Getting a National Insurance number – International and EEA students

Everyone who works in the UK needs to have a National Insurance (NI) Number which is a unique personal reference number for all your tax/employment affairs. If you are an international or EEA student and want to work in the UK you will need to apply for one once you are in the UK.

Depending on how much money you earn, you may be required to pay National Insurance Contributions, a form of tax automatically deducted from your pay if you earn over £162 per week (tax year 2018-19).

You may have a National Insurance Number on the back of your Biometric Residence Permit (2 letters, 6 numbers, 1 letter). If so, you do not need to apply for one. If you are not sure, check with the Immigration Advice Service or the Careers and Placements team.

Important note:
You will not be charged for an NI number – it is completely free.
Please do not use any website that charges a fee for this service.

To get an NI number you will need to contact the National Insurance Number Application line on 0800 141 2075, Monday – Friday 8.00am – 6.00pm. This is a free number; you will not be charged for the call, however waiting times for an answer can be very long. (If you have hearing or speech difficulties, call the text phone on 0800 141 2438.)

Have your passport/visa with you when you call, and a pen and paper to note down the reference number you will be given.

You can expect to be asked these questions:
- Are you in the UK now?
- Have you have applied for a National Insurance number before?
- Why do you need a NI number?
- What is your nationality and do you have any other nationality?

You will then be asked for the following information:
- your full name (AS IN YOUR PASSPORT)
- your date of birth (Day/Month/Year)
- full address and postcode of where you are currently living (check this before you phone)
- contact telephone and mobile number (this must be a UK mobile number)

You will be asked to check your Biometric Residence Permit:
- Is there a number on the back of the card, consisting of 2 letters, 6 numbers, 1 letter? If yes, this is your National Insurance number and you do not need to apply for one.
You will be invited for an **interview** at a Jobcentre Plus office. This is likely to be in York or Leeds. **Please do not** visit the Jobcentre Plus office without an appointment.

**Attending an Interview for your NI Number**

The purpose of the interview is to check your identity, your status as a student, and check that you have a legal right to work in the UK. You will be told what documents you need to bring with you to your appointment – these **may** include:

- Passport and visa (if applicable)/Biometric Residence Permit - EU students can use a national ID card
- If dual nationality, both passports, if possible
- Police registration certificate (if applicable)
- Confirmation of your address – bank statement, rental agreement, utility bill, etc.
- Confirmation of study letter/student card
- If you are working, name and contact details of employer and other evidence of employment, such as a letter from employer/contract/payslip

**What happens after your application?**

It will take a few weeks for your letter containing your National Insurance Number to arrive. You are allowed to start work before you receive your NI number, provided you can show an employer you have applied for it. You should keep your NI number safe – it is unique to you and you retain the same number during your whole working life in the UK. Even if you leave the UK and come back at any time to work, you use the same number.

For further information about working while you study, see the *Temporary work in the UK* information sheet at: [www.york.ac.uk/careers/work](http://www.york.ac.uk/careers/work) - click on *Temporary and part-time work*, or speak to a member of staff in Careers and Placements. If you are an international student you will also find useful information about working in the UK while you study on our international student webpages at: [www.york.ac.uk/careers/international](http://www.york.ac.uk/careers/international) and at: [www.ukcisa.org.uk/](http://www.ukcisa.org.uk/)

When you leave the UK it *may* be possible to reclaim some tax you have paid – please see [www.york.ac.uk/students/support/international/after/leaving/](http://www.york.ac.uk/students/support/international/after/leaving/) for more information. You can find more information about paying National Insurance Contributions in the Tax Guide for Students [https://www.taxguideforstudents.org.uk/types-of-student/international-students/do-students-pay-national-insurance-contributions](https://www.taxguideforstudents.org.uk/types-of-student/international-students/do-students-pay-national-insurance-contributions)

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**Please note:** The websites listed here are not intended to represent a comprehensive list. Careers and Placements cannot be held responsible for the content of external websites.

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