

# Let's build the best jobs market in the world

REC manifesto for jobs



Recruitment &  
Employment  
Confederation

# REC MANIFESTO FOR JOBS

What does a great jobs market look like? It is one that provides job and progression opportunities for all, promotes inclusion and diversity, and ensures that there is real synergy between the needs of employers and the skills and attitudes of jobseekers. In an age of accelerating change and disruption, we need an agile labour market that is underpinned by good hiring and management practices.

**Jobs *transform* lives** which is why we are building the best recruitment industry in the world and is why we want to work in partnership with policy makers to build the best jobs market in the world. This is our aspiration, one that we want the next government to share and deliver by working with the REC and other stakeholders.

## 1 Give everyone the chance to succeed through work

Technology is significantly impacting on the world of work. It is more important than ever to prepare future generations by embedding employability within the school curriculum and building a world-class careers network. Boosting opportunities for under-represented groups must also be a priority. Important ground work has been done through recent reviews<sup>1</sup> and the recruitment sector is committed to working with the next government to make further change happen. In order to further promote progression opportunities, the Apprenticeship Levy (which provides no real outlet for workers in short term and temporary roles) should evolve into a broader 'Training Levy' that can meet the training needs of those in non-permanent roles.

### To give everyone the chance to succeed through work, the next government must:

- For young people: embed employability within the school curriculum and build a world-class careers advice network which taps into the expertise of employers and recruiters and inspires future generations.
- For under-represented groups: create a tipping-point on the inclusion agenda by promoting innovative hiring practices, using business organisations to engage employers across all sectors and promoting flexible working options as a means of accessing work.
- For flexible workers: broaden the Apprenticeship Levy into a 'Training Levy' that can meet the wider training and re-training needs of workers currently in non-permanent roles.
- For older people: facilitate transitions and opportunities for older workers to return to work through an 'all age' careers advice network.

## 2 Drive business growth through skills and better regulation

Nearly half of employers (49 per cent)<sup>2</sup> expect to see a shortage of candidates to fill the jobs that are available and 78 per cent have little or no spare capacity in their current workforce to take on more work. As well as radically improving the UK skills base, the next government must work with industry to build a balanced and agile immigration strategy that reflects business needs in all sectors and regions. Businesses have absorbed significant regulatory developments over recent years<sup>3</sup>; calling a 'time-out' on new regulations for the coming years would help boost growth and business confidence. New proposals aimed at reflecting modern working practices must remain proportionate and recognise the regulatory load that employers have had to deal with.

### To drive business growth and job creation, the next government must:

- Implement a comprehensive industrial and skills strategy and build an authoritative view on where skills gaps are through the creation of a business-led 'Skills Advisory Committee'.
- Agree a post-Brexit immigration system that helps businesses across all sectors and regions source the people they need.
- Simplify the tax system and refrain from extending new IR35 rules to the private sector in order to find a better means of determining the tax status of self-employed workers.
- Ensure that employment regulations reflect modern working practices but remain proportionate and are underpinned by effective enforcement mechanisms, as per our industry's response to the Taylor Review.
- Look ahead at how technological and demographic changes might impact on the future of the UK jobs market<sup>4</sup> so that policy responses can be mapped out in advance.

1 For example, the McGregor-Smith Review, Sir John Parker Review, Hampton- Alexander Review

2 REC JobsOutlook (April 2017)

3 Pensions auto-enrolment, apprenticeship levy and gender pay reporting are just three examples

4 The REC is committed to this agenda through its Future of Jobs Commission

### 3 Boost local jobs markets through effective industrial strategy

Workforce investment is as important as infrastructure investment, if we are to boost the number and quality of jobs in all regions and sectors. An industrial strategy must be underpinned by an effective skills strategy and the next government should conduct a detailed review of how Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and sector skills bodies are currently delivering. Local politicians have a role to play by actively championing good recruitment and inclusive hiring practices to improve workplace productivity. The public sector must also play a leadership role by promoting good recruitment and management practice in their supply chains.

#### To boost local jobs markets, the next government must:

- Deliver an ambitious and effective industrial and skills strategy that stimulates job creation across all regions.
- Conduct a wide-ranging review of LEPs and skills bodies to learn what is currently working well and what can be improved.
- Promote good recruitment practice in the public sector and work with the recruitment industry to harness the benefits of well-managed flexible working arrangements.
- Build on existing partnerships between public and private sector employment providers to help local employers access the staff they need and local job-seekers access the jobs they want.
- Ensure local politicians promote the best hiring practices by acting as 'good recruitment' champions in their constituencies and engaging with local employers, jobseekers and specialist recruiters.

### 4 Boost overseas opportunities and the UK's global presence

Over the course of the Brexit negotiations, a core focus for the next government must be to maintain the health of the UK jobs market and to ensure that the post-EU landscape is one in which both demand and supply of staff remains vibrant. Boosting opportunities for UK firms to export goods and services overseas will further accelerate business growth and fuel UK job-creation. The next government must also help deliver a level-playing for UK workers and businesses operating overseas by feeding into global debates on unregulated work, addressing modern day slavery and promoting good supply chain management.

#### To boost overseas opportunities, the next government must:

- Work with the recruitment industry and wider business community to pre-empt how potential new working arrangements with the EU (for example with regards to trade, sectoral agreements and movement of workers) might impact on the UK jobs market.
- Ensure that the practical support from the Department for International Trade (DIT) is effective and helps UK businesses to learn about and expand into new markets.
- Feed into global labour market debates and the work of international institutions such as the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the OECD to address global challenges such as modern day slavery and to achieve a level playing field for UK workers and businesses.
- Build international awareness and encourage the take-up of language skills amongst future generations of workers.

**Nurturing a dynamic and agile twenty-first-century jobs market is key to economic and social well-being; this will provide opportunities for individuals to progress through work and will drive business growth through skills and productivity.**

**Jobs *transform* lives which is why the REC is committed to working with government to deliver a bold and aspirational vision for the UK jobs market.**

**Let's build the best jobs market in the world.**



Jobs *transform* lives

Recruitment's biggest lobbying voice

The source of recruitment knowledge

Raising recruitment standards

Developing successful careers  
in recruitment

Exceeding members' expectations through  
business support.

*Jobs transform lives*, which is why we are building the best recruitment industry in the world. As the professional body for recruitment, we're determined to make businesses more successful by helping them secure the people they need.

We are absolutely passionate and totally committed in this pursuit for recruiters, employers, and the people they hire.

Find out more about the Recruitment &  
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Registered in England, company registration number 3895053

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