WHAT IF HR

UK EMPLOYERS · CHECKED 27 NOVEMBER 2026

New starter checklist

What a new employee must get from you, and when. **Tick it off in order.** Most of it is done once and reused for every hire after.

ONCE, BEFORE YOUR FIRST HIRE

- [ ] **Employers' liability insurance**, at least £5 million cover, certificate displayed (online counts)
- [ ] **Register as an employer** with HMRC before the first payday
- [ ] **Health and safety law poster** up, or the leaflet given to each worker

BEFORE THEY START WORK

- [ ] **Right to work check**: original documents, an online share code check or a digital check. Keep a dated copy for their employment plus two years
- [ ] Workers too, including casual and zero-hours staff, and self-employed people who do your clients' work FROM 1 OCT 2026

WHEN YOU COLLECT THEIR DETAILS

- [ ] **Privacy notice**: what data, why, lawful basis, who sees it, how long, how to complain

ON OR BEFORE DAY ONE

- [ ] **Written statement of employment particulars**: the main part, in one document (employees and workers)
- [ ] **Statement of trade union rights**, due from 1 January 2027: the Government's wording, given with the written statement

FIRST DAY

- [ ] **Health and safety induction**: risks in their job, fire procedures, first aid

BY THE FIRST PAYDAY

- [ ] **P45**, or HMRC's starter checklist if they have none
- [ ] New starter on your **Full Payment Submission** to HMRC
- [ ] **Payslip** on or before payday, and pay at or above **minimum wage** for their age

WITHIN SIX WEEKS OF BECOMING ELIGIBLE

- [ ] **Pension enrolment** (22 to State Pension age, over £10,000 a year) and a letter to them

WITHIN TWO MONTHS

- [ ] **Rest of the written statement**: pension, collective agreements, other training, disciplinary and grievance rules

WITHIN FIVE MONTHS OF YOUR FIRST HIRE

- [ ] **Declaration of compliance** to The Pensions Regulator, even if nobody was enrolled

BY MONTH FOUR OR FIVE

- [ ] **Probation review**, written down. From 1 January 2027 employees can claim unfair dismissal after six months' service

Dates to know

6 APRIL 2026
Sick pay from the first full day off. Paternity leave from day one. Holiday records kept six years.

1 OCTOBER 2026
Wider right to work checks. Most tribunal claims up to six months after the event.

30 OCTOBER 2026
All reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment. No permitting harassment of staff by customers or suppliers.

1 JANUARY 2027
Unfair dismissal claims after six months' service. Union rights statement due for new starters, and for existing staff by 5 April 2027.

Keep records for

Right to work copies	**job + 2 yrs**
Holiday and holiday pay	**6 years**
Minimum wage records	**6 years**
Payroll (PAYE)	**3 years***
Working time (48 hours)	**2 years**

*from the end of the tax year they relate to

Rates to check

Minimum wage from 1 April 2027 (announced): **£13.21** (21+), **£11.27** (18 to 20), **£8.31** (16 and 17, and eligible apprentices).
Until 31 March 2027: £12.71, £10.85 and £8.00.

Statutory Sick Pay 2026/27: **£123.25** a week or 80% of average weekly earnings, whichever is lower.

Send us your what-ifs.

First hire? First Hire Ready sets up the contract, the team guides and the right to work steps at a fixed fee.

Full guide with sources: whatifhr.co.uk/post/legal-documents-new-employees-uk

HR updates by email: whatifhr.co.uk/newsletter

What If HR
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