

Executive Summary from ACE HR Taskforce 13 September 2018

September 2018 ACE HR Taskforce Group meeting was held at ACE's office in London.

Room 101: The group was concerned about how apprenticeships are receiving negative press coverage and are still seen as low end and undesirable. The industry could do more in terms of taking on apprentices and communicating the value of this career path to parents more effectively.

Room Lovely: It was noted that HR professionals are dealing with additional projects such as GDPR and Brexit that interfered with the 'day job' but also mean that HR is becoming more visible within consultancies and enhancing HR's role as Business Partner.

Brexit: The group discussed readiness for Brexit and the importance of planning. A few practical things to bear in mind:

As a starting point, it is recommended to find out about the number of EU workers working in your organisation - if a significant percentage are EU citizens and/or are high flyers this will impact the business. For smaller employers, collecting this data may be as easy as walking around offices. Larger employers can consider other techniques, including: asking employees to update their HR records, auditing HR records and checking passport copies, relying on right-to-work checks completed when a person began employment, following up on record updates etc. Information about length of service, skills, location and age to retirement will also be important.

Scenario planning: Valuable as a means of dealing with uncertain situations and weighing potential options. The aim is to use that knowledge to make sure contingencies are in place to tackle any eventualities. Companies may wish to consider exploring the cost of the business paying for employee residence permits.

Activate a 'Brexit taskforce' – identify the key personnel who will be involved in responding to Brexit developments. Communicate regularly to stakeholders.

Put in place support structures so that employees know that they and their contribution are valued. Communicate regularly with employees and other stakeholders.

Equality and Diversity: Most of the group reported focusing on gender. The aim is to increase fairness in terms of gender and also exploring opportunities to encourage more diverse recruitment in other areas e.g. race, sexuality and disability. Training managers in Unconscious Bias is important. One of the attendees reported working with CIC in creating inclusive cultures reflecting the city you are in.

Safeguarding: Important to give some thought to best practice for safeguarding under 18s within the workplace. Is a mentor needed when talking to apprentices under the age of 18 or travelling with adults in a car, staying overnight in a hotel e.g. for inductions, apprentice exposure to alcohol. The group discussed the recent news relating to safeguarding issues and Oxfam. The industry needs to change to support safeguarding including overseas where there are particular issues working in difficult conditions.

Salary Benchmarking: was discussed. ACE was requested to ask group members if they would be interested in taking part in a salary review to be managed by an independent third party.

Terms of Reference: The Group explored ways in which it could be more visible to the ACE wider membership. This includes reviewing the format of the Group, having an input from difference size organisations, having more regional meetings, the use of technology to increase meeting attendance, sharing the Group outputs with a wider audience and reaching out to other members that could benefit from the Group.

Reverse Mentoring: The Group was interested in pushing forward with ACE reverse mentoring initiative, this item to be added to future agenda.