

NIC

Applying for a National Insurance (NI) number



What is a National Insurance number?

A National Insurance (NI) number is a personal number used:

- to record a person's National Insurance contributions and credited contributions, and
- when a person is claiming social security benefits.

Your NI number is unique to you and only you must use it. There are circumstances when, by law, you must apply for an NI number.

What should I know?

When and where should I apply for a National Insurance number?

You should apply for an NI number if:

- you will be making a claim for benefit
- you have started, are about to start or are looking for work
- you are self-employed
- your partner is claiming benefit for you, or
- you want to pay voluntary NI contributions and would benefit from paying them.

If you have applied for a student loan, you may also need to apply for a NI number. The Student Loan Company will tell you if this is the case.

You should apply for a National Insurance Number through your local Social Security or Jobs & Benefits office.

Applying for a National Insurance number

There is a process of checks we need to go through when you apply for an NI number. Firstly, we make sure you need an NI number. Secondly, we make sure you haven't already got an NI number. If you need an NI number and you haven't already got one, we will write and ask you to come to an interview.

We use this interview to:

- check your identity – to make sure you are who you say you are and to protect your NI and social security accounts, and
- check you have a right to work in the UK if your application is for employment purposes.

Will I need to prove my identity and right to work?

At the interview, we will ask you questions about who you are and why you want an NI number. If you are applying for an NI number to take up employment, we will also ask you about your right to work in the UK. This information, and any official documents you bring with you, will help to prove your identity and your right to work (if this applies). You may also have to fill in a form to apply for an NI number.

When we give you the date of your interview, we will tell you what information or evidence to bring with you. The

information or evidence you need to bring depends on why you need the NI number. The list on the next page might give you an idea of the relevant documents.

The interview will usually be with one other person unless, for example, you need an interpreter. Sometimes we may ask for your permission to let us keep your documents for a short time. We will give you a receipt for any documents you let us keep.

Types of evidence to prove your right to work

As well as providing evidence of your identity, you will need to provide evidence of your right to work in the UK if your application is for employment. We cannot accept photocopies. You can provide any of the following as evidence.

- Passport
- Birth certificate
- Adoption certificate
- Registration or naturalisation certificate
- Home Office documents, confirming you are entitled to work in the UK
- Work permit

What types of evidence and information can I bring to help prove my identity?

Here are some examples of the types of evidence and information we will accept as evidence of your identity. We cannot accept photocopies.

General documents

- Passport
- National identity card
- Birth certificate
- Marriage or civil partnership certificate
- Full driving licence
- Home Office documents
- Two or more passports if you are of dual-nationality or multi-nationality
- Student-loan documents
- Student identity card
- Letter from your college, including course details
- Mortgage or rental agreement

Employment documents

- Payslips
- A work permit
- A letter from your employer
- Your contract of employment
- Details of any employment agencies you are registered with
- Evidence that you are actively looking for work
- Certificate of incorporation
- Memorandum of association
- Articles of association
- Services contract

Documents if you're self-employed

- Invoices
- Letters from your accountant
- Letters from your clients
- Your Schedule D tax form
- Stock transfer form

If you have recently arrived in the UK after living outside Europe, you must bring any travel documents you have. These are documents that give information about your travel between countries. They include things like your passport, National Identity card, or NASS 35 form (issued to people applying for asylum in the UK).

If you have any other documents that you think may help prove your identity and your right to work (if this applies), please bring them with you. If you do not have any documents, you must still go to the interview. You may be able to prove your identity and right to work with the information you give at the interview.

What happens after the interview?

If your application is successful, we will give you your NI number in writing as soon as possible after the interview. We will send you an NI number card later.

If your application is unsuccessful, we will write and tell you.

Remember, a National Insurance number is not proof of identity.

How do I find out more?

For more information, visit the Department for Social Development website at www.dsdni.gov.uk or contact your local Social Security or Jobs & Benefits office. Contact details will be in your local phone book.

This leaflet is only a general guide and not a full statement of the law. We have made every effort to make sure that the information in this leaflet is correct at the date shown below. However, changes in the law make the leaflet become gradually less accurate. For up-to-date information, please contact your local Social Security or Jobs & Benefits office.

www.dsdni.gov.uk

We are committed to applying the principles of equal opportunities in our programmes and services.

This leaflet is available in large print, in Braille and on audio tape. Contact your local Social Security or Jobs & Benefits office for more details.

