

## Do UK companies have a TIN number?

When you set up a company of your own, you are responsible for paying the taxes for your business. You will be obligated to facilitate the organisation of your national tax affairs, both within the United Kingdom and internationally if it applies to you. A Tax Identification Number (TIN) is what the tax authority in most countries in the world uses to identify taxpayers.

If you live and do business in the UK, you might not be familiar with the term TIN. It is important, however, for all entrepreneurs to understand what it means. This guide will take you through what a TIN number is, and other important terms and identifiers you must know to manage your tax affairs.

### What is a TIN number?

The Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) is an exclusive identifier appointed to a taxpayer to assist in identifying them for various tax and administration purposes. Each country, issuing authority or state has their own methodology for structuring a TIN.

The TIN can be a combination of numbers, letters and symbols and they vary in character length for each country or issuing authority as well. The most important aspect about a TIN number is that each one is unique and corresponds to a sole business entity or individual. A TIN will never be duplicated or shared by anyone, so should be kept safely in your records.

### Does the UK issue TIN numbers?

The United Kingdom does not use the term “TIN” exactly, but it does issue numbers that are very similar in function to it. If you are conducting business with overseas companies, are running a company in another country or are taking part in financial transactions outside of the UK, you may need a TIN number for use in that particular country. These countries will also ask that you provide them with your UK TIN number (or equivalent) to proceed with any transactions and business.

To do so accurately, we will now illustrate alternatives for a UK TIN number that you may need to be aware of as a business owner.

## Alternatives to TIN number, UK

If you are a resident of the UK and you are setting up your business in the country, then you must be familiar with many other terms that are related to a TIN number and could assist in identifying you and your company. These include the ones listed below.

### Unique Taxpayer Reference (UTR)

This is the number that is most closely related to a TIN number in the UK. You will obtain your UTR number as soon as you register your business as a limited company or enrol in a [Self-Assessment](#) with Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) department. It is used to identify you (or your business) as an individual taxpayer and the system issues this automatically to individuals, companies or any type of organisation in the UK.

You will receive a UTR as soon as you register, and it may take up to 10 days for it to reach you by post. Your UTR is a ten-digit number and can be located on any correspondence or document from HMRC including:

- Your account statement
- Tax return notice
- Self-assessment
- Payment reminders

Alternatively, if you log in to your online profile on HMRC, you should be able to easily locate it too. If you are still unable to locate your UTR number, you can contact HMRC directly for assistance. Our helpful and professional team at Uniwide can also aid you with this request should you need it. Once issued, a UTR will never change so it is important to store it in a safe and secure place to avoid theft or fraud.

To register for UTR you will be required to provide your full name, date of birth, address, national insurance number, the type of business activity your company will engage in and other basic details.

### Company Registration Number (CRN)

Companies House issues this as soon as your business is registered with them. This unique eight-digit number is assigned only to incorporated businesses. This means that you will receive a CRN if you register as a limited liability partnership (LLP) or a limited company. Your CRN is public information and can be viewed on Companies House' online public register of companies.

Not necessarily required for taxation purposes, your CRN is still an important number for you to secure safe in your records. You may require it to identify your company, to open bank accounts or when issuing share certificates for your company. The CRN verifies the legal existence of your company and you are legally obligated to disclose your CRN across every piece of official company stationery. This includes your website, leaflets, brochures, letterheads, invoices and emails.

## National Insurance Number (NI or NIN or NINO)

Every resident of the UK will be assigned a NI number when they reach the age of 16. If you come to the UK to live and work at a later age then you will need to apply for a NI number yourself and it is required for anyone who intends to work in the country. Your NI number is unique to your individual self and will be active for the rest of your life. Even if you leave the UK and come back several years later, you will use the same NI number that was first assigned to you. The NI number consists of two alphabets followed by six numerical digits and lastly another letter.

Your NI number is not used for identity purposes but is applicable for tax contributions and any tax reductions or refunds you apply for. Other government entities such as the National Health Service (NHS), your bank and loan providers, the local council, borough or district you reside in and pension providers may ask you for your NI number as well.

A percentage of your gross salary will be deducted as your National Insurance Contribution (NIC), and this will vary according to how much you earn. These contributions go towards your pension, disability or sickness allowance and unemployment benefits. Locate your NI number on your payslips, tax letters and on your P60 form. Outside the UK, especially in the United States, the NI number is related to the Social Security (SS) number.

## Employer Reference Number (ERN)

In many countries across the world, this might be known as an Employer Identification Number (EIN). In the UK, however, businesses that register as an employer with HMRC are assigned an Employer Reference Number (ERN). The country's tax office uses this number to identify you as an employer that has employees above the Pay-As-You-Earn (PAYE) threshold. If none of your employees are paid £120 or more per week, then you do not have to register for PAYE. Hence, you will not have to apply for an ERN.

You can locate your ERN number in any correspondence from HMRC, payslips and tax credits. You can identify it by looking for a number that is split into two by a slash. The

first part of the number will consist of three digits that corresponds to your HMRC office. The second part of the ERN number will refer to your business.

## VAT registration number

HMRC issues businesses with a VAT registration number when they enrol for Value Added Tax. This nine-digit number ensures smooth and efficient trade between national and overseas business entities. UK-registered business suppliers will have the prefix 'GB' attached to their VAT registration number.

If a supplier provides you with an invoice that does not contain a VAT registration number, you must contact them immediately before going ahead with any transaction. You will not be able to reclaim VAT without a valid VAT registration number, so it is important that you check your and your supplier's number at all times. To confirm whether a VAT registration number is valid you may call HMRC directly to find out, you can check their website or you may enlist our help to assist you with this task.

Navigating the complex world of bookkeeping and accounting can be an overwhelming task. It is made all the more daunting if you are attempting to manage your business by yourself. Uniwide Formations steps in to take care of all your business' needs to help you manoeuvre even the most complex auditing situations. Reach out to find out more about how you can enlist in our services today.