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COLLEGE

2025

Employment Rights

Mont Rose Guide to



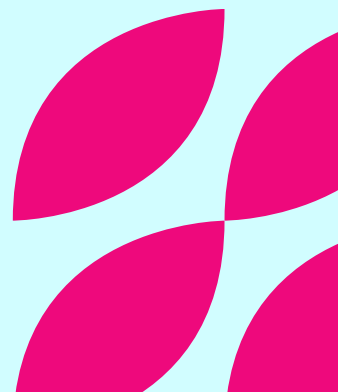
REGULATIONS

Employment Rights : A Mini Guide

Every worker in the UK has rights that protect them throughout their employment. These rights set minimum standards that employers must follow, covering things like fair pay, working hours, time off, pensions, and equality.



“All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence.” — Martin Luther King Jr.



Why It Matters



- Rights prevent exploitation and ensure fair treatment.
- They give you support during important life events such as sickness, pregnancy, or redundancy.
- Understanding them empowers you to challenge unfair practices.

General Principles



Two Types of Rights

- **Statutory Rights:** Legal protections that apply to all employees from the first day of work (e.g., minimum wage, safe workplace, protection from discrimination).
- **Contractual Rights:** Extra benefits offered by your employer (e.g., bonuses, private health cover, extra holidays). These can never replace or reduce statutory rights.



Key Statutory Rights (UK, April 2025)

→ Pay (National Minimum & Living Wage):

- Age 21 and over (National Living Wage): £12.21 per hour
- Age 18–20: £10.00 per hour
- Under 18: £7.55 per hour
- Apprentice rate: £7.55 per hour

Before 1998, the UK had no minimum wage at all this law now ensures all workers are paid fairly.

→ Working Time:

Right to a 30-minute break after 6 hours, and not to work over 48 hours per week unless you voluntarily opt out.

→ Pensions:

Automatic enrolment into a workplace pension (usually after 3 months). You can opt out, but employers cannot pressure you to.

→ Time Off:

Paid holiday, sick leave (if eligible), jury duty, and protection during emergencies involving dependents. Not all leave is paid.

→ Equality:

No discrimination based on age, gender, race, disability, religion, or sexual orientation.

→ Parental Rights:

No discrimination based on age, gender, race, disability, religion, or sexual orientation.

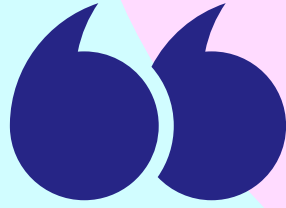
→ Dismissal & Redundancy:

Right to notice (unless for gross misconduct), fair redundancy procedures, and legal protection if a company changes ownership.

→ Agency Workers:

After 12 weeks, agency staff gain the same basic pay and conditions as permanent colleagues.

“An injury to one is an injury to all.” — Trade union motto



Breaches of Rights

If your rights are ignored for example, if you are dismissed unfairly or not paid correctly you should gather evidence, raise a grievance, and seek legal advice. Disputes are often settled in employment tribunals.





Trade Unions – Extra Protection at Work


Alongside the rights guaranteed by law, employees can choose to join a trade union. A union is an organisation that represents workers, helps enforce fair treatment, and gives members a stronger voice when negotiating with employers.

General Unions	– open to workers across many industries (e.g., Unite, GMB).
Industry Unions	– focused on a specific sector (e.g., Usdaw for retail, RMT for transport, Unison for public services).
Professional Unions	– for particular careers (e.g., NEU for teachers, BMA for doctors, RCN for nurses).
Specialist Unions	– for niche professions (e.g., Equity for actors, Musicians' Union for performers, Prospect for engineers and scientists).

Why Join a Union?

- ✓ They negotiate better pay and working conditions (collective bargaining).
- ✓ They offer legal advice and representation if you face problems at work.
- ✓ They campaign against unfair treatment, discrimination, or unsafe workplaces.
- ✓ They provide training, resources, and career support.

Common Mistakes to Avoid



exercise

- ✗ Not checking your pay rate – assuming you're being paid correctly without comparing it to the legal minimum wage for your age or role.
- ✗ Confusing contractual perks with legal rights – benefits like bonuses or extra holiday are optional and employer-specific, but statutory rights (like minimum wage and breaks) apply no matter what.
- ✗ Not keeping payslips and contracts – forgetting to keep records makes it harder to prove your rights if something goes wrong.
- ✗ Overlooking working hours rules – agreeing to work long shifts without breaks, or being pressured into working over 48 hours a week without knowing you can say no.
- ✗ Failing to ask about pensions – not realising you've been automatically enrolled or ignoring notices about contributions.



- ✗ Not knowing your leave entitlements – assuming all leave is paid or that you can be dismissed for taking statutory unpaid leave (e.g., emergencies with dependents).
- ✗ Ignoring discrimination – accepting unfair treatment based on age, gender, race, religion, or other protected characteristics instead of challenging it.
- ✗ Not questioning redundancy or dismissal – forgetting that employers must follow fair procedures and provide written notice, except in cases of gross misconduct.
- ✗ Believing agency workers have no rights – not realising that after 12 weeks in the same role, you are entitled to equal pay and conditions as permanent staff.

CHECKLIST

EMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

Am I being paid at least the legal minimum wage for my age?

Do I understand the difference between statutory and contractual rights?

Have I been told about my pension scheme?

Do I know my entitlement to breaks, holidays, and time off?

Am I aware of my protections against discrimination and unfair dismissal?

UNION CHECKLIST – SHOULD I JOIN ONE?

Do I want someone to back me up if I face problems at work?

Would I feel safer knowing I have legal support if I'm treated unfairly?

Am I interested in better pay, fairer working hours, or improved conditions?

Do I want access to training, advice, or career resources?

Am I working in a sector where most people are already unionised (e.g., retail, healthcare, transport, education)?

Would I like to be part of a collective voice that campaigns for workers' rights?

KEY TAKEAWAY

Your rights protect you; unions empower you. Knowing both means you're never alone at work you're backed by law and by people.



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