

Desktop Guide to HR - National Minimum Wage

What Is the National Minimum Wage?

The National Minimum Wage (NMW) is a minimum amount per hour that most workers in the UK are entitled to be paid. Currently, the rates are set at:

- £5.93 an hour for adults (workers aged 22 and over)
- £4.98 an hour for workers aged 18 to 21 inclusive
- £3.64 an hour for workers aged 16 – 17 inclusive
- £2.50 an hour for apprentices

The Government has announced that the national minimum wage will increase from 1st October, 2011 as follows:

- Adults aged 21 and over – by 15p from £5.93 to £6.08 per hour
- 18 – 20 year olds – by 6p from £4.92 to £4.98 per hour
- 16 – 17 year olds – by 4p from £3.64 to £3.68 per hour
- Apprentices – by 10p from £2.50 to £2.60 per hour

Who is entitled to the National Minimum Wage?

Most workers in the UK over compulsory school leaving age are legally entitled to be paid at least the NMW and all employers have to pay it if the employee is entitled to it. It makes no difference:

- if the employee is paid weekly or monthly, or by cheque, in cash or in another way
- if the employee works full time, part time or has any other working pattern
- if the employee works at your premises or elsewhere
- what size of employee/company you (the employer) are

Employees are entitled to the NMW even if they have signed a contract agreeing to be paid at a lower rate. The contract will have no legal effect and the employee must still be paid the proper rate.

Does the National Minimum Wage Change?

Yes. The NMW rate is reviewed every year and any changes take place on the 1st October. If you are a subscriber to our monthly HR e-Bulletin we will notify you of any upcoming changes as they are announced. You can join [here](#).

--- PLEASE NOTE ---

The information set out in this document is correct at 1st May, 2011. As the legislation that applies in this article/document is general in its context, your specific circumstances may require tailored advice for it to be effective. If in doubt, contact Crispin Rhodes on 01908 230969 or email angela@crispinrhodes.co.uk