

Gravitate HR Newsletter

Gravitate HR Newsletter - Our Quarterly Client Newsletter

Summer 2016

Year of the Dad

2016 is [Year of the Dad in Scotland](#), a celebration of fatherhood and the huge importance of dads in child development and parenting.

Shared Parental Leave was introduced in April 2015 bringing in new opportunities for equality in both home and workplace yet there has been recent coverage in the media of dads not utilizing this leave.

Gravitate HR recently held a seminar on Shared Parental Leave with Sam Pringle, CEO of Fathers Network Scotland, to explore; what you can do in your workplace to make it more productive by being dad friendly, and the benefits for the employee and the organisation.

Please click [here](#) to read the blog.

*Nothing
will work
unless you
do - Maya
Angelou*



In This Issue

- Year of the Dad
- Preparing for the consequences of Strike Action
- Employment Law Updates
- Ramadan
- Legal Highs
- Gender Equality
- Inductions and On-Boarding for New Starts
- Health and Wellbeing
- Gravitate News

Strike Action

How to Prepare for the Impact on your Employee's Commute

With planned ScotRail strikes across Scotland in June / July of this year, this could potentially cause major disruption to commuter's journeys.

Employers have little control over industrial action and may need to be flexible about how employees can get to work and may wish to consider alternative ways of working if it will be difficult or overly time consuming for their employees to get to work.

Employers could explore alternative means of transport or give consideration to whether the employee could usefully work from home or from an alternative local office until the travel situation improves, or whether the time could be made up at a later date.

If this is not possible, the employer will need to decide how to record the absence and communicate this to staff whether any time off work in these circumstances will be unpaid, paid or paid on a discretionary basis but in exceptional cases only.

For more information on how to manage absence due to strike action, please [click here](#) to see Laura's blog.

Ramadan

Umar has written a series of thoughtful and insightful blogs about Ramadan, the month of fasting, from the perspective of employers and employees.

The blogs provide useful tools and practical guidance on how to support employees through Ramadan in achieving a balanced approach to work and the practice of religion.

[Follow the link](#) to Umar's blog for more on these articles.

Psychoactive Substances Act 2016

With effect from 26th May 2016 the Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 came into force. The purpose of the legislation is to address the problem of, "legal highs". These psychoactive substances simulate the mind altering effects of illegal drugs which can affect behaviour and performance (See the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 for details).

With an increase in sales of psychoactive substances we are recommending companies include the use of these substances in their drugs and alcohol policies as there is a real risk this could impact on the workplace.

Click [here](#) to read Nichola's blog to find out more about this.



Employment Law Updates

Gender Pay Gap Reporting

- Gender Pay Gap reporting – Private & Charity organisation's with over 250 staff are required to provide the mean / median pay gaps and hourly pay rates which will be assessed each year. Details must be published on the Company website and will be retained for 3 years. Regulations come into force on 1 October 2016, and reports should be published within a year of 30 April 2017.

The National Living & Minimum Wage

- The compulsory National Living Wage (NLW) for workers aged 25 and above, was set at £7.20 from 1st April 2016, for workers under 25. **The National Minimum Wage** still applies but is likely to increase from October 2016.

Trade Union Bill

- The Trade Union Bill will potentially be introducing more stringent balloting procedures, making it tougher for Unions to call for legal strike action. The date for application is yet to be determined.

The Equality Act 2010

- Caste to be included as a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010, the date for application is yet to be determined.

Psychoactive Substances Act 2016

- This new act came into force on the 26th of May 2016.

Try our HR quiz

1. In what year did Year of the Dad Fall in Scotland?
 - a) 2008
 - b) 2012
 - c) 2016
2. How many employees does a private or charitable organisation have to employ before it is required to produce a Gender Pay Gap Report by law?
 - a) 20 - 49 employees
 - b) 100 - 249 employees
 - c) 250+ employees
3. What new piece of legislation will make it more difficult for trade unions to initiate industrial action?
 - a) The Industrial Actions Act
 - b) The Trade Union Bill
 - c) The Trades Union Congress Statute

Answers:

1. c. 2. a. 3. b



Induction and on-boarding for new starts

It is so important for a company no matter how large or small to consider the on-boarding experience, ensuring you are taking into account the whole process.

A good induction programme should contain the following elements:

- On the first day, a tour of the office/building to ensure your new employee knows where all the facilities are and including practical information such as opening hours, fire alarm testsetc.
- An overview of the organisation's history, its culture and values, and its products and services
- A clear outline of the job/role requirements including showing how the employee fits into the team and how their role fits with the organisation's strategy and goals
- The expected performance and behaviour you expect from the employee
- Explanation of terms and conditions including key policies & procedures
- An awareness of other functions within the organisation, and how the employee fits within that
- Providing health and safety information- a legal requirement

For more information on this topic please [click here](#) to read Sara's blog.

Is Gender Equality really that much of a tall order to achieve?

The recent case of [Ms Thorpe in May 2016](#), was an interesting reminder that some organisation's views are still decades behind where they perhaps should be in terms of gender equality. Ms Thorpe, a receptionist was sent home from work for refusing to wear high-heels under a veiled argument of failure to comply with "appearance guidelines".

Both an interesting and frustrating case in equal measure. Interesting because it sparks conversation and thought around the issue of gender equality; frustrating because in 2016, we are still having to have conversations and thoughts around whether it is appropriate to insist a female member of staff wear high heels to sit behind the desk of a reception.

[Follow the link](#) to Neil's blog for more information on this matter.

Gravitate News

Glasgow Update

Hello from the West of Scotland! As I approach the end of month two (already!) at Gravitate HR's – Glasgow office.

Our serviced space on Blythswood Square is perfect both for visitors to the office as well as a central point for me to head outward to meetings, events or catch ups. There have been plenty of networking events to get along to and I have made so many great new contacts.

I am keen to meet with more business owners/Directors operating in the West who may have HR needs that are not currently being met and so if there is anyone within your network who you think I should be speaking to please get in touch; neil@gravitatehr.co.uk and I'll be happy to meet with them to discuss further.

Health & Wellbeing

The team here at Gravitate recognise that a healthy working environment is so important to our wellbeing. We recently held a team wellbeing day which focused on our body, mind and diet.

Body / Posture – Like most office workers, we spend up to 90% of our working day sitting down at a desk. Anna Risso, a Musculoskeletal Physiotherapist from [BodyWorks Edinburgh](#), held a session focusing on how we sit at our desks and our posture. She also showed us how to build simple exercises into our day to relieve any tension and prevent repetitive strain injuries.

Diet – As food plays an important role in our wellbeing, both physically and mentally, we carried on the theme and lunched on a healthy meal, hand-made and delivered by [Social Bite](#). Not only was it delicious, it was healthy! Social Bite is a remarkable Company which we are proud to support as every penny of profit is put towards tackling social problems in the UK and abroad.

Mind – Our very own Douglas complimented the day with a session on resilience which looked at our ability to adapt to stress and adversity, identify signs from others who may not be coping and tools to both promote positive mental health and support mental health issues in the workplace. The session was incredibly thought provoking and informative.

Margery takes on Machu Picchu - In April 2017, Margery will be trekking up to 2,430m in aid of Breast Cancer. We will be holding several fundraising events over the year with the first being in September 2016, more details to follow.

Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about our services and support we can provide.

Gravitate HR
14 India Street
Edinburgh
EH3 6EZ

0131 225 7458

info@gravitatehr.co.uk

Visit us on the web at
www.gravitatehr.co.uk
