



DWP Employer News: August 2015

HMRC digital help and support

At HMRC we know that most Small & Medium Enterprises want to get things right but may need help to do so. We particularly want to help customers as they face key business life events, including starting in business, taking on an employee, registering for VAT, importing/exporting and incorporation.

Our support products include:

- E-learning packages for self-employed customers, employers and traders registered for VAT. [Starting your own business](#) aimed at the self-employed covers all aspects of starting and growing a business. [Becoming an employer](#) deals with taking on and paying employees. [VAT - Getting started](#) is for traders who are working out if they need to register for VAT and [VAT – How VAT works](#) provides essential information once you're registered. Thousands of businesses have already used these and found they're a great way of learning.
- A range of [webinars](#). These enable customers to attend a seminar at a time to suit them. We have both live and pre-recorded webinars covering a range of topics. Customer feedback tells us that these are a good way to get started.
- A selection of short videos on [YouTube](#) covering subjects such as Registering as Self-Employed, PAYE, Record Keeping and Construction Industry. These are a really useful way to get a quick overview on various subjects.
- Business help and support [emails](#) which is a free service to provide customers with information from HMRC that is tailored to their needs. They are designed to help customers understand what they need to do and how to get it right first time.
- Record keeping [apps](#) for mobile devices to help make life easier for busy people on the go. A [ready reckoner](#) is also available to help customers budget for their first tax bill and our [tax help fact sheets](#) are a good source of straightforward guidance that customers can download from our website.
- [@HMRCBusinessHelp](#) is a Twitter account designed to provide help to business. We tweet about our educational products, upcoming tax matters and online guidance.



Employers See Potential

Priti Patel, Minister of State for Employment, has encouraged employers to tap into the talent of people from disadvantaged groups through our new [See Potential](#) campaign. These groups include people who've been long-term unemployed, ex-offenders, rehabilitating drug or alcohol addicts, lone parents, care leavers and the homeless, or those at risk of homelessness.

See Potential asks employers to think differently about how they recruit. It encourages them to focus on people's skills and potential rather than their history. Many employers are already discovering the significant benefits to employing people who may have previously been excluded from the jobs market. These benefits include financial return, staff engagement, enhanced capability and company image. Visit the [campaign site](#) for real life examples.

Sir Richard Branson and 14 other leaders of major employers sent a [letter to the Telegraph](#) supporting the campaign. The letter urges other employers to widen their talent pool by providing opportunities to people with the skills and commitment required to make a difference to their business.

Women on FTSE 100 boards reaches landmark level

In July the Government welcomed [news](#) that women now make up a quarter of all board members in top UK companies. Set in 2011 as a target to be met by UK FTSE 100 companies by the end of this year, the milestone signals a vital shift in British corporate culture.

To celebrate this, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) is encouraging businesses of all sizes to get involved with the campaign and champion equal opportunities within the workplace. You can participate in a number of ways.

Why not join in the online conversation by tweeting about how your organisation is supporting women in the workplace using [#BusinessIsGREAT](#) It could be through flexible working, professional networks or mentoring. Suggested tweet:

- We're supporting women at work by... [insert wording]... [@businessisgreat](#) [#BusinessIsGREAT](#)

In addition, keep your eyes on the [@businessisgreat](#) Twitter handle which will be tweeting a range of successful women in business case studies.



Department
for Work &
Pensions

For tips on building a more diverse workforce and unlocking talent, please visit <http://www.greatbusiness.gov.uk/>. The site aims to inspire businesses to grow and provides information on key government support.

Skills Funding Agency (SFA) - have your say

The Skills Funding Agency (SFA) is designing a new online service to help employers engage with apprenticeships and traineeships. When the service is live, it will help employers find out more about apprenticeships and traineeships, recruit apprentices and manage funding.

As part of our research we'd like to talk to you about your experience regarding apprenticeships. It doesn't matter what the size of your company is, whether you've had apprentices before or whether you've never considered it.

You can help us by:

- Taking part in an interview
- Testing and feeding back on new designs
- Completing our online [survey](#). It takes no more than 10 minutes to complete

Your feedback will help shape the new service by providing us with a deeper understanding of your business needs.

If you are interested in taking part, please email Kirandeep.Rai@sfa.bis.gov.uk

Queen's Awards for Enterprise - Awards close 30 September

You still have time to let any growing UK businesses know they can put together an entry for this great competition!

The [Queens Awards for Enterprise](#) recognise and reward outstanding UK businesses for International Trade, Innovation and Sustainable Development.

There's also an award for individuals that positively promote enterprise skills in others.

2013 Winner David Hymers from Totalpost said "Since winning the Award, our sales have increased by 20% and our staff numbers have gone up by 25%. Winning this award has given the whole team an extra boost and is leading to more success for us"

The Queen's Awards for Enterprise 2016 are free to enter. For more information visit the [Queen's Awards for Enterprise Application webpage](#)



Automatic enrolment - new guide to help you choose a pension scheme

The Pensions Regulator has made it easier for small and micro employers to choose a pension scheme with the publication of a [new quick guide](#) on what to look out for when picking the right scheme for your staff. They've also published the master trust pension schemes that are prepared to accept business from employers of all sizes, and have been independently reviewed to show they're administered to a high standard.

You can also find links on their [website](#) to National Employment Savings Trust (NEST), the pension scheme set up by government that has a public service obligation to accept all employers, and to lists from the Association of British Insurers and the National Association of Pension Funds.

Do you employ short-term workers?

If you employ short-term workers, such as fruit pickers, you'll need to make sure you're up to speed with how they need to be treated for automatic enrolment purposes. Make sure you understand what it is you have to do and by when if you employ a lot of people, especially if you employ a lot of people on a variety of contracts or have a high staff turnover.

Visit the ['checking who to enrol'](#) page in our online guide, where you'll find information on how to assess your staff and the options available to you.

Acas Updates

- Workplace experts, Acas have more information about the Fit for Work service available from their website (<http://www.acas.org.uk/fitforwork>), and if your organisation requires more in-depth advice, they can provide training for managers to handle absence and long-term absence.
- Schools have broken up for summer holidays and people are booking time away from work. But this can sometimes be difficult for businesses to keep going with less staff. Find out more about your rights as an employee and as an employer with [Acas guidance on booking leave](#).
- It is unlawful to discriminate against pregnant women and those on maternity leave. But recent research from the Equality and Human Rights Commission reveals that around one in ten women experience this type of discrimination in the workplace and lose their jobs. Acas has produced guidance that explains what [maternity and pregnancy discrimination](#) is to help employers understand their employees' rights and stay within the law.



- Acas has also launched a set of guides on [equality and discrimination](#) which help employers to understand the basics; prevent discrimination, and support equality; and what to do if it happens. These are supported by a range of products including sample policies, monitoring forms and at-a-glance checklists.
- Following publication of the June report on ways to raise levels of productivity and efficiency in the workplace, [a series of blogs](#) have been published from commentators to reflect the wider debate from employers, trade union and other perspectives.

For more information visit the [Acas website](#).

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