** and show that you have had some experience, however short it may be. If you are on **JSA** you can undertake voluntary work experience through Jobcentre Plus or organise your own experience and still continue to claim benefits. Speak to your benefits adviser for more information.

For more information on work experience please see the *From Care2Work Work Experience Handbook* or visit: www.leavingcare.org.

Volunteering

A great way to get involved in your local community and to get experience along the way. Volunteering can enhance a **CV**, by showing employers you are willing to take on new challenges.



Volunteering is unpaid, although expenses will usually be covered if the volunteering is run through an official programme.

If you are volunteering, it is worth checking with your benefits adviser that you are still meeting the conditions of your benefit claim (eg. **JSA** states you must be actively seeking work and able to attend interviews within 48 hours notice).

For volunteering opportunities in your local area please search: www.do-it.org.uk

Vinspired also connects 16–25 year olds with volunteering opportunities across England www.vinspired.com or call: **0800 089 9000**.

CSV (Community Service Volunteering) offers both opportunities to develop new and existing skills to improve employment prospects, as well as providing volunteering opportunities in your area. Visit: www.csv.org.uk for more information.

Contracted working hours

A full time worker will be expected to work for at least 35 hours a week, or more. If you are classed as a part time worker this can be anything up to 35 hours per week. Your working hours should be negotiated with your employer before you commence your work or placement.

You should also be aware that some contracts are temporary rather than permanent (especially if you work for an agency). Temp workers (“Temps”) have similar employment rights to permanent staff (or “employees”), such as the right to minimum wage, but would not be able to claim for unfair dismissal. For more information on your employment rights as a worker call: Pay and Work Rights Helpline: **0800 917 2368**



● Opening a bank account

When you start your new job your pay will be paid into your bank account. You will need to provide details of your bank account to your new employer. Your bank account should also be used to receive any benefits you are entitled to (see NCAS's guide *Know your rights, know your benefits* for more information). If you do not have an account, here is a guide to help you:

1 Choose a bank. Think about a bank that would be convenient for you to visit. Remember that you would not have to go to your bank directly to access your money, you can do this at most cash machines. Visit a few banks to see if there is one you prefer and pick up some information.

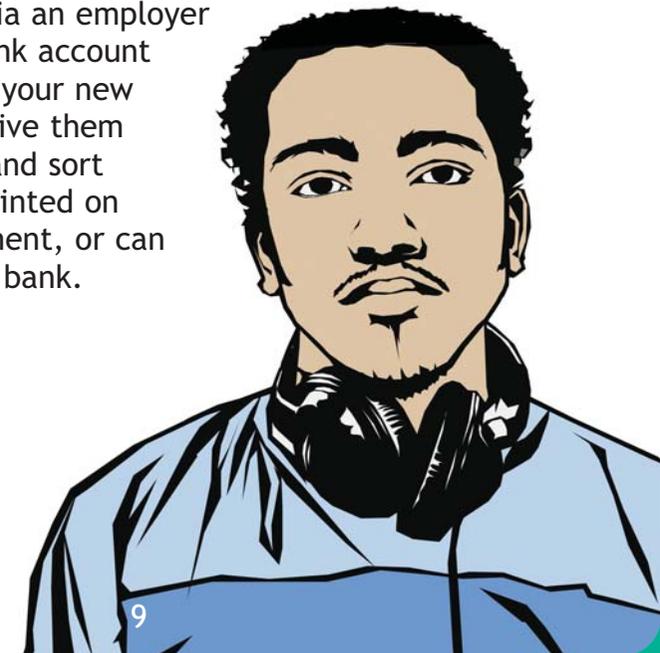
2 Pick the account you want. A current account will allow you to access your pay and for your employer to pay you easily. There are many accounts available, which can be confusing, but pick the one that is right for you. It can help to speak to someone at the branch, although some banks will allow you to open an account online.

3 Opening an account. To open an account you must provide some personal details such as: name; address; date of birth; national insurance number, proof of address (eg. a telephone bill) and photo ID. Many people find it easier to go into a bank than to do it online.

4 Agreeing terms and conditions. When you open an account you agree to certain terms and conditions which you should read. If you complete this online you will be asked to tick the box that says "*I agree to Terms and Conditions*", but make sure you read these rules.

5 Completing opening your account. If you open an account online you will be asked to print and sign documents, if you are in the bank you will have to sign documents there and then. After this, it will take a few days (sometimes a week) for your bank to process your paperwork, send you a card and your pin number (which you can use to withdraw money from cash machines).

If you are being paid via an employer they will need your bank account details when you start your new job. You will need to give them your account number and sort code. These may be printed on your card, bank statement, or can be obtained from your bank.



● Before you start your new job

Here are some things that you should consider before you start your new job:

- **How will you get to your new place of work?** Plan your journey and give yourself plenty of time.
- **Presentation.** Make sure you have some appropriate clothes for your first day (you may need to ask your new manager about what you should wear, or ask your personal advisor about an Access to Work grant). **PPE** (Personal Protective Equipment) may be required/provided, and you may also be given a uniform.
- **Sharing information.** You may choose to tell your employer that you are a care leaver. If so, they should not share this information with anyone else without your agreement. If you choose to tell your colleagues be prepared to be asked about your journey into care, but remember that what you choose to share is up to you.
- **Lunch!** Prepare a pack-lunch or make sure you have enough money to buy yourself lunch (which can be expensive so taking your own will save you money).



● What to expect when you start work

It is impossible to start a new job and not experience a first day! The first day in a new job can seem daunting and unfamiliar – this is natural. Over time the things that felt *unfamiliar* will become *familiar*. Don't forget that you will not be expected to be able to do everything on your first day.

On your first day you should find out:

- What your work will be that day
- What time your breaks are
- Where the toilets are
- What the procedure is in case of a fire
- And who you should speak to for help.

Remember, each day you go to work things will become more familiar.

Mentors

Some employers provide new starters with a **mentor**. A **mentor** is someone who could support you with any queries or concerns you may have in the workplace, someone other than your line manager that you can talk openly and honestly with. However, only some employers will offer this support.



Everyone that starts a new job should receive an **induction**. You should meet with your manager or supervisor to discuss the work you will be doing. This is also your chance to ask any questions you might have about your job.

Case study

Kim



Hi I'm Kim, I have been in my new job for six weeks, and have a contract for six months.

On my first day I was shown around my workplace as an introduction to the job. I was then told that I would be working alongside a colleague for the rest of the week who would explain my role and responsibilities.

On my second day I was not introduced to my colleagues as expected, so I tried to get on with my job as best I could, without the support that I was told I would receive.

After a week I met with my manager and we talked about my first week. My manager seemed shocked and organised a colleague to show me the ropes.

Looking back I think I had a good first day; however my employer could have provided me with a thorough **induction** from the beginning with support from my colleagues. Now after six weeks, I feel I know what my role is and can do my job better.

● Employment checklist

As an employee you should be able to tick each box in the checklist within the first few weeks of employment. If not, you should speak to your manager and/or personal advisor – asking questions whenever needed.

This information is **essential** for you to be able to do your job well, and to keep you safe. For ease of reference take the checklist into work with you.

- Your **job description** has been explained to you and you understand it.
- You have read and signed a contract with your employer.
- You are aware of your day-to-day working times and length of your breaks (and have a timesheet where applicable).
- You know how many holidays you are entitled to and how to apply for them.
- You know who your manager or supervisor is and have met with them.
- You have been shown the area where you will be working and know where to go to get apparatus to help you do your job.

(continued overleaf)

(continued)

- You have been shown where to go in case of a fire.
- You know who the first aider is.
- You have been introduced to your colleagues.
- You are aware of the dress code and have suitable clothing.
- You know what to do if you cannot go to work because you are unwell or in a crisis (eg. your mother and/or child is ill). Ensure you have contact details for your manager.
- Your pay process has been agreed, and you have been made aware of dates of payment.
- You have given your employer your bank details in preparation for being paid.
- You know whether your employer offers a **pension** scheme and whether you qualify to join this.
- You are aware of general and job specific health and safety procedures.
- You have been made aware of the complaints procedure when you are unhappy with behaviour in the workplace.

● What's expected of you?

As an employee you will be expected to behave professionally. This means:

- **Being at work and being on time.** Make sure you plan your journey into work and give yourself a realistic amount of time to arrive. If you know you are going to be late – call your manager to warn them. Also, familiarise yourself with your employers sickness absence policy (see *Employment checklist* on page 13), as some employers will not pay you if you are off sick. If you are regularly off sick you may be asked to attend a meeting to discuss your sickness record.
- **Use the correct language.** Be careful how you express yourself in the workplace as most employers will not accept the use of swear words.
- **Be presentable.** Pay attention to the way you present yourself when going into work.
- **Be sober.** Be aware of your alcohol intake on nights before work, alcohol can impact on your concentration and work performance. Talk to FRANK for information on safe alcohol consumption (0800 77 6000).
- **Limit your smoking breaks.** Each workplace will have a smoking policy which you will be expected to adhere to. Some employers will not allow smoking on their premises, or during break times.



- **Limit the use of your mobile phone.** Some employers do not allow personal calls during work time. There may be times when you are waiting for an urgent personal call (eg. about childcare), tell your boss and explain at the start of your day. If you really need to use your phone, do it away from your work space or during your break and turn your phone onto vibrate so it doesn't disturb others.
- **Use the internet sparingly.** If you are using computers in your job and have access to the internet, remember that it is there to be used for work purposes. Some companies restrict the use of particular websites (eg. Facebook) and some have a policy that you cannot use them for personal use at all.
- **Be enthusiastic.** Employers like someone who has an enthusiastic approach to their work.
- **Be respectful to your colleagues.** And to their rights and views.
- **Communicate regularly with your manager.** It is important that you speak to your manager about any concerns you may have, either about your work or about your workplace, in a structured (**supervision**) or non-structured way (eg. whilst doing your job).



● After you've started

The following should happen once you have started your new job:

- **Regular meetings with your manager (1:1's/supervision) – often monthly.** A chance for your manager to give you feedback about your work, for you to ask questions and to share your views. If you have a question about how to do your job or related to your health and safety, then do not wait for this meeting speak to your manager or supervisor as soon as you can.
- **Annual appraisal** – Each year you and your manager should meet to discuss your performance and achievements you have made, and to discuss what you will be doing in the following year.
- **Support** – You should receive regular support from your manager or those you work closely with. You should feel that you are listened to and that any concerns you may have about your work are being dealt with.
- **New jobs include a period of probation** – This means that for a period of time (3–12 months usually) your performance will be monitored against your **job description**. At the above meetings you should discuss your performance and what improvements you have made or need to make (if any) so you can pass your **probation** period. If you are finding your job difficult you should speak to someone (manager/**mentor**). Your employer has the right to terminate your employment if the **probation** period highlights concerns.
- **Training** – You may feel that you need training for a particular part of your job, speak to your manager about possible training opportunities. However, you should always be supported to develop and improve your own working practice.

Case study

Kim



I have now been in my role for twelve weeks and I'm really enjoying the work.

However, it has been hard to get to work on time, and I have missed my bus a few times. It has been taking me a long time to get ready in the mornings, and to get my work clothes ready.

Although I was still getting to work on time I was finding the rush quite stressful, and I know now that this was affecting my performance at work in the mornings. During my last **supervision** I mentioned this to my manager and explained what was happening.

My manager was really supportive, and quite surprised that I had been struggling with my timekeeping for so long. I am really pleased that I decided to talk to someone about it. My manager and I discussed how I could solve the situation and now I find it much easier to get to work on time and I'm less anxious when I get there because I'm more organised!

In the future I will try to speak to someone, preferably my manager, about something that is affecting my work or something that I am worried about.

Your rights

From your first day of work you have certain rights, even if you have not signed an initial contract. You should be aware of the following:

- Pay
- Sick pay
- Minimum wage
- **Pension**
- Laws against **discrimination**
- Working time rights
- Holidays
- Health and safety.

Pay

You will often receive a pay statement ("payslip") when your wages are paid into your bank account (make sure you give your employer the correct details, see the section on *Opening a bank account* on page 8).



The statement should include:

- The name of the employer responsible for paying you;
- Your **employee number**;
- Your **gross pay** (your earnings before any deductions have been made);
- Deductions including **tax** and **National Insurance (NI)**;
- The **net pay** – this is the actual amount you will receive after deductions have been made.

You should keep your payslips, as they are proof of your employment, what your employer has paid you and what you have received.



Tax free allowances – All **employees** are entitled to earn a set amount before they start to pay **tax**. This is called a Personal Allowance and is set by the Government.

Cash in hand – An employer may ask you to work “cash in hand” (this means you would not be registered as an **employee** and would not pay **tax** or **national insurance**). This is against the law and you would not receive a payslip or be entitled to any sick pay if you were ill. Your working rights would also be affected if you were **discriminated** against or **harassed** (see the section on *Laws against discrimination* on page 23) and you would not be covered by the employer’s liability insurance if you had an accident or were injured while at work.



Sick pay

If you are not able to work due to sickness, you are entitled to SSP (Statutory Sick Pay), if you’re sick for at least 4 days in a row and earning up to £95 per week. Your employer may also offer their own sick pay scheme which you will need to find out about.

Your employer will have their own rules about how you should contact them when you are unwell, it is very important you follow their procedures and let them know about your illness.

You are able to self certify for up to 7 days, this means you are able to sign yourself off work for up to 7 days without a doctor’s note, unless you are off work regularly, in which case your employer can remove your right to self certify. A doctor’s certificate is strong evidence to suggest you are not fit for work.

When you return to work after a period of sickness you may be required to attend a “back to work interview”. This is to make sure you are well enough to return.

Minimum wage

If you are employed then you are entitled to be paid for the work you do.

Here are the current (March 2012) *National Minimum Wage* rates:

- **£6.08 (£6.19 from Oct 2012)** – the main rate for workers aged 21 and over;
- **£4.98** – the 18–20 rate;
- **£3.68** – the 16–17 rate for workers above school leaving age but under 18;
- **£2.60 (£2.65 from Oct 2012)** – the apprentice rate, for apprentices under 19 or 19 or over and in the first year of their apprenticeship.

You should check that you are at least receiving the *National Minimum Wage*, your employer should explain your pay entitlements in your induction.

For confidential help and advice on the *National Minimum Wage* call Direct Gov on: **0800 917 2368**, or visit: <http://bit.ly/EcWZC>

Pension

Pensions help people who have retired from work and no longer receive a regular income. Pensions are an alternative to a savings account and can only be accessed once you retire. Employers often have their own pension schemes that you can access.

You can agree to pay a small amount from your wages into a pension scheme which will be saved for you until your retirement and your employer will also pay a small amount too. Saving a little each month this way adds up over the years and remember, it’s paid back to you when you retire.

Pension age can often seem a long time away and, although it is not compulsory, planning for your future should be considered.

Laws against discrimination

If someone experiences unwanted or is given unfair treatment due to their race; gender; religion; national origin; disability or sexual orientation, this is called **discrimination**. There are two forms of discrimination:

- **Direct discrimination:** This is when you feel you’ve been treated less favorably than someone else due to one or more of the above reasons, e.g. A driving job vacancy that is only open for male applicants. Bullying and **harassment** are forms of direct discrimination.
- **Indirect discrimination:** This is when a working condition or role causes a disadvantage to one group more than another, eg. A job advert only asking for clean shaven applicants puts some religious groups at a disadvantage.



Companies may have their own harassment policies or grievance procedures to support employers which you should familiarise yourself with.

Disabled workers: If you have a disability you have the same employment rights as other workers, but you also have the right to reasonable adjustments to help you do your job (under the *Disability Discrimination Act*). However, you do not have to tell your employer that you are disabled, but it is worth remembering that your employer cannot make suitable adjustments for you if they are not aware.

If you feel you are being discriminated against at work and your employer is not doing anything to stop this you can get advice from The Equality and Human Rights Commission www.humanrightscommission.com or call 0845 604 6610.

Pregnant or a young mum? If you are pregnant and working you have 4 key rights: *time off for antenatal classes*; *maternity leave*; *maternity pay benefits* and *protection against unfair treatment or dismissal*.

Statutory Paternity Leave can also be given to partners who are supporting the mother and will be involved in the upbringing of the child. This can differ between employers, but for more information on your Paternity Rights please visit this interactive link: www.direct.gov.uk/paternity.dsb.

You should tell your employer that you are pregnant before you reach the 25th week of your pregnancy. Your employer should then carry out a risk assessment to keep you and your baby safe in the workplace which should be reviewed regularly.

As a parent, or a carer, you have the right to ask for **flexible working hours** once you have worked for your employer for 26 weeks. Flexible working can mean (for example) working part time, or working school hours. Your employer must give your request consideration, but does not have to agree to it. If you want further advice contact the *Citizens Advice Bureau*, local numbers are available from directory enquiries.

For general information on benefits please refer to the NCAS's *Know your rights, know your benefits*, or read <http://bit.ly/Hx2afY> for more information on being pregnant and working.

Are you an UASC? If you are an Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Child (UASC) you may have been granted either Discretionary Leave (DL) or Humanitarian Protection (HP).

In either case you should have received a letter from the Home Office giving details of when your leave to remain in the UK expires. During this time you are entitled to work in the UK under the Working Time Rights.

You can ring The Children's Legal Centre on: **0808 802 0008** if you need clarification, or visit: www.childrenslegalcentre.com



Unfair treatment? Sometimes you may feel you are being treated unfairly, but an employer may have a good reason for their behaviour. It is worth contacting the *Pay and Work Rights Helpline* to discuss whether your treatment is fair: **0800 917 2368** (Directgov) www.direct.gov.uk/en/DI1/Directories/DG_177940.

Ever been in custody? If you have ever been in custody you have the **same right to employment** as someone who has not (although some jobs working with vulnerable people may require a Criminal Record Bureau **CRB** check), which will identify any previous convictions. However, if you are under 18 you should be getting additional advice and support from your YOS/YOT worker, as well as from the standard sources, such as Connexions, your social worker, personal advisor and <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/advice/planning/Pages/convictions.aspx>.

Working time rights

If you are a “Young Worker” (this means you are under 18 but over the compulsory school age, which begins at the end of the academic year of your 16th birthday), then there are restrictions on the type of employment you can undertake; where you are employed and how many hours you can work in a week. (See opposite).

If you would like to talk to someone confidentially about your working hours, contact the *Pay and Work Rights Helpline* for more advice: **0800 9172368**.

As a young worker:

- You should not be expected to work more than 8 hours a day, for up to 40 hours per week.
- You are also entitled to a break every 4.5 hours (for 30 mins).
- You should ensure you have 12 hours of uninterrupted rest in each 24 hour period in which you work (the 12 hours can be split if your employment is split through the day).
- You must also take 2 days off per week, you should not work in between these days.
- You should not be working between the hours of 10pm–6am. However there are some exceptions (eg. when working in a hospital).

If you are over 18 you are classed as an adult worker:

- You should not have to work for more than 48 hours per week, excluding lunchbreaks (unless you choose to do so, or are in an industry that demands it).
- You will normally have the right to a 20 minute rest break, although your employer can say when you are allowed to take this break, you are allowed to move away from your place of work for your break. Details of your break entitlements should be included in your contract.
- You have the right to 11 hours rest between working hours (eg. If you finish work at 7pm you should not begin work until 6am the following day).
- You are then entitled to have at least a 24 hour break each week, or a 48 hours break per fortnight. Details of your “weekend breaks” should also be included in your contract.

Holidays

Every **employee** is entitled to 5.6 weeks **annual leave** (28 days for someone working 5 days per week). This is set out in guidance from www.direct.gov.uk. However, your employer might offer more days which you should check. This can include public and bank holidays but the calculation may be different if you work less than 5 days or start part way through a leave year. Find out when the leave year runs so you know when you have to use your holiday entitlement by.

It is worth remembering that you will get paid for your holidays, but your employer can control when you take your leave (so book in advance with your employer). If you leave a job before taking all your holiday entitlements (calculated from the start of that leave year until your final day of employment) you should get paid for those days you are owed.



Health and safety

Your own health and safety at work is very important, and is the responsibility of both you **and** your employer. Every job will require you to undertake particular health and safety precautions, and you should discuss these with your employer in your **induction**. You do however, have the right to:

- Have any risks to your health properly controlled;
- Be allowed to leave your working site and not be disciplined if you have a reasonable concern for your safety;
- Be provided free of charge with any **PPE** (personal protective equipment).

If you are worried about any form of safety at work then you should talk to your employer, or get advice from *Health and Safety Executive* Tel: **0845 3450055** or visit: www.hse.gov.uk.

Case study

Kim



After six months in my role I am now at the end of my contract. I feel I have really gained some valuable skills and experiences.

During a recent **supervision**, my manager asked how much **annual leave** I had left. I had to be honest and say that I wasn't sure and I realised I had not checked in my **induction** how many days off I was entitled to. My manager went away and checked the leave I had remaining.

I had not taken that much leave during the last six months, as I wasn't really sure if I was going to get paid and didn't want to seem like I was bothered about money by asking. When my manager told me how many days I had left I was shocked and realised there were times I could have really done with taking some time off. I had also thought that the two days I had taken off sick would be counted as my annual leave which I now know is not the case.

I now have time to take my remaining leave, or I might choose to be paid for the annual leave I have not taken. In the future I will check during my **induction** how many days leave I am entitled to and what the sickness policy is for the company.

My time in this role has been very exciting. When I think back I don't think I would have completed my contract if I had not spoken to my manager about the concerns I had.

● Jargon buster

Ever wondered what an “Appraisal” really means? Here are a list of explanations of words and abbreviations to help you understand the world of work:

Annual leave	The amount of days holiday you are entitled to from your employer.
Appraisal	An annual assessment of your performance.
CRB check	Employers often require their employees to have a CRB (Criminal Record Bureau) check which would show whether they have convictions that may restrict them from working with vulnerable people.
Certificate II	A qualification equivalent to an NVQ 2, or 4 GCSE’s C or above.
CV	Curriculum Vitae is a written explanation of your work, skills and experience.
Discrimination	When someone suffers unwanted treatment due to race, religion, origin, disability, sexual orientation etc.
Diversity	The similarities and differences between people such as race, ethnicity, gender, age and sexuality.
Employee	A person hired to provide a service to an employer.

Employee number	Your unique employee number, this will appear on your payslip.
Equal opps	Treating all employees fairly.
Flexi time	Allows an employee to select the hours he/she will work, but these have to be agreed by the employer. Usually employees on flexi time may work a shorter work week or work a regular work week but do more hours per day.
Gross pay	Your earnings before deductions such as NI and tax.
Harassment	When someone feels intimidated, picked on or made to feel scared. For example, someone giving you an offensive nickname.
HR	Human Resources is a department within an organisation that supports staff and can provide details of any policies that relate to your terms and conditions.
Induction	Received at the beginning of an employment opportunity to assist employees to settle into their role.
JD	Job description (JD), describes the duties and responsibilities of a role.
JSA	Job Seekers Allowance is a financial benefit given to those looking for work.

Mentor	An experienced employee who supports a new worker in their role.
Net pay	The amount of pay you will receive after deductions.
NI	National Insurance, is a deduction from your pay, paid by every employee which goes towards supporting benefits for those not in employment and used to fund the National Health Service.
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment.
Pension	An allowance for those who are retired and are no longer in employment.
Person spec	An outline of the skills that someone should possess for a role offered by an employer.
Probation	A period of time in your employment where your suitability for the role will be assessed.
Referee	Someone who can provide you with a positive reference.
Supervision	A meeting with your supervisor/manager to discuss your role, progress and responsibilities.
Tax	A percentage of your wage charged by the government.
Team player	Someone who works well within a team.

● Valuable contacts

- **16–19 Bursary Fund** – Schools, colleges and training providers have funds to help you if you're studying or starting a full-time course from September 2011. For advice speak to student support services or your tutor. Visit: <http://bit.ly/IOwn9z>
- **Adult Learning Grant** – If you are over 19 and thinking about going back to college, you could receive up to £30 per week. www.direct.gov.uk/alg
- **Apprenticeships** – www.apprenticeships.org.uk
- **Basic Skills Learning** – Online learning, support and advice. www.bbc.co.uk/learning/subjects/basic_skills.shtml
- **Children's Legal Centre** – Tel: 01206 877 910 or visit: www.childrenslegalcentre.com
- **Citizens Advice Bureau** – Helps people solve their legal, money and other problems by providing free independent and confidential advice. To find your local bureau call 08444 111 444 or visit: www.citizensadvice.org.uk
- **Direct Gov** – For more information on your employment; benefits; education rights and more, follow the link: www.direct.gov.uk
- **Disability Rights Helpline** – 0845 604 6610

- **Discretionary Learner Support** – Can be a source of help for 19 year olds or over who are having trouble with meeting the costs of participating in further education at college.
Visit: <http://bit.ly/fhngna>
- **Equality and Human Rights Commission** –
Tel: 0845 6045510 or visit: www.equalityhumanrights.com
- **FRANK** – For confidential advice on drug and alcohol use
call: 0800 776000
- **Handsoncv** (CV guidance) – www.handsoncv.co.uk
- **Health and Safety Executive** – Tel: 0845 3450055
or visit: www.hse.gov.uk
- **Health and Safety for New and Expectant Mothers** –
www.hse.gov.uk/mothers
- **Jobcentre Plus** – www.jobseekers.direct.gov.uk
- **Learndirect** – Learn new skills and enhance existing ones (like English or maths).
Tel: 0800 101901 or visit:
www.learndirect.co.uk
- **Monster Jobs** – www.monster.co.uk



- **National Careers Service** – Provides information, advice and guidance to help you make decisions on learning, training and work opportunities. The service offers confidential, helpful and impartial advice, supported by qualified careers advisers. <https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk>
- **National Minimum Wage** – Call Direct Gov on: 0800 917 2368 or visit: www.direct.gov.uk/en/Employment/Employees/TheNationalMinimumWage/DG_10027201
- **NCAS** – For links to products on employment and education:
www.leavingcare.org
- **Pay and Work Rights Helpline** – For more advice
tel: 0800 9172368 or visit: www.direct.gov.uk/en/DI1/Directories/DG_177940
- **Unison** – Contact with any concerns about your work.
Tel: 0845 3550845 or visit: www.unison.org.uk
- **Voice** – A children's advocacy organisation for children living away from home or in need that provides a national helpline.
Call: 0800 800 5792 or visit: www.voiceyp.org
- **Volunteering** – A database of volunteering opportunities follow: www.do-it.org.uk.