



welcome to the Acorn Group

The Acorn Group consists of Acorn, Concept Staffing and Advance Personnel. As one of the UK's leading recruitment and training specialists, we have a great deal of experience in all types of recruitment and will always be on hand to give you the advice and guidance you need to succeed in your role.

You will have a dedicated team of consultants, who will take time to get to know you and your requirements. When working with the Acorn Group we make it our business to listen. We will ensure your pay rate, training and support are the best so you will give us your best. All of our services are free and tailored to your individual needs.

The Acorn Group works with many of the country's leading companies and is able to offer you quality assignments, with good working conditions, in all types of settings from general industrial work through to commercial office and management.

If you would like to register on-line please visit our website.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

when do I start work?

Once you have registered, your details are held on our system. If you are looking for temporary work it may not be possible to offer you an immediate start. If this is the case, we will contact you as soon as we have assignment matching your requirements.

Your consultant will explain exact details about the work, such as wages, conditions, hours of work, canteen facilities, dress codes, etc. In all cases the Acorn Group expect you to honour any verbal commitments made when accepting your assignments.

You will not be able to start working on temporary assignments until you have provided us with a document which proves you are eligible to work in the UK. This applies to all temporary workers regardless of race, nationality or ethnic origin. Your consultant will provide you with a list of acceptable documents.

Contracts vary enormously and we may offer you one day's work, or we could offer you one year's work – whatever the length of the assignment, our level of commitment to you remains the same.

If you are no longer looking for work and wish to have your details removed from our system, please contact your local branch.



who is responsible for Health & Safety?

The prime responsibility for your health and safety during an assignment lies with the client hiring your services.

On arrival at an assignment the client should explain the layout of the premises, identifying toilets, kitchen / eating facilities, fire alarms, fire exits and assembly point arrangements. Ideally the client should also refer to the reporting and recording of accidents. The client should also refer to any risk assessments and / or operating instructions before you carry out any work, use machinery or handle chemicals, including any specific Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) required. If you are in any doubt of your duties please ensure you speak to your supervisor at the client site, and your consultant.

Whilst at work, you should:

- Take reasonable care of your own health and safety and of other persons who may be affected by your acts or omissions.
- Co-operate with the client or any other person with responsibility for work place health and safety at the client site.
- Not intentionally or recklessly misuse any equipment provided for your health and safety.

will I be required to carry out manual handling?

You should not be asked to lift or carry items without proper instruction on the correct way to do this. If you are required to move heavy or bulky items that cannot be split down, or carry items across or through awkward areas like steep winding staircases, ask the client for assistance and instruction on how best to move the items.

what precautions will be made if I have to work on a computer?

Clients have a duty to ensure that computer workstations are well designed. If you find the working arrangement uncomfortable, ask the client if it can be modified or rearranged. You should not work permanently in front of a VDU without regular breaks.

what if I have an accident?

If you are involved in an accident resulting in an injury, however minor, please report it to the appropriate person, ensure it is recorded in the client accident book and notify your consultant. You should also notify your agency and / or the client if you are off work due to a work related injury for more than 3 days.

what if I have to use my car for business purposes?

If you are required to travel as a part of your job role, i.e. other than your drive to and from work, you will need to obtain car insurance for business use. Please contact your insurance provider for further details.



does the Acorn Group have an equal opportunities policy?

Our main aim is to be consistent and promote equal opportunities in every area of recruitment and career development.

Our recruitment process has been developed to be completely open, honest and fair. We will only select people based on their ability to do the job and the professional, education and interpersonal skills required for the position, irrespective of sex, marital status, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, disability, age, religion or sexual orientation.

We believe that respect for colleagues is extremely important and ask people working with us to treat others as they would wish to be treated.

does the Acorn Group have a Pension Plan?

The Acorn Group offers a Group Stakeholder Pension Plan from Standard Life. The scheme is registered with the Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority (OPRA). The benefits include tax relief on your contributions, simple, low charges and flexibility to make contributions as and when you want. Joining is simple and can be done over the telephone.

To obtain your copy of the pension scheme application pack or if you would like further information, please call 0845 60 60 087 quoting reference J76045.

how do I complain?

For general complaints in relation to your assignment please contact your consultant who you are working for. We will try and resolve your issue over the telephone. For more serious complaints please confirm the details of your complaint in writing to the Branch/Divisional Manager. The Branch/Divisional Manager will carry out an investigation into your complaint. You will be notified in writing of any action taken within ten working days of the complaint being made.

can I be paid by cheque?

If you do not have a bank account, you can elect to be paid by cheque (this will incur a £5 administration fee per payment, which will be deducted from your pay, as stated in the Contract for Services) or you can specify an account of a family member to which your pay can be credited. You will need signed authorisation from the account holder.

how is my pay calculated?

You are paid based on the number of hours you work, and these need to be recorded on your timesheet. Timesheets can be downloaded from our website or obtained from your consultant.



how do I complete my timesheet?

It is vital to **ALWAYS** get your timesheet signed at the end of each job (this may be daily or weekly). It **MUST** be signed by the client and clearly show how many hours you are to be paid) after breaks have been deducted.

It is your responsibility to ensure your signed timesheet arrives at your local branch **no later than 10am on Monday morning**. Failure to do this could result in you not receiving your pay or a reduction in your annual leave entitlement. The easiest way to do this is to ask the company you are assigned to if they will fax this to us on a Friday.

If you are working with a company who require you to clock in, we will receive your hours automatically – your consultant will advise you of any specific procedures before you commence an assignment.

do I receive a payslip?

Yes. You will receive a computerised payslip from the Acorn Group either through the post or email detailing the hours worked, your rate of pay and any deductions, including tax.

You can elect to receive your payslip by email by completing the authorisation form on our website or asking your consultant to arrange this for you.

If you have any queries please contact our **Hotline on 01633 760 303** as soon as possible.

who has my P45 / P46?

When commencing work with the Acorn Group you will need to let us have your P45 immediately so that your tax and national insurance contributions can be based on the correct code. If you do not provide your P45 or do not sign a P46, then these deductions will be made at the 'Basic Rate'. Once you have completed your contract, or it ends, for whatever reason, we will issue a P45 on request. If not requested, a P45 is automatically issued to the Inland Revenue eight weeks after leaving.

I am in full-time education – do I pay tax?

If you are in full-time education and looking for temporary work **during your holidays**, please ask your consultant for a P38 tax form when you start working. You will be exempt from paying Income Tax, providing you stay within your Personal Allowance. However, if you work during term-time, your wages will be subject to normal tax deductions and you will need to complete a P46 form.

Please be advised that if you are a student from outside of the European Union, you are only allowed to work a maximum of 20 hours per week during term-time.



notes on P60

A P60 is issued in accordance with Inland Revenue guidelines and is issued to people working in the final week of the tax year. If you require details of gross pay and tax and do not receive a P60, you can call the **Payroll Hotline on 01633 760 303**. **Please note that it is your responsibility to retain your P60. The Acorn Group cannot re-issue you with another one should you mislay it.**

how is my annual leave entitlement calculated?

Annual leave is accrued from your start date, and is calculated in proportion to the number of weeks actually worked and the average pay. You will accrue annual leave at a rate of 0.1077 weeks per working week. For example:

26 working weeks x 0.1077 = 2.8 annual leave weeks

The monetary value of the annual leave is calculated by multiplying the entitlement by the average number of hours worked and pay accrued over the past 12 weeks (or actual number of weeks worked if less than 12).

how much of my paid annual leave can I claim at any one time?

You can claim all the days accrued up to the time of your request, but the number of hours you will be paid per day will be based on the average hours worked per week during the previous 12 (or the actual number of weeks worked if less than 12). You can claim a maximum of five days holiday in one week.

how do I request paid annual leave?

Contact the **Payroll Hotline on 01633 760 303** to establish that you have sufficient accrual to take the leave you require. Fill in an Acorn Group Holiday Form, with signed authorisation from your current workplace supervisor and verbal confirmation from your consultant. Return by post, or fax the completed Holiday Form to your consultant as quickly as possible.

do I have to give notice?

Yes. The Acorn Group must have twice as much notice as the number of days leave you wish to take, e.g. if requesting two days leave we require four days notice.

can my request be turned down?

Yes. In line with legislation, the Acorn Group can, at their discretion, refuse and / or reject a request for paid annual leave.

can I carry holidays over to the next leave year?

No. All entitlement to leave must be taken during the course of the holiday year which it accrues, and any annual leave not taken at the end of the holiday year (31st December each year) will be forfeited.



can I be paid money instead of taking annual leave?

No. There is no cash alternative.

can I work whilst on paid annual leave?

No. You cannot carry out any assignments for the Acorn Group during a period of paid annual leave.

what if I work overtime or shifts?

For the purpose of calculating paid annual leave, working hours shall be all hours worked which do not attract overtime rates of pay. If you are engaged on shift work, you will be paid for annual leave at normal day shift rates.

what happens on a bank holiday?

Your 5.6 weeks annual leave entitlement is inclusive of bank holidays.

Bank holidays are not paid as statutory holidays, so you will need to request holiday pay from your accrual of the 5.6 weeks entitlement.

what happens during company “shutdowns”?

If you are contracted to a site that has shutdowns (e.g. Easter, Summer, etc.), you may wish to use your paid annual leave to cover these periods.

who can qualify for paid annual leave?

Only temporary workers who are subject to normal PAYE / NI deductions are included within this statutory holiday entitlement. Temporary workers who are employed by limited companies are not eligible.

what happens when I leave?

On termination of your assignment, any outstanding paid annual leave entitlement will be forwarded, on request, along with your P45.

what happens if I am sick or need time off work?

If you are unable to attend work for whatever reason, it is your responsibility to contact your consultant by phone on your first day of absence, before your assignment starts. You must let us know why you cannot attend work and how long you are likely to be absent.

If you are off work for more than four working days, you will need to complete a self-certification form (please contact your consultant). If you are not entitled to sickness benefit through us contact the Hotline on **01633 760 303**. Someone in our Payroll Department will partially complete a SSP1 form and send it to you for completion. You will then need to forward it to the DSS.



If you are absent for longer than seven days, you will need to provide a medical certificate from your GP to cover your entire absence from work. If you have to go to hospital as a result of being ill, you will need to give us a discharge notice and a certificate stating you are fit to return to work.

Some workers may be required to follow a more specific 'return to work' procedure, and your consultant will brief you on these requirements, prior to commencing your assignment.

Sometimes following a period of sickness it is not possible for you to return to your assignment, and if this is the case we will endeavour to find you alternative work.

Please note that holiday pay and SSP cannot be paid at the same time. If you receive holiday pay, one day's SSP will be forfeited for each day's worth of holiday pay.

who do I need to contact regarding maternity, paternity, parental and family leave?

Please contact payroll who will be able to advise you of your entitlement, applicable at the time of your request. You can contact the **Payroll Hotline on 01633 760 303**. Should you become pregnant whilst working for the Acorn Group, please advise your consultant and the client. The client needs to carry out a risk assessment to avoid risks to yourself and your unborn child.

We will also require a Maternity Certificate (MATB1), which will be issued by your GP confirming your due date.

what does the Acorn Group expect of me?

change of circumstances

Please keep your consultant up-to-date with any changes in your personal circumstances including changes in bank details, address, telephone numbers, etc. If you no longer want to be considered for assignments with the Acorn Group, please contact your consultant who will remove your details from our database.

behaviour

Whilst you are working with the Acorn Group, you are representing us to our clients and we expect you to be professional in your performance and conduct at all times. Should you have any problems at work, or you feel something is unsatisfactory or inappropriate, please contact your consultant immediately. We are here to support you and will ensure that any matter is dealt with in the appropriate manner.

dress code

You should dress appropriately for your role and responsibilities. Your consultant will give you any necessary guidance prior to you starting your assignment.

When wearing a uniform purchased by the client or the Acorn Group, please ensure it is kept clean and in good repair at all times.



confidentiality

Any information you come across during your assignments relating to the company you are working for, whether financial, personal, technical or operational, must not be disclosed to anyone except in carrying out your duties.

security

When you are at work, please keep your personal property in a safe place and, if possible, lock it away while you are not at your desk or work area. The Acorn Group cannot accept any liability for any damage to, or loss of, personal property. However, any proven theft will be treated seriously.

alcohol and drugs

The Acorn Group will not tolerate any temporary workers found to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while working. These are serious offences which will result in the termination of your assignment.