

National Insurance Numbers

A National Insurance number is unique to you throughout your life. It is not a form of identity. It is made up of 2 letters, 6 numbers and a final letter for example ZY 98 76 54 A. Everyone who wants to work in the UK must have a National Insurance number. Most young people whose parents receive child benefit for them will automatically get a NINO sent to them shortly before their 16th birthday

When do I get a National Insurance Number (NINO)?

To obtain a NINO you must be over 16 and resident in Great Britain or Northern Ireland. You can start work without one but you must then apply immediately. The law requires you to apply for a number if you do not already have one and you are working or intend to work. You can call Job Centre Plus and arrange an appointment. They will need documentary proof of your identity (eg passport, driving licence etc) and address. If you are working they want proof of this too. If you haven't started work yet they want to see four letters from prospective employers to show you are actively seeking work.

I am not a UK resident, so how do I get an NINO number?

An application for a NINO is made in person at a local Jobcentre Plus office (see overleaf)*. You will complete form P86 and it must be accompanied by documentary evidence such as proof of identity, like a passport, entry document issued by home office and/or birth certificate. Please note that information on applications for NINOs may be passed to the Home Office. A person who has a restriction on working here should be aware of this. Being given a NINO is not Home Office permission to work.

What happens when I get an NINO?

Once your application is successful you will receive a plastic NINO card. As soon as you have your NINO number you should tell your employer immediately.

What are National Insurance Contributions (NIC)?

See fact sheet A5 on NICs.

Do I need a NINO before starting work?

No, however, some employers or employment agencies may refuse to employ or accept you on its books until you have a NINO. An employer or employment agency should not insist on a NINO and should use other methods to satisfy itself about permission to work in the United Kingdom.

What happens if I am refused an NINO number?

You can appeal against a refusal to allocate you a NINO. You will be given more information on appealing by the Inland Revenue.

What happens if I lose my NINO?

If you lose your NINO you should contact the Inland Revenue office for a record of the number. A number can only be given to the applicant in person or in writing to her/his home address. If the applicant has lost her/his NINO card, only one replacement is allowed.

What if I change my name?

If you change your name then you should inform the Inland Revenue. This is necessary to update your NINO account. If you have changed your name, then you will be issued with a new NINO card if you ask for one.

*** Where can I get more detailed information?**

There are two Job Centre Plus nearby:

Charles St Job Centre Plus

Charles Street
Cardiff
CF10 2GS

Telephone number: 0845 604 3719

Useful contacts

Inland Revenue (www.hmrc.gov.uk/students)

Low Income Tax Reforms Group www.litrq.org.uk

Helpline for UK residents – 0845 915 7006