



New Starter Checklist

Updated for UK employment law as at September 2026

Copy this list for each new starter and work through it as they move from offer to settled employee. Items marked “Legal requirement” are duties every UK employer has, however small. Everything else is good practice — adjust freely to match your own process.

Employee name: Date of birth:

Job title: Start date:

Manager / buddy: Probation end date:

Date of birth matters at hiring: it sets the correct National Minimum Wage band and whether young-worker working time rules apply. Store this form securely — it contains personal data.

Before day one

- ☐ Signed offer letter and contract of employment received back. **Legal requirement** *The written statement of particulars must be given on or before day one — a proper contract covers it.*
- ☐ Right to Work check completed and evidence recorded before any work is done. **Legal requirement** *Establishes your statutory excuse against a civil penalty of up to £60,000 per illegal worker (£45,000 for a first breach). Check every new starter, whatever their nationality. From 1 October 2026 the duty extends beyond employees to individual sub-contractors, agency, casual and gig/platform workers you engage — genuinely self-employed people in business on their own account stay out of scope.*
- ☐ References requested, and any role-specific pre-employment checks started (e.g. DBS for regulated work).
- ☐ Payroll set up: bank details, P45 or HMRC starter checklist, student loan status, correct National Minimum Wage rate for their age. **Legal requirement**
- ☐ Pension auto-enrolment: assess the new starter and enrol if eligible; plan for your Declaration of Compliance. **Legal requirement**
- ☐ Equipment ordered: laptop, phone, access card, uniform or PPE as the role needs.
- ☐ System accounts requested: email, HR system, any role-specific software.
- ☐ Workspace or remote-working setup confirmed.
- ☐ Manager has prepared a first-week plan and, ideally, assigned a buddy.
- ☐ Welcome email sent confirming start date, time, location, dress code, and who to ask for.

Day one

- ☐ Written statement of employment particulars issued, if not already given with the contract. **Legal requirement** *Required from the first day of employment.*
- ☐ Welcomed on arrival; workspace and equipment ready and working.
- ☐ Building tour, fire safety and emergency procedures explained. **Legal requirement**
- ☐ Introduced to their manager, buddy, and immediate team.
- ☐ Key policies issued or explained: health & safety, IT / acceptable use, equality & diversity, anti-harassment, data protection privacy notice. **Legal requirement** *A privacy notice for employee data is a UK GDPR requirement; preventing sexual harassment is a positive legal duty.*
- ☐ Emergency contact details collected.
- ☐ Working hours, breaks, and how to report absence explained. *Since 6 April 2026, Statutory Sick Pay is a day-one right: no waiting days and no minimum earnings level. Make sure your absence policy says so.*
- ☐ Leave rights outlined, including the newer day-one rights. *Paternity leave and unpaid parental leave are day-one rights since 6 April 2026; neonatal care leave has been a day-one right since April 2025.*

First week

- ☐ Role, responsibilities, and probation expectations discussed in detail.
- ☐ Health & safety training for the role completed; DSE workstation assessment done for regular screen users. **Legal requirement**
- ☐ Working time reviewed: 48-hour average limit, rest breaks, and any opt-out discussed if relevant. **Legal requirement**
- ☐ Introductions made to the wider team and key contacts.
- ☐ Access to all required systems confirmed as working.
- ☐ Any role-specific training scheduled.
- ☐ First informal check-in with manager held.

First month

- ☐ Formal one-to-one held: how settling in is going, any support needed.
- ☐ Probation objectives agreed and recorded.
- ☐ Outstanding paperwork confirmed complete: references, DBS, and a follow-up Right to Work check diarised if their permission is time-limited. **Legal requirement**
- ☐ Benefits enrolment (pension, healthcare, etc.) confirmed.
- ☐ Holiday entitlement and pay records set up. **Legal requirement** *Since 6 April 2026 employers must keep records of annual leave and holiday pay — keep them for six years.*

What changed in 2026 — quick reference

6 April 2026	Statutory Sick Pay from day one of sickness — the three waiting days and the lower earnings limit are gone. Low earners get 80% of normal weekly earnings or the flat rate, whichever is lower.
6 April 2026	Paternity leave and unpaid parental leave became day-one rights — no qualifying service. (Statutory paternity pay still needs 26 weeks' service.)
6 April 2026	New duty to keep records of annual leave and holiday pay. The Fair Work Agency now enforces these rules.
1 October 2026	Right to Work checks extend beyond employees to many contractors, agency, casual and gig/platform workers, with extended liability down supply chains. Map everyone who works for you and check before this date.

If you use MadyHR.ai, you can track a new starter's onboarding, documents on file, Right to Work evidence and probation dates directly on their employee profile rather than a separate paper checklist.

Free template provided by MadyHR.ai — UK HR software for small and medium businesses. Written for employers in England, Wales and Scotland; some rules differ in Northern Ireland. Correct as at September 2026 — employment law changes, so check GOV.UK for the latest position. This checklist is general guidance, not legal or immigration advice, and MadyHR.ai accepts no liability for how it is used. Take professional advice for your specific circumstances.