

## Useful Facts & Figures

### FROM 1ST FEBRUARY 2012

**Statutory Redundancy Payment - Up to £430 per week**

Age 22 and under: 0.5 week's pay for each full year of service

Age 23-40: 1 week's pay for each full year of service

Age 41 and over: 1.5 week's pay for each full year of service

**Compensation for Unfair Dismissal - Up to £72,300****Average Unfair Dismissal Payment - £8,924**

### FROM APRIL 2012

**Statutory Sick Pay - £85.85 per week up to 28 weeks****Statutory Maternity Pay & Statutory Adoption Pay**First 6 weeks - 90% of average gross weekly salary per week  
Remaining 33 weeks - £135.45 or 90% of average gross weekly salary per week, depending on which amount is lower**Ordinary Statutory Paternity Pay**

£135.45 or 90% of average gross weekly salary per week, depending on which amount is lower

Paid for up to 2 continuous weeks

**Additional Statutory Paternity Pay**

£135.45 or 90% of average gross weekly salary per week, depending on which amount is lower

Up to 26 weeks

### HOLIDAY ENTITLEMENT

Minimum of 5.6 weeks per annum which is 28 days for full time employees  
This can include the 8 named public holidays

### NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE

Apprentice under 19 - £2.60 per hour

Apprentice over 19 but in their first year - £2.60 per hour

Apprentice over 19 but in their second year of above - NMW for their age

Under 18 (but above compulsory school leaving age) - £3.68 per hour

Age 18 to 20 inclusive - £4.98 per hour

Age 21 and over - £6.08 per hour

### FROM OCTOBER 2012

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## The Wage Incentive

Youth unemployment is a growing problem in the UK, with over a million young people aged 16-24 currently unemployed. A new Government Scheme is providing long term support to help unemployed people into sustainable employment, providing a **no cost** recruitment service to local employees.

### IS THE FIT NOTE FIT TO WORK?

A recent survey has shown that only 30% of employers think the introduction of the fit note has helped improve absence management. With 11% of employers reporting that they think the previous system was better, the Government is now facing calls to improve the fit note system.

A review by the Department for Work and Pensions has found that doctors are unwilling to provide information and use the 'may be fit for some work'. Doctors are not suggesting adjustments in duties or working hours, enabling the employee to work.

The incentive allows for one to one employer support to resource and employ the right young person for your business. By supporting youth unemployment, your business will receive additional funding.

The Wage Incentive funding is calculated on two levels:

If you employ a young person for 16-29 hours each week, you could access up to £1,137.50\*\*.

If you employ a young person for 30 hours or more each week, you could access £2,275.00\*\*.

This scheme currently supports a wide range of candidates working with Apprenticeships, up-skilling and retraining.

If you are interested in employing a young person as part of the scheme, please contact us on 0845 6100 651 or [sales@hrsmartuk.com](mailto:sales@hrsmartuk.com).

\*\* specific terms apply

### INCREASE IN THE AVERAGE RETIREMENT AGE

The Office for National Statistics has revealed an increase in the average retirement age. It is thought that people are delaying their retirement due to concerns over financial issues. Since 2004 the average male retirement age has increased from 63.8 to 64.6 and the average female age has increased from 61.2 to 62.3.

On the other hand, research commissioned by ACAS found that employers are failing to fully benefit from older workers as they are not retaining and engaging them. It is thought that their skills and experience have growing importance and that companies need to adopt age management practices and procedures.

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

### SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE

A recent poll of 1500 mums, conducted by Netmums, has found that only 17% of partners would take additional paternity leave as well as the two weeks statutory paternity leave that is offered.

The majority of mums reported that as a couple they could not afford for their partner to have the time off, whilst others thought that either it would not be practical or their partners would not want to share the care.

For more information on maternity, paternity and adoption, including our new factsheets, contact us on 0845 6100 651 or [sales@hrsmartuk.com](mailto:sales@hrsmartuk.com)

[www.netmums.com](http://www.netmums.com)

# Work Experience: The Guide

Many employers are reluctant to take on people that lack experience as they see them as a risk. On the other hand, many people are at a disadvantage within the work market because they lack the experience and skills that are required by employers. Work experience can break this vicious cycle and challenge employer perceptions.

## What is work experience?

Work experience generally refers to a specified period during which an individual spends time as part of a business to learn within a work environment. Generally, employers will offer the opportunity for people to observe and learn, however others may provide the chance to get more hands on with tasks.

## What is the difference between work experience and an internship?

Sometimes work experience can be referred to as an internship. However, whilst work experience is an opportunity for people from any background to observe and learn, most commonly an internship will require candidates to have a higher level of qualification. Individuals embarking on an internship are more likely to gain experience in a professional career and be allocated specific tasks and/or responsibilities.

## How long should a placement be and what hours should I offer?

The length of placements can be determined between the employer and the individual. In order for placements to be beneficial to both parties you should look to offer experience over two to twelve weeks, depending on the level of experience that needs to be gained.

Both parties should also come together to discuss suitable hours of work. These may be dependent on the needs of the business and support that you can offer, as well as any academic commitments or classroom time that the individual may have.

## What are the benefits?

Work experience is an opportunity for individuals to get an insight into the reality of working life as well as be supported in developing essential skills to secure good employment in the future. Placements within a business can help break the cycle of no experience leading to no job.

On the other hand, you have the opportunity to take on people able to offer fresh ideas to the business and allows you to access a wide range of new talent. As a result you will get the opportunity to explore taking on new employees as part of workforce planning and strategic business management.

## How do you recruit for work experience?

Rather than relying on recommendations from friends and family, you should advertise the position as you would any other. This will allow you to access a wider range of talent that can make a difference to your business. It is also useful for the individual, as they will gain experience in job applications and interviews, if you choose to include them in the process.

## Do I have to pay the individual?

Work experience has no legal status under the National Minimum Wage (NMW) entitlement. However if the placement that you are offering involves undertaking responsibilities and carrying out duties that are business critical then NMW should be paid. As a minimum, it is suggested that the employer covers any reasonable travel expenses. Remember that if the individual is classed as a volunteer then they have no obligation to perform or work under a formal arrangement.

## What tasks should individuals be allocated?

For work experience to be beneficial it is important the individual is given tasks that will assist with their professional skills and give them an insight into the world of business. It is important to support individuals in widening their talent base. Some examples of tasks include:

- Allocating them a mini project to undertake
- Identifying shadowing placements within different areas of the business
- Assigning business critical tasks under the supervision of a mentor

## What happens once the placement is complete?

Regardless of how long the placement has been, you should make the time to hold a final interview during which you can discuss the placement successes and any future support you may be able to offer. It is also a good opportunity to gain feedback from the individual about the placement and the business.

You may like to provide the individual with a reference or discuss acting as a referee for future employment.

Finally, depending on the success of the placement and need within the workforce, you may consider offering the individual a fixed term contract or permanent employment.

**HR Support**  
Whatever  
your  
concerns we  
can give you  
the legal and  
practical  
advice and  
support your  
Company  
needs and all  
for a  
guaranteed  
fixed fee.

**Contact HR**  
Smart  
Consulting  
LLP to talk  
through any  
employment  
issues on  
0845 610 6651

**Five Important Things to Remember When Making A Dismissal**

Make sure that the employee is properly informed of the allegation being made and that it is fully explained.

Make sure you use the correct reason for the dismissal - conduct and capability can be easily confused so make sure this is clearly determined before approaching the employee.

Ensure that evidence both for and against the allegations made are fully investigated.

If you obtain any medical reports then you must act on any recommendations that are made.

Ensure that you offer and then uphold a flawless appeal procedure.

**APPRENTICESHIPS UPDATE**

Following on from our article and factsheet on apprenticeships in our Spring Newsletter, we can report apprenticeships are set to reach half a million this year. So far during this academic year over 256,500 people have enrolled on apprenticeships. Breaking the stereotypes of apprentices, nearly half of the people that embarked on the scheme were over 25 years of age.

A consultation has been opened to introduce a new apprenticeship scheme in accountancy and the professional services sector. The aim is to deliver 1500 higher education apprentices by March 2015, in the fields of audit, tax and consulting. The intake will commence this September 2012.

**Are you worried about losing talented employees?**

A survey recently published by WorldatWork has shown that 56% of employers find their most talented employees are the hardest to retain within the business and that maintaining a strong Senior Management team is becoming a growing concern.

Many companies are putting retention schemes in place, including strategies such as paying above the labour market, allowing flexible working along with acknowledging talent and identifying future opportunities.

But do these strategies address the real reasons that employees are leaving?

32% - Can earn more money in another job

24% Believe there is lack of opportunity for promotion

19% - Find workloads are too heavy and are affecting their work/life balance

18% - Are concerned over the direction of the Organisation they work for

17% - Feel pay levels are unfair compared to colleagues

[www.worldatwork.org](http://www.worldatwork.org)



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