



Starting a business in the UK

Business for beginners

ACH

Contents

03

Welcome

16

Important things
to consider

20

Case studies

04

Introduction to
business in the UK

18

Get free business
support

21

About ACH

05

Steps to starting a
business

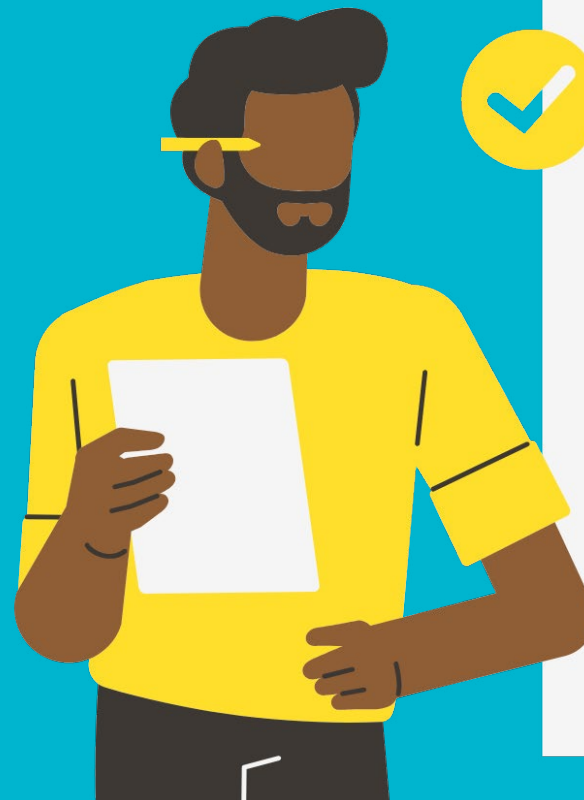
19

Free business
courses

22

Further
resources

Welcome to your guide to starting a business in the UK



At ACH, we provide free Business Support across the South West and West Midlands. Designed to help people from a refugee or migrant background explore, launch, or grow their business.

Keep reading for our steps to starting a business in the UK.

[Contact us on page 18](#) to book an appointment with one of our business consultants.

Introduction to business in the UK



In the United Kingdom, anyone of any nationality can start a business. You do not need to have a residential status or to be living in the country.

Starting a business is really exciting, but requires a large amount of time and energy, therefore picking a business that you are passionate about is key!



Step 1

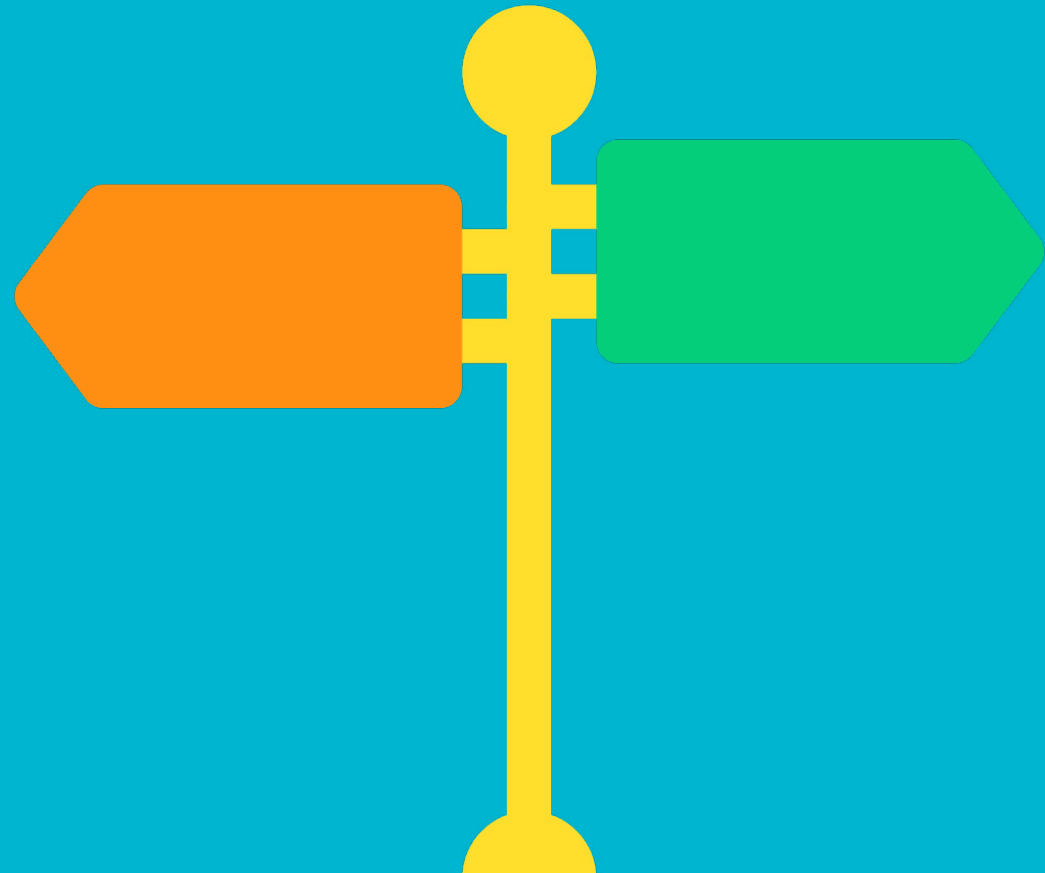
Have a good business idea

Having an idea is the beginning of the journey. You will need to assess your idea, research the market and establish an initial business plan.

Start by questioning yourself about your idea:

- What kind of suppliers will you need?
- How much will it cost you to launch your business?
- Will you need staff?
- Who are your customers?
- Can you use your existing skills and experience?
- Is there a gap in the market for your business?

Avoid an overly optimistic business plan by asking family and friends to review it.



Step 2

Choose a business name

Think about what you want your business to be called. Try to make your business name unforgettable, unique and a name that reflects your business.

If you are setting up a limited company, remember to [conduct a business name search](#) to ensure the name you have for your company isn't already being used.

Step 3

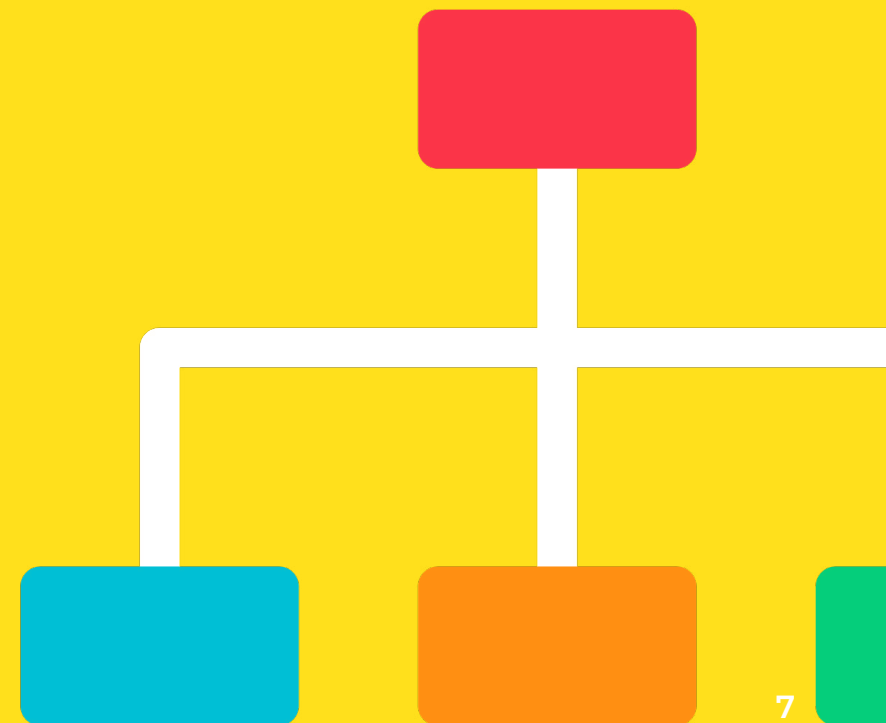
Decide your company structure

Sole trader

Under this business model, one person owns and runs the entire company. The owner is entitled to all profits and also liable for any debts or damages. This is a popular option for independent freelancers, plumbers, hairdressers, gardeners etc.

A sole trader cannot have partners, directors or shareholders and you only need to register as a sole trader if you have earned over £1,000 in the business tax year.

If you earn over £1,000 in a tax year, you are required to register your business with HMRC. Every year you must fill out a HMRC self-assessment form which will determine how much tax you pay.



Step 3

Decide your company structure



Limited company

This type of business is separated from its owner meaning that the owner is only liable for the amount they have invested in the business. Most companies in the UK are set up like this e.g., hair salons, cake shops, and construction businesses. This type of business must register with Companies House and file annual financial reports.

Partnership

This type of business is where owners are business partners, meaning they share profits, debts and expenses. This type of business is commonly used by dentists, law and accounting firms, and vets. A partner doesn't need to be a person it could be a limited company partnering with another limited company.

Step 4

Write a business plan and complete your financial forecast

Always remember **SWOT**:

Strengths

Weaknesses

Opportunities

Threats

This will help you answer difficult questions about your business.

You will need both a business plan and a financial forecast to apply for any type of funding. Make sure you accurately work out how much money you will need to start your business. There are different funding opportunities such as grants and loans for new businesses.



Step 5

If possible, find a business mentor



Business mentors can help you develop your ideas for growth by sharing their skills, expertise, experience, and contacts.

At ACH, we can connect you with fellow business owners to support you on your business journey.

Step 6

Test your product/ service

Just because there is a gap in the market for a particular product or service, it doesn't automatically mean that there is a demand for it. Test trading allows you to gather information about the quality of your business idea, for example:

- Selling at a local Christmas market
- Giving away free food and drink samples
- Selling products on eBay



Step 7

Set up a business bank account and register your business



Having a business bank account is highly recommended. It will help you to keep track of your income and outgoings, separate your personal finance from your business's and look professional.

You will need to register your business on the [gov website](#).

Step 8

Market your business

Your chance to get creative!

Consider how you want to brand your business and how you will market it to customers.

Do your competitor research and think about setting up social media accounts, a website, building an email list you can send emails to, any local events you could advertise your business at and also the materials needed to do this, for example, posters and flyers.





Step 9

Business insurance

Do your research on the type of business insurance you'll need. Your business insurance will be dependent on the type of business but is very important to protect your business. Public Liability Insurance is what most businesses will have (or product liability, if it is a product you are selling).



Step 10

Officially launch your business *(optional)*

This is arguably the most exciting step – you may decide to invite friends and family to celebrate with you.

This is the perfect opportunity to give out free samples or tell people about your new business.

Important things to consider

Taxes

The type of taxes you pay depends on your business structure and income. It is important to be aware of the different types of business tax.

Keep a record of your finances to be able to complete your self-assessment and store your business records somewhere safe; you are required to keep them for several years.

Income Tax

Corporation Tax

National Insurance

Employers' PAYE

VAT

Business Rates

To read more about taxes, visit the [gov website](#).



Important things to consider

Licences

Check the [gov website](#) to see if you need a business licence. You might need a license for some business activities, for example, selling food.

Training

Some business types require specific training. Consider if you need to complete any training/ courses in order to run your business efficiently.

Get free business support

At ACH we provide free Business Support across the South West and West Midlands. Designed to help people from a refugee or migrant background explore, launch, or grow their business.

Contact us

We offer:

- 1-2-1 business support from ACH's in-house advisors
- Personalised advice, training and workshops
- No time limit or cost, even if you are already on a government programme or supported by another organisation
- Help exploring self-employment, setting up a business or supporting an existing business

Book a free, no obligation, one-to-one meeting with one of our friendly business consultants:

Email | business.support@ach.org.uk
[Fill out our contact form](#)

ACH Birmingham | 0121 565 3384
ACH Bristol | 0117 954 0433

Free business courses

For more information and training on starting a business in the UK, [visit our online courses.](#)

Intro to Business

Business Finance

Customer Service

Product & Service

Marketing

Market Research





Nessi Cuisine, Egyptian street food

With a passion for cooking Egyptian food, Nesrin became curious to see if she could start a business. Joining our business support programme in November 2021, Nesrin launched Nessi Cuisine 4 months later making amazing Egyptian Street food!

[Read more](#)

Launching Mariah Craft Art online

Since the launch of Mariah Craft Art in October 2020, Maria has been hosting her own workshops for refugees who have recently arrived in Bristol with Refugee Woman of Bristol and Bristol Mind, sharing her passion and teaching people how to crochet.

[Read more](#)



Ann Win African Boutique and Jewellery

Two months after seeking business support from ACH, Winny has now launched her shop where she sells African fabric, apparels for men, women and children, as well as fashion accessories.

[Read more](#)



About ACH

ACH empowers refugees and migrants to live independent and ambitious lives. Established in 2008, we have a track record of delivering effective support services that give people the tools they need to succeed.

Based in the West Midlands and Bristol, we offer [accommodation](#), [training](#), [career advice](#), and [business support](#) and can help you settle into life in the UK.

Our integration services



Accommodation

We have safe and secure accommodation for refugees and migrants in Bristol, Birmingham, Coventry and Wolverhampton.

Integration support

Our support and integration officers can help you access welfare benefits, health and wellbeing services, family reunion support, and more. We are here to help you to live an independent and ambitious life in the UK.

Employability

We can support you in finding the career you want and deliver various training courses, career advice, business support, and employment opportunities.

Further resources

Click on any of the below links to be taken to more information.

[Our website](#)

[About us](#)

[A guide to finding work in the UK](#)

[Our integration services](#)

[Training courses](#)

[Business support](#)

