



NEWCASTLE
CUSTOMS

ACCOMMODATION

BIRMINGHAM

MANCHESTER

TAKES

CONTACTS

EDUCATION

08



FINDING A JOB

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If you are going to the UK and you do not have a job before you go, you should read this chapter as there is useful information on how to find a job as well as information on who can help you to find employment.

You will find some useful tips in this chapter on what to do when you are applying for a job including a sample CV, application letters and forms etc.

You will find some information on getting your qualifications assessed in the UK if you need to do this. You will also find information on employment rights in the UK.

Will I need to have a National Insurance Number before I find a job?

It is a good idea to apply for your National Insurance Number before you look for a job. If you have your National Insurance Number you can give it to your employer as soon as start work.

Your National Insurance Number (NIN) is your own unique reference number. The number ensures that the National Insurance contributions and the tax you pay are properly recorded and it also acts as a reference number for the whole social security system.

Who can I contact to help me find a job?

Jobcentre Plus

Jobcentre Plus is the public employment service in the UK with over 1,000 offices throughout England, Wales and Scotland. Jobcentre Plus has the largest jobs databases in the UK which can be accessed from their website.

Jobcentre Plus offices offer access to jobs, training opportunities and benefits for any person who is of working age and people looking for work.

In the UK you can find your nearest Jobcentre Plus office in the telephone directory under 'Jobcentre Plus' or on the Jobcentre Plus website www.jobcentreplus.gov.uk. You can also call the telephone job search service, Jobseeker Direct on 0845 6060 234 and they will search for suitable jobs for you.

European Employment Services (EURES)

The EURES network is a partnership between all the public employment services in the EEA. In Ireland FAS employment services will have details of UK vacancies supplied to it through the EURES network.

You should contact your local FAS office here in Ireland and ask to see a trained EURES adviser. They will have information and advice on the practical issues surrounding employment in the UK.

Private employment agencies

Employment agencies are an important source of jobs in the UK. For details of private employment agencies in your area, look under Employment Agencies or Personnel Consultants in a business directory such as Yellow Pages.

Newspapers

Newspapers carry a large amount of job vacancies so they are a good source for finding a job. The majority of companies will advertise job vacancies in either national or regional newspapers. Good sources for vacancies are *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Times* and *The Financial Times*. Regional newspapers carry vacancies for their local area and may have a wider range than the national papers.

Networking

Word-of-mouth information is an excellent way of finding out about employment vacancies. Ask your friends and if they know about any vacancies at their company or organisation.

Irish organisations

You should contact your nearest Irish organisation or club in the UK. They will be able to give you information and advice on finding a job. They may know of vacancies within the area or they will be able to give you advice on the best place to look for employment locally.

Speculative applications

You should send a copy of your CV along with a covering letter to potential employers. Apply to large companies and organisations outlining why you would like to work for them and why they should take you on.

What other information do I need to know about applying for jobs in the UK?

Application letters

Normally you will have to send in an application letter with your CV when applying for a job in the UK. Where possible your application letter should be typed and on plain white A4 paper. You should highlight your personal qualities but be careful to neither 'oversell' nor 'undersell' yourself. You do not need to enclose copies of qualifications, reference or medical certificates at this stage.

Most UK companies will reply to your letter even if you have been unsuccessful. If you have not been contacted within about four weeks you can contact the company to make sure your letter was received.

Application forms

In some cases when you apply for a job you may be asked to fill in an application form. Standard questions may cover education and training, work experience, hobbies and personal interests.

Questions requiring longer answers may ask about your motivation for the job, your interest in the sector and why you wish to work for that particular company. It is very important to make sure that your application form arrives with the company before the specified closing date. If your form is late it may not even be considered.

Interviews

If a company is impressed with your application letter or form you may be called for an interview. You may be interviewed by just one person or by a panel of interviewers. They will ask you questions in an attempt to find out whether you are suitable for the job. You may well be asked questions about your motivation, your education and about the company itself. You may also be asked to expand on information given in your application letter or form.

It is very important to prepare for your interview. Find out as much as you can about the company. If you can talk about the company you will create a good impression. You should take with you copies of your CV, qualifications, references and any other documents you think you may need.

Tests

Some organisations like to test applicants for a range of abilities. The type of test will depend on the position itself but common types of test include skills tests, personality tests and aptitude tests.

Skills tests are designed to measure your level of competency in a specific skill area, for example, typing tests. Try to find out what the test will involve in advance so that you can prepare yourself.

Personality tests may ask you to describe your thoughts, feelings or behaviour in a certain situation. These questions do not have right and wrong answers. The idea is to get an overall picture of a candidate and use this to decide if they are suitable for the job.

Aptitude tests try to predict how well you would perform certain tasks. They test abilities such as reasoning with words, numbers and diagrams, problem solving and following instructions. They are usually in the form of a test that you must finish within a certain length of time.

Curriculum Vitae (CV)

A UK CV (please see sample CVs in the next 2 pages) should be one to two pages long and provide an account of you, your work experience and your qualifications. There is no set format but you should generally include:

- Your personal details
- Your education (including schools, dates and places)
- Your work experience (including dates, most recent job first)
- Your language skills (especially if English is not your first language)
- Your interests and your hobbies.

Nora Bloggs

CURRICULUM VITAE

CONTACT DETAILS

<i>Address</i>	Flat 123 All Peter's House All Saints Road London W11
<i>Telephone</i>	00 44 123 456 789 12345
<i>Mobile</i>	00 44 797 123 45678
<i>Email</i>	norabloggs@gmail.com

EDUCATION

September 1988 – June 1994	
St Mary's Secondary School, Whitehall, Dublin 9	
Leaving Certificate; September 1994 – June 1995	
St Leman's Vocational School School, Dublin	
Secretarial Course	
<i>Computers</i>	ECDL, Lotus
Other Skills	
<i>Languages</i>	Knowledge of French

WORK EXPERIENCE

May 1999 – January 2007	
<i>Company</i>	JJ Thompson, Dublin
<i>Position</i>	Accounts Payable Department
<i>Duties include</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Handling all customer queries by phone and email– Reconciling all invoices and issue cheques

**WORK EXPERIENCE
(CONTINUED)**

- Record all journal entries, reconciling all discrepancies
- Preparing end of month accounts
- General office duties including reception duties

May 1997 – May 1999

Company Spar Supermarket, Loughlinstown, Dublin

Position Dealing with customer requirements on a daily basis

Duties include

- Dealing with customers requirements on a daily basis
- Reconciling tills and end of shift
- Maintaining stock levels
- Preparing food following Health and Safety practices

OTHER SKILLS

Highly proficient in Microsoft Office software (Word, Excel, Powerpoint & Outlook Express)

INTERESTS & HOBBIES

Swimming, Walking, Reading, Cinema

REFERENCES

Available upon request

How do I get my qualifications assessed in the UK?

Recognition of diplomas and qualifications

In the UK the National Academic Recognition Information Centre for the UK (UK NARIC) deals the recognition.

To get your qualifications assessed you will need to provide the following:

- A photocopy of your certificate(s) together with transcript(s)
- A copy of a certified translation in English if necessary and
- A covering letter from yourself stating the purpose of your enquiry.

The NARIC will assess your qualifications and give you a letter of comparability, which is a letter, stating how your qualifications compare to UK qualifications. There is a fee for this service.

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For more information you can contact:

Qualification and Skills Division

UK NARIC

Oriel House

Oriel Road

Cheltenham

Glos GL50 1XP

Telephone: 00 44 (0) 870 990 4088

Facsimile: 00 44 (0) 870 990 4560

Email: info@naric.org.uk

Department for Education and Skills

QFW2

Room E3b

Moorfoot

Sheffield S1 4PQ

Telephone: 00 44 (0) 114 259 4997

Email: application.coe@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

Will I receive a contract of employment?

It is not common practice for an employee to receive a formal contract of employment immediately. Within 2 months from the date you start your employment your employer must provide you with a written statement outlining the following details of your employment. This must include:

- The names of the employer and the employee
- The date when the employment began
- The pay rate and the frequency of pay
- Hours of work
- Holiday and sick pay entitlements
- Details of pension arrangements
- The notice period
- The job title or a brief job description.

What are my rights if I am working part-time?

If you are working part-time you should not be treated less favourably than full-time workers doing a similar job unless the less favourable treatment can be objectively justified. Part-time employees are entitled to:

- The same hourly rate of pay
- The same access to company pension schemes
- The same entitlements to annual leave and maternity/parental leave on a pro rata basis
- The same entitlement to contractual sick pay
- No less favourable treatment in access to training.

What is the National Minimum Wage in the UK?

Most adult workers who are working legally in the UK, who are not self employed and have a written, oral or implied contract are entitled to the National Minimum Wage.

There are 3 levels of minimum wage in the UK.

They are:

- £5.35 (2007 figure) per hour for workers aged 22 years and older
- A development rate of £4.45 (2007 figure) per hour for workers who are 18-21 years of age inclusive
- £3.30 (2007 figure) per hour for all workers who are under 18 years of age and are no longer of compulsory school age (under 16 years of age).

If you are provided with accommodation your employer can deduct £4.15 (£29.05 per week - 2007 figures) for each day that accommodation is provided.

What are National Insurance Contributions?

In the UK you pay National Insurance Contributions (NICs) to build up your entitlement to certain social security benefits, for example, contribution-based Jobseekers Allowance and the State Pension. National Insurance Contributions similar to Pay Related Social Insurance (PRSI) contributions that you pay in Ireland.

The type and level of NIC you pay depends on how much you earn and whether you're employed or self employed. You stop paying NICs when you reach State Pension age.

Who pays National Insurance?

You pay NICs if you are an employee or self-employed and you are aged 16 and over, provided your earnings are more than a certain level. You stop paying NICs at State Retirement age (currently 65 years for men and 60 years for women).

What benefits depend on my NIC contributions?

Your entitlement to the following benefits and/or the amount you can get will depend on your (or in some cases your spouse or civil partner's) NIC contributions:

- Contribution based Jobseeker's Allowance (Class 1 NICs only)
- Incapacity Benefit
(if you can't work for long periods due to illness or injury)
- State Pension
- Additional State Pension (Class 1 NICs only)
- Widowed Parents' Allowance
- Bereavement Allowance
- Bereavement Payment.

Am I entitled to paid holidays?

Most UK workers are entitled to four weeks paid holidays a year by law. Some workers are not automatically entitled to this leave (for example, members of the armed forces or police force) and these workers have to rely on their contracts of employment for their rights to holiday.

Unless you're in one of these special categories of worker, you are entitled to four weeks paid holiday each leave year. Your employer will decide when the leave year starts and finishes - it may run from 6 April one year to 5 April the next, or it may run from 1 January to 31 December.

You are entitled to paid holiday leave from the day you start work - you do not have to have worked for any minimum time to qualify. A week's leave will be based on your normal working week, so if you usually work three days a week, you will be entitled to twelve days paid leave a year. If you work five days a week, you will be entitled to twenty days paid leave a year. A week of holiday pay should be paid at the same rate as your normal week's pay.

There is useful information about paid holidays in the guidance document on the Department of Trade and Industry website at www.dti.gov.uk

Am I entitled to have bank holidays off work?

Most UK workers are entitled to 4 weeks paid holidays. However there is no automatic right to have any bank or public holidays off or to be paid for them. Any rights that you have to time off for bank or public holidays will depend on what it says in your contract of employment.

If you are given bank or public holidays off they can count as part of your 4 weeks holiday unless your contact of employment specifically says that you get these holidays in addition to your 4 weeks holiday.

Can my employer dismiss me because I am pregnant?

If your employer dismisses you because of your pregnancy you could make a claim to an Employment Tribunal for automatic unfair dismissal (regardless of how long you have been employed) and also for sex discrimination. You would need to be able to show an Employment Tribunal that the main reason for your dismissal was your pregnancy. For further advice on this you can contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau (please see **Chapter 13 - Useful Contacts**) as you may need specialist help in making a claim.

Other useful information on finding work

This information describes the main Government employment schemes. Most schemes are provided through the Jobcentre Plus. You should contact your local office to get more information on any of the schemes. Some employment schemes are compulsory for people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) while others are voluntary.

Help for people with disabilities

Every job centre has a Disability Employment Adviser (DEA) attached as part of a Disability Service Team (DST), providing specialist advice to people with disabilities and actual or potential employers. The DEA can advise on practical help through the Access to Work scheme, the Job Introduction Scheme and supported employment.

Compulsory schemes

If you are claiming Jobseeker's Allowance, you must take part in certain schemes if you are advised to do so by an Employment Service Adviser. Your benefit may be affected if you refuse to do so or leave a scheme before completing it.

Benefit sanctions

If you refuse to take part in, or leave a scheme before completing it you may suffer a benefit sanction. This means that you will have your Jobseeker's Allowance suspended for two weeks in the first instance.

Jobseeker's agreement

If you go to a Jobcentre Plus to find work you will be interviewed by an Employment Service Adviser who will help draw up a Jobseeker's Agreement. This agreement will state the steps you should take to find work and forms the basis of your interviews with the Employment Service Adviser.

13-week review

If you have not found work after 13 weeks, the Employment Service Adviser will review the situation with you. The interview may take place on a day other than the unemployed person's usual attendance day. Attendance at the interview is compulsory. As a result of the 13-week interview you may:

- Be put in touch with local employers with vacancies
- Have your Jobseeker's Agreement reviewed to reflect the fact that you will widen the range of jobs you will look for

- Be issued with a direction aimed at improving your prospects of finding work
- Be referred to a scheme or programme.

If you do not attend the 13-week review or fail to act on the Employment Service Adviser's suggestions you may suffer a benefit sanction.

Restart interviews

If you are still out of work after 26 weeks you will be asked to attend a Restart interview with the Employment Service Adviser. Attendance is compulsory and failure to attend could affect your benefit.

Voluntary schemes

Some government schemes are voluntary and you can ask your Employment Services Adviser for advice on joining one. In some cases, however, attendance may be compulsory if the Employment Service Adviser feels you will benefit from attendance.

Work Based Learning for Adults (WBLA)

Work Based Learning for Adults (WBLA) is a training programme for people aged 25 years and over who have been long-term unemployed (particularly anyone who is at risk of exclusion from the job market). If you are on the scheme you will get a weekly allowance, which is the same amount as the benefit you were receiving plus an extra weekly premium of £10. To be eligible for a place on WBLA you must be:

- 25 years of age or over
- Not on another government funded training programme and
- Have been continuously unemployed for 26 weeks or more. Some people do not have to meet the 26-week rule, such as lone parents, people with disabilities, people with literacy/ numeracy problems and former detainees in prison.

At the end of your training you will either return to JSA (or to the appropriate benefit) or take up employment.

Programme centres (including jobclubs)

Programme Centres are run by outside organisations (from the public, private and voluntary sector) on behalf of the Jobcentre Plus. Each Programme Centre provides specific jobsearch and guidance

programmes, for example, interview techniques and CV preparation, sometimes known as Jobclubs to meet individual needs.

Programme Centres provide help to unemployed people who are 25 years of age and over and who have been out of work and claiming benefits for at least 6 months. You can also qualify if your partner receives benefit on your behalf. There are special categories of jobseekers that may be able to have immediate access to programme centres. These include:

- People with disabilities
- People who have literacy problems
- People who are homeless
- Ex-offenders or
- People returning to work after looking after a family.

Programme Centres provide help in the form of training sessions, which attempt to improve job-hunting techniques and, where necessary, restore self-confidence. You will also have facilities to help you find a job, for example, the use of a telephone, word processor, newspapers, and photocopying facilities.

While attending the Programme Centre you will get your normal benefits and have your travel fares paid.

People with literacy difficulties

In some areas there is provision for people with severe literacy difficulties or whose first language is not English. Further information about special facilities is available from your local Jobcentre Plus office.

People with disabilities

If you are disabled you are eligible to apply for special assistance to help you use Programme Centre facilities. This may include telephone aids, Braille devices, special chairs, readers if you are blind or partially sighted, or a communicator if you have hearing difficulties. In some areas there may be a Centre specifically equipped for people with mobility problems or one which provides facilities, for example, for a group of people with hearing impairment. Further information about special facilities for disabled people is available from job centres.

Work trials

Work Trials enable employers to 'try out' unemployed people in a particular job for up to 15 working days whilst the person remains entitled to benefits. The aim of Work Trials is to encourage employers to consider long-term unemployed people for vacant positions and see how they get on in the position before deciding whether to take them on permanently.

If you are 25 or over and have been out of work for 6 months or more you may be eligible to apply for a Work Trial.

If you are aged 18-24 you can be offered a Work Trial if you are on the New Deal (see below) and the District Manager decides to make Work Trials available.

You do not have to wait 6 months before being eligible to apply if you are a New Deal for Lone Parents participant, a person with a disability, an ex-offender, or if you are a former member of the armed services or returning to the job market after a gap of 2 years.

A Work Trial can last up to 15 days. The job must be fulltime and permanent and likely to last for at least six months. An employer will guarantee to consider you for permanent employment if you prove suitable but the employer and you can terminate the trial at any time. Your benefit will not suffer if you or the employer decides not to continue with the trial.

New deal

New Deal is a Government programme that aims to give unemployed people the help and support they need to get into work. Every participant on the New Deal scheme is given a personal adviser who is his or her point of contact throughout the programme. The personal adviser's role is to help you the participant identify your interests and goals so you can get a suitable job. There are a number of different programmes available. You can find out more about the different New Deal programmes by contacting your local Jobcentre Plus office or you can call 0845 606 2626.