

The UK's National Hiring Strategy

In collaboration with:



Foreword



Lord Ranger
Member of the
House of Lords

Hiring in Britain is broken – but it doesn't have to be.

We stand at a crossroads. We can either use new technology like AI as a quick fix for a flawed system, or we can seize this moment to reimagine how the UK hires – building a process that's faster, fairer, and truly fit for the future.

The economic case for change is undeniable. Poor hiring decisions cost the UK an estimated £14.4 billion each year. Unemployment drains another £61 billion, and inefficient recruitment and unfilled vacancies add nearly £150 million more. By simply halving time to hire, improving outcomes, and making hiring more inclusive, we could unlock £40 billion a year in value for our economy.

This has never been more urgent. With unemployment rising, vacancies remaining low, and productivity stagnating, our labour market needs bold reform – not small adjustments.

That's why the UK's Hiring Taskforce, launched in Parliament earlier this year, is developing the country's first-ever National Hiring Strategy. Its ambition is nothing short of global leadership: to make UK hiring the fastest, fairest, and safest in the world.

I'm delighted to provide the foreword for such an important piece of work – and at such a critical time. My thanks go to the Better Hiring Institute for driving this agenda, and to the 500+ organisations that have contributed to shaping the strategy. Their commitment underlines both the urgency and the opportunity before us.

I look forward to supporting this work as we move forward – and to helping the UK take its place as a world leader in a new era for hiring.

Introductions



Viscount Camrose
Shadow AI Minister

Hiring has evolved organically over a significant period of time. It's evolved without any real direction or overarching strategy and that has led to a recruitment marketplace that is fractured. The tools used by employers and candidates are not significantly better than random lotteries at matching roles to suitable people. Even highly qualified people – let alone graduates – go unseen by recruiters because they are swamped by “spray and pray” submissions.

There could be no single greater boost to national productivity than fixing hiring. A trusted and efficient recruitment marketplace would get the right people into the right jobs – and indeed create more of them. This is crucial as we face a continued decline in vacancies, rising unemployment, and lagging productivity. Britain should be leaders in hiring and that is the ambition for the first National Hiring Strategy which I am very happy to endorse.

Developed by the Better Hiring Institute and over 500 UK employers the strategy represents a key milestone in the journey to reimagine UK hiring.

Recruitment technology is key to fixing this problem. I was delighted to launch the first trade association for “RecTech” in Parliament ([Join the Association of RecTech Providers](#)) which has been launched to develop standards, influence policy, and set out a roadmap for a new way to hire. What we need is a trusted jobs market where people will trust the recruiting market place enough so that we can all move around much more in that context, in a world of short jumps. Moving across a variety of jobs and organisations can help people to be constantly improving, constantly learning, and therefore moving around, maintaining curiosity about new possibilities and new technologies in that way.

Better conceived artificial intelligence systems is instrumental in bringing this about: AI needs to be drawing inferences about credentials, commercials and fit from both employers and candidates to match them more smartly. The current direction of AI tools to tweak text in CVs for recruiter visibility is the depressing fruit of unimaginative hiring. We can do better, and the rewards for improving this will be significant.

Inefficient and ineffective recruitment is costing the UK billions, and by halving the time to hire, improving candidate fit so fewer new recruits leave in their first 6 months, and by helping more people into work we could save tens of billions of pounds a year. Through this work I have been delighted to see the commitment, enthusiasm, and desire of the UK's hiring community to inspire change, and I have no doubt this movement has the potential to do exactly that.

Introduction

Shaping the Future

Our mission statement:

To restore the UK's leadership in hiring by transforming outdated recruitment practices into a modern, inclusive, and agile system that drives economic growth and social progress.

We are committed to making hiring a strategic advantage – ensuring the right outcomes, faster processes, and equitable opportunities for all. Through innovation, collaboration, and a relentless focus on quality, we aim to build a hiring ecosystem that supports a thriving UK economy and reflects the diverse talent of our society.

The **UK's Hiring Taskforce** was created to transform hiring by utilising the latest technology to make UK hiring the fastest in the world. The National Hiring Strategy addresses the key areas of broad strategy, recruitment technology (or RecTech), and policy. The strategy will redefine hiring and position the UK as global leaders in talent acquisition.

The **UK's Hiring Strategy** aims to reimagine the future of hiring which is fast, inclusive, and effective. This will drive significant economic benefit, improve productivity, cut worklessness and waiting lists, whilst delivering social benefit.

The UK's Hiring Strategy represents a first of its kind which covers 3 key workstreams.

- ① **The UK's Hiring Strategy** – to outline a strategic vision for future hiring.
- ② **The UK's RecTech Roadmap** – the introduction of a recruitment technology (RecTech) roadmap.
- ③ **Hiring Policy Change** – a white paper to UK Government on required legislative and regulatory reforms.

This document is structured into the three key workstreams stated above, each containing clear, actionable recommendations. A concise summary of these recommendations is provided at the end for ease of reference.

The Economic Case

Broken hiring costs the UK economy £75 billion annually. Through this strategy that number could be reduced by £37.5 billion.



A 2025 study by the Centre for Economics and Business Research (Cebr) and PageGroup found that:

- **£132.6 million** is lost annually in productivity due to **inefficient recruitment processes and unfilled vacancies** in large UK businesses.

This includes:

- **£90.2 million** from roles left unfilled for an average of **six working weeks**.
- **£42.5 million** from inefficient recruitment processes (e.g. overly complex or slow workflows).

According to the ONS approx. 9% of UK workers change jobs annually. With a UK workforce of around 33m this equates to roughly 3m people a year starting a new job. Current estimates claim 41% leave their new job in the first 12 weeks which is the equivalent of 1.2m people (CIPD, 2024). The CIPD say the cost of a bad hire is £12,000 which means it costs the UK £14.4bn a year. By improving the quality of hiring and reducing the 41% to 20% this would save the economy £7bn a year.

Consideration must also be made as to the impact of inefficient recruitment processes and the effect it can have on those not only going through the process but also those hiring managers and existing team members who are caught up in the resulting factors. Poor mental health costs the UK economy around £102 billion annually, according to AXA UK in 2023, with £26 billion lost from sick days, £57.4 billion from lost productivity, and £18 billion from workers leaving their jobs.

House of Commons Library analysis estimates the real cost of unemployment is at £61bn per year. This includes lost tax revenue, benefit payments, and reduced economic output. By creating a new hiring system based on better job matching and inclusion it would be possible to reduce the 7.5m working age people receiving Universal Credit. Were it possible to reduce this by 10% it would save in the region of £5bn per year. Alongside these financial outcomes there are other benefits to improving UK hiring, according to KPMG it takes 75 to 131 days to hire into the NHS and taking into account the latest social and technology trends such as the use of smartphones and digital wallets, the aim should be to cut that by a third which would have a significant impact on reducing the median waiting time on the waiting list of 13.4 days.

The UK hiring strategy requires key changes to the way hiring is currently conducted. It must consider future methods of job seeking and employment.



1 The UK's Hiring Strategy

UK hiring has evolved organically over time without a clear strategic direction which has created a less-than-optimal and problematic process for employers and candidates.

Current statistics state that time to hire in the UK is at a staggering 40 days+ (Smart Recruiters 2025 Report), with countries like Australia leading the way with time to hire at 32 days. The intention of the National Hiring Strategy is to dramatically cut hiring times so employers can reduce their time to hire by a minimum of 20%.

Much of UK hiring dates back to the Industrial Revolution and beyond and is no longer fit for purpose for 21st century Britain. A staggering 27% of employers report no-shows on day 1 (CIPD, 2024), 46% of new hires fail within 18 months, and only 19% are deemed truly successful (Leadership IQ, 2025). With 41% resigning within 12 weeks (CIPD, 2024), the journey is clearly broken: UK hiring is not only slow, but more often than not gets the wrong outcomes.

The National Hiring Strategy is focused on delivering fast and effective hiring which improves outputs, reduces inefficiency, and results in a better experience for all. Key challenges include attracting quality talent, engaging candidates and achieving fair hiring.

Recommendation:

Priorities that could advance recruitment through technology include analytics to support inclusive and efficient recruitment, programmatic ads to target suitable talent and pre-employment assessments to save interview time.

1 The UK's Hiring Strategy

Industry advised that traditional hiring methods, especially CVs and application forms, are outdated and inefficient, with 64% of candidates frustrated by re-entering CV details (Tribepad, 2025).

If hiring was quicker, the key economic benefits to the UK would be lower cost-per-hire, faster job placements, higher retention rates, better matches and improved recruiter productivity.

Entry-level job vacancies or roles such as graduate positions, apprenticeships, internships, and junior roles not requiring a degree, in the UK have dropped by 31.9% since November 2022. Entry-level positions now make up just 25% of the UK jobs market, down from 28.9% in 2022 (Adzuna, 2025).

Hiring needs to focus on other types of credentials, not just a degree which will need to be reflected in job adverts. Key employment barriers include a mismatch between advertised roles and actual needs, unrealistic expectations, lack of tailored onboarding, and outdated verification practices.

Employers report that current systems fail to support dynamic, skills-based role matching.



Recommendation:



Job adverts should be redeveloped to show the specific skills, values, or behaviours required for the role and matching technology should be able to match the right candidates for the role with AI helping the job seeker to apply online. This would make CVs and job application forms redundant.

Recommendation:



Organisational skills mapping would work in tandem with job seekers' skills-based profile supported by the right apps. Work histories can be replaced with HMRC data checks to validate a candidate's employment making the process faster and more secure..

1 The UK's Hiring Strategy

By 2026, over 500 million smartphone users will use digital identity wallets (JFF, 2024) and 75% of jobseekers are open to using digital wallets to manage credentials (JFF, 2025).

With that in mind, technology and automation can speed up and vastly improve the quality of hiring, with 10-30% of jobs now considered to be automatable by utilising AI (PwC, 2025), it is recognised that having a human involved in the decision-making process is critical.

This is a legal requirement where AI is used and Article 22 of the UK's Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 has been amended to include the outright ban on automated decision-making. This means that any shortlist produced entirely by an algorithm must come with a clear explanation of the logic and a guaranteed right to human review before a hiring decision is made.

Recommendation:

A future hiring system should be based on digital credentials so employers have the knowledge upfront that a candidate matches the skills and to tackle hiring fraud. Alongside innovation such as digital credentials a future hiring system needs to develop faster and more trusted ways to shortlist, interview (which is currently estimated at taking 23 days), onboard and check candidates.

As the UK progresses on its journey to faster, fairer and more effective hiring, it will be important that key policy areas are also challenged and improved, hence this strategy covers the policy areas that require modernisation.

Recommendation:

To truly achieve the fastest hiring globally alongside this Strategy it is important to re-think careers advice, job centres, career journeys, as well as tackling broader technology challenges such as interoperability.

1 The UK's Hiring Strategy

Not only is hiring slow and inefficient, but research also suggests it is less than optimal for people going through the process.

For example, People Management state that 78% of jobseekers withdraw from the hiring process due to long or complex recruitment processes. According to TribePad (2024) there are 48.7 applications per job and 3m people start a new job per year, meaning there are nearly 150m job applications a year and astonishingly 114m of those withdraw during the hiring process.

This creates a huge cost and time inefficiency which could be drastically reduced by a more effective hiring system.

Data from Tribepad suggests that job seekers are least satisfied about:

- Having to register to apply (50%),
- Having to join a talent network to apply (41%),
- The length of time required to make the application (56%),
- Ghosting from the employer (49%)
- Receiving generic automated confirmation emails (39%) (Tribepad, 2024).

Recommendation:

To measure the impact and progress of a future, trusted hiring process it is essential that “UK Hiring Measures” are developed and universally agreed.



2 The UK's RecTech Roadmap

To underpin a National Hiring Strategy a “RecTech Roadmap” for the UK is essential.

Technology can transform UK hiring, offering improvements at every stage of the process such as defining the role, advertising the vacancy, attracting candidates, shortlisting and selection, and onboarding to replace outdated practices. This Roadmap must be flexible to adapt to evolving tech and workforce needs.

To develop and deliver the roadmap a vehicle is required to bring RecTech firms together to work with UK government and employers to bring about a future way to hire. This vehicle is the Association of RecTech Providers (ARTP) launched in Parliament in September 2025. It is critical this body can bring the relevant firms together with employers and government to design and spotlight innovation in technology which will support businesses as we redesign hiring.

Efficiency and automation are at the heart of many tech solutions; whereas the current hiring process includes many different component parts such as candidate sourcing, job posting to multiple job boards, scheduling interviews, and trigger points to move through the hiring process all highlighted by employers as key issues and inefficiencies. Employers and candidates alike will benefit from increased efficiency, resulting in a reduced time to hire, and an improved experience.

Recommendation:



An end-to-end integration of technology, from job posting to onboarding, is a must. What will need consideration is how the ARTP can support SMEs to benefit from the use of technology in hiring where the means and motive to replace their current process may be lacking. The implementation of technology such as blockchain and digital wallets for candidates could reduce the time to hire substantially from weeks to minutes, further streamlining the process, and in turn enhancing the trust and transparency throughout the process.

Technology can also aid inclusion. This covers both digital inclusion and social inclusion. Digital inclusion remains a challenge for the UK with an estimated 0.3m working age adults operating completely offline and 8.5m adults lacking essential digital skills. 6% of UK households are without internet access creating barriers for people finding work.

Recommendation:



Emerging technologies like AI-powered personal recruiter apps can help bridge this gap. These tools simplify job searching, automate applications, and offer tailored support, making employment more accessible for those with limited digital confidence or time. When paired with digital skills initiatives, they can significantly enhance both access and opportunity.

2 The UK's RecTech Roadmap

Work of the Modernising Employment All Party-Parliamentary Group (APPG) Chaired by Lee Barron MP has found significant discrimination in UK hiring.

At no point can technology be discriminatory or include bias. This is an important challenge to overcome. Essentially getting a job is a human activity and therefore, despite wholesale technology change, the majority believe that human intervention must remain within the hiring process at some stage.

The emergence of AI and the high-profile cases of bias must be met with sensitivity, although the utilisation of technology for efficiency and security throughout the processes is notable.

There are very strong use cases where technology and apps have been developed to support job applicants, particularly those who may find the process challenging. Approximately 7 in 10 students would not work for an employer who banned the use of GenAI, as they feel this shows a lack of progressive and modern employment. With 44% of the same sample group stating that they feel that GenAI levels the playing field for disadvantaged groups (Arctic Shores, 2023).

Recommendation:



Clear guidance should be given by employers about how AI and technology can be used by work seekers going through the hiring process, ideally suggesting the type of tools that are available to assist.

As new technologies continue to emerge, it is essential to consider governance and legislation that protect organisations from rogue traders and evolving threats. With growing concerns around deepfake candidates, AI-generated applications, and broader cyber risks, robust fraud detection mechanisms must be in place. Employers need to feel confident that the technology they adopt enhances the hiring experience while remaining trustworthy.

Recommendation:



Regularly auditing the tech stack for bias, transparency, fairness, and ensuring human oversight in algorithmic decision-making is crucial.

The Better Hiring Institute produced the UK's first guide on how to tackle Hiring Fraud and technology should be designed to address the majority of the issues in hiring from deep fakes to impersonating.

2 The UK's RecTech Roadmap

There is a huge industry within the UK of job applications, rejections, and withdrawals.

64% of first-time job applicants in the UK are rejected due to lack of experience, which is often exacerbated by ATS systems that filter out candidates without specific job history (The Diversity Dashboard). This seems unnecessary and a failure of the process. Furthermore, over 75% of CVs are rejected by ATS systems before a human ever sees them and 53% of new hires leave within six months due to 'shift shock' (Personnel Today, 2024).

CVs represent an out-dated, inefficient part of the recruitment process. 75% of all CVs across a calendar year equates to over 100m rejected CVs, wasting considerable time for applicants and hirers alike, not to mention causing harm to people's mental health.

Recommendation:

An objective of the National Hiring Strategy should be to find a more modern, efficient, and fit for purpose replacement for the CV.

Jobseekers report a repetitive and time-consuming application process, with 56% citing lengthy forms as a major pain point, especially when applying to multiple roles. Additionally, 49% express frustration over the lack of feedback, highlighting inefficiencies in the candidate journey (ThriveMap, 2025).

Recommendation:

The UK needs a joined-up strategic approach to recruitment technology, whilst not a one size fits all approach, certainly a framework for how hiring could be optimised. It is important that there is an industry level approach.

As the UK embraces new forms of hiring such as values-based, competency-based, and skills-based hiring, effective job matching will require advanced technologies that verify and align candidate skills with organisational needs.

Recommendation:

Tools like assessments and gamification can enhance this process, while feedback and aggregate scoring will enable continuous improvement through tech-driven learning loops – boosting candidate quality, scalability, and long-term cost efficiency.

2 The UK's RecTech Roadmap

The current concerns about bias in technology include cases such as Workday's AI system facing a lawsuit for violating federal anti-discrimination laws, Amazon scrapping its tool for downgrading female-coded CVs and UN facial recognition tool ranking darker-skinned applicants lower.

That said, hiring systems should accommodate neurodiverse applicants and those with disabilities, including AI as an enabler – because AI can also be utilised to help job seekers find good work.

Recommendation:



The aim should therefore be to develop a future UK hiring system that is the fastest globally at the same time cutting discrimination and bias and improving inclusion. The aim is to create an efficient, trusted market for jobs.

This must include:

- Digital credentials in digital wallets that can be used to match candidates to jobs
- A new hiring process based on competency or skills matching, effective AI-enabled support for job seekers when applying for jobs, and ethical AI in the selection process
- Job adverts that better reflect the requirements and can facilitate automatic matching
- Selection and assessment methods which utilise the latest, tested technology
- Interview and onboarding processes which are remote and digital with the ability to run in person interviews where required
- Digital credentials that act as an “online professional footprint” to speed up background checking
- Requirements built on Better Hiring Toolkits that provide consistent standards across industries to make hiring more standardised and therefore elements of it more transferrable

3 Hiring Policy Change

To deliver the National Hiring Strategy there are key policy changes that will be required.

These could be at central government, regulatory, or industry level. Technology can fix many of the challenges that legislation and regulation have struggled to. However, certain outdated rules and regulations remain that limit the effectiveness, security, and efficiency of a future hiring system.

There could be a tension between speed and fairness, therefore it is important that a new way to hire hardwires fairness into the system. Digital exclusion is a challenge, according to the Good Things Foundation 1.6m adults do not possess a smartphone or device, with 7.9m adults lacking basic digital skills.

According to LINK, the UK's cash access and ATM network, around 10% of people in the UK prefer offline processes. Whilst this number may decline in time, it shows the importance to the UK of continued upskilling and investment to ensure digital access and literacy across the working-age population.



3 Hiring Policy Change

Digital verification

To drive a fully effective, fast hiring system digital verification is essential. This began with the move to digital right to work checks in 2022. It is essential this foundation is built upon further.

This needs to include reforms to the current digital scheme so the many job seekers in the UK without an in date British or Irish passport or valid e-visa can apply and get work quickly and efficiently.

Recommendation:



Future consideration should be given to the portability of digital identity and right to work verification to strengthen controls against illegal working and improve efficiency and speed in the UK labour market.

Recommendation:



Beyond right to work, the use of digital wallets would drive speed and efficiency in hiring. A “digital wallet for hiring” or a “personal digital footprint for professional life” that contains HMRC employment information, credentials, and qualifications would radically improve job matching.

The current system of qualification verification is prone to error, fraud, and inefficiency. With the cost of digital verification solutions largely being prohibitive, the majority of employers either don't verify qualifications claimed by applicants or employers verify them using original paper or copy documents. Holding digital qualifications in a digital wallet would help ensure better outcomes for employers.

3 Hiring Policy Change

Industry and Sector requirements:

There needs to be a holistic view to hiring and safeguarding that is flexible enough to accommodate sectoral differences but consistent enough to be standardised at a national level.

Examples include NHS identity rules that are out of sync with Home Office policy whereby original documents are still needed to be seen face to face in the NHS, when technology now delivers this more safely and flexibly across the rest of industry. Employment checks such as Disclosure & Barring Scheme (DBS) criminal record checks, BPSS and BS7858 vetting requirements operate with significant and unnecessary differences that complicate hiring for employers, such as rules relating to proof of address checks. This would be straightforward to standardise thus removing complexity for employers.

This issue is seen with identity checking rules for criminal record check authorities, the NHS, and other bodies where identity checking rules are not aligned. This should be standardised around the GBG45 standard.

Recommendation:

The Better Hiring Institute has produced Better Hiring Toolkits with industry standard requirements for onboarding for 80% of the UK labour market. The concept of a National Hiring Standard based on this standardised approach should be adopted to remove the confusion and/or barriers that currently exist due to multiple checks and interpretations to satisfy different vetting requirements.

3 Hiring Policy Change

Referencing and work history

The current system of referencing is time consuming and ineffective with so many references “dates only” and so many not being completed at all. A recent study of over 101,000 references showed that only 61% were being returned, of which 31% contained discrepancies and had to be cross-checked.

What's more, references typically took 2-3 weeks to be completed, after sending an average of 1.4 chasers.

Recommendation:



Employment verification through, for example, HMRC data is one improvement, but employment verification alone does not give any indication of characteristics such as reliability and integrity, and nor does it provide any information on aspects such as reason for leaving. Employment verification coupled with digital references held in digital wallets would improve the current state of referencing, as well as reducing hiring times.

If employment verification and digital references were used effectively this would further undermine the need for a CV. There exist considerable issues with CVs, first developed during the Middle Ages and still an integral part of the hiring process.

With over half of all job seekers now using AI to create CVs (Hiscox, 2025) and 60% of CVs containing factual inaccuracies (Reed, 2025) the usefulness of CVs is significantly under question. With a new way to hire that includes job matching and digital verification the role of the CV in hiring should end.

3 Hiring Policy Change

International operability and immigration

Following the launch of the digital right to work solution in the UK which has had a large impact in helping people get into work quickly and remotely, there remains work seekers who do not have an in-date passport or visa. According to the 2021 census 16.8m people (about 29% of the population) do not hold an in-date passport.

Many in this group could still hold legitimate right to work documents however an Electoral Commission study of 2015 found that 11m people lacked both an in-date passport or driving licence, the main documents required to vote. ID Crypt Global estimated 14% of the UK population do not have an in-date passport, a figure that rises to 25% in some regions. Whilst an exact figure is not clear, it is likely that between 1 in 5 and 1 in 10 job seekers cannot use the digital right to work route to secure a job quickly and remotely. Therefore, for the success of a new way to hire it is important the digital right to work scheme evolves to include other forms of identification.

Problems persist with the Shortage Occupation List and immigration rules to fit skills shortages. Employers don't feel there is a way to influence policy in this area.

See the BHI Ensuring Fairness in UK Hiring for the International Talent Pool recommendations [here](#).



Recommendation:



Effort should be made to work with UK Government departments to develop a standard for international hiring standards and vetting checks, such as international criminal record checks and rules around dates of checks and dates of entry into the UK. This should also include best practice for employers on verification of authenticity of overseas checks.

3 Hiring Policy Change

Apprenticeship issues

Employers firmly believe there should be an overhaul of the apprenticeship scheme to include consideration of an Apprenticeship living wage and how it could be applied to the gig economy. There should be better join up between employers, their representatives, and Skills England to develop a strategy for apprenticeships that works for employers alongside the National Hiring Strategy.

Employment Rights Bill

The Employment Rights Bill is a key piece of legislation being implemented. For the future of faster, more efficient hiring to help drive the economy it is essential the Employment Rights Bill does not make hiring more risky and add unnecessary administrative burden. Day one rights (in particular the right to claim unfair dismissal) and guaranteed hours needs to be balanced effectively to avoid making hiring too risky and less flexible for employers.

While these reforms aim to strengthen worker protections, placing excessive legal and procedural burdens on employers could inadvertently discourage recruitment, especially among small and medium-sized businesses. Ultimately, a fair and sustainable employment framework should protect workers without undermining the confidence and capacity of employers to hire, invest and grow.

Job adverts and requirements

Job adverts is a key area in need of overhaul. There is general agreement that salary information, benefits, and only asking for essential qualifications important to the role should be enshrined in policy.

There is a desire amongst employers and work seekers for job adverts to be more standardised.

Recommendation:



For a new way to hire to be a success, a template job advert should be utilised by all employers.

3 Hiring Policy Change

Hiring Fraud

Hiring Fraud is on the rise. There has been a steady increase in AI abuse, impersonating, Reference Houses, immigration abuses targeting the manual right to work process, fake IT workers looking to enable a cyber event, alongside long-standing issues such as dishonesty in the process.

Digital credentials that include verified references, improvements to the digital right to work process, and portable and secure digital identity would go a long way to resolving many of these issues.

The Better Hiring Institute launched the UK's first ever guide to preventing Hiring Fraud and the principles within this guide should be adopted through an accreditation to ensure the new way to hire tackles the majority of these issues.

The recommendations from this report can be found [here](#).

Consistency in handling adverse issues

Employers require support and guidance on how to deal with adverse issues during hiring such as criminal record information, negative social media information, gaps in employment history for career break professionals, professional misconduct, financial concerns (e.g. poor credit history) and adverse references.

There are clear frameworks to follow when hiring a person with convictions but it is far less clear when it comes to other types of adverse information.

Recommendation:



Whilst this is the responsibility of the hiring company, a framework would be useful.

3 Hiring Policy Change

Fairness and Inclusion

A new way to hire must also take account of fairness and inclusion.

Recommendation:



Clearer definitions and tangible actions need to be clearly stated in employer schemes when embedding the principles of the strategy.

This is particularly important when considering AI in hiring. The Better Hiring Institute have developed clear guidelines and recommendations to cover this area, it is important these are enacted either through the current AI Regulations Private Members' Bill or through another legislative route in future. In the meantime, it is important employers follow the best practice when adopting AI in hiring.

Removing barriers in work must be part of any new strategy to ensure that the full workforce can thrive.

This has been evident in the guidance that the Better Hiring Institute has developed with groups that suffer from these barriers, including women, people with disabilities and neurodivergent individuals (this list is unfortunately not exhaustive).

Simple workplace and process changes can be made by employers to ensure that these barriers are broken down and hiring practices can remain fair and inclusive.

Consideration should also be given to **empowering young people and graduates**. Currently young people and graduates find the hiring process a challenge, young people describing the selection process as a “rejection process”. It will be important to the future success of a new way to hire that it is communicated clearly across the student community.

Summary of Recommendations

Strategy:

The National Hiring Strategy aims to significantly accelerate recruitment across sectors, enabling employers to reduce time-to-hire by at least 20%.

This goal can be achieved through the following key recommendations:

- 01. Leverage technology to streamline recruitment:** Use data analytics to support inclusive and efficient hiring, programmatic advertising to target suitable talent, and pre-employment assessments to reduce interview time.
- 02. Broaden the definition of candidate credentials:** Shift focus beyond traditional degrees to include alternative qualifications. Job adverts should reflect this change. Address key barriers such as misaligned job descriptions, unrealistic expectations, lack of tailored onboarding, and outdated verification methods.
- 03. Modernise job adverts and application processes:** Redesign job postings to highlight specific skills, values, and behaviours. Implement AI-powered matching tools to connect candidates with roles, making CVs and traditional application forms obsolete.
- 04. Enable skills-based hiring through digital tools:** Align organisational skills mapping with candidate profiles supported by apps. Replace manual work history checks with HMRC data validation to enhance speed and security.
- 05. Adopt digital credentials to improve trust and efficiency:** Build a hiring system where verified digital credentials provide upfront assurance of candidate suitability and help prevent hiring fraud. Innovate faster, more reliable methods for shortlisting, interviewing (currently averaging 23 days), onboarding, and verification.
- 06. Rethink the broader hiring ecosystem:** To achieve world-leading hiring speeds, reimagine careers advice, job centres, and career pathways. Address wider technology challenges such as interoperability across platforms.
- 07. Establish national hiring metrics:** Develop and adopt universally agreed “UK Hiring Measures” to track progress. These should include time-to-hire, application withdrawal rates, day-one dropouts, and job application volumes.
- 08. Establish the Better Hirer Accreditation:** Introduce a nationally recognised accreditation, endorsed by key stakeholders, to promote consistent hiring standards and elevate employer accountability across sectors.

Summary of Recommendations

Technology:

The overarching goal should be to build a future UK hiring system that is not only the fastest globally but also actively reduces discrimination and bias, while promoting greater inclusion and ensuring protection around emerging cyber risk.

The following should be considered to achieve this:

- 01. Adopt blockchain and digital wallets to accelerate hiring:** Technologies like blockchain and digital wallets can dramatically reduce time-to-hire – from weeks to minutes – by streamlining verification and enhancing trust and transparency. Digital credentials stored in wallets can be instantly matched to job requirements.
- 02. Utilise AI-powered personal recruiter apps:** Emerging tools can simplify job searches, automate applications, and provide personalised support – especially for individuals with limited digital confidence or time. When integrated with digital skills initiatives, these apps can expand access and opportunity.
- 03. Provide clear employer guidance on AI in hiring:** Clear, transparent guidance on how AI and other technologies are used in the recruitment process, including recommended tools and ethical considerations to ensure fair and responsible use.
- 04. Ensure fairness through regular tech audits:** Recruitment technologies should be routinely audited for bias, transparency, and fairness, with human oversight embedded in algorithmic decision-making to maintain accountability.
- 05. Replace outdated CVs with modern alternatives:** A key objective of the National Hiring Strategy should be to develop a more efficient, inclusive, and fit-for-purpose alternative to the traditional CV.
- 06. Enhance candidate evaluation with innovative tools:** Assessments, gamification, and feedback mechanisms – combined with aggregate scoring – can create continuous improvement loops, boosting candidate quality, scalability, and cost efficiency.
- 07. Shift to competency and skills-based hiring:** A future-ready hiring process should prioritise matching candidates based on verified skills and competencies rather than traditional qualifications alone.

Summary of Recommendations

- 08. Redesign job adverts for precision and automation:** Job postings should clearly reflect required skills, values, and behaviours, enabling automated matching through AI and reducing reliance on manual screening.
- 09. Modernise selection and assessment methods:** Leverage the latest validated technologies to improve selection accuracy, efficiency, and candidate experience.
- 10. Digitise interview and onboarding processes:** Implement remote and digital-first approaches to interviewing and onboarding, while retaining flexibility for in-person interactions when needed.
- 11. Use digital credentials as professional footprints:** Verified digital credentials can serve as trusted online profiles, speeding up background checks and improving hiring security.
- 12. Standardise hiring with Better Hiring Toolkits:** Build consistent, transferable hiring standards across industries using toolkits that promote best practices and reduce variability in recruitment processes.
- 13. Establish a unified RecTech collaboration:** Create a centralised collaboration platform within the Association of RecTech Providers to drive innovation, share best practices, and align efforts across the recruitment technology sector.
- 14. Support emerging hiring technologies with strong governance:** Ensure new technologies are backed by robust governance frameworks to protect against fraud, evolving threats, and misuse – safeguarding both employers and candidates.

Summary of Recommendations

Policy:

To successfully deliver the National Hiring Strategy, key policy changes will be required across central government, regulatory bodies, and industry. These changes should focus on enabling a more efficient, inclusive, and secure hiring ecosystem.

They could be achieved through the following recommendations:

- 01. Enable portability of digital identity and right-to-work verification:** Future policy should support the use of portable digital identity solutions to strengthen controls against illegal working and improve speed and efficiency in the UK labour market.
- 02. Introduce digital wallets for hiring:** Beyond right-to-work checks, a “digital wallet for hiring” – containing HMRC employment history, verified credentials, and qualifications – would significantly enhance job matching and reduce time-to-hire.
- 03. Adopt a National Hiring Standard:** Building on the Better Hiring Institute’s toolkits, which cover onboarding standards for 80% of the UK labour market, a unified National Hiring Standard should be implemented to eliminate confusion caused by inconsistent vetting requirements.
- 04. Improve employment referencing through digital integration:** While HMRC data can verify employment history, it lacks insight into attributes like reliability or reasons for leaving. Combining employment verification with digital references stored in wallets would modernise referencing and reduce delays.
- 05. Develop international hiring and vetting standards:** Collaborate with UK Government departments to create consistent standards for international criminal record checks, verification timelines, and best practices for authenticating overseas documentation.
- 06. Introduce a template job advert:** To support a new way of hiring, a standardised job advert template would help employers clearly communicate role requirements and facilitate better candidate matching.
- 07. Provide a hiring framework for employers:** While hiring remains the responsibility of individual organisations, a national framework would offer guidance and consistency, helping employers adopt best practices more easily.

Suggested Next Steps

- Launch the National Hiring Strategy in parliament in November 2025 with key stakeholders and parliamentarians in attendance to deliver the long-term vision.
- Design and publish UK Hiring Measures to track time-to-hire, dropouts, and application withdrawals.
- Progress key policy reforms including digital verification, job advert standards, and AI regulation.
- Further engage with key Government bodies such as Skills England, Home Office, and DSIT.
- Launch the Better Hirer Accreditation in Q1 of 2026, enabling employers to pledge towards better hiring practices.
- Create a framework for industry-wide hiring optimisation, adaptable across sectors and organisation sizes.
- Develop the RecTech workstream with a view to building a technology roadmap.
- Review the progress of the Strategy against the agreed success metrics every 6 months to ensure that the document is a true reflection of the RecTech roadmap ahead.



Acknowledgements

The UK's Hiring Taskforce was launched in the House of Commons in May 2025 with the intention of reinventing UK hiring through the development of a first National Hiring Strategy. The Taskforce was Chaired by Shadow Minister for AI, Viscount Camrose, and supported by many politicians and industry leaders including Lord Holmes, Alan Mak MP, and Peter Cheese, CEO of the CIPD.

The Taskforce and the National Hiring Strategy have been supported by the Better Hiring Institute, a brand of the Modern Work Foundation, a Community Interest Company which exists to improve work, productivity, and hiring.

From the launch to the creation of the Strategy, over 500 UK and multinational employers advised and inputted into this important work. The Better Hiring Institute are indebted to the support, advice, and guidance from some of the leading experts in the field.

The Strategy was debated in September at a House of Lords roundtable led by Viscount Camrose with Parliamentarians, industry leaders, and experts. The Better Hiring Institute are grateful to those who gave their time and commitment to both reviewing and challenging the draft Strategy, and contributing so much to its development.

It became clear during the development of the Strategy that to be a success, the Strategy had to become an agile, living blueprint for the new future of hiring. This means the Strategy intends to be a living blueprint on how the UK achieves the fastest and most effective hiring globally and realises the benefits this brings from millions in extra revenues into the Treasury, billions in growth through increased productivity, and the advantages of getting more people into work. The Strategy therefore sets out how to achieve this mission, a "RecTech Roadmap", metrics to measure progress by, recommendations on necessary policy change, and ways to implement and embed change.

To be a success it is important that progress and the Strategy itself are revisited at regular intervals to assess momentum, delivery, and success.

This Strategy was made possible by the support and expertise of our sponsors; Amiquis, Equifax, Harvey Nash, Konfir, Reed Screening, ThriveMap, UK Debt Expert and VireUp.

About Us



[The Better Hiring Institute's](#) mission is to make UK hiring faster, fairer, and safer. Specifically, to make UK hiring the fastest globally, the fairest in the world, and the safest it can be.

The Better Hiring Institute (BHI), a brand of the Modern Work Foundation, was set up between government and industry during the pandemic to revolutionise UK hiring. In its early days its Chair, Keith Rosser, was cited by UK Government as a key architect in the establishment of the digital right to work scheme, necessary to make UK hiring digital following lockdown. Since those early days, the BHI has established the UK's first National Hiring Framework, filled with free resources and best practice for the hiring community.

The Framework now covers 80% of the UK workforce with free Better Hiring Toolkits. The BHI has been at the forefront of hiring reforms by publishing the nation's first guide on AI in Hiring (quoted by the House of Lords committee report and considered in the AI Regulations Private Members' Bill) and developing the UK's Hiring Fraud guide for employers which was launched in Parliament. The BHI continues



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They are authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority and hold Debt Counselling and Debt Adjusting permissions.



[ThriveMap](#) helps companies hire better by creating realistic, job-specific assessments that simulate the work environment.

Our platform replaces guesswork with data, helping recruiters identify the best candidates faster, improve retention, and give applicants a true preview of the role.



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