

WELCOME TO *The HR Insight!*

Welcome to the first edition of our 2025 HR newsletter, The HR Insight! As we step into the new year, it's the perfect time to ensure your HR practices are aligned with your business goals. This month, we focus on setting the stage for success, supporting mental health in the workplace, and staying compliant with key employment laws.

Let's make 2025 a year of growth and positive change for your team!

Happy New Year!



Lauren Gatenby, Managing Director



NEW YEAR HR CHECKLIST: ARE YOU READY FOR 2025?

Start the year with a proactive HR approach. Here's your checklist:

- **Review Contracts and Policies:** Ensure all employment contracts, handbooks, and policies are up to date with legislation. Key areas to review include flexible working, prevention of sexual harassment, and pay transparency.
- **Right-to-Work Checks:** Verify your processes for compliance with updated immigration rules. Fines for illegal working have tripled under a new Civil Penalty regime introduced on 13 February 2024, emphasising the importance of thorough right-to-work checks.
- **Plan Training and Development:** Schedule mandatory training, including mental health awareness and prevention of sexual harassment.
- **Update Statutory Rates:** Check updates to statutory pay, including sick and maternity pay, and minimum wage rates for April 2025.

By addressing these areas now, you'll avoid compliance issues and set your team up for success. If you need support, get in touch at hello@renzoconsulting.com

TIME TO TALK DAY 6 FEBRUARY 2025

Time to Talk Day is the UK's largest mental health conversation. Organised by Mind and Rethink Mental Illness, in partnership with Co-op, the day encourages open discussions about mental health to reduce stigma and promote well-being. The [Time to Talk Day](https://www.timetotalkday.org/) website offers a variety of free resources to facilitate these conversations. By utilising these resources, employers can contribute to creating a more open and supportive environment regarding mental health across the UK.



Facts of The Case:

In the case of Merriman v Bugibba Independent (2024), an employee filed a claim for sexual harassment.

The Claimant, a doughnut decorator, alleged that a male colleague gave her an unwanted bear hug and touched her bottom. After she complained, the colleague made derogatory remarks and swore at her. The employer sided with the male colleague and dismissed the Claimant, leading her to file a claim with the Employment Tribunal.

Tribunal Decision:

The Tribunal ruled that the Claimant was sexually harassed. The bear hug constituted “unwanted conduct of a sexual nature” under the Equality Act 2010. Additionally, the male colleague’s subsequent actions, motivated by her rejection, were also deemed harassment. The Claimant was awarded over £30,000 in compensation.

Key Takeaways for Employers:

- Harassment includes both the initial unwanted advances and any retaliatory actions following rejection.
- Employers must act appropriately when complaints arise, as they can be held vicariously liable for employees’ actions.
- Clear anti-harassment policies and thorough investigations are crucial to prevent and address such issues effectively.
- Provide sexual harassment training to all employees and conduct risk assessments to mitigate risks.

SETTING SMART OBJECTIVES FOR 2025

Kick off the year by aligning your employees’ goals with your business objectives. The SMART framework ensures goals are clear, realistic, and measurable.

What Does SMART Mean?

- **Specific:** Clearly define the goal.
- **Measurable:** Identify metrics to track progress.
- **Achievable:** Ensure the goal is realistic with available resources.
- **Relevant:** Align the goal with your broader business objectives.
- **Time-Bound:** Set a deadline to create urgency and accountability.

How to Implement SMART Objectives:

- Conduct a goal-setting workshop with your team.
- Encourage employees to set personal development goals alongside business targets.
- Regularly review and adjust goals as needed throughout the year.

Pro Tip: Recognise and reward progress to keep employees motivated and engaged. Celebrate small wins that contribute to long-term success.



STREAMLINE YOUR HR Admin

Save hours on HR admin and focus on growing your business with BreatheHR. We offer a free 2-week trial to show you how this powerful system can simplify employee management, from tracking absences to organising documents.

Let us take care of the setup and ongoing management, so you can enjoy a hands-off solution that saves you time and keeps your HR running smoothly. Get in touch to find out more.

BLUE Monday

Supporting Employee Well-Being

The 20th January 2025 is the official date of 'Blue Monday'. Often referred to as the "most depressing day of the year," Blue Monday is a symbolic reminder of the importance of addressing mental health and well-being in the workplace. Employers can use this day as an opportunity to encompass a supportive environment and show commitment to their employees' mental health.

Key Action Points for Employers:

- 1. Organise a Team Check-In:** Host a team meeting or informal coffee break to check in on employees. Encourage open conversations and active listening.
- 2. Promote Mental Health Resources:** Share information about available support, such as Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) or local mental health organisations.
- 3. Encourage Movement and Breaks:** Organise a short wellness activity, such as a yoga session, group walk, or desk exercises, to combat stress and improve energy levels.
- 4. Provide Resources for Self-Care:** Distribute tips for managing stress and maintaining a healthy work-life balance. Offer flexible working hours to alleviate pressure.
- 5. Engage Managers in Mental Health Awareness:** Train managers to recognise signs of burnout and how to support employees effectively. Don't forget to provide support for your managers.



DID YOU KNOW?

In the UK, small businesses account for over 99% of all private sector businesses, employing approximately 16.4 million people (as of 2023). However, research shows that 60% of small businesses lack a dedicated HR professional, leaving many at risk of non-compliance with employment law and challenges in managing employee relations effectively.

If you're a small business owner navigating the complexities of employment law and workplace management, we're here to help. Whether you're looking for ongoing support, guidance on a specific issue, or assistance with a major project, our tailored HR solutions can make all the difference.

NEXT MONTH'S PREVIEW

February's edition will cover bereavement in the workplace, flexible working case studies, and a round up of statutory payment increases.

Need HR Support? Let's Talk!

Whether you need ongoing support, help with a specific issue, or assistance with a big project, we're here to make HR simple for your business.

✉ Email: hello@renzoconsulting.com

☎ Phone: 07468 528 798

Get in touch today for a **confidential** chat about how we can support your business and help you thrive!