

National Minimum Wage

Almost all UK workers have a legal right to a minimum level of pay, called the National Minimum Wage. The level is set by the government each year based on the recommendations of the independent Low Pay Commission.

Who can get the minimum wage?

With a few exceptions, all workers in the UK aged 16 or over are legally entitled to be paid a minimum amount per hour. This is regardless of the kind of work they do or the size and type of company. The rate is reviewed every year and any increases take place in October.

What are the current rates of the national minimum wage?

There are three levels of minimum wage, and the rates from 1st October 2007 are:

- £5.52 per hour for workers aged 22 years and older
- A development rate of £4.60 per hour for workers aged 18-21 inclusive
- £3.40 per hour for all workers under the age of 18, who are no longer of compulsory school age.

Apprentices

From pay reference periods starting on or after 1 October 2006 the special rules for apprentices will be extended to apprentices aged over 25. This will mean that:

- Apprentices under age 19 will not qualify for the national minimum wage
- Apprentices over age 19 and in the first 12 months of their apprenticeship will not qualify for the national minimum wage.

Further information:

HM Revenue & Customs National Minimum Wage Helpline 0845 600 0678 (9am to 5pm Monday to Friday) www.hmrc.gov.uk/nmw