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. (*Croatian nationals should read the important note at the end of this information sheet)

Depending on how much money you earn, you may be required to pay National Insurance Contributions. This is a form of tax which everyone who works in the UK is required to pay if they earn over a certain amount. It is automatically deducted from your pay. In the tax year 2015-2016 you will only be required to pay NI if you earn over £155 per week. 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/ for more information.

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 0345 600 0643 (open Monday – Friday 8.00am – 6.00pm)
(If you have hearing or speech difficulties, call the text phone on 0345 600 0644).

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:

- Have you 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)
- if you are an EU national, the date you arrived in the UK
- if you are non-EU national you will be asked what kind of visa you have, the place where it was issued and the date it expires. If the visa was issued in the UK you will also need to remember the date you arrived in the UK
- full address and postcode of where you are currently living
- contact telephone and mobile number (this must be a UK mobile number)

Depending on your nationality and where your visa was issued (if you have one), you will either be invited for an interview at a Jobcentre Plus office or you will be asked to complete a postal application with copies of your identity documents. Please do not visit the Jobcentre Plus office without an appointment.
You will be given a contact telephone number to call if you have not heard anything within 7-11 days.

Attending an Interview for your NI Number

If you are asked to attend an interview, it will be in either York (very limited availability) or Leeds. If you are offered a Leeds appointment and it is very difficult for you to travel there, please let Jobcentre know immediately. They may be able to offer you an appointment in York in this situation – but this is not guaranteed.

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
- 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

Making a postal application:

If you are making a postal application (this is usually the case if your visa was issued outside the UK), you will receive an application form after you’ve rung the application line - with instructions about completing the form and which documents you need to send. You can usually submit photocopies but please follow the instructions carefully and make sure you complete and send off your form within the time limit stated in the letter. If you have any questions about completing the form please call into Careers and speak to a member of staff at the Information Desk – you do not need an appointment to do this.

What happens after your application?

It currently takes about four weeks to receive the letter containing your National Insurance Number. 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 - click on Temporary and part-time work or speak to a member of staff in Careers. 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 and at: www.ukcisa.org.uk/

Information for Croatian nationals

If you are a Croatian national and have a valid Tier 4 student visa with work permission, you can continue to work under the terms of that visa until it expires. After that time, you must apply for a Registration Certificate in order to continue to be able to work legally in the UK (unless you are exempt). If you are working, you must apply for a Registration Certificate before your student visa expires – so that you can keep working legally. If there is a gap between the end of your visa and receiving your Registration Certificate you will not be able to work in this period. The type of Registration Certificate you apply for will depend on your personal circumstances and work history in the UK.
If you came to the UK since 1 July 2013 there are specific rules in place which restrict your access to the UK labour market. In order to work legally while you are a student, you need to apply for a yellow registration certificate (unless you are exempt). You will need this certificate before you can make an appointment to get a National Insurance number and employers will want to see it when they recruit you. There is a £55 charge and you are restricted to working a maximum of 20 hours per week in academic term time, full time during vacations. You can find more information about these rules at: www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/eucitizens/croatia/ and more information about how to apply at www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/eucitizens/croatia/applying/

If you need any help or have questions about your application and the evidence/documents you need to include, please book a Careers Information Appointment through Careers Gateway www.york.ac.uk/careers/gateway

If you intend to work during your time in the UK (including going on placement as part of your course) you should apply for your Registration Certificate well in advance as it can take several months to process your application. If you do not intend to work you don’t need to apply for this certificate.

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

May 2016