

Looking for work in the United Kingdom

Working abroad sounds like an adventure to many people. However, it requires thorough preparation, starting with a successful application. Expertise in Labour Mobility has prepared a set of country guides describing the main routes to employment in 31 countries. This is a brief abstract of the *Looking for work in the United Kingdom* guide, highlighting the main focus points. For more detailed information, consult the full guide on the United Kingdom.



Work permits in the UK

- EEA citizens are free to move and work wherever they want to, within the EEA (including the UK).
- You must apply for a residence permit. This is valid for five years and should be issued within six months of your arrival.
- Contact the British embassy in your home country for more information.

The application procedure in the UK

- Careers advisory services are well-established at all British universities.
- Speculative applications in Britain are only worth the effort if well researched in advance.
- Realise the importance of language skills. Having a social conversation is very different from a business negotiation.

Writing a CV in the UK

- The key focus of your CV should be to persuade the employer to invite you for an interview. Therefore your CV is a marketing tool, which should be adapted to the market in which you intend to use it.
- The British CV is short, a maximum of two pages in length.
- UK companies generally attach less importance to someone's marital status than in most Continental European countries.
- It is common in the UK to give the contact details of two references at the end of the CV.
- Use either a reversed chronological or a functional format for your CV.

The application letter in the UK

- Explain why you are the right candidate for the job.
- Illustrate your skills with examples.
- In the UK, if the addressee is unknown to you, start with 'Dear sir/madam' and end with 'Yours faithfully'.
- If you do know the name start with 'Dear Mr/Ms X' and end with 'Yours sincerely'.
- Many companies in the United Kingdom use application forms instead of letters.

Do's & Don'ts in the United Kingdom

- Do**
- Use power words in an application in the UK.
 - Add extra-curricular activities, hobbies and sports in your CV.
 - Look interested – ask questions.
 - Provide examples to prove your achievements.
 - Ask for clarification if you don't understand the question.
 - Be prepared for an assessment centre.

Power words and action verbs	
Accomplished	Improved
Achieved	Negotiated
Carried out	Realised
Finalised	Represented
Guided	Structured
Handled	Succeeded in

- Don't**
- Act like a leader when you are not!
 - Add a reference without telling this person.
 - Overestimate your qualities, the British are modest people.
 - Sit until invited in an interview.
 - Criticise former employers.
 - Go over the top – stay calm and stick to the facts.

Management culture in the United Kingdom

- The traditional British organisational structure is a pyramid, consisting of many layers and a strong vertical hierarchy.
- It is important that employers are fair and just and that they have a good relationship with their employees.
- Meetings are a very important management instrument. All important decisions will be brought up, discussed, negotiated and passed through during the meeting.
- At meetings, British people are always on time. However in social life, they are almost always ten minutes late.
- Humour is very important, humour is present on every level and on almost every occasion.

For more information on employment in the UK, order the *Looking for work in the United Kingdom* guide – one of 28 Expertise in Labour Mobility *Looking for work in...* guides – at www.labourmobility.com. It's all you need to make that first successful step abroad!

Good luck with your application in the United Kingdom!