

Becoming an employer

Employing people seems a perfectly straightforward matter: hire them, then set them to work, but is it so easy? (Acas 2018)

Many new employers are often unaware of their obligations towards their employees. Unfortunately, in some cases, they often only find out the tough way when a situation is handled incorrectly, employee rights are overlooked or, in the worst case scenario, they are facing a potentially expensive tribunal claim.

Becoming a new employer can seem daunting, and the many employer responsibilities and employee rights can seem over-whelming. However, it is essential to be compliant with employment law, and to keep up to date and informed.

Research has shown that looking after the staff team, and ensuring they have all they are entitled to, will lead to increased productivity and effectiveness. At the same time this will give organisations the peace of mind that they are doing everything possible to be the best employer that they can be, even at the early stages of taking on workers.

There are many useful sources of information available for both new and existing employers to help with employing staff and managing people. A number of key websites and resources are listed in Section 16 below.

This factsheet on Becoming an employer will summarise the main areas to be aware of and the key items that all employers should have in place. This factsheet may even be useful for more established employers as a useful refresher and checklist.

1. Recruitment

For many the recruitment process will be the first step in becoming an employer. Any new employer wants to ensure that they recruit the best candidates, with all the necessary experience and abilities to be effective in their roles. Successful and fair recruitment is much easier with some basic, but well-structured, systems in place.

Becoming an employer

Acas have useful guidance on recruiting staff which can be accessed on their website. There are a number of key points they advise employers to consider during recruitment including:

- Ensuring that the number of new staff has been carefully worked out, and the skills that are needed have been considered and agreed
- Making sure that vacancies and new roles are advertised without discriminating
- Being careful to ensure that selection of applicants for interview, and the selection of the successful candidates, is done fairly without discriminating
- Organising a carefully-planned programme to settle the new employee/s into the organisation. Employers want new staff to become as effective as possible as quickly as possible, and also to then stay with the organisation!

Employers will need to have well-structured processes in place for the following stages of the recruitment process:

- Assessment of staffing needs
- Advertising and attracting applicants
- Handling applications
- Selecting candidates for interview or assessment (short-listing)
- Deciding on the best candidate
- Offering the job

Employers will also need to decide whether they want to include a probationary period at the start of employment. This is usually for a six month period, but can be shorter. The probationary period allows both employer and employee to assess whether the job and individual are a good fit for each other. The employer can see whether the new recruit is performing well within the reality of the role, and the new employee can decide if they are happy with the role and organisation. Notice required by either side during this period can be very short – sometimes only a week. However, it should be remembered that some of a new recruit's employment rights start from their first day. Details of the probationary period should be included within the offer letter and the employee's Written Statement of Terms and Conditions of Employment. At the end of the probationary period, if the employer is still unsure whether the employee is suitable for the job, it can extend the

Becoming an employer

probationary period if the employment contract permits and/or the employee agrees.

Organisations should be aware they have a responsibility to ensure that no unlawful discrimination occurs at any stage in the recruitment process on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, maternity, pregnancy, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation.

Acas have a wide range of free, downloadable tools and 'Hiring Staff' templates to help employers with recruitment, including job descriptions, person specification, application and equality and diversity forms, and letters and checklists.

See Section 10 for more information on the Written Statement of Employment Particulars.

See Section 14 below for more on Induction and settling new staff into the organisation.

2. Deciding what to pay

When deciding a new employee's terms and conditions, and for the purposes of advertising the job, an important decision will need to be made regarding salary.

Employers will need to ensure that the rate they are paying meets the minimum wage rate current at the time. The National Minimum Wage is the minimum pay per hour that almost all workers are entitled to. All employers need to pay this, regardless of the size of the organisation. The minimum wage a worker should get depends on their age, and whether or not they are an apprentice. The rate updates in April each year.

The National Living Wage is higher than the National Minimum Wage, and is for workers age 25 and over.

The role, or roles, being created may require a salary higher than the minimum wage. In this case employers may need to carry out research to check what the current market rate is for similar jobs. This can be done by researching similar positions being advertised locally and nationally, or by accessing salary surveys.

Becoming an employer

Employers may also be able to speak to other organisations they have contact with in the local area to share pay information. However, any final salary decisions will be dependent on a number of factors including organisational size, the specific role and responsibilities and the budget available.

3. Pre-employment checks

Carrying out pre-employment checks, or 'vetting', applicants is an essential part of the recruitment process. Once an employer has selected someone suitable for a role, they need to find out if applicants might bring the organisation into disrepute, or cause difficulties with colleagues, managers, customers or suppliers. The employer must show due diligence to establish relevant information about the applicants that that could cause future problems for the organisation.

However, it is crucial that employers adopt vetting practices that are both legal and ethical. The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development advises that, in conducting pre-employment checks, employers should seek to:

- Ensure non-discrimination and compliance with data protection law
- Rely on fact, not opinion
- Ensure relevance to the post to be filled
- Understand the candidate thoroughly
- Be transparent and open to candidates about the checking process

There are a number of different pre-employment checks which may apply to potential applicants. Pre-employment health checks and references will be covered in this section. Checking an applicant's right to work in the UK and DBS checks will be covered separately in Sections 4 and 5 below.

Pre-employment health checks – The Equality Act 2010 generally prohibits employers from asking applicants questions about their health before a job offer is made. This means that employers can't ask potential employees about their sickness record or health during the recruitment process.

The exception to this is when questions relate to an essential aspect of the role, such as eye tests for a commercial vehicle driver, or when insurers may require it. In these cases details must be made clear in the offer letter, and the

Becoming an employer

employer must obtain the employee's permission to access their medical records.

Employers should ensure that checks don't discriminate against certain groups, or discourage applicants from applying.

Employers should also be mindful that they still have a responsibility to make reasonable adjustments for disabled job applicants to overcome any disadvantages they may experience during the recruitment process and to consider whether the applicant can perform the role if reasonable adjustments were made. This is not prevented by the Equality Act 2010.

An employer who discriminates against a candidate because of a disability that doesn't stop them from doing the job can be prosecuted.

References – Taking references can be an important part of the pre-employment checking process for many employers, and it is important to establish a clear process and be aware of best practice in this area.

Employers should state on the application form exactly when in the recruitment process references will be requested, and shouldn't approach a current employer unless the candidate has given express permission.

If references are sought they will be most effective if a job description is included along with structured, relevant questions that will enable the new employer to gain accurate further information about the candidate's abilities.

However, many employers now have a very cautious approach to providing references and will choose only to give a factual reference stating dates of employment, job title and salary. Therefore, employers should be prepared to only receive limited information, and a simple request form confirming dates, employment, capacity and particular skills may be satisfactory for many roles.

Employers should never ask for personal information or expect the referee to speculate about the applicant. The reference should always be about the candidate's abilities and aptitude for the job.

Becoming an employer

There is no legal obligation for employers to provide a reference at all, but any they do provide should be true, accurate and fair. References should always offer facts not opinions, and any mention of negative issues, such as gross misconduct or events giving rise to a disciplinary process, should be reported in a way which is truthful and correct.

Job offers can often be conditional, and may depend on satisfactory references being received. However Acas now advise against this. Prospective employers should remember a referee may simply fail to provide a reference as there is no legal requirement to do so. Or the referee may wrongly indicate the applicant is unsuitable in which case, if the offer is withdrawn on those grounds, the organisation could face legal action by the applicant. Employers need to decide their policy in the case of non-supply of a reference. Acas suggest that an initial probationary period might be an acceptable way of proceeding.

The holding of particular qualifications, training or licences may be important to the job, and it is reasonable to ask candidates for proof. The candidate may be asked to bring documentary evidence of qualifications to the interview. If checks on such qualifications are to be made it is good employment practice to make sure the applicant knows, and they are aware that copies of any relevant documents will be held on their personnel file.

Please see Sections 4 and 5 below for further information on pre-employment checks relating to right to work in the UK and DBS checks.

4. Right to work in the UK

Employers have to check that all potential employees have the right to work in the UK before they employ them. New employers need to be aware that they could face a civil penalty if they employ an illegal worker and haven't carried out a correct right to work check.

Employers will need to ask potential employees to provide documentary evidence from a list of acceptable documents. This list, and further information on checking a job applicants 'right to work', can be accessed on the gov.uk website.

Becoming an employer

Employers must ask to see the original documentation and confirm that the paperwork is correct with the applicant present.

It is important to ensure that the documents belong to the person presenting them by checking names, date of birth and photos. The documents need to be original, still valid and should not have been changed or tampered with in any way.

The employer must then take copies of the documents and record the date that the checks were made. The copies must be kept for the duration of the person's employment, and for two years afterwards.

If an applicant uses the 'online right to work checking service' this will generate a share code. The employer must then use the employers' online checking service to check their right to work using this share code.

If an applicant can't provide their documents then, in certain circumstances, employers can ask the Home Office to check the employee's immigration employment status. This would be the case if the applicant has an ongoing application with the Home Office, or can present an Application Registration Card or Certificate of Application which is less than six months old. These documents will state if the type of work being offered by the employer is permitted. The Home Office will send a 'Positive Verification Notice' to confirm the applicant has the right to work.

There will be no changes to the way in which individuals from the EU, EEA or Switzerland prove their right to work in the UK until 30 June 2021.

5. DBS checks

The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974 was brought in to support people who have been convicted of a criminal offence, and who have not offended again for a number of years, to enable them to gain employment and be reintegrated into society. Under the Act convictions become 'spent' or ignored after a specified rehabilitation period, and means that previous convictions can only be disclosed in certain circumstances.

Becoming an employer

Many employers report very positive experiences of recruiting people with criminal records, and ex-offenders make valuable and reliable employees. However, employers need to be vigilant when recruiting people to work in certain regulated activities. It is an offence for an employer to knowingly allow a barred person to engage in regulated activity with the group with which they are barred from working.

Therefore, new employers should decide their policy on employing ex-offenders to ensure they are:

- Recruiting safely and fairly
- Assessing and managing risk
- Implementing safeguards

This may involve requesting a criminal record check as part of the recruitment process.

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) helps employers when recruiting to sensitive roles to prevent unsuitable people working with children or vulnerable groups. Checks may also be necessary for roles which involve a greater deal of trust such as lawyers and regulated financial roles. These roles are deemed exempt from the ROA.

There are four types of DBS checks that employers can request, and employers will need to determine which level of check the post is eligible for:

Basic Check which shows unspent convictions and conditional cautions. A basic check can be used for any position or purpose, but for certain roles a higher level of check will be needed. The basic check should not be confused with a standard check which can only be carried out on roles which are 'exempt' from the ROA.

Standard Check which contains details of all convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings which are not 'protected' and are therefore eligible for filtering. Standard checks are available for jobs and activities listed in the Exceptions Order.

Becoming an employer

Enhanced Check which contain details of all convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings which are not 'protected', and may also include 'other relevant information' (police intelligence) which a chief police officer of the force that holds the information reasonably believes to be relevant to the role applied for and, therefore, ought to be included. Enhanced checks are only available for certain jobs and activities listed in both the ROA Exceptions Order and also the Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) Regulations.

Enhanced Check with children's and/or adults' barred lists which includes the same criminal record information as Enhanced Disclosures, but also detail whether the person is barred from working with either children or vulnerable adults or both. To be eligible to request a check of the children's or adults' barred lists, the position must be eligible for an enhanced check and also specifically listed in the Police Act 1997 (Criminal Records) regulations as eligible to check against the appropriate barred list(s).

Employers who wish to carry out a basic check will need to choose a company from a list of 'responsible organisations' who are registered with DBS to process checks. The responsible organisation will inform the employer of the result and send the applicant a certificate in the post. A basic check can take up to 14 days. Employees can also apply for their own basic check.

Employers requesting standard or enhanced checks must do so through an 'umbrella body'. The certificate is sent directly to the individual who must then hand it to the employer. A standard or enhanced check around 8 weeks. Employers who carry out more than 100 checks a year can choose to register with the DBS directly.

There is a cost for all checks. In 2020 fees were £23 for basic and standard checks and £40 for enhanced checks. Checks for volunteers are free.

6. Employer liability insurance

It is compulsory to hold employer liability insurance, so employers need insurance in place as soon as they start employing people.

Employer Liability Insurance will help employers to pay compensation if an employee is injured or becomes ill because of the work they do.

Becoming an employer

The policy must cover the employer for at least £5 million and come from an authorised insurer. Employers can check to see if their insurer is authorised by contacting the Financial Conduct Authority.

Employers can be fined £2,500 for every day they are not properly insured.

Employers need to display their insurance certificate or make it available electronically. They must also keep copies of these certificates for 40 years. Employers can also be fined £1,000 if they do not display their certificate or refuse to make it available to inspectors when they ask.

7. Registering as an employer

Employers normally need to register as an employer with HMRC when they start employing staff. This needs to be done before the first payday, and can take up to two weeks to process. It isn't possible to register any earlier than two months before people start to be paid. Potential employers can check whether they need to register as an employer via gov.uk, and will usually be able to register on-line.

8. Workplace Pension Schemes

Workplace pensions are also known as occupational, company or work-based pensions.

They were introduced as a way for employees to save for their retirement, and are arranged by employers rather than by the government or directly by the employee.

A percentage of the employee's pay is put into their pension scheme automatically every payday. In most cases the employer also adds money into the pension scheme.

'Automatic enrolment' means that all employers must automatically enrol eligible workers into a qualifying workplace pension scheme (unless the worker chooses to opt out).

Becoming an employer

Employers must also contribute to the pension scheme if the employee meets certain criteria (such as being age 22 and over and earning £10,000 a year or more). Employers must periodically re-enrol eligible staff who chose to opt-out of a qualifying automatic enrolment pension scheme.

The amount the employee and their employer pay towards the pension depends on the type of workplace pension scheme in place, and whether they been automatically enrolled or have joined a workplace pension voluntarily ('opted in').

Automatic re-enrolment occurs every three years after the employer's 'staging date' and is basically a repeat of the duties that were carried out at staging. The staging date is the date that the employer was required to have a compliant pension set up.

Employers are required to write to employees once they are enrolled in the scheme and provide certain information about the pension scheme and contributions.

Pension contributions and benefits are influenced by HMRC limits and vary from time to time. Further details and the latest figures are available from HMRC.

Other sources of information include:

- The Pensions Regulator who offer information for employers
- The Department for Work and Pension
- The Chartered Institute of Payroll Professionals

At the current time it is still uncertain what Brexit could means for pensions.

9. Employee rights and the law

Any new employer should ensure that they have a good understanding of essential employment law, and that they are fully aware of employee rights and their responsibilities as an employer. If employers don't know the legal rights of their employees this can lead to numerous problems including low employee morale and motivation, high absence and turnover and generally

Becoming an employer

ineffective management. In turn this can lead to a high level of dismissals and also the risk of employment tribunal claims.

Gaining an understanding of employment legislation can seem like a very daunting task for new employers. However, there are a number of places where organisations can access useful information including:

- Gov.uk provides clear and easy-to-understand information on employing people, and covers all the issues new employers need to be aware of
- Acas offers information for both employers and employees. Their website has a vast array of guidance including downloadable booklets, templates, forms and checklists.
- Acas also has certain information and advice especially for small organisations who are taking on employees for the first time. They have organised their expertise and knowledge into manageable step-by-step guides, so employers can build their understanding on the basics a bit at a time.

New employers will need to ensure they have researched and understood all of the following (as a minimum) before taking on employees:
(tick once completed)

- Know the law in the following areas
 - Unfair dismissal
 - Notice periods
 - Wages
 - Holiday entitlement
 - Flexible working
 - Maternity leave
- Sorting out an employment contract (written statement)
- Paying the right rates (minimum wage)
- Recruiting the right people
- Setting boundaries and clear rules
- Having disciplinary and grievance procedures in place
- Being aware of the right to be accompanied
- Arranging training and induction
- Understanding attendance management
- Avoiding discrimination

Becoming an employer

- Ongoing employee communication

Acas advises new employers to...

Know the law and how it relates to your workplace

Stay compliant and stay informed

10. Issuing a Written Statement of Employment

As soon as someone accepts a job offer a contract is formed. A contract is an agreement that sets out an individual's:

- Employment conditions
- Rights
- Responsibilities
- Duties

These are called the 'terms' of the contract.

A contract must be adhered to until:

- It ends by either of the parties giving notice
- Employment is terminated because the individual is dismissed
- The terms are changed by agreement between the parties

Employers are required to provide individuals with a written statement of certain terms and conditions of their employment. This includes employees, plus workers where they start work on or after 6 April 2020. It does not include contractors or volunteers.

From 6 April 2020 the required information must be provided to the individual on or before **day one** of their employment or contract.

This isn't an employment contract but is a summary of the basic terms and conditions that apply to the job and provides good written evidence of the terms of the employment contract.

The employer's duty is only to provide the information in writing. The employer can decide in what form it is actually provided. Many employers will choose to incorporate the required information into a contract style of document, but it could be set out just as easily in a letter or other

Becoming an employer

communication to the individual. However, most employers will choose to provide both a written statement and a job offer letter to reduce the likelihood of any misunderstandings arising later over what terms and conditions were offered.

A written statement can be made up of more than one document. However, certain information must be included in one single document. This single document must include at least:

(tick to ensure the information is provided)

- The employee or worker's name
- The organisation's name
- Job title and a description of work
- Start date
- If a previous job counts towards a period of continuous employment, the date the period started
- How long a temporary job is expected to last
- The end date of a fixed-term contract
- Where an employee will be working and whether they might have to relocate
- If an employee works in different places, where these will be and what the employer's address is
- Length of notice to be given by both parties
- Any probationary period, including any conditions, and how long it lasts
- How much and how often an employee will get paid
- Hours of work including the specific times and days of the week the individual is required to work (and if they will have to work Sundays, nights or overtime)
- Whether the hours are variable and, if so, how they are varied
- Holiday entitlement including any entitlement to bank holidays and accrued holiday pay on termination of employment
- Any other paid leave beyond paid leave/holiday pay (such as maternity or paternity pay)
- Terms relating to any other benefits provided that are not covered elsewhere (including non-contractual benefits) *
- Terms relating to incapacity and sick pay

Becoming an employer

- Training requirements (and whether mandatory and/or if the employer will cover the cost)
- Who to go to with a grievance
- How to complain about how a grievance is handled
- How to complain about a disciplinary or dismissal decision

*Employers should be careful not to not convert non-contractual benefits into contractual entitlements. There are different ways to achieve this, for example by including the additional information in a non-contractual annex.

If an employee has to work abroad for more than a month, their employer must state:

- How long they'll be abroad
- What currency they'll be paid in
- What additional pay or benefits they will get
- Terms relating to their return to the UK

The following information can be provided separately, within two months, but the principle statement must state where the information can be found:

- Pensions and pension schemes
- Collective agreements directly affecting terms
- Any other training entitlement
- Disciplinary and dismissal procedures
- Grievance procedures

A template of a written statement of particulars can be downloaded at gov.uk

It is advisable for employers to have separate statements for employees and workers. This is to avoid the use of inappropriate language or non-relevant clauses which may cause confusion about the different status of employees and workers.

While not strictly necessary, it makes sense for the employer to obtain written evidence of the individual's agreement to the terms and conditions. This evidence could be in the form of a copy of the contract or letter signed by the individual. Obtaining written evidence of the individual's agreement is likely to help the employer if there is a subsequent dispute about the individual's terms and conditions.

Becoming an employer

If there is a change in any of the information, the individual must be notified in writing of the change at the earliest opportunity and, in any event, not later than one month after the change.

11. Policies and procedures

For many new employers it may feel unnecessary to have an enormous Employee Handbook containing a whole raft of procedures and policies, especially if they only have one or two staff. It is true that many policies and procedures won't be needed in the early days of becoming an employer, and these can maybe be put on hold for consideration in the future. However, even with a very small staff team, it is advisable to have following as a bare minimum:

- Absence reporting and sick pay policy
- Disciplinary procedure
- Grievance procedure
- Equal opportunity policy
- IT and computer use policy
- Safeguarding (where applicable)
- If you have five employees, it is a legal requirement that you have an up to date health and safety policy (please see Section 12 below)

It is also suggested that new employers consider having the following in place also:

- Bullying and harassment policy
- Maternity, adoption and paternity leave policy
- Whistleblowing policy

12. Health and safety

It is vital that all employers are aware of the health and safety issues which apply to all workers and also visitors to their premises. This even applies to organisations who may not yet have employed any staff.

If an employer has five or more staff then they must, by law, have a health and safety policy in place.

Becoming an employer

Employers should visit the Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) website for a full range of information to help employers of all sizes manage their health and safety.

HSE provide guidance on all areas of health and safety including:

- Deciding who will help with health and safety duties
- Managing risks
- Being aware of any law that applies to the organisation and type of work carried out
- Consulting employees
- Providing training and information
- Providing the right workplace facilities
- Writing a health and safety policy
- Displaying a health and safety poster
- Dealing with accidents, first aid and ill health
- Getting the right insurance

HSE provides a range of resources and information especially for employers who are new to health and safety.

13. Equality and discrimination

All employees, and recruitment candidates, are entitled not to be discriminated against, or treated unfavourably, because of a 'protected characteristic' including race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, marital status or civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity or gender reassignment.

Employers should note that the employee, or candidate, does not have to possess that protected characteristic him/herself.

Candidates and employees are also protected from less favourable treatment for membership (or non-membership) of a trade union.

Both male and female workers should receive equal pay for work of equal value, and part-time workers are entitled to what a full-time person would earn, on a pro rata basis.

Becoming an employer

Those on fixed-term contracts are also entitled to receive the same benefits (or an overall package which is no less favourable) on a pro-rata basis as comparable full-time staff.

For further information on equality, and avoiding discrimination in the workplace, employers should visit the Acas website. Acas provide a range of helpful guides, templates and tools covering this topic, including an Equality policy template.

14. Induction

The first day arrives, and the new employee finally commences employment! It is a great achievement to reach this point, but now isn't the time to sit back and let the new employee just get on with it!

It is extremely important that the employer has spent the time preparing for how the new recruit will be welcomed to the organisation and settled into their role. Failure to do this can create a number of problems including:

- Creating a poor first impression of the employer and the organisation
- Fostering negative feelings of disappointment and resentment which can remain throughout the employee's time with the organisation
- Reduction in productivity and effectiveness
- High turnover of staff – eight out of ten staff who leave organisations are new employees

Acas point out that making the effort early on in the employment relationship reaps big rewards. Employers who get the settling in process right often succeed in creating a positive sense of loyalty and attachment in new staff.

Many employers prepare for a new employee's arrival by planning an 'induction programme'. Induction refers to the process where employees adjust to their jobs and working environment. This can involve a range of activities from familiarising new staff with the building and facilities, meeting colleagues and starting new working relationships, specific training essential to the role and learning about the new organisation and its ways of working. Every organisation, whatever its size, should have a well-considered induction programme. It needs to be thorough, but not overwhelming, and it should

Becoming an employer

never divert the new employee from the essential process of integrating into their team and settling into their role.

The specific details of the induction programme, and the length of the process, will depend of the job, the individual and the organisation. It will need to be tailored to the specific circumstances, and a one size fits all approach is unlikely to be successful.

However, most induction programmes usually share some common elements, which are usually spread over the first weeks and months of employment. Useful suggestions for consideration in the induction programme are:

Pre-employment

- Joining instructions
- Proof of the legal right to work in the UK and other necessary pre-employment checks (if required, and not already done during recruitment)
- New starter forms (enabling the set-up of bank account details and eligible benefits from day one)
- Terms and conditions of employment
- Company literature or other media

First day

- Meeting with the new manager and colleagues
- Becoming familiar with the building and working environment
- Escorted tour of the building and highlighting useful facilities
- Meeting with their assigned 'buddy' or mentor
- Sharing useful background information about the organisation, and providing an organisational chart or contact list
- Pressing paperwork such as issuing security passes and ensuring finance have the employee's correct details etc
- Vital Health and Safety information – including emergency exits, evacuation procedures, fire drills, first aid, accident reporting and specific hazards to the role

The first week

Becoming an employer

- A more in-depth look at how the organisation works – including history, aims and objectives, culture, values and further details of the services/products provided
- Understanding of the IT and telephone systems
- Looking more closely at the employee's role
- Discussing the future, including training and development opportunities, and how performance will be assessed
- Ensuring the employee understands the terms and conditions of their employment contracts, explaining the detail of matters such as working hours, probationary periods and notice periods
- Discussion around salary, benefits and expenses
- Discussing standards of acceptable behaviour and essential policies and rules. This should include areas such as smoking breaks, use of IT and social media, dress codes, parking, rest breaks, booking time off etc
- Key policies to cover in the first week should include discipline, grievance, performance management, absence management, equality and diversity, IT, Health and Safety
- Information regarding compliance – security, confidentiality, data protection

In the following weeks and months

- Meeting and spending on-to-one time with key colleagues in other teams or other sites/buildings
- Ensuring they have an understanding of other policies and procedures not covered in the first week
- Checking they are settling in or have any concerns
- Assessing training needs

At six months

It could now be time for the organisation to make a probationary decision, although any performance issues or concerns should have already been discussed during the probationary period. At this point new objectives and training needs could be established.

Please note – It is advisable for employers to put an induction timetable together, containing relevant points from the information above. This can also

Becoming an employer

include a tick list that should be completed and dated as each element of the programme takes place.

15. Communication

Once the new employee has settled into the organisation it is vital that a successful employee-employer relationship is maintained, and employee communication plays an essential role in this.

Communication should be on-going throughout the employment relationship, and should be systematic and regular. It can take many different forms including both one-to-one and group meetings, handbooks, newsletters, bulletins, notices and letters.

Communication:

- Contributes towards giving employees a sense of control over their work
- Improves employee engagements and increases job satisfaction
- Enables employees to carry out their roles to the best of their abilities
- Increases levels of commitment to the organisation
- Helps develop trust
- Improves organisational performance

Managers need to communicate information to employees about:

- Contractual terms and conditions of employment
- Key procedures, including disciplinary and grievance
- The job, duties and obligations
- Performance within the role
- The products and/or services offered by the organisation
- The organisation's performance, progress and prospects
- Changes to any of the above issues

However, communication is a two-way process which requires information to also flow upwards from employees. It is important that employees have an opportunity to:

- make their views known to management on issues that affect them
- raise any concerns
- discuss their role and responsibilities

Becoming an employer

Therefore, employers should ensure that there is provision for communicating this information. Employees' views should be genuinely considered before decisions are made.

16. Information and resources

Further information and guidance for new employers can be obtained from:

1. **HMRC** www.gov.uk
Becoming an employer
www.hmrc.gov.uk/courses/syob3/new_employer/HTML/new_employer_menu.html
Right to Work in the UK www.gov.uk/legal-right-work-uk
2. **Acas** www.acas.org.uk
Guide for new employers www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=2949
Help for small firms www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4231
Recruiting an employee: a step-by-step guide
www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4216
3. **GOV.UK** www.gov.uk
Employing People www.gov.uk/browse/employing-people
Interactive template for a written statement of employment particulars -
www.gov.uk/government/publications/employment-particulars-written-statement-form
4. **Home Office Employer Enquiry helpline** – advice on right to work in the UK
Telephone: 0300 123 5434
5. **HSE (Health and Safety Executive)** www.hse.gov.uk/index.htm
Writing a Health and Safety Policy
www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/policy/index.htm
6. **Equality Act 2010**
www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance
www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act-2010/what-equality-act
7. **Care Quality Commission** www.cqc.org.uk

This guide was compiled by Clare Cooper using the following sources:

1. CIPD
2. Acas
3. GOV.UK

Becoming an employer

4. HMRC
5. Business HR Solutions
6. Personnel Today
7. My HR Dept
8. HSE
9. XpertHR.co.uk

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