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HR Day: Trends & Challenges for 2026

With: Malia Jamison & Leanna Bishton

Date: 13th May 2026

Run Time: Approximately 50 minutes

This session will start shortly (11AM)

The detail contained within this webinar is based on GB & Northern Ireland employment legislation.

Members in the jurisdictions of the Republic of Ireland, Jersey, Guernsey and Isle of Man are asked to please contact the Advice Service to obtain the information relevant to your jurisdiction.

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Hard hitting reality

- 2026 is going to be a busy year for employment law changes
- Changes will affect over 28 areas of employee management
- 173 separate pieces of law to be written/amended
- Laws will be spread over next 2 years
- Vast majority of changes will affect every employer in the UK regardless of size

Today We Will Cover

- Why we celebrate the HR profession and its impact on business success.
- HR Trends for 2026: What is moving the needle this year?
- Practical tips to stay ahead of the curve in a rapidly changing employment landscape.

**POLL: How would you describe the HR function
in your small business?**



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What is International Human Resources Day and Why recognise it?

- When and who started International HR Day
- Why recognise HR
- Function
- Importance of getting HR right

How does the UK economy impact HR?

- From "Volume" to "Value" Hiring
- The "Job-Hugging" Stagnation Risk
- Rising National Minimum Wage (£12.71) and higher National Insurance contributions
- The "Pay Compression" Crisis
- Rising Indirect "Day-One" Costs

HR Over The Years

- The number of HR professionals has grown by 42% in the past decade, compared to just 10% for the general workforce.
- From Administrative to Strategic
- Technology Adoption
- The number of legislative changes are increasing year on year
- Increases to number of Employment Tribunal Claims

Increasing Costs

- From 6 April 2026, SSP to be paid from first day of absence regardless of earnings.
- From 7 April 2026, the FWA will enforce statutory payments, including SSP, national minimum wage, and holiday pay.
- Increased scrutiny and enforcement may lead to fines and additional administrative costs for employers.
- From 6 April 2026, paternity and parental leave types became day-one rights for eligible employees.
- From 6 April 2026, the maximum protective award for collective redundancies doubled from 90 days' pay to 180 days' pay.

Upcoming Trends

- A focus on 'People-First AI'
- Structured Hybrid Work Models
- Employee Wellbeing as a Core Regulatory Requirement
- Gender Equality and Menopause Action Plans
- Increasing Role of the Fair Work Agency (FWA)
- Four-Day Working Week
- Managing "Conscious Quitting" and Ethics

Impacts of Employment Rights Act

- Required to keep detailed records of holiday and holiday pay for six years.
- Performance Management & Probation Rigour
- Scheduling & Workforce Planning Challenges
- Preparing for random inspections.
- Increased tribunal claim time limit
- Expanded Liability & Harassment Prevention
- Significant overhauls to dismissal and reengagement practices

Non Legislative Changes

- Supporting workers with a terminal illness through the Dying to Work Charter
- Modernise health & safety guidance
- Enacting Socioeconomic duties
- Ensuring the Public Sector Equality Duty provisions cover all parties exercising public functions
- Developing menopause and health and wellbeing guidance
- Extending pay gap reporting to ethnicity and disability for employers with more than 250 staff
- Extending equal pay rights to protect workers suffering discrimination on the basis of race or disability
- Stop outsourcing being used to avoid paying equal pay

Longer Term Plans

- Trade Union Access & Surveillance
- Collective Grievances
- Single 'Worker' Status
- Right to Written Contract for Self-Employed
- Freedom of Information Extension
- Domestic Abuse (Safe Leave) Bill

What This All Means For Employers....

1. Expect increased administrative duties
2. Prepare for increased risks of fine and tribunal claims
3. Statutory Payments Are More Costly Than Ever
4. Restrictions on Employment Practices

Our Top Advice Line Queries

- Disciplinary Procedures
- Capability general
- Flexible Working
- Policies
- Medcap Case Review Formal
- Resignation
- Recruitment
- Retention
- Notice/Pay In Lieu
- Immigration/Right To Work
- Redundancy general
- Contractual Terms
- Holiday/Holiday Pay
- Grievance Formal
- Conduct – General
- Sickness Absence
- TUPE
- Maternity Leave/Pay
- Settlement Agreements
- Pay/Benefits

POLL: Do you feel prepared to adapt to the upcoming HR trends across 2025/26?



Summary

- It is predicted to be another busy year for HR and the employer
- Plenty of changes are already in place and coming in – have you updated everything?
- Are you thinking ahead when it comes to planning and HR audits
- More than ever HR is a valuable function in any organisation

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Thank you!

Any questions

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