

Checklist for first time employers



Becoming an employer for the first time is an exciting situation – but it can also feel like there is a lot to remember. To help you move forward with confidence, here are 11 key steps to consider:

Key steps

Salary

Employees must be paid at least the National Minimum (or Living) Wage. New rates come into effect in April of each year.

Don't forget further costs such as: pension contributions, employer National Insurance contributions, any bonuses and benefits.

Right to work

Undertake the necessary right to work checks to ensure your new employee can legally work in the UK. If you don't, your company could be fined.

DBS and other employment checks

Consider if you want to apply for a basic DBS (criminal record) check. You may want or be required to apply for a more detailed check dependent upon the particular role/sector.

If the role requires the employee to hold certain qualifications, licences or memberships, these should also be



checked.

Employers' liability insurance

You must have employers' liability insurance in place as soon as you become an employer. Your company could be fined if you do not.

Employment terms and documentation

Decide the specific terms of employment: including matters such as probationary and notice periods, hours, benefits and holiday entitlement.

Written statement of particulars of employment: since 6 April 2020, all new employees and workers have the right to a written statement of employment (setting out minimum terms) from their first day.

Employment contract: we strongly advise that you provide to all employees a written employment contract, signed by both parties. This can satisfy the requirement to provide a written statement of employment (above).

Policies and procedures: at minimum, you should have written details of any disciplinary and grievance rules and procedures. A staff handbook can incorporate all key policies to set out procedures and expected standards.

Statutory rights

Be aware of your employees' statutory rights, including in relation to: minimum wage, holiday, sickness and family related rights, notice periods, redundancy pay and protection against discrimination, detriments and dismissals. New statutory pay rates come into effect in April of each year.

Registering as an employer (and payroll)

You must be registered as an employer with HMRC, and for PAYE (Pay as You Earn) online, before the first pay day.

Payslips

Staff must be provided with a payslip, with appropriate details, on or before each payday.

Pensions

Comply with your auto-enrolment obligations. Check if you need to automatically enrol your staff in a workplace pension scheme: this applies to all qualifying employees, unless they choose to opt out.

Health and safety

Familiarise yourself with your employer duties to protect the health, safety and welfare of your staff. Employers with 5+ employees must have a written health and safety policy.

Induction

Start on the right foot: stay in contact with your future employee, welcome them and put in place an appropriate induction and training programme.



How we can help

For further advice or assistance on the above, or for any employment matters, please don't hesitate to contact the [employment team](#)

This is an overview document for guidance only and does not constitute legal advice. The following list is not exhaustive and you should always obtain specific legal advice where necessary.



[Laura McMaster](#)

Managing Associate