



The most asked HR Questions in the UK:

Here's a UK-specific list of HR FAQs we're asked most often by SMEs and charities.

Hiring & onboarding

- **Do we need a written contract?**
You must give a written *statement of employment particulars* on or before day one (often embedded in your contract).
- **What right-to-work checks are required?**
Do an approved check **before** employment starts (manual docs, IDVT for British/Irish passports, or the Home Office online check with a share code) and keep dated copies to get a statutory excuse.
- **What's the difference between employee, worker and self-employed?**
Status depends on reality (control, obligation to accept work, substitution). Use HMRC/tribunal tests; write status clearly but expect scrutiny.

Pay, hours & breaks

- **Do I have to pay overtime?**
There's no statutory overtime premium; you must at least meet National Minimum/Living Wage and Working Time limits.
- **What are current NMW/NLW rates?**
Rates change every April; from **1 April 2025**: NLW (21+) £12.21; 18–20 £10.00; under-18 £7.55; apprentice £7.55. Always check the current GOV.UK table.
- **What breaks are staff entitled to?**
If over 18 and working more than 6 hours, at least **one uninterrupted 20-minute** rest break; plus **11 hours** daily rest and **24 hours** weekly (or 48 in 14 days).
- **Do travel times count as working time?**
Commute usually doesn't; some travel *for work* (esp. mobile workers) can count — check WTR guidance.

Holiday & leave

- **What's the legal minimum holiday?**
5.6 weeks (pro-rata). Use the GOV.UK calculator for starters/leavers/part-time.



- **How do we handle holiday for irregular hours/part-year workers?** New rules apply to leave years **starting on/after 1 Apr 2024**: accrual by pay period and an option to use **rolled-up holiday pay** (must be itemised).
- **Is rolled-up holiday pay allowed?**
Yes — but **only** for irregular-hours and part-year workers, for leave years beginning on/after 1 Apr 2024, and it must be shown separately on payslips.
- **Has paternity leave changed?**
Yes — for EWC on/after **6 Apr 2024**, the 2 weeks can be taken as **two separate 1week blocks** anytime in the first 52 weeks.
- **What about carer's leave?**
Employees have a **day-one right** to up to **1 week of unpaid carer's leave** per year to care for a dependant with a long-term need (since Apr 2024).
- **Redundancy protection in pregnancy/after family leave?**
Protection has been **extended** so that at-risk employees in pregnancy and following family leave have priority for suitable alternative roles (from Apr 2024).

Flexible, remote & predictable working

- **Is flexible working a day-one right now?**
Yes — employees can make a statutory request from **day one** (rules updated Apr 2024).
- **Can we monitor staff (CCTV, keystrokes, GPS)?**
Only if it's **necessary, proportionate and transparent** under UK GDPR; do a DPIA where high-risk and explain clearly to staff (ICO guidance).

Discipline, grievance & performance

- **Do we have to follow the Acas Code?**
Yes — tribunals adjust awards if you unreasonably fail to follow it in disciplinary/grievance cases. Use a fair process (investigate, invite, hearing, appeal).
- **Can employees bring someone to a hearing?**
Yes — a statutory **right to be accompanied** (colleague or trade-union rep) at disciplinary/grievance hearings.
- **Can we dismiss during probation without the full process?**
You still must act lawfully (notice, contract terms, no discrimination/auto-unfair reasons). The 2-year qualifying period for *ordinary* unfair dismissal still applies.

Ending employment & redundancy



- **What notice do we have to give?**
Statutory minimum when dismissing is **1 week** after 1 month's service, then **1 week per complete year** up to **12 weeks** (contracts can be longer).
- **How do we run a fair redundancy?**
Consult, use objective selection, look for alternatives, give notice, and pay statutory (or contractual) redundancy pay where eligible. Follow your policy and Acas guidance.
- **When do collective consultation rules apply?**
If you propose **20+ redundancies within 90 days at one establishment**; start consultation in good time (30/45-day minima depend on numbers) and notify on HR1.
- **Is 'fire and rehire' banned?**
Not banned, but there's a **Statutory Code of Practice** you must follow — failure can uplift tribunal awards. Seek advice early.

Policies & compliance

- **Which policies are legally required?**
Disciplinary & grievance (per Acas Code), health & safety (written if **5+** employees), and various privacy/data notices. Handbooks aren't mandatory but are best practice.
- **Do we have to issue payslips?**
Yes — **itemised payslips** to **all workers** (since 2019) and show hours where pay varies by time worked.

Time off & sickness

- **What's the minimum SSP and who qualifies?**
Check current GOV.UK rates and eligibility; many employers top up via contract or policy. (Rates change each April.)
- **Do we have to allow time off for dependants?**
Yes — reasonable **unpaid** time off for emergencies involving a dependant.