

HR UPDATE

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THE NEW WEBSITE IS LIVE!

The new website is now live:

www.woodcotehr.co.uk

If you would like to help build our Google review ratings, please click 'Write a Review' below:

 [Write a Review](#)




Streamlined HR, Smarter Solutions

Welcome to WoodcoteHR, where HR operations, process excellence, and data-driven insights are our passion.

We partner with business owners and in-house HR teams to simplify complex processes, optimise operations, and harness the power of



Services



HR Advice & Consultancy



HR Systems Support



HR Training & Development



Workplace Mediation

Partners

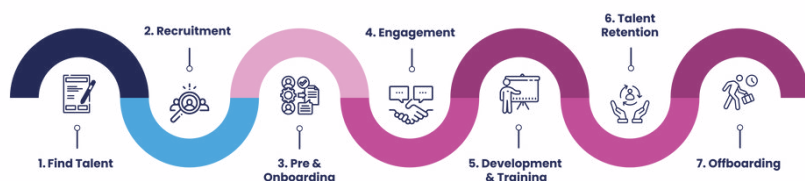



How We Can Help You

- **On-Demand Expertise:** With our flexible, on-demand HR services, you get the expertise you need, when you need it, without the overhead of a full-time hire. Whether you need help managing complex HR projects or simply need support for day-to-day operations, we've got you covered.
- **Tailored Solutions:** From policy updates and workplace investigations to handling redundancies, TUPE transfers, and restructures, we deliver bespoke HR solutions that are designed to fit your unique business needs.
- **Efficient, Cost-Effective HR Management:** We understand the

7 RISKS OF NOT HAVING AN EMPLOYEE OFFBOARDING PROCESS

In the world of HR, we use a framework called the 'Employee Life Cycle' to help us to understand and manage every stage of an employee's journey...



Offboarding is one of the most critical stages of the Employee Life Cycle, yet it is often overlooked. However, doing this creates big risks for the business, including:

- Damage to employer brand .
- Loss of knowledge and productivity.
- Reduced employee morale.
- Missed opportunities for improvement.
- Risk of security breaches.
- Increased legal and compliance risks.
- Higher turnover costs.

For these reasons, it pays to invest in a proper offboarding process. That's why we created our latest guide...

The Ultimate Guide to Employee Offboarding

In it, we walk you through what your offboarding checklist could look like.

Get in touch and we'll send you a FREE copy.

ARE YOU PREPARED FOR THE NATIONAL MINIMUM WAGE TO GO UP IN APRIL?

The National Minimum Wage (NMW) and National Living Wage (NLW) will rise significantly from 1 April 2025, reflecting changes in the economy.

As an employer, staying informed and ensuring compliance with these new rates is essential.

Here's what they're going up to:

National Living Wage (ages 21 and over):
A £0.77 (6.7%) increase, rising from £11.44 to £12.21 per hour.

National Minimum Wage (ages 18-20):
A £1.40 (16.3%) increase, rising from £8.60 to £10.00 per hour.

National Minimum Wage (ages 16-17 and apprentices):
A £1.15 (18%) increase, rising from £6.40 to £7.55 per hour.

How we can help...

Adjusting wages isn't just about updating payroll. It's also an opportunity to review HR documentation to ensure that everything aligns with the new requirements.

Our team can support you with:

- Reviewing and adjusting salaries.
- Advice on how to cope with 'pay compression' caused by the significant increases in NMW and NLW in recent years and subsequent smaller gap in pay further up the organisation.
- Ensuring all documentation reflects the changes.

If you need guidance or support navigating these updates, get in touch with us today.

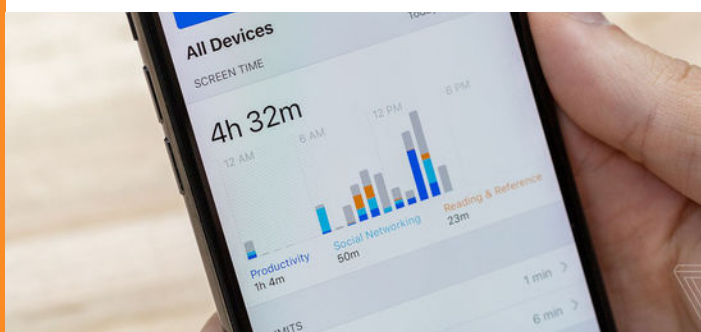




EXCESSIVE SCREEN TIME

Here's a stat that might make you want to turn off your laptop and hide your phone: A study has found that Brits will spend a staggering 25 years (that's 223,015 hours!) in front of their screens over their lifetime.

Excessive screen time can impact health and cause symptoms such as headaches, eyestrain and poor sleep. So, it's no surprise that people are being warned to cut back. From setting screen-free boundaries to savouring phone-free social moments, it's time to discover how to reclaim our time and well-being.



<https://hrreview.co.uk/hr-news/future-of-work-hr-news/brits-set-to-spend-25-years-of-their-lives-working-on-screens/376383>

NEW RIGHT TO NEONATAL CARE LEAVE



From 6 April, thousands of working families with babies in neonatal care will be entitled to additional leave from day one of employment.

Under the Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Act 2023, eligible parents can take up to 12 weeks of extra leave, in addition to maternity, paternity, and shared parental leave.

This leave will be paid for those who meet minimum service and earnings requirements.

Neonatal Leave Policy & Procedure

Let us know if you would like to request a FREE copy of the policy once it is ready.

IS ALCOHOL ABUSE QUIETLY UNDERMINING YOUR WORKPLACE?

With 17 million days lost annually to alcohol-related sickness, it's an issue no employer can afford to overlook.

Whether it's a casual tittle or excessive consumption, some employees, especially those in high-stress or manual roles, are more vulnerable.

This highlights why preventive and supportive measures are crucial for all organisations.

We can help you to navigate these issues.



<https://hrzone.com/alcohol-abuse-in-the-workplace-spot-the-signs-and-support/>





"APPRAISALS DON'T WORK"



Let's bust a common workplace myth... "Appraisals don't work".

If you've ever thought appraisals are just a box-ticking exercise or a painful annual ritual, you're not alone.

But the problem isn't appraisals themselves; it's how they're often done. When handled poorly, appraisals can feel pointless or even counterproductive.

But, when done right, they can be a game-changer for your team and business.

Why appraisals get a bad reputation...



Too infrequent: Waiting an entire year to give feedback is like trying to steer a ship by looking at last year's map.



One-sided conversations: Employees don't want to just listen; they want to be heard too.



Focus on the past, not the future: Dwelling on what went wrong instead of planning for growth kills motivation.



Generic goals: Vague targets like "do better" or "work harder" don't inspire action or results.

HOW TO MAKE APPRAISALS WORK

Appraisals aren't inherently broken. They just need a fresh approach. Here's how to flip the script:

- 1** Make it a regular thing
Don't wait for an annual meeting to share feedback. Regular check-ins keep communication flowing and help employees to course-correct in real time.
- 2** Focus on growth, not just performance
Sure, reviewing performance is important... but don't stop there. Use appraisals to set goals, explore career aspirations and offer development opportunities.
- 3** Turn it into a two-way street
Appraisals should be conversations, not lectures. Give employees the chance to share their experiences, challenges and ideas.
- 4** Celebrate wins
Take time to acknowledge what's going well. Recognition during appraisals can leave employees feeling motivated and appreciated.
- 5** Tailor goals to the individual
One-size-fits-all targets don't inspire anyone. Collaborate on specific, achievable goals that align with the employee's strengths and your business objectives.

Appraisals don't have to feel like a dreaded chore. When done consistently, collaboratively and with a focus on growth, they become opportunities to motivate, connect and drive performance.

So, let's stop saying "Appraisals don't work", and instead ask "How can we make them work better?"



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS



Can I ask anything I want during a job interview?

Employment law prohibits certain questions, such as those about a candidate's age, marital status or plans to have children. These could be considered discriminatory under the Equality Act 2010.

Stick to questions directly related to the job role and skills.

What should I do if an employee fails to attend a disciplinary hearing?

First, you should make reasonable efforts to reschedule. If the employee repeatedly fails to attend without a valid reason, you can make a decision based on the evidence you have available.

Before deciding, you will need to consider company policy, the employee's record, reasons for absence and medical opinions. It's best to contact an expert for guidance. We can help.

Do apprentices have the same rights as employees?

Apprenticeships are a great way to get work experience while training and studying for qualifications. They have the same rights as those legally classed as employees, but there are additional clauses that must be present in an apprentice's contract.

Get it touch if you are thinking of employing an apprentice.

My employee has been sick for 4 days, do they need a fit note?

If someone is off sick for 7 calendar days or less (including weekends), they do not need a fit note. They can tell you they're not well enough to work without medical evidence and should still be paid the amount of sick pay they're entitled to.