

EmployNet update

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CIPD code of conduct 'raises the bar' in HR standards

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) has unveiled a revised "Code of professional conduct", along with updated complaints and disciplinary procedures.

The new code – based on consultation with the profession and drawn up by a steering group including senior members of the profession and experts on codes of professional conduct – will come into force for all CIPD members on 1st July 2012.

The new code sets out member requirements under 4 key areas:

- professional competence and behaviour
- ethical standards and integrity
- representative of the profession
- stewardship.



The CIPD board has also agreed to new complaints and disciplinary arrangements. These arrangements will now comprise of two distinct phases with their own specialist panels, resulting in greater ownership of the investigation process by CIPD members and with a

wider group of professionals hearing disciplinary cases.

Any valid complaint regarding an alleged breach of the "Code of professional conduct" will first be investigated by an investigation panel of CIPD members, selected from a pool with the necessary experience, capabilities and training for the task.

Where the investigation panel determines that there is sufficient evidence of a breach of the code, the case will be referred to a hearing by a formal disciplinary panel consisting of appropriately experienced and trained professionals, including CIPD members drawn from a "disciplinary pool".

Vicky Wright, chair of the CIPD's nominations and professional conduct committee and immediate past president, said: "Our new code of professional conduct is an evolution of our existing Code. But it also marks a raising of the bar in terms of the maintenance and enforcement of clear, simple, rigorous standards in HR professional practice."

"Our new complaints and disciplinary procedures are crucial to ensuring that the CIPD has the tools and capacity to maintain and uphold the highest standards in HR practice by its members."

The revised code can be accessed in full on the CIPD website.

Meet the team



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Rosa has substantial experience acting for, and advising, employers and employees and has sat as a member of the Employment Tribunal.



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Pritti's specialism is acting for employees. She has extensive experience of representing individuals, including directors and senior executives, covering a range of employment issues.



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Yasmin specialises in employment issues acting for both employers and employees. She has experience in representing commercial clients and individuals in various cases.



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Employment Law changes starting from April 2012

New unfair dismissal rules mean that from 6th April 2012, new employees will need a longer time of service with you before they can claim for unfair dismissal. New employees who start work with you will need to put in two years' service before they can claim for unfair dismissal. Rules for your existing staff don't change — they can still claim after a year.

Also coming into effect on 6th April 2012 is the New Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) Rules. These will change the reporting requirement for injuries so that only accidents resulting in incapacitation for more than 7 days must be reported.

National minimum wage to increase by 1.8%

The Government has accepted the recommendations of the Low Pay Commission in relation to the 2012 national minimum wage.

The adult rate of the national minimum wage will increase by 1.8%, but youth rates will remain unchanged.

The following rates come into effect on 1st October 2012:

- the adult rate will increase by 11p to £6.19 per hour
- the rate for 18 to 20-year-olds will remain at £4.98 per hour
- the rate for 16 to 17-year-olds will remain at £3.68 per hour
- the rate for apprentices will increase by 5p to £2.65 per hour.

UK employers need to adopt age management policies

Employers need to take proactive steps towards engaging and retaining their older workers, according to new research by Cranfield School of Management and Nottingham Business School.

The Employment Relations Challenges of an Ageing Workforce report, published on behalf of Acas, recognises that the proportion of the UK population aged 65 and over will rise from 16% in 2008 to 23% by 2033.

UK employers need to tackle the issue by implementing age management policies in order to retain the skills and expertise of older workers.

An ageing workforce brings new challenges for employers including:

- flexible working requests
- training and support for career development.

Author of the report, Dr Emma Parry says: "To overcome stereotypical attitudes towards older workers, companies need a supportive culture with policies and procedures that focus on supporting and capturing their skills and experience. And crucially managers need the expertise and knowledge to deliver on these organisational aims."

For more information on developing age management policies, contact one of our specialist solicitors.

What is your policy for the Olympic Games?

With a likely increase in the number of requests for leave or flexible working around the time of the Olympics, employers need to establish a leave policy for the event and/or familiarise themselves with existing policies.

It is good practice to remind staff of the annual leave policy and of the procedure for taking time off; including the amount of notice required. It is also important to inform employees that while each request will be considered, there is no guarantee that all will be approved.

Also, a consistent and fair response to multiple holiday requests over the Games period should be decided upon and communicated to staff. Will the organisation choose to grant holiday requests on a first come first served basis? Or will they look at introducing a temporary flexible working practice?

Correct, up-to-date, policies and procedures on holidays, requests for leave, flexible working and unauthorised absence are the key to managing situations like these fairly and consistently.

Contact us for further information.



Employers count the costs of workplace relationships

43% of employers have experienced at least one issue as a result of a close personal relationship between employees, according to the latest XpertHR research. But, only 24% have in place a written policy on workplace relationships.

HR professionals responding to the survey said they wanted to see their organisations develop a definitive policy on workplace relationships with clear parameters and fair and consistent treatment of individuals involved in a relationship.

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