

Government announces measures to support sectors reliant on migration for workforce

The Government have announced new measures to give young people the chance to develop the skills most needed across Britain's workforce. A £3bn apprenticeship budget forms part of the Government's Plan for Change and aims to provide 120,000 new opportunities across key sectors such as construction, engineering and healthcare.

- Measures include:
 - Using the increase in the Immigration Skills Charge to deliver up to 45,000 additional training places to upskill the domestic workforce and reduce reliance on migration in priority sectors.
 - Redistributing funding away from Level 7 apprenticeships for over 21s from January 2026.
 - Creating new foundation apprenticeships and Level 2 courses in key sectors.
- These measures, particularly for those employers in the key sectors of construction, engineering, health and social care, present an opportunity to mitigate some of the current recruitment challenges faced. Challenges that may only be worsened by the recently announced reforms to the immigration system.

Don't forget, our HR Documentation Team can provide you with Apprenticeship Agreements.

Committee publishes responses on age discrimination

HR

The Women and Equalities Committee published responses it received to a report released in February 2025, *The Rights of Older People*. The report recommended the Government commission the EHRC to review the effectiveness of protections against age discrimination in the Equality Act 2010. The Government has confirmed in its response it is committed to bringing the combined discrimination provision at s.4 of the Equality Act into force and it is engaging with the EHRC and other stakeholders on how best to achieve this. Organisations are encouraged to sign up to the Age-friendly Employer Pledge, a free nationwide programme that promotes age inclusive working practices.

Did you know?

Our 24/7 HR Advisory Team can answer any queries on how to ensure inclusivity in the workplace.

£200k employer fine for worker health failures in HAVS case

H&S

Rowes Garage Ltd, a car dealership, was fined over £200,000 after two Truro bodyshop workers were diagnosed with Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome (HAVS). The workers, using vibrating tools like sanders and saws, developed painful disorders due to prolonged exposure. An HSE investigation found inadequate risk assessments, no control measures, and a lack of employee training on HAVS risks. Despite reported symptoms, the company failed to reduce exposure, leading to the fine for neglecting employee health and safety. This highlights the need for proper risk assessments, training, and exposure monitoring for Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome.

Did you know?

Croner offers a 24/7 H&S advice line, where our accredited H&S advisers can support with H&S concerns.

'This is a man's world' comment was sexual harassment

HR

Upon starting her job, the claimant was told "you don't belong here, this is a man's world". She was then later told "the only reason you got the job is because of the way you look". The claimant told the tribunal she felt shocked and intimidated when a little while later in the office, she was hit on her bottom with a ruler in front of two other colleagues. The person was suspended but not dismissed as the respondent believed he "accepted full responsibility for his actions". The tribunal upheld claims for sexual harassment and harassment related to sex in relation to the comments and behaviour. (*Miss A Piromalli v Charles Trent Ltd*)

Did you know?

Don't forget to check out [BrAlnbox](#) for questions like '[What is sexual harassment at work?](#)'.

Understanding key employer responsibilities for compliance under COSHH

H&S

The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH) protect workers from ill health caused by exposure to chemicals and harmful substances at work. Substances covered under COSHH include cleaning products and solvents, dusts, fumes and vapours, biological agents and nanomaterials. Under COSHH employers should identify hazardous substances in the workplace and assess the risks posed by them. Once assessed employers should prevent or control exposure (e.g. ventilation, PPE, substitution). Training should be provided alongside risk assessments and safety data sheets being made available to staff. Exposure should be monitored and health surveillance carried out where necessary.

Did you know?

A COSHH assessment must evaluate the specific substances, their use, and what control measures are in place.

Please contact the 24 hour advice service for advice on your specific situation before acting on the information in this publication.