## Payslips as tools of empowerment, not sources of confusion

Sheryl Steele ACIPP, head of payroll experience, PayCaptain, explains how payroll professionals can do their bit to help employees understand the payslips they receive, empowering staff and reducing queries into the department



n a world inundated with financial intricacies, where the language of payslips often feels like a cryptic code, there's need for change. The mission should be beyond the mechanical task of depositing hard-earned money into bank accounts; it's about empowering individuals through intelligible payslips which transcend the conventional norms.

"In the evolving landscape of employee well-being, payroll can set the stage and through this distinctive lens, can rewrite the script of financial understanding, one payslip at a time"

The traditional payslip has remained largely unchanged, laden with jargon and complex numerical codes, creating a barrier for many, which can leave employees feeling disengaged. Striking a chord with the reality that a significant portion of the working population struggles with basic numeracy skills, payslips should be tools of empowerment rather than sources of confusion.

Startling statistics reveal that approximately 20 million adults and half of the UK population possess the mathematical skills of a primary school child, highlighting the potential barriers faced by a significant portion of working adults. A payslip shouldn't be an additional hurdle for these people.

Financial transparency is the cornerstone of a healthy employeremployee relationship and payslips are more than routine paperwork. They are, in essence, the narrative of an individual's hard work and dedication. Every employee deserves to understand this narrative, irrespective of their level of mathematical proficiency.

I've recently had the pleasure of working with Plain Numbers, an organisation which enables firms to take practical steps to better support their customers who struggle with numbers, by applying the Plain Numbers approach to their communications. I, myself, underwent a transformative journey through the comprehensive Plain Numbers training process. This wasn't just about learning to communicate about numbers in the best way possible but

about adopting a fresh perspective on how financial information can be better absorbed for those most vulnerable.

So as a new practitioner, armed with a new lens and toolkit, I was delighted to rewrite the payslip rulebook and support the development of a Plain Numbers Certified payslip.

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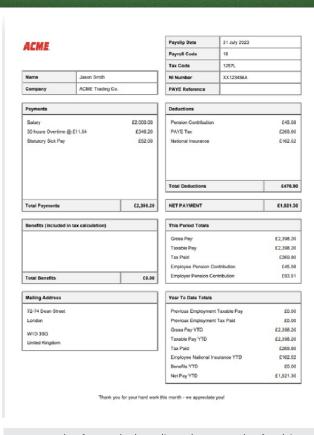
## **Plain Numbers Certified payslips**

Certification, in this context, signifies that the payslip has undergone a meticulous evaluation by Plain Numbers, ensuring it adheres to a superior standard of clarity in presenting numerical information.

The impact of this approach extends beyond mere comprehension. By streamlining payslip communication, payroll departments can bridge the gap between employees and their financial information. It's about instilling confidence and assurance that every penny earned is accounted for, fostering a sense of financial security.

In essence, this approach transforms







An example of a standard payslip and an example of a Plain Numbers Certified payslip.

## "It's about instilling confidence and assurance that every penny earned is accounted for, fostering a sense of financial security"

the often-neglected payslip into a tool for financial literacy and employee engagement. It's a reminder that behind every payroll entry is a story of dedication, effort and livelihood. As the newly launched Plain Numbers Certified payslip makes its debut, it carries the promise

of a more transparent, inclusive and empathetic payroll experience.

Beyond the altruistic motivation to empower individuals in understanding their finances, there are also pragmatic advantages. Traditional payslips tend to generate numerous queries, burdening already busy payroll teams. By providing a more inclusive payslip, this can ease the strain and reduce queries due to ease of understanding.

In the evolving landscape of employee well-being, payroll can set the stage and through this distinctive lens, can rewrite the script of financial understanding, one payslip at a time.

Today, we're closer to a world where every employee can effortlessly decipher their payslip.