

ISSUE #0001 | JANUARY 2024

## GQEA Newsletter Launch

**Visit Our Website** 



Dear members,

Let me begin by wishing you a happy new year, I hope 2024 is filled with happiness, health and success.

It is a privilege to communicate with you through the first edition of the GQEA newsletter. I'd like to say a big thank you to the relentless efforts put in by my team and the contributions from members and suppliers to make this possible.

Befitting the GQEA theme for 2024, the newsletter is a step in the right direction with the hope to encourage industry and member information dissemination, event updates, and knowledge sharing etc. since launching early September 2023 I am extremely proud of what has been achieved so far and excited for the newsletter to inform you of what's happening next. As we build and strengthen the Guild to make our organisation more vibrant and value based I request all members to participate and support the initiatives and events organised to help build this community of like minded individuals who all want to improve the recruitment sector.

I look forward to working together and welcome your suggestions and active involvement in GQEA initiatives.

Best wishes Joseph Willis

We are a Community that's Committed to Excellence Withinthe Recruitment Industry



#### Welcome to our newest members

A big welcome to all our new members. We have been working hard in the background developing the Guild and making sure we can add value to members and begin making strides in improving the recruitment industry as a whole. We are very excited to bring you our first ever newsletter introducing you to the guild and what we have planned for the future along with a time line of events as to whats happening next. You will have already recieved your membership certificate along with our code of conduct for you to Adopt.

We have created this model for recruitment agencies to follow, standardising minimum expectations around recruitment and compliance standards as well as customer service expectations. By attempting to streamline and instil minimum standards - our seal of approval is one that customers and candidates can trust and come to recognise as added value in your offerings. At GQEA we aim to bring recruitment professionals together in one place, to create a strong network of those companies and their representatives who are passionate about high quality standards and excellence within the recruitment industry.

As a non-profit organisation we want to bring recruitment companies as much knowledge and help as we can free of charge to enhance standards and spotlight Recruitment and Employment agencies committed to advancing quality practices and raising industry standards. Over the coming months we have lots of exciting plans, firstly in this newsletter we will be introducing you to our new GQEA approved supliers, these suppliers will be offering Guild members exclusive disounts on their products and services, keep checking the approved suppliers list on the Guild website as we are in talks with lots of companies and new suppliers will keep coming on board over the coming weeks and months.

We would now like to introduce you to the Guilds approved suppliers Care job, everything about recruitment, fair pay services and FCSA. Below is an introduction to each of these companies, how they can help elevate your recruitment business and what discounts they can offer GQEA members. You can find links to each of their websites in the approved suppliers list on the GQEA website.





## Fair Pay Services Limited

Outsource the cost, work and risk of employment while ensuring your contractors are in safe hands.

Improve contractor engagement, retention and satisfaction while reducing sickness absence with our amazing employee benefits platform.

**DISCOUNTED** charges for Guild Members

We are pleased to offer a 20% discount on our standard margin for all contractors working with GQEA member agencies. This reduces our standard margin to just £16 (if weekly paid) or £48 (if monthly paid)!

https://www.fairpayservices.co.uk/



We're here to help you, and hundreds of other contractors, make the most of your income.

#### Why PSCs are Unsuitable for Healthcare Workers

As a recruiter, you may see healthcare workers who want to contract through their own Limited company, often called a Personal Service Company, or PSC. The expectation is that as the director and shareholder of a PSC they can take advantage of tax-planning opportunities, pay less tax, and increase their take-home pay. It's difficult to argue with the sentiments, but this route is not suitable for most healthcare workers, and could put workers, recruiters and clients at considerable financial risk. In fact, most healthcare contractors would be better off with umbrella company employment, and in this article we'll explain why.

#### The PSC route is best suited for higher-earning career contractors who are

PSCs are not suitable for everyone

genuinely in business on their own account. These contractors are set up to build their brand and their company, they earn enough to take full advantage of the tax planning opportunities, they're comfortable paying for high quality advice and with the responsibility of being a company director. Most importantly, they're genuinely independent, which means they're likely to fall outside the scope of IR35.

## IR35 is legislation designed to stop so called "disguised employees" getting a

Most healthcare workers are inside IR35

tax advantage by working through an intermediary, like a PSC. If "caught by" or "inside" IR35, PAYE tax and National Insurance must be

definition of employment or self-employment, IR35 assessments are complex, and every case really is different, but broadly speaking: If the end client has employees doing the same work as the contractor in the

deducted from any fees paid to the contractor or their PSC. With no statutory

- same way, it's very likely that they'll be inside IR35. If the contractor is hired as extra resource and will fit into the client's
- organisation like an employee would, it's very likely that they'll be inside IR35. As you've probably guessed by now, in our experience the vast majority of

healthcare workers are very clearly inside IR35.



#### not changed, but it used to be up to the contractor to determine whether it applied to them and if they got it wrong the bill for unpaid tax and penalties

Is IR35 new?

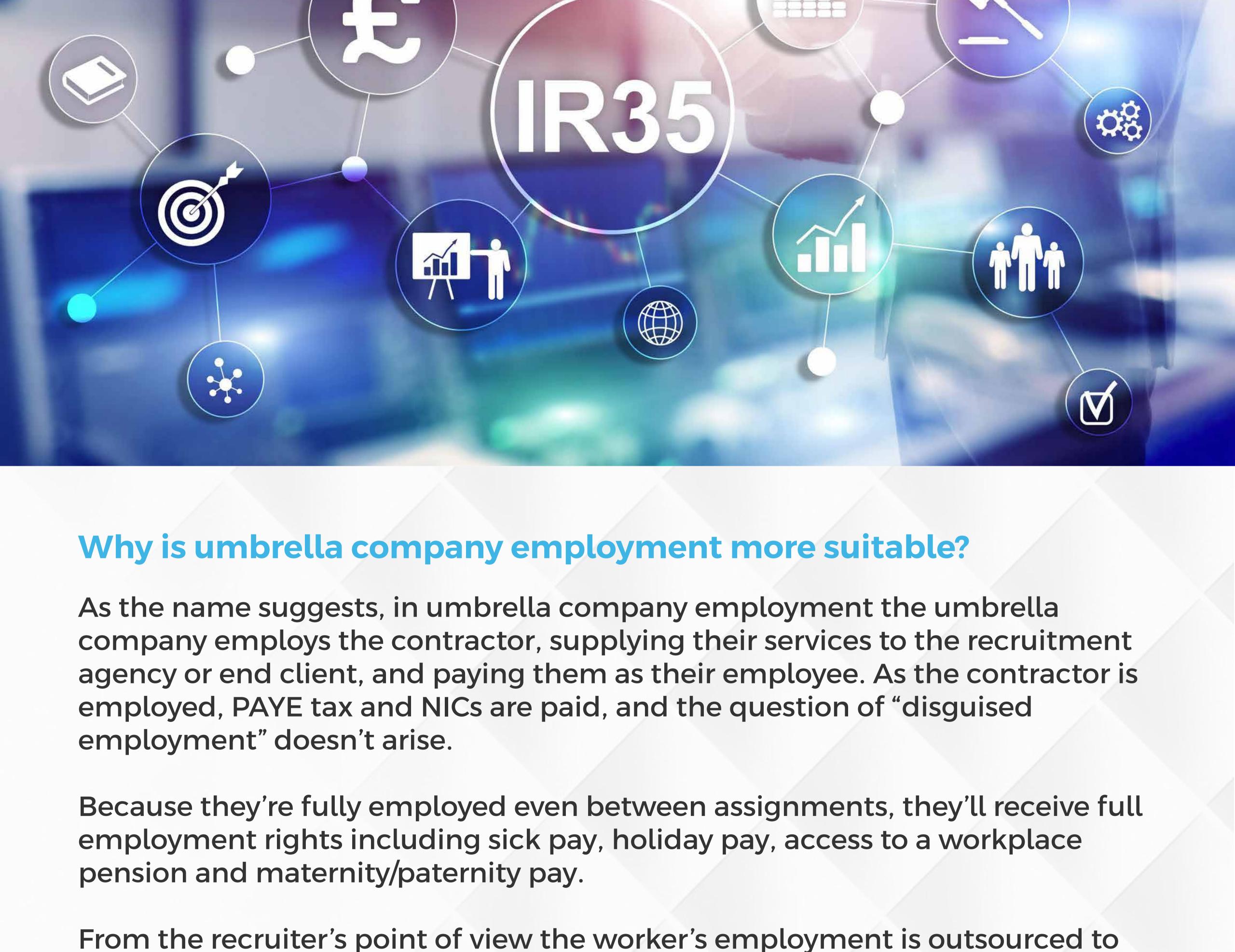
was entirely their responsibility. Even though they were clearly working inside IR35, many healthcare workers either received bad advice or actively chose to take the risk. Since 2017 in the Public Sector and 2021 in the Private Sector, IR35 determinations have been the end client's responsibility, and unpaid tax and NICs can be recovered from the "fee payer" - which is usually the recruitment

The legislation itself is more than 20 years old and the rules themselves have

departments have received enormous tax bills because they assessed IR35 incorrectly. What's the best option for a contractor who's inside IR35? If your contractor is inside IR35, trading through a PSC is unlikely to work for them as they'll be funding their company from taxed income and end up

agency. As a result, several high-profile end clients and even some government

taking home even less. Of the other commonly available options, most healthcare workers will be better off with umbrella company employment.



## their core business.

Is there a downside?

If your healthcare workers are currently contracting through PSCs, there are some things that you'll need to consider when switching them to umbrella company employment.

specialist experts who will handle payroll, HR concerns and many other

aspects of contractor management, freeing the recruiter to concentrate on

The first is to confirm that they need to switch. In our experience very few healthcare workers are genuinely outside IR35, but if after following expert advice and best practice the end client is confident of their "outside" assessment, it may be safe to continue engaging the contractor through their PSC. This situation will be extremely rare, though, and each contractor must be assessed individually before proceeding on this basis.

If your health workers have been incorrectly working as if they were outside IR35, the switch to umbrella will see them paying PAYE tax and National Insurance for the first time, and this will reduce their take home pay unless the assignment rate is increased to take account of this. There's never a good time to take a pay cut, and you're likely to see some resistance from your contractors, but it really is the best option for all concerned.

And finally, there is the choice of umbrella company to consider.

them the best possible experience of working with you.

Vetting your umbrella partners Where contractors are under financial pressure, for example when they've just been told they can't use their PSC anymore, there's an increased risk they they'll be targeted by non-compliant umbrella companies who will promise a

higher take home pay figure and use tax avoidance to achieve it. This is at least as risky for all concerned as operating IR35 incorrectly and should be avoided at all costs. For this reason, we recommend using a "preferred supplier list" of vetted umbrella companies, rather than allowing your contractors to choose their own umbrella. You should ensure you vet potential umbrella partners for

compliance, expertise and service levels, to protect your contractors and give





## **Everything About Recruitment (EAR)**

Everything About Recruitment (EAR) is a training and coaching company for recruitment agencies and agency recruiters. We cover the full recruitment cycle. With 19 years experience in the recruitment industry, Gavin Johnston teaches you how to bill more, or if you are a beginner how to get up to speed rapidly. We cover the full recruitment cycle and invest in making sure our students get long term, lasting results. Our target audience are recruitment leaders and recruiters who feel they could be billing more but are not sure what to do to improve this. We teach recruitment methodology, relationship building, sourcing, business development, time management, how to avoid ghosting, how to increase margins, negotiation skills, and much more.

We are happy to offer guild members a 10% Discount on our signature course Successful Agency Recruitment.

https://www.everythingaboutrecruitment.com/sales-successful-agency-recruitment-1





Approved Supplier to the Guild



#### UPSKILL YOUR STAFF WITH FCSA RECRUITER PARTNERSHIP

Joining FCSA Recruiter Partnership provides access to education and compliance peace of mind, in addition to giving you access to the FCSA Levy Network to train your staff for free. There is currently over £2M of funding available to upskill your staff.

#### GET YOUR APPRENTICESHIP FUNDING IN 4 SIMPLE STEPS



Agencies can become a Recruiter Partner for **free** 



Register for funding on the FCSA Levy Network website



Once you have decided on the course and the training provider, update your request on the FCSA Levy Network website



Your request will be matched with an FCSA Accredited Member's pledge. You will then be invited to begin your studies, as the course fees will be paid 100% by the FCSA Member



TO BECOME AN FCSA RECRUITER PARTNER PLEASE GET IN TOUCH BELOW



# RECRUITMENT AGENCIES ARE BETTER OFF AS AN FCSA RECRUITER PARTNER

#### Are you looking for:

- Risk-free payroll partners who have been subject to the most rigorous due diligence carried out in the sector?
- Access to webinars, resources and meetings when legislation and case law change?
- Access to apprenticeship funding for you and your team?

# SECURE YOUR SUPPLY CHAIN

#### BECOME A RECRUITER PARTNER

Becoming a Recruiter Partner is **free** to all agencies that agree to work ethically and use FCSA Members.

FCSA Accredited Members are assessed by the UK's leading tax and legal experts, against everything including tax payments, holiday pay, pension contributions, proper contracts and much, much more.

TO BECOME AN FCSA RECRUITER PARTNER, PLEASE GET IN TOUCH BELOW.



# YOUR SUPPLY CHAIN NEEDS YOU... TO BECOME A RECRUITER PARTNER

#### **Become an FCSA Recruiter Partner for free!**

Benefits include industry notifications, legislation updates, newly accredited umbrellas and those that lose their accreditation (before public release). Webinars and topic request (hosted by industry experts), company cloning alerts, HMRC's live tax avoidance list, networking events, fully-funded training courses for your internal staff, reduced due diligence workload, and a fully compliant, protected supply chain.

You also get to use our FCSA logos on your website, email signatures, job adverts, client letters, etc. Our partnership will be announced on LinkedIn, tagging your company, & in our newsletter to our Accredited Umbrella Members, & you'll get added to our Recruiter Partner section of our website. Free marketing is always a plus!

**Peace of mind**: FCSA Accredited Members are continuously checked against our published Codes of Compliance, and annually assessed by independent tax professionals and lawyers in the UK, to ensure they remain compliant. This means that you can be confident that you are working with companies that are operating at the highest standards.

**Increased visibility**: As an FCSA Recruiter Partner, you will be listed on our website and in our directory, which is visited by thousands of businesses and contractors every month. This will help you to increase your visibility and attract more clients.

**Enhanced reputation**: FCSA Accreditation is recognised by all of the UK's leading recruitment trade bodies, as well as by many end-hirers. This means that becoming an FCSA Recruiter Partner will enhance your reputation and make you more attractive to clients and we are also a trusted Partner of APSCo.

**Reduced risk**: By working with FCSA Accredited Members, you can reduce your risk of being involved in non-compliance issues. This is important, as non-compliance can lead to financial penalties, reputational damage, and even legal action.

Access to resources: As an FCSA Recruiter Partner you will have access to a range of resources, including training guidance, and support. This will help you to improve your knowledge and skills, and to stay up-to-date with the latest compliance requirements.

#### Requirements

For the protection of your supply chain, fully commit to removing the risk of non-compliance by using FCSA-only Umbrellas. And that's it!



#### Get in touch today

If you are a recruitment agency that is committed to professional and compliant recruitment, then becoming an FCSA Recruiter Partner is the right choice for you. To find out more, visit our website or click here to read our brochure.



On the 21st November 2023 the government announced that it has accepted the Low Pay Commission's (LPC) recommendation on minimum wage rates to apply from April 2024. The Low Pay Commission is an independent body made up of employers, trade unions and experts whose role is to advise the Government on the minimum wage. The rate recommendations introduced were agreed unanimously by the Commission.

From 1st April 2024, the National Living Wage age threshold will be lowered to 21 (previously this applied to all workers aged 23 and over) and will rise from £10.42 to £11.44 per hour. There will be a £1.11 increase in the National Minimum Wage for 18-20 year olds to £8.60 per hour, and a £1.12 increase in the National Minimum Wage rate for both 16-17 year olds and the apprentice rate to £6.40 per hour.

It is worth noting that the National Living Wage is different from the UK Living Wage and the London Living Wage which are calculated by the Living Wage Foundation. The UK Living Wage and the London Living Wage are voluntary pay benchmarks that employers can sign up to if they wish. These are not legally binding requirements and are an attempt to measure need.

In the announcement made by the LPC it states that: This will be the largest ever increase in the minimum wage in cash terms and the first time it has increased by more than £1. The size of this increase is driven by the strength of pay growth across the economy, which is forecast to continue into next year. Planning for the increases coming into force.

It is important that businesses review pay rates in March to ensure that the increases to the rate of the NLW and NMW in April do not result in workers being underpaid once the increases take effect. It is also really important to keep track of the ages of individuals to ensure that their pay continues to comply with the NLW/NMW when they move into a different age band or complete the first year of their apprenticeship.

It is also worth noting that the hourly rate of the NLW / NMW which a worker is entitled is the rate which applied to the worker on the first day of that pay reference period. So by way of example, if an individual is paid the NMW / NLW and there is a NMW / NLW increase on the 1st April and they get paid monthly on the 15th of the month, this would mean:

- They would be paid the "old" rate of NMW / NLW up to the 15th April.
- They would receive the "new" rate of NMW / NLW for 16th April to 15th May.

	Rates from April 2023	Rates from April 2024	Increase
National Living Wage	£10.42	£11.44	9.80%
21-22 Year Old Rate	£10.18	£11.44	12.40%
18-20 Year Old Rate	£7.49	£8.60	14.90%
Under 18 Rate	£5.28	£6.40	21.40%
Apprentice Rate	£5.28	£6.40	21.40%

#### GQEA Top 5 hiring trends to look out for in 2024

As we move forward into the new year, the landscape of recruitment continues to evolve; shaped by the rise of AI, changing workforce dynamics and the evergrowing demand for skilled professionals.

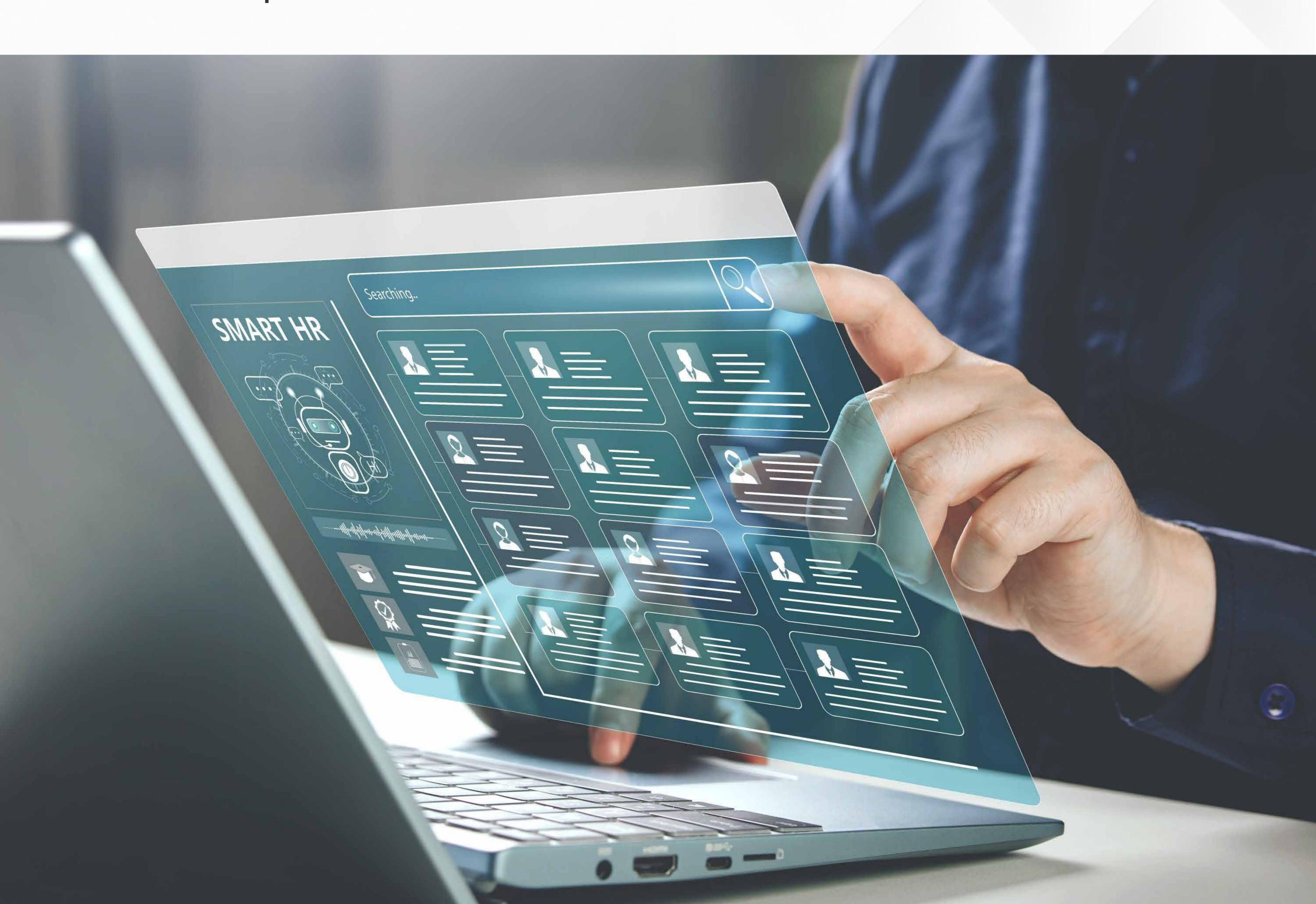
As we go into 2024 let's take a look at the top 5 hiring trends expected to influence the recruitment industry in 2024.

#### 1. Emphasis on remote work

The Covid-19 pandemic has accelerated the adoption of remote working. As we go into 2024 the ability to work remotely is becoming a crucial consideration for job seekers. It is anticipated that employers will need to further adopt and embrace this change to improve employee satisfaction in addition to attracting and retaining top talent.

#### 2. Rise of Al in recruitment

Artificial intelligence will become an integral part of the recruitment process in the upcoming years. Al is rapidly changing the hiring process by providing solutions that make matching candidates, screening resumes and even conducting initial interviews less time consuming and easier. Additionally, AI will provide valuable insights and predictions on candidate performance and retention, helping recruiters make more informed. We can expect a broader adoption of AI driven solutions in 2024.



#### 3. Diversity and inclusion will be embraced

The importance of diversity and inclusion in the workplace has gained significant momentum in recent years and this trend will continue shaping recruitment practices in 2024. During the hiring process companies should give priority to EDI initiatives. This is important not only due to societal expectations, but because it can boost the success of organisations, having a diverse workforce will bring with it more diverse ideas. Recruiters will play a vital role in ensuring job advertisements, interview processes and overall hiring practices are non-biased and promote equal opportunities for all candidates.

#### 4. Candidate experience

of their organisations.

Candidate experience will be at the forefront of recruiting in 2024. With ever increasing competition for talent, recruiters will need to focus on creating personalised and meaningful interactions with candidates. Candidate relationship management systems will enable recruiters to maintain strong connections by personalising the hiring process. This personalised approach will not only help to attract top talent it will also help to retain them.

#### 5. Proactively engaging with departed employees

The current social media and review culture has made employer branding more important than ever. Dissatisfied candidates and employees are taking to social media platforms and sharing negative experiences, this can heavily impact a company's reputation. By proactively engaging with departed employees and understanding friction points, organisations can gain valuable

insights that can improve retention whilst also minimising the negative feedback left by previous employees. In order to attract and retain top talent in the recruitment industry businesses

must manage these trends by staying ahead of the curve. Recruiters need to

recruiters will not only attract top talent but contribute to the overall success

embrace these changes to stay ahead in this rapidly evolving field. By doing so,



#### **GQEA Awards Catergories**

We are extremely proud to announce our first GQEA awards, these awards will be free to enter to all members with entries opening on the 31st of January. We will have 10 catergories including awards for both individuals and companies, Make sure to put the date in your calenders and get your entries in. Our panel of judges will be going over the entries and winners will be announced on the 31st of March.

#### 1. Recruiter of the year

Are you a permanent recruiter who has consistently exceeded your company's expectation and targets? Do you have tales of how you have 'gone the extra mile' that is worthy of being recognised as the best in the UK? Then this category is for you.

Judges will be looking for evidence of the following:

- How many placements you have made in the past year.
- Your average income generation per month.
- What your clients see as your key attributes.
- Your awareness of current legislation and regulations, and how you use this in your day-to-day work.
- How you consistently exceed company expectations and targets
- What drives and motivates you, and how you apply this in your role.
- An example of when you have "gone the extra mile" for a client or candidate.
- Examples of your approach to customer service.
- Examples of what steps you have taken to enhance your skills and capability.
- Applications must include at least two testimonials from clients and candidates.

#### 2. Business leader of the year

This category is aimed at business directors, senior managers and owners, who have demonstrated excellence in driving your business forward whether that's through supporting employees, transforming the business or innovating on your approach to candidate service. We're looking to hear from leaders who've transcended the traditional role as a boss and someone who can provide great examples from their employees or clients.

Judges will be looking for evidence of the following:

- Examples of the performance improvements you have achieved.
- Describe how you support and motivate your employees.
- Explain how you have created competitive advantage for your business.
- Describe how you transcend the traditional role as a "boss".
- Describe your techniques in adding value to your organisation's approach to customer service
- Applications must include at least two testimonials from employees and clients.

#### 3. Start up of the year

This award recognises entrepreneurs and their new start-up businesses; recognising the challenges and highlights of their first year and how they have triumphed. Enter this category to be recognised for your innovation, quality of service and willingness to go above and beyond for your clients and candidates.

To be eligible for this category, you need to have started your business no earlier than 1st December 2021.

Judges will be looking for evidence of the following:

- What was the initial strategy and vision for your start up? Please describe how the first 6 months aligned with strategy
- What challenges have you had to overcome during the start up?
- How has the business stood out from the crowd? Or please define the
- unique selling point. What is the vision and strategy for the next 12 months?
- Give an example of success during the first 12 months of trading?
- Describe how you have gone above and beyond whether in placing a
- candidate or delivering great service to client. Applications must include at least two testimonials from candidates and clients.

4. Demonstrating high standards in recruitment award

recruitment industry who can demonstrate not only good compliance, but a demonstrable way of working which drives high standards in recruitment. The judges will be looking for a champion that consistently goes the extra mile to ensure their staff deliver high levels of compliance and go the extra mile to ensure that all standards are adhered to and exceeded, whether through technology, training or KPIs and processes and can show that that it has embedded high standards throughout its organisation. Judges will be looking for evidence of the following:

In this category, we are looking to celebrate companies operating within the

- How standards are met and adhered to.
- How standards are continuously monitored. Programmes for onboarding newcomers with the required information

or employee.

- about industry rules and regulations and best practice as well as keeping current staff up to date.
- Planning for future improvements and preparing for incoming legislation.
- The adoption of industry standards and frameworks.
- Keeping up to speed with industry requirements and legislative changes. Support of the REC Compliance Regime - demonstrated by completion of
- the REC Compliance Assessment (formerly the Compliance Test). Applications must include at least one testimonial from a client, candidate,

#### 5. Community Impact of the year

The judges will be looking for a recruitment business that has invested in their staff and systems to enable it to improve its social and environmental concerns in their business operations in the communities they operate in. The award will be given to the recruitment business best able to demonstrate how it achieves a balance of economic, environmental and social imperatives while at the same time engaging with stakeholders and staff alike. Judges will be looking for professionalism, ethical behaviour and practices that have resulted in the enhanced image of the recruitment industry as well the business itself.

Judges will be looking for evidence of the following:

- A detailed description of what the activity was and why it was carried out.
- How the activity benefited the community.
- The benefits the activity made to your organisation.
- How you promoted the activity and its outcome.
- How your actions enhanced the image of the recruitment industry.
- Applications must include at least two testimonials from employees and/or stakeholders

#### 6. Recruitment team of the year

This is an excellent opportunity to celebrate the success of a recent project or campaign you've worked on as a team – whether that's a marketing campaign or bringing in a new innovation/process within your organisation. We'd like to hear the full story – from how you worked together to what you achieved at the end of the project.

Judges will be looking for evidence of the following:

- Describe the team and the project or campaign worked on.
- Please describe how the team achieved the expected goals (including both qualitative and quantitative data to support).
- Please describe how you used innovation as a team to realise goals.
- Describe how the team members worked together to excel, add value and overcome challenges.
- The difference the team has had on your organisation's performance and values.
- Applications must include at least one testimonial from the agency's leadership team.

#### 7. Best company to work for (up to 20 employees)

This award is aimed at agencies with up to 20 employees that has demonstrated success in terms of people development, employee engagement and recognition. We're looking to hear from businesses who have put employees at their heart of their business strategy and can demonstrate examples of where this has paid dividends.

Judges will be looking for evidence of the following:

- How your company's vision and values drive your organisation's activities.
- Your company's approach to people development and engagement.
  How employees are actively engaged in the development of your business
- strategy.
  A description of the business's employee benefits package, including reward
- and recognition of the business's employee benefits package, including reward and recognition strategies and highlighting any innovative employee schemes such as volunteering or community activity.
- How employees' skills are developed, measured and sustained to ensure performance standards are maintained, and that you retain a competitive advantage.
- An outline of your company's approach to measuring employee satisfaction and how this information is used to improve management behaviour and communication.
- Applications must include at least two testimonials from employees.

#### 8. Best company to work for (up to 50 employees)

Are you a medium-sized recruitment agency with up to 50 employees that has demonstrated success in terms of people development, employee engagement and recognition? We are looking to hear from businesses who have put employees at their heart of their business strategy and can demonstrate examples of where this has paid dividends.

Judges will be looking for evidence of the following:

- How your company's vision and values drive your organisation's activities.
- An outline of your company's approach to people development and engagement.
- How employees are actively engaged in the development of your business strategy.
- A description of the business's employee benefits package, including reward and recognition strategies and highlighting any innovative employee
- schemes such as volunteering or community activity.
   How employees' skills are developed, measured and sustained to ensure
- performance standards are maintained, and that you retain a competitive advantage.
  An outline of your company's approach to measuring employee satisfaction and how this information is used to improve management behaviour and
- communication.
  Applications must include at least two testimonials from employees.

#### 9. Best company to work for (over 50 employees)

This category is aimed at larger recruitment agencies (with over 50 employees) who can demonstrate success in terms of people development, employee engagement and recognition. We are looking to hear from businesses who have put employees at their heart of their business strategy and can demonstrate examples of where this has paid dividends.

Judges will be looking for evidence of the following:

- How your company's vision and values drive your organisation's activities.
- An outline of your company's approach to people development and engagement.
- How employees are actively engaged in the development of your business strategy.
- A description of the business's employee benefits package, including reward and recognition strategies and highlighting any innovative employee schemes such as volunteering or community activity.
- How employees' skills are developed, measured and sustained to ensure performance standards are maintained, and that you retain a competitive advantage.
- An outline of your company's approach to measuring employee satisfaction and how this information is used to improve management behaviour and communication.
- Applications must include at least two testimonials from employees.

#### 10. Agency star of the year

This category is aimed at all employees within a recruitment agency who have demonstrated excellence in delivering a service that is above and beyond expectation – whether that's through exceptional customer service or innovation within a process that has had a significant impact on efficiency, candidate or client satisfaction.

Judges will be looking for evidence of the following:

- What your role is within the company and how long you have been employed by the company.
- A clear explanation on what you have contributed, above and beyond your role.
- Evidence of the outcomes and improvements.
- Changes in customer service and candidate or client satisfaction levels.
- Revenue improvements or cost reductions resulting from your actions.
- Applications must include at least two testimonials.

# **Explore Sponsorship and Advertising Opportunities with GQEA!**

As a valued member of the Guild of Quality Employment Agencies, you have the exclusive chance to showcase your brand and services to a highly engaged audience. Elevate your presence by becoming a sponsor or advertiser in our newsletters!

For detailed options and custom packages, please contact Jemma at jemma@gqea.org.

We look forward to discussing how we can amplify your brand within our vibrant community.

Thank you for considering this exciting opportunity to connect with our esteemed members!



#### from everyone here at GQEA

