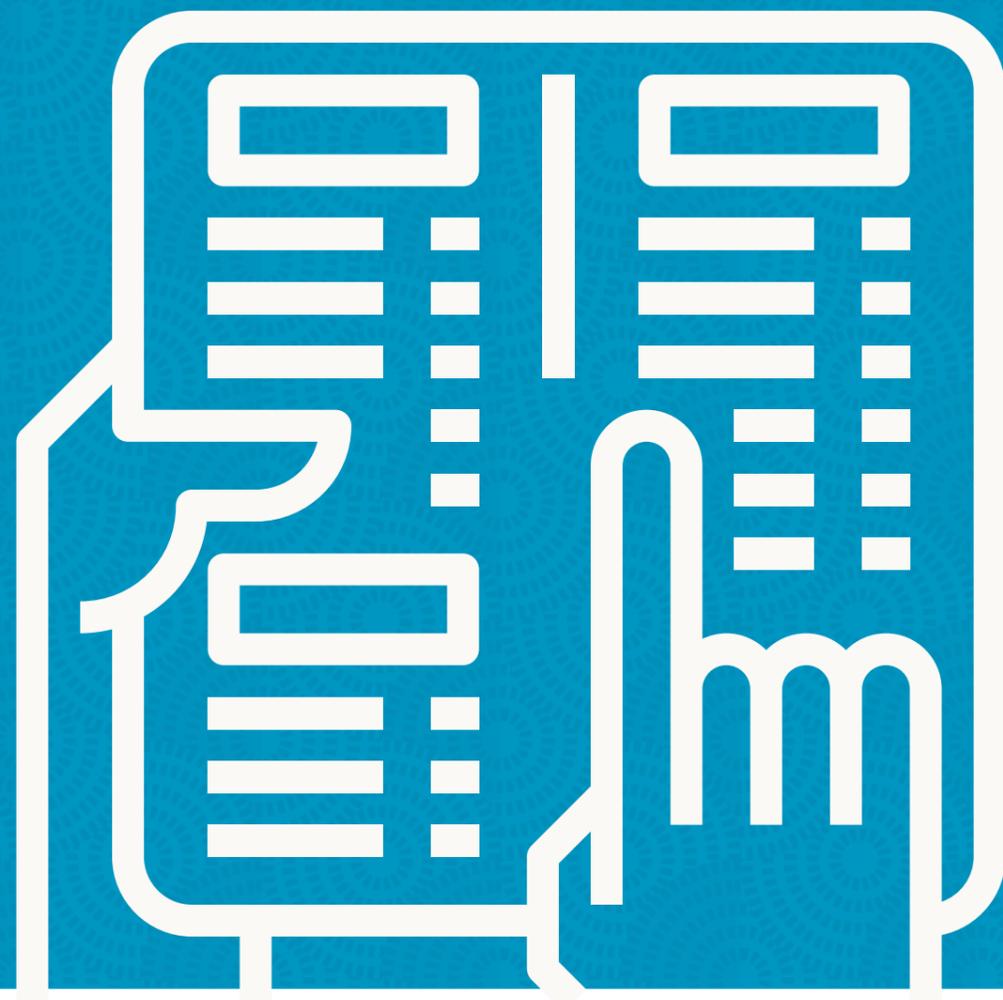




# Recruitment and Retention

A practical guide for employers

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# Why use this guide?

Workforce recruitment and development may be the most important issue for our sector in the years ahead.

We're operating against a difficult backdrop and we are clear about the scale of the challenge.

Scotland's farming, fishing, food and drink sector can be a remarkable place to work. But our future rests with our workforce.

They need to see and feel the opportunities and we need to attract, retain and develop them if we are going to unlock the potential ahead of us.

This guide is designed to help you. It's easy to use, focused on the day-to-day challenges in food and drink and designed for businesses of all sizes.

Investing time in your people is investing in your greatest asset. They are ambassadors, innovators, coaches and cheerleaders and it's your people that will help your business survive and thrive.

As an industry, we know how resilient you are. And we will need to deploy that flexibility and fresh thinking to find and develop future talent.



## SCOTLAND FOOD & DRINK PARTNERSHIP

We all need to embrace this skills agenda more closely than ever before. We need to challenge ourselves to ensure we are creating the right working environment and culture for the future.

Use those amazing aspects of your business to inspire your workforce.

By seeing and feeling the opportunities, they can become as enthusiastic and fired up about your business as you are.

It's expensive to recruit and train people so make it count. With an engaged and loyal workforce, you reduce churn, hang on to knowledge and experience, and maintain smooth operations.

This guide contains what you need to know, signposting resources, providing checklists and templates. There are stories of employers like yourselves, telling their stories and hopefully sparking ideas.

It's designed to stimulate your thoughts on all aspects of attracting, recruiting, retaining and developing people, to support your own business journey - and its future success.



# Useful resources

We'll suggest more detailed resources at the end of each section, but here are some good places to start:

## Find Business Support



A searchable guide to public sector support for businesses in Scotland, including grants, funding, training, innovation, international trade and net zero.

Also check with your local authorities for specific employer support schemes.

## Skills Development Scotland



Scotland's national skills agency, supporting businesses with their goals and growth.

## Feeding Workforce Skills



An online platform that signposts relevant support for food & drink employers, including case studies, articles as well as other tips & advice.

## Scottish Enterprise



Helping businesses to innovate and scale to transform Scotland's economy.

## Highlands and Islands Enterprise



Economic and community development agency for the north and west of Scotland.

## South of Scotland Enterprise



Economic and community development agency for Dumfries & Galloway and the Scottish Borders.

# How to attract the right people to your business

You already know you need great people in your business. You also know it can be hard to attract and keep them. This guide will help you get adaptable, committed people to work for you – young people about to start their careers, people returning to work or wanting a new direction, and people already experienced in food and drink.

The first thing to think about is what people want from a job. Research shows that paying employees market rates is important, but other things matter too:

- › **The job itself**
- › **Working hours and flexibility of hours**
- › **Management**
- › **Career opportunities**
- › **The culture in the business – having a culture and place where people want to work**



# How to create a great place to work



There are several elements to think about here: **People, Place, Practice and Values.**



## People

You're looking for two-way communication, people who feel good about their job, and provide opportunities for them to develop new skills and knowledge and where appropriate, support their future company career ambitions.



## Place

You're looking to create physical and virtual working environments where people enjoy working and can work safely to the best of their ability.



## Practice

You want management and workplace practices that help people to be productive and creative and feel valued, and give you a good reputation as an employer.



## Values

You ideally want to ensure that all employees have been involved in the development or refreshing of your company values and they're fully understood and embedded within your company.



To get it right on these elements, it's helpful to translate them into more bitesize approaches. For example, on the People element:

- **Make time to listen to your staff and don't just talk at them. Example: an employee forum**
- **Make people feel recognised and proud of what they do. Examples: employee of the month board or trophy, using social media and internal communications to recognise people**
- **Help your staff to grow professionally and show them clear paths of progression in your own business. Examples: mentor system; comms promoted to where they are**

# Checklist

## Are you getting it right with People, Place, Practice and Values?

★ = Poor   ★★ = Okay   ★★★ = Good   ★★★★★ = Excellent

You can use this checklist to help you assess whether you have a great place to work. As well as looking at these questions yourself, it's good practice to ask your team or a cross-section of employees to give a rating too, so you can compare scores. If you let them do it anonymously, they're more likely to give honest feedback.

For **Values**, take a look at our [10 ways to make yourself an employer of choice](#).

Practice 	★	★★	★★★	★★★★	Comments
Do you have a reputation as a great employer?					
How do your workforce feel about management and working practices?					
How do your working practices compare with other businesses?					
Do your managers know how to engage effectively, nurture commitment and motivate people?					
Do you have practices in place that engage your people in improving productivity?					
Do you engage with your local community, including schools, to attract potential employees?					
How could you improve your working practices and management?					
How could you promote your reputation to potential employees?					

People 	★	★★	★★★	★★★★	Comments
Do you engage with and listen to your people?					
Do people feel able to raise challenges and suggest improvements to your managers and you?					
Do you offer development opportunities so people are better equipped to contribute to your business?					
Do you provide career paths to encourage ambitious people to stay?					
How could you build a more engaged and productive workforce?					

Place 	★	★★	★★★	★★★★	Comments
Does your work environment encourage efficient working?					
Is your work environment an enjoyable place to work?					
Do you offer flexible working so that employees can balance their family and work time?					
Do you provide opportunities for (supported) remote working for some roles in your business?					
How could you improve your working environment and make it a great place to work?					



# Case study

## North Uist Distillery

northuistdistillery.com

Being an employer of choice is an important priority for North Uist Distillery.

Owners Jonny Ingledew and Kate MacDonald grew up on the island and they started the business there because they wanted to create something for the island.

**You have to court potential applicants, because a business lives and dies by its team**

So when they set up their distillery in 2019, they made the deliberate choice not to outsource activity and instead to keep everything on the island. With low unemployment on the Outer Hebrides – jobs can sit vacant for a couple of years - they make sure they provide an attractive package to their 12 employees. As well as equity in the business, they pay above the industry average and offer flexible working hours.

For Jonny and Kate, it was also important to set down their three aims for the business: to put Uist on the whisky map, to be carbon neutral; and to be the best employer on the island.

“We’re based on a small and fairly remote island and we’re all very proud of where we come from,” said Jonny. “There is quite a lot of time and effort put into our recruitment process. You have to court potential applicants, because a business lives and dies by its team.

“And we try to bring our team along with the vision for our business because the part that workplace culture plays can’t be undervalued.

“We wrote down our mission statement because seeing it immortalised in ink keeps it at the forefront of your mind.”

Outsourcing training means each team member can choose what they want to learn and where. Jonny follows the mantra of training the team so they can leave but treating them well so they don’t want to.

They’re also extremely flexible employers, with people able to choose permanent or zero hours contracts.

And it’s not all work and no play. Jonny is a keen surfer, an interest he shares with some of the team. So when the weather is good and the surf is up, he and the team can down tools and head for the beach.



# Boost your business by attracting young people

Hiring young people can fill gaps and create a pipeline of talent for the future, which in turn will support your succession planning.

There's another reason to attract them too – they can be an excellent source of new ideas, especially since some of your customers (and future customers) will be their age.



# So how do you attract young people?



## Engage with your local community

to promote your reputation as a great employer. This could be anything from sponsoring young people's activities to encouraging school visits and placements. Word of mouth is really important in drawing in young people.

## Offer career opportunities

and clear paths to progress so young people can see the options ahead of them, and a reason for choosing your business. Do this for different entry levels.

## Build links with schools

to raise awareness of career opportunities. This builds community connections and could convince young people to join you as an apprentice. Developing [STEM Ambassadors](#) could also inspire others to choose further education routes that develop knowledge and skills you'll need in the future.

Emphasise that working in food and drink in Scotland is **being part of something great**.

There's more advice on this at [Promoting food and drink as a career of choice](#).

Provide **work experience** for young people, and make it interesting.

**Develop roles for apprentices** and show them potential career paths.

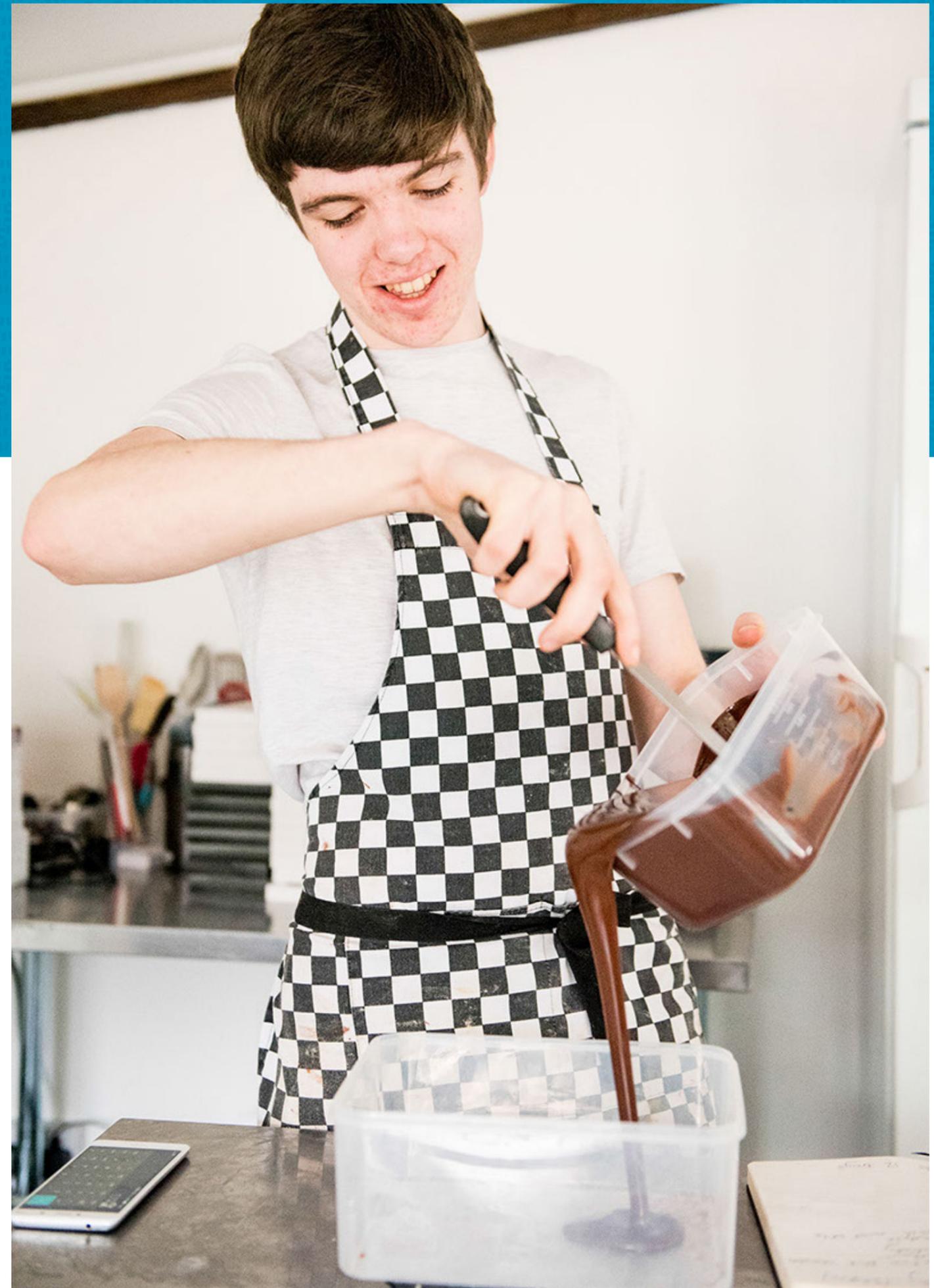
There's support to help you offer a range of different types of [apprenticeships](#) including Foundation Apprenticeships, Modern Apprenticeships and Graduate Apprenticeships  
[www.apprenticeships.scot](http://www.apprenticeships.scot)

## Build links with colleges and universities.

You could provide work experience, internship and project opportunities for students whose skills will be useful, eg engineering or administration students.

Engage with your local [Developing the Young Workforce](#) group.

You can showcase your company or industry to schools and colleges across Scotland – which can help you build a **future talent pipeline**, as well as meeting other goals.





# Case study

**Macphie**  
macphie.com

For employers, offering a young person work experience to achieve the Foundation Apprenticeship is an excellent opportunity to engage with your future workforce.

Aberdeenshire-based ingredient manufacturer Macphie is proving the point by providing pupils with a practical, hands-on work placement at its factory in Glenbervie.

**“I’ve loved having the opportunity to concoct my very own unique sauce”**

The students - in their final year at Mearns Academy, Mackie Academy and Portlethen Academy - joined the Macphie team for seven weeks as part of a Foundation Apprenticeship in Food and Drink Technology.

They were shown different areas within the business, with the end goal being the development and creation of their own new flavours of the brand’s popular dessert topping range, o.t.t® which is used by leading restaurants, dessert parlours and bakeries around the world.

Sixteen-year-old Lewis Mowatt created a non-alcoholic mulled wine flavoured dessert topping as part of his placement.

He said: “The placement at Macphie gave me a very insightful look into the food manufacturing industry through first-hand experience.

“It’s been great to learn all the ins and outs of such a modern company with my fellow classmates and I’ve loved having the opportunity to concoct my very own unique sauce.

“This experience has really benefitted me as I will now be able to demonstrate my knowledge of the industry to a future employer, presenting myself as a valuable member of a working team.”

Lucy Angel, Principal Teacher of Developing the Young Workforce at Mackie Academy, said: “Our pupils have been able to access state-of-the-art facilities, get insight into Aberdeenshire’s thriving food and drink sector and work closely with experts in this field.”



# Sign up to the Young Person's Guarantee



The Young Person's Guarantee is a commitment to connect every 16 to 24 year old in Scotland to an opportunity.

As an employer, you can build a workforce with the right skills and experience and put young people at the heart of what you do.

There are lots of benefits in joining the Guarantee, including:

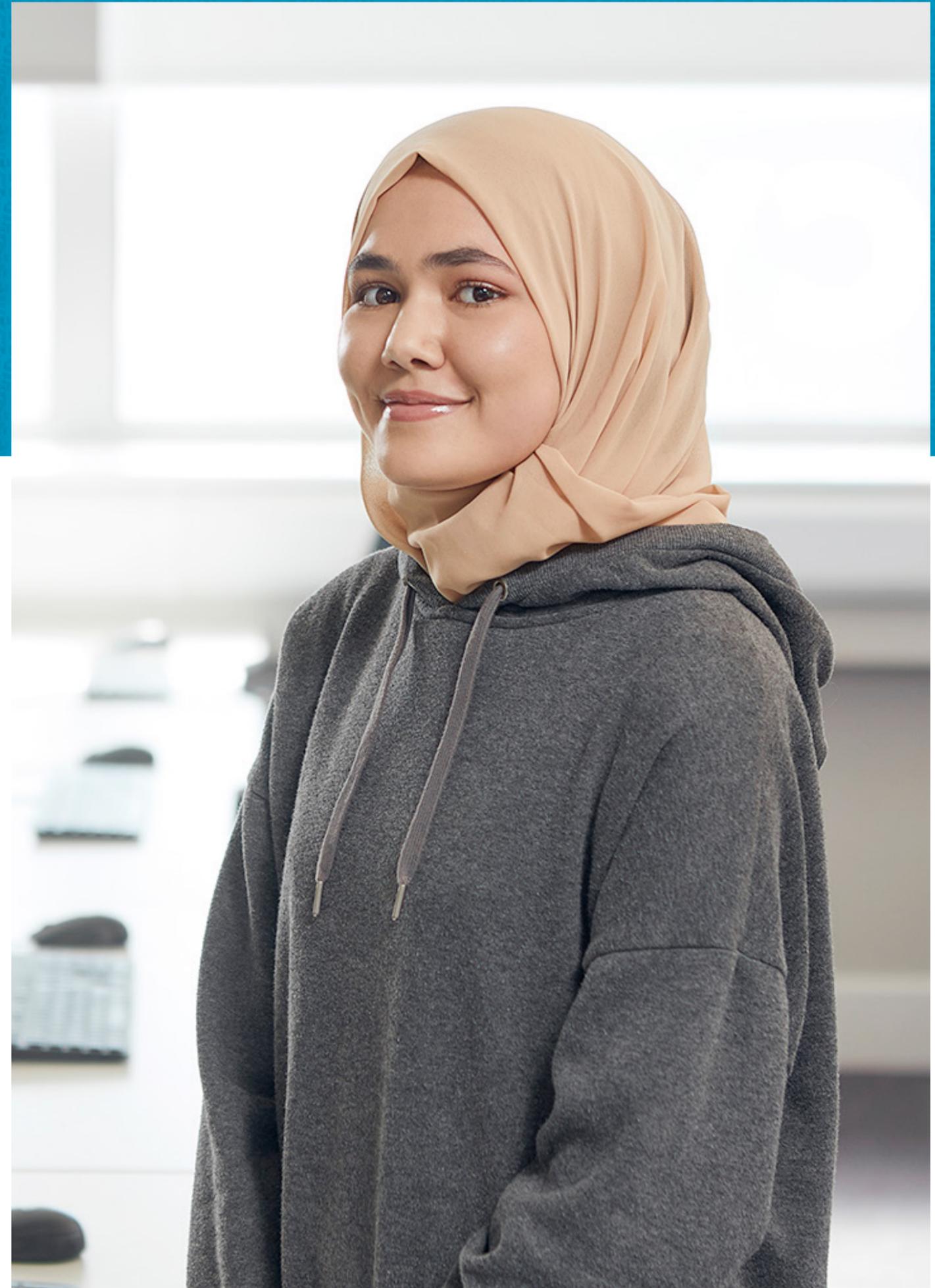
- **Building a skilled workforce for now and in the future**
- **Gaining new ideas and insight from a generationally diverse team**
- **Help with recruitment, retention and succession planning**
- **Developing and motivating existing staff**
- **Raising awareness of your industry and organisation**

## Young Person's Guarantee

Employer support for the Guarantee is built around [5 Asks](#). They will help you plan and develop the ways in which you can engage now and in the future.

You do not need to commit to all 5 Asks. To join the Guarantee, [download and complete the form](#). It will help you understand how you can support the Young Person's Guarantee.

Got a job vacancy suitable for a young person under 25? Upload it to the [YPG Opportunity Finder](#).



# A quick guide to apprenticeships



Scottish Apprenticeships are a flexible and affordable way to attract young people and develop your workforce.

Over 12,000 businesses in Scotland already have apprenticeships, and it's probably easier than you think to join them. Here's a simple four-point guide:

**1** Decide what type of apprenticeship(s) would work best for your business: Foundation, Modern or Graduate. At [apprenticeships.scot](https://www.apprenticeships.scot), you can see different types of apprenticeship designed for food and drink businesses, and arrange a chat with an adviser.

**2** Check out the funding available to help you. For Foundation Apprenticeships, there's no financial cost to the employer, and for other types, you can get financial support. You'll see more on [apprenticeships.scot/for-employers/](https://www.apprenticeships.scot/for-employers/) in the section on 'Funding'.

**3** Arrange the training element. Here again, there's plenty of support and advice available on [apprenticeships.scot](https://www.apprenticeships.scot)

**4** With everything set up, you're ready to advertise your role. You can do this for free on [apprenticeships.scot](https://www.apprenticeships.scot) and they also publish vacancies on partner sites. To make sure your recruitment process runs like clockwork, follow our tips in '[Recruitment](#)'.

Need more help? If you can't find what you need on [apprenticeships.scot](https://www.apprenticeships.scot), give them a call on 0800 783 6000.

And one more thing: remember that apprenticeships aren't just a way to recruit new talent, you can also **use them to upskill your existing staff.**



	Foundation Apprenticeships	Modern Apprenticeships	Graduate Apprenticeships
<b>Suitable for</b>	School pupils	New & existing employees aged 16+	New & existing employees aged 16+
<b>Duration</b>	Up to 2 academic years	Depends on employee's qualifications & level	Up to 4 yrs, depending on employee's qualifications & the programme
<b>What happens</b>	Pupils get time with local learning provider and work experience with you	Employees learn on the job, and with learning provider	Employees spend majority of time with you, with learning supported by a college or university



# Want to know more?

Take a look at [our tips on diversity](#) and look at these great external links to attracting young people too:

## Pathways and progression routes



Find information on routes into the industry and careers in food & drink.

## Developing the Young Workforce



Find out how you can connect with education to prepare young people for the world of work.

## Connect with young people



Find out how to connect with school, colleges and universities



# Checklist

## How are you doing with young workers?

★ = Poor   ★★ = Okay   ★★★ = Good   ★★★★★ = Excellent

You can use this checklist to help you assess whether you have a great place to work for young people. As well as looking at these questions yourself, it's good practice to ask your team or a cross-section of employees to give a rating too, so you can compare scores. If you let them do it anonymously, they're more likely to give honest feedback.

Young workers	★	★★	★★★	★★★★	Comments
How attractive is your business to young people?					
Are you showing young employees & potential employees the career opportunities you offer?					
Do you have links with local schools?					
Do you offer work experience to young people?					
Do you offer a range of apprenticeships?					
Do you engage with colleges & universities, eg through internships or opportunities for projects?					
What more could be done to attract young workers and make them feel valued?					



# Case study

**Devro**  
devro.com

Apprenticeships can secure the skills your business needs. They aren't quick fixes, but they pay back the investment you put in as an employer – sometimes quite literally.

Devro apprentice Kyle Nielsen worked on an electrical panel upgrade that is saving the business £20,000.

Twenty-year-old Kyle is an apprentice maintenance engineer at Devro, who supply casings for sausages and other meat products.

He is based in one of their global manufacturing plants in Moodiesburn in North Lanarkshire and is in the fourth year of his five-year apprenticeship.

**Working in food & drink is an attractive opportunity for anyone looking for work, especially young people that are looking for a career for life**

He sees the financial saving of £20,000 from his work on the panel upgrade through an interesting lens.

“As a business, we were shocked by the current war in Ukraine and I was moved by Devro’s pledge to donate a significant amount to the Ukrainian families affected by the conflict.

“I feel by saving the company money on the electrical upgrade I am doing my small part in helping those who are suffering.”

This is one of the reasons Kyle was given the Young Talent award at the Scotland Food & Drink Excellence Awards.

As part of his apprenticeship at Devro, he has already completed HNCs in both mechanical and electrical engineering and is now doing an HND in electrical engineering.

“Each day brings new challenges and learning opportunities that I can adapt to and I’m encouraged to be creative and innovative,” he said.

“I’d say working in food & drink is an attractive opportunity for anyone looking for work, especially young people that are looking for a career for life.

“I am proud to say I am a part of the future of this industry.”





# Case study

**Brakes**

brake.co.uk

Looking to add some new skills and a fresh pair of eyes to your workforce? Be like Brakes and introduce a graduate role into your organisation.

Brakes has been providing top quality food and catering supplies to the food service industry for more than 60 years and employs more than 6,500 people across the UK. Calum Brown is one of their graduates who work with the company for two years.

Regional marketing and merchandising manager Lorna Allison oversees the graduate role.

“Calum has made a real difference in the role,” she said. “For example, in his first year there was £50,000 of stock waste he managed to halve. By getting into the detail and the underlying causes, he actively and efficiently managed the stock holding to reduce waste significantly.”

Calum’s role covers much more than this. He graduated from Glasgow University with a degree in economics and has now developed a wide range of buying,



**Calum Brown**

**“For graduates, it’s their first job on their career path and if I can get someone to stay in the food & drink industry, then I’ve done my job”**

selling, and marketing skills. However when he’s speaking to friends, Calum tells them he buys and sells food and drink.

“I admit I knew nothing about wholesale, where food comes from, or how it gets to supermarket shelves,” he said.

“In my time here, I’ve done a million different things, from the commercial stuff around marketing to costs and sales data margins.”

Lorna says the graduate scheme is designed so both sides get the most out of it.

“For graduates, it’s their first job on their career path and if I can get someone to stay in the food & drink industry, then I’ve done my job,” she said.



# Diversity

More than a third of people employed in Scotland are over the age of 50 and there are unlikely to be enough younger people entering the labour market to replace this group when they retire. So it's a good idea to try thinking more flexibly about who could work for you and by thinking about diversity, gaining access to the widest potential recruitment pool.



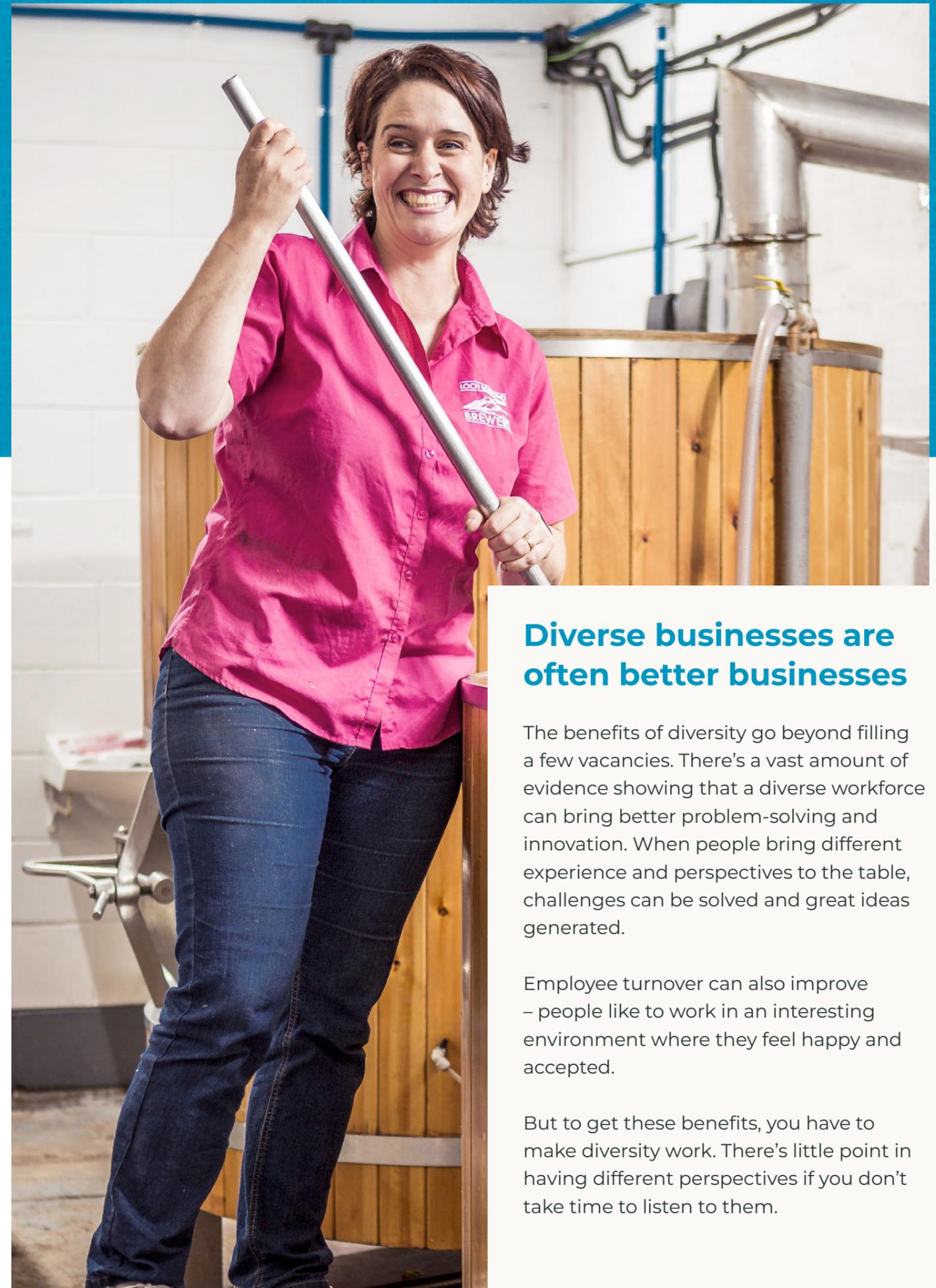
# How to mix it up successfully



'Diversity' is a term used all over the place, but what does it actually mean in practice?

It's about much more than age and gender. And it's about being inclusive as well as diverse. In other words, your culture, physical premises and training provision, among other things, should bring out the best in a wide range of people:

- › Consider the range of people you could attract, for example: people returning to work perhaps after having children or caring for a relative; people looking to move into a different type of role or for a change of career; and young people looking to build a career. Check that job description and structure (working hours) meet the needs of the people you wish to attract.
- › Think about how your business appears to potential employees from different backgrounds and of different ages. Ensure your website, social media, communications and recruitment and management practices **portray an inclusive culture**.
- › Could you have ambassadors or case studies to **show you're inclusive**?
- › Is there an opportunity to offer jobs that include a **mix of activities**? This could make jobs more interesting and attractive to potential employees.
- › Are there **potential career paths** you can highlight to ensure development opportunities are communicated to potential employees? With this one, think about the development opportunities returners or career changers may want, as well as young people.
- › Employers who offer **flexible work arrangements** are more likely to be able to attract and retain a diverse workforce, so think about how you could do this, or do it better.
- › Ensure your managers understand the benefits of a diverse workforce and can manage fairly and inclusively. They may need some **training** in this.



## Diverse businesses are often better businesses

The benefits of diversity go beyond filling a few vacancies. There's a vast amount of evidence showing that a diverse workforce can bring better problem-solving and innovation. When people bring different experience and perspectives to the table, challenges can be solved and great ideas generated.

Employee turnover can also improve – people like to work in an interesting environment where they feel happy and accepted.

But to get these benefits, you have to make diversity work. There's little point in having different perspectives if you don't take time to listen to them.



# Want to know more?

If you want to know more about the benefits of diversity and how to manage it in your business, take a look at the following:

## Inclusive recruitment



Why diversity is good for your business.

## Equality, diversity and inclusion



The Food & Drink Federation's platform for best practice.

## Diversity and inclusion (CIPD)



Good practice for managing diversity and inclusion, including managing multicultural teams.

## Age Scotland



Employers' network of a national charity working to improve the lives of everyone over the age of 50.

## Employers for Carers



Resources and practical advice produced for employers committed to working carers.

## Inclusive recruitment (CIPD)



Practical guidance for managers to create an inclusive environment, avoid bias and ensure an inclusive recruitment process.



# Checklist

## Are you doing the right thing on diversity?

★ = Poor   ★★ = Okay   ★★★ = Good   ★★★★ = Excellent

You can use this checklist to help you assess whether you have a good approach to fostering diversity in your workplace. As well as looking at these questions yourself, it's good practice to ask your team or a cross-section of employees to give a rating too, so you can compare scores. If you let them do it anonymously, they're more likely to give honest feedback.

### Diversity

	★	★★	★★★	★★★★	Comments
Is the culture in your workplace diverse and inclusive?					
Do your website, social media and communications show you're inclusive?					
Do your recruitment practices promote diversity?					
Do you offer career development paths for recruits such as returners, career changers or part-timer workers?					
Do you offer flexible working so people can balance family and work?					
Are you offering the flexible working policies that people want?					
Do you provide remote working for any roles in your business?					
Have your managers been trained on managing a diverse workforce?					
How could the culture in your workplace be made more diverse and inclusive?					



# Case study

## Clottie McToot

clotiemctootdumplings.com

Michelle Maddox is the owner of Clottie McToot, a family-run business based in Abernethy, making clottie dumplings.

There are 15 members of the “Clottie Clan”, as Michelle calls her workforce.

She freely admits that running a business is full of risks, but is convinced some types of risks are worth taking.

“There is a whole untapped source of talent out there,” she said. “You need an open mind to discover that talent pool, and open your door to people from complex backgrounds.

“I’m talking about people with neurodiverse conditions, or of no fixed abode and who haven’t had those employment opportunities in their lives.

**There is a whole untapped source of talent out there ... you need an open mind to discover that talent**

“Don’t get me wrong, when it comes to interviews, I always select a couple of

candidates who fit the job description to a T. But I also choose two or three ‘wild cards’, people who have a spark, and there is just something about them, their hobbies or interests.”

Michelle knows that if candidates have a complex background, they’re less likely to have a well-composed, attractive CV, so she looks beyond mismatching dates and spelling errors.

This also applies when they arrive for interview. They might not arrive fully suited and booted - dressing smartly for interview means different things to different people - and they might be really nervous.

The thing about this approach is that it seems to work for Michelle.

“In five years of recruiting, I’ve taken on 16 people, every single one has been a ‘wild card’ and I do not regret a single hire I’ve made.

“Maybe I’ve been lucky, but I prefer to believe that showing social responsibility and a commitment to the local community pays its own dividends.”



# Promoting food & drink as a great career



One way to help attract great people to your business is to promote the food and drink sector generally.

People of all ages like to have a job that matters; they want to work in a sector that they think is important, interesting or has status. So, show people the many reasons to work in Scotland's food and drink sector.

For a start, there are dozens of different career paths. Whether they're a scientist or ideas person, great at fixing things or better at selling or planning, a career in food & drink lets them be whatever they want to be.

Relate this to your own business, showing them all the different roles and opportunities.

Tell them they can also be part of something great.

Food and drink is one of Scotland's largest employers, expected to employ over 77,000 people by 2031, spread across a huge range of different jobs.

It's also a place where they can feel good about their future. People will always want to eat and drink, and there'll always be careers to get their teeth into.

And tell them there's one more reason why food and drink careers are the pick of the crop – jobs in this industry can be hard work but people like to enjoy themselves. And getting to taste test the products isn't so bad either!

Get the facts and figures to [sell a career in the sector here](#). From key messages to FAQs, you'll find what you need [here](#).



# Recruitment

Effective recruitment is vital for every business – you know that already. But it's easy to overlook that recruitment is not just about finding the right people for immediate vacancies. The people you recruit now can deliver the longer term success of your business.

This means that an effective recruitment approach needs to consider how you identify and recruit people with the potential for development. You'll need to compete with other businesses in the food and drink industry and employers in other industries. You may also need to work on your attractiveness as an employer.

Factors which can impact on your ability to recruit effectively include:

- › **If your business is perceived as a purpose-driven business that cares about the impact it has on the environment**
- › **How your business is perceived by potential employees, both in your local community and by those who may be considering relocating**
- › **The job itself and potential career paths**
- › **The development opportunities you offer**
- › **The working environment and practices such as shift patterns and flexible working opportunities**
- › **Your recruitment process and practices**
- › **The salary and remuneration package you offer**



# Ten ways to make yourself an employer of choice



- 1** Consider how your business is perceived by potential employees and ensure your website and social media activities communicate your values, culture and commitment to being a great employer.
- 2** Engage with your local community and promote career opportunities and your commitment to being a great employer.
- 3** Design job roles that are attractive. You could perhaps enhance roles by incorporating variety and the opportunity to work in different parts of your business. You could also offer options to gain knowledge and skills that could lead to promotion opportunities and career development.
- 4** Provide development opportunities that will appeal to ambitious people, for example, learning opportunities that could help them become a supervisor, team leader or manager.
- 5** Ensure your working environment is the best it can be; this includes areas where job tasks are performed, the machinery and IT equipment employees use, and facilities for employees during breaks.
- 6** Consider whether the shift patterns you offer could be made more attractive, and consider whether they suit a wide range of potential employee circumstances.

- 7** See if you could build greater flexibility into working practices, for example, could some roles include opportunities for remote working for part of a working week?
- 8** Your recruitment process and practices are the first touchpoints prospective employees have with your business so consider the impression you are making. Treat everyone who takes the time to apply for a job with you with respect, by keeping them continually updated on the status of their application.
- 9** A recruitment interview is a two-way process. Your focus will be on evaluating the candidate but he or she will also be assessing whether your business is an attractive place to work. Consider if managers involved in recruitment are modelling values, attitudes and behaviours that align to the culture you want in your business.
- 10** Ensure you offer a salary appropriate to the job role. If a potential employee considers the salary to be broadly in line with similar opportunities, the wider remuneration package, working environment, culture and development opportunities then may make your job opportunity more attractive than others.





# Taking things further

There are other things you can do to make yourself an attractive employer – it's worth looking at the sections in this handbook on:

[Boost your business by attracting young people](#)

[Diversity: How to mix it up successfully](#)

[How to create a great place to work](#)

## Guide to recruitment (SDS)



Download Skills Development Scotland's helpful factsheet on how to find and attract talent.

## Build your reputation



Tips on how to engage with your local community and build your reputation as an employer.

## Recruitment factsheet (CIPD)



Read about best practice recruitment approaches in this factsheet from CIPD (free registration with CIPD is required to access the full factsheet).



# Checklist

## Are you well on the way to being an employer of choice?

★ = Poor   ★★ = Okay   ★★★ = Good   ★★★★ = Excellent

You can use this checklist to help you assess whether you have a great place to work. As well as looking at these questions yourself, it's good practice to ask your team or a cross-section of employees to give a rating too, so you can compare scores. If you let them do it anonymously, they're more likely to give honest feedback.

### Becoming an employer of choice

	★	★★	★★★	★★★★	Comments
Are you clearly communicating the purpose of your business and your commitment to the environment?					
Does your website & social media show your culture and commitment to being a great employer?					
Are you promoting yourself as a good employer to the local community?					
Have you designed job roles that are attractive?					
Do you offer employees the opportunity to work in different parts of your business and gain knowledge and skills that could help them move to other roles?					
Do you provide development opportunities that appeal to ambitious people?					
Are your shift patterns attractive to the type of people you want to attract and retain?					
Does your work environment appear an enjoyable place to work?					
Do you offer working practices such as flexible or remote working?					
Are your recruitment processes & practices creating the best first impression of your company?					
Are the managers involved in recruitment modeling the values, attitudes & behaviours you want in your business?					
Are you offering a fair salary appropriate to the job role and in line with similar roles in the food and drink industry and other local employers?					
How could you do any of these things better?					

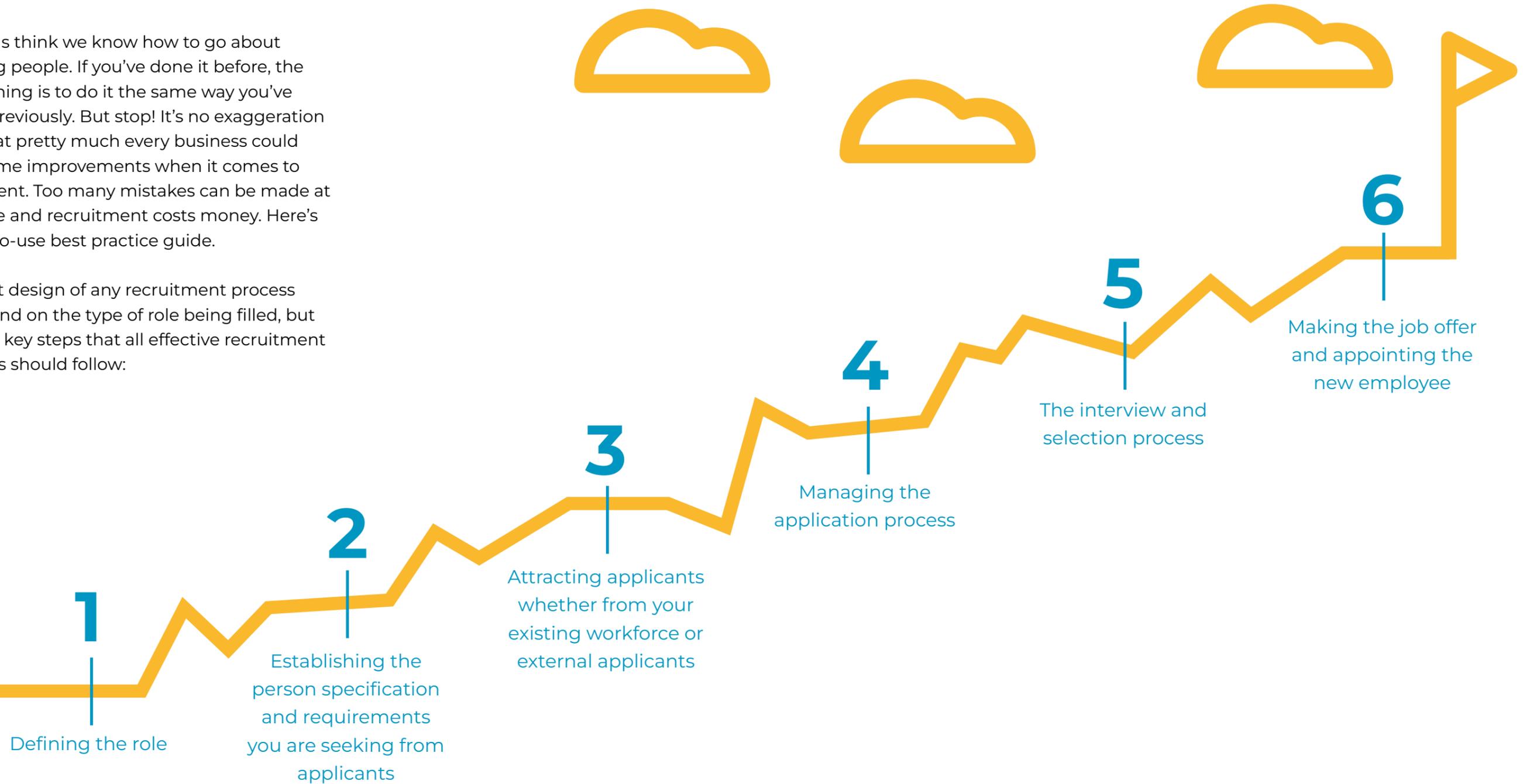


# Recruitment best practice

## A step-by-step guide

Most of us think we know how to go about recruiting people. If you've done it before, the natural thing is to do it the same way you've done it previously. But stop! It's no exaggeration to say that pretty much every business could make some improvements when it comes to recruitment. Too many mistakes can be made at this stage and recruitment costs money. Here's an easy-to-use best practice guide.

The exact design of any recruitment process will depend on the type of role being filled, but there are key steps that all effective recruitment processes should follow:





# Recruitment best practice

A step-by-step guide in detail

## 1 Defining the role

The job role should clearly define the tasks and responsibilities.

Take professional advice to get the current correct legal guidance on contracts, occupational health etc.

You may simply require to fill vacant posts but it's always an opportunity to step back and redefine a job role. For example, if you have experienced a high turnover of people in a particular job, you could add more variety to the role, re-evaluate the type of person you recruit, or adjust working patterns to be more appealing.

For creating new roles, ask other people in the business about how this might fit in best with existing positions as they'll bring a different perspective.

Sometimes it's about finding someone with a great attitude and who fits well with the culture and values in your business. You can provide knowledge and teach skills, but people bring their own personality and attitude!

## 2 Establishing the person specification

This should outline the criteria you're going to use to select a candidate, eg good team player / self-motivated / methodical approach / attention to detail.

It's important the person specification provides equal opportunity and doesn't discriminate against anyone. Being aware of unconscious bias when creating job specs, writing job advertisements and selecting candidates is important.

## 3 Attracting applicants

The approaches you use to advertise your vacant roles will depend on your business, location and the types of applicants you wish to attract.

Do you have people in your existing workforce with the potential to develop to do the job? It could be a nice career development opportunity.

To attract external candidates, the best ambassadors for your business are your own workforce so ask them to spread the word locally, on LinkedIn and social media.

When advertising roles, you are selling the business to potential recruits. Job advertisements are different to role profiles: if you don't sell the opportunity, you're unlikely to attract the right people.

Remember to include any potential career development opportunities and emphasise that working in food and drink in Scotland is being part of something great. There's more advice on this at [Promoting food and drink as a career of choice](#).



# Recruitment best practice

A step-by-step guide in detail

## 4 The application process

CVs and/or application forms? The benefit of an application form is that you can directly compare applicants more easily on how their knowledge and experience fit with the requirements of the job. It also lets you gauge their written communication ability.

If you're filling a few similar vacancies, you could bring a group of candidates together and use an 'assessment centre' approach. This means designing a series of interviews and activities so those involved in the recruitment process can assess and compare candidates.

For some roles, you may wish to use psychometric testing. This can give you insights into a candidate's preferred ways of working and how they fit the role and your team.

Why not use a combination of these to create a shortlist of candidates?

## 5 The interview and the selection process

It's good to involve a group of people/managers in the recruitment interview so that strengths or disadvantages of candidates are not missed.

Agree key interview questions and prepare a document on which all interviewers can make notes and score candidates' responses. That way candidates are asked the same questions; the interview panel can discuss candidate responses afterwards and the documents can be used to help feedback to unsuccessful candidates.

Make sure you have defined criteria (competencies & positive & negative indicators) in advance, against which to assess each candidate.

It's essential that questions asked at interview are fair to all candidates and consider equality of opportunity for all.

This is also your opportunity to promote your business and opportunities you can provide e.g. training, development and career progression.

## 6 Making the job offer and appointing the new employee

Get the relationship off to a welcoming start, give them a call to tell them the good news! It's good practice to make offers of employment in writing, however, note that a verbal offer of employment made in an interview is as legally binding as a letter to the candidate.

Employers have a responsibility to check that applicants have the right to work in the UK, before making a job offer.

Let candidates know if you're following up on their references. Notify unsuccessful candidates promptly in writing and offer to provide feedback. If you've used psychometric testing, any feedback on the results should be delivered by someone qualified to interpret and provide feedback.



# Want to know more?

There's great information available if you want to know more about best practice in recruitment. We particularly like:

## Recruitment checklist



Strengthen your approach to recruitment with this more detailed guide.

## Recruitment template



Download job description and person specification templates and job applications and two examples (ACAS).

## Interview checklist



A useful checklist for getting the best from interviews.

## Selection methods and factsheets (CIPD)



Best practice selection methods from the CIPD.



# Checklist

## Should you improve your recruitment processes?

★ = Poor   ★★ = Okay   ★★★ = Good   ★★★★ = Excellent

You can use this checklist to help you assess whether you have robust recruitment practices. As well as looking at these questions yourself, it's good practice to ask your team or a cross-section of employees to give a rating too, so you can compare scores. If you let them do it anonymously, they're more likely to give honest feedback.

Recruitment processes	★	★★	★★★	★★★★	Comments
Before recruiting, do you review requirements and define the tasks and responsibilities of the role?					
Do you check the person spec for the role, to ensure it provides equal opportunity?					
When you have vacancies, do you offer opportunities to your existing workforce?					
Are your recruitment ads reaching the people you want to attract?					
Do you adapt your recruitment processes, so you're using the best approach for each role?					
Do you use a structured set of interviews so you can assess all candidates fairly?					
Do you have a diverse mix of perspectives on your interview panels?					
Do you check the right to work in the UK and take up references?					
Do you provide written job offers?					
Do you inform unsuccessful candidates in writing promptly and offer feedback?					
How could you do any of these things better?					



# Case study

## Mossgiel Farm

mossgiefarm.co.uk

When it came to taking a new approach to recruitment, farmer Bryce Cunningham looked south – specifically, all the way south to the Antarctic.

Bryce farms at Mossgiel, an organic dairy farm in Ayrshire that processes all its own milk as well as milk from four other organic farms. They also have two coffee shops and employ 43 people.

A year ago, they found they were struggling to get applications. Then Bryce was listening to a podcast which made him stop and think about how to do things differently.

It told the story of Ernest Shackleton, who led three British expeditions to the Antarctic, and included the apocryphal tale of how Shackleton recruited his crew for the Endurance voyage.

The story goes the advertisement in the Times highlighted the realities: “small wages, bitter cold, long months of complete darkness, constant danger, safe return doubtful” but also “honour and recognition in case of success”.

This inspired Bryce to rethink his entire approach to recruiting into what can be seen as an unforgiving work environment.

He approached his existing team and asked them to write down all the bad points of their jobs.

They mentioned things like early starts, cold and dark milking sheds but also talked about the satisfaction of working with the animals, the fresh air and sunlight and being part of such a good team.



Shackleton was supposedly flooded with 5,000 responses to his advert, with men clamouring to take their chances on the icy southern continent.

Bryce wasn't counting in the thousands but he got a healthy 35-40 applications which was more than enough to start adding to the team.

“By highlighting the bad points, I think we attracted the right people,” he said.



tablet explaining which supporters are receiving milk that day.

**The bad bits?**  
 Sometimes you'll be held up if milk isn't quite ready, other times the load may have changed from when the van was loaded and you'll need to load the rest yourself.  
 It does happen that the route may be slightly in the wrong order if new supporters have joined or a wee mistake has been made; now and again a supporter may have forgotten to tell us they're closed for the day too, so you've driven for a long time to turn up to an empty shop.  
 All of that can be mega frustrating, but.....

**We've got some fab bits too -**  
 You'll join our awesome team, full of peeps dedicated to our vision of changing dairy. Our supporters are the best

# Are you meeting your legal obligations on recruitment?



It's important to be aware of your legal responsibilities as an employer and to keep up to date with changing regulations. Here's a quick checklist:

- › Ensuring you are paying the [National Minimum Wage](#) and Living Wage – this is the minimum wage an employer can pay and is set by government and reviewed and updated regularly. Any employer found to be paying lower than the National Minimum Wage can be prosecuted by HMRC and will also be named and shamed.
- › Providing a written statement of terms and conditions of employment - this is a written statement covering key information, such as names of employer and employee, date employment started, job location, working hours, holiday entitlement, job title and description and pay details. Employers must issue a written statement of terms and conditions of employment within two months of an employee starting work.
- › Providing wage slips showing appropriate pay deductions such as tax, national insurance and pension contributions. You must pay tax and national insurance contributions to HMRC and any employer pension contributions to your agreed pension provider.
- › Ensuring you have appropriate level of employment related insurances in place. It is a legal obligation for employers to have Employers Liability and Public Liability Insurance.
- › Ensuring your HR records comply with GDPR regulations which require businesses to inform employees of the purpose and use of their personal data, and give a clear explanation of how it will be treated. Employees must consent freely to the use and processing of their data.



A word of warning, though. This is certainly not an exclusive list, and employment law is constantly changing so check the links for updates. Employers need to meet legal obligations so you should consult a suitably qualified and experienced employment law / accountancy professional who can provide expert advice tailored to the specific needs of your business.



# Want to know more?

Here's where to go for more information on your legal obligations:

## Employment responsibilities



This ACAS website has user-friendly information about your responsibilities as an employer.

## Written terms of employment



Download an example written terms of employment.

## Read GDPR factsheet (CIPD)



Information relating to GDPR and HR practices (free registration with CIPD is required to access the full factsheet).

## National Minimum Wage and National Living Wage



Find out the minimum pay per hour.

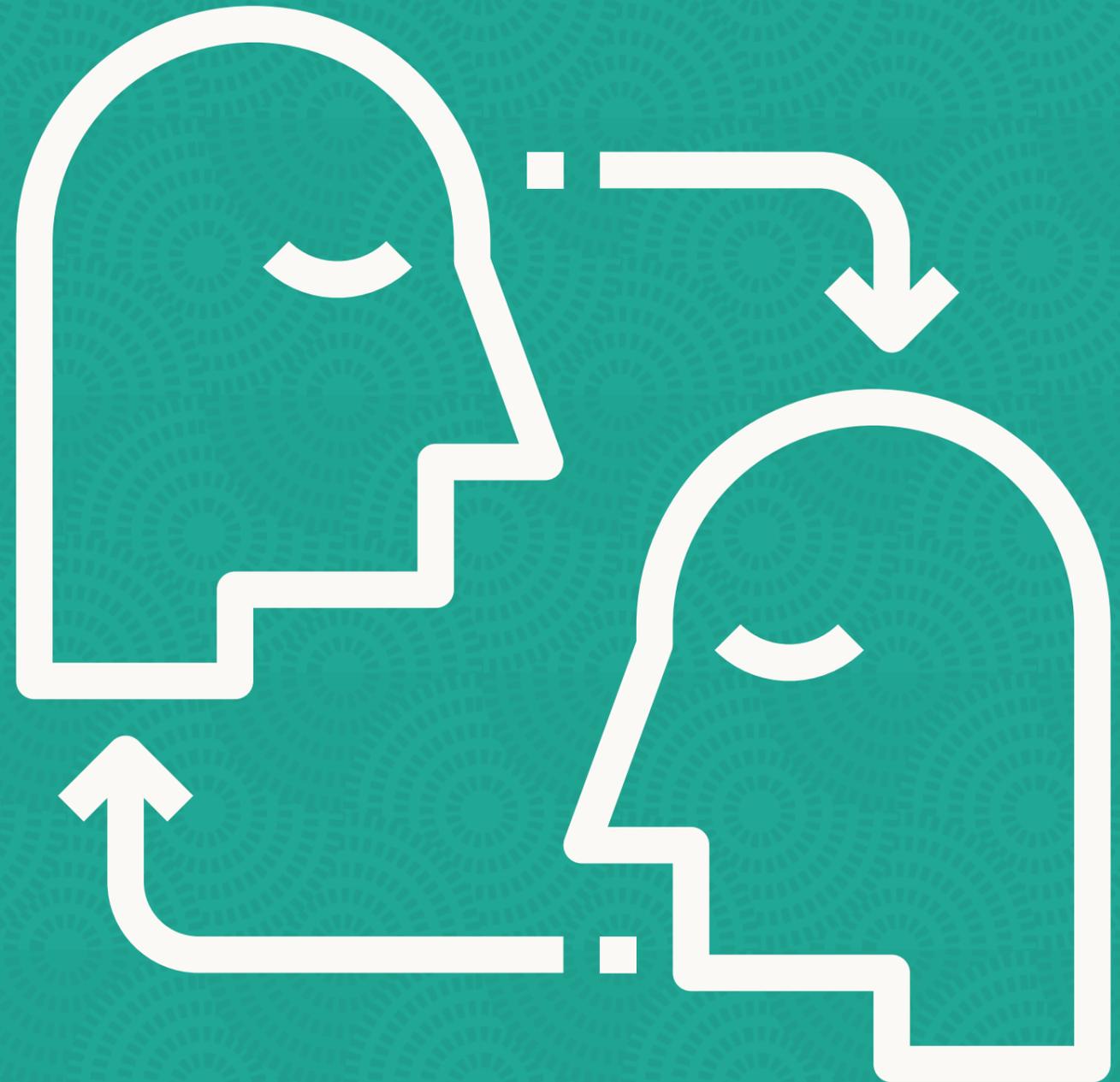
## The real Living Wage



In a tight labour market, add an extra reason to join your workforce by offering the real Living Wage, an independently calculated rate based on the cost of living paid voluntarily by employers.

# Induction

If you've been in your job a long time, or run your own business, you may not remember just how you felt on your first day or week in your job. But induction – basically what happens when people start – is a crucial part of recruitment and staff retention.



# Before people start



First impressions really count and an effective induction will make a new employee feel welcome, boost their morale, build commitment to the business, and help them do their job effectively. It's as important for temporary staff as for permanent roles and particularly important for young people who may be starting their first job.

As a result, you want everyone involved in the induction process to know what they need to do, and the best way to do this is usually through a structured induction process. This can include key information and practices that are appropriate for every role in your business, and then be tailored for the specific team and role.

A good induction process starts before an employee's first day at work.

Plan what information is appropriate to send to new employees before they arrive for their first day at work. They'll need to know the basics such as working hours, information

**“A good induction process starts before an employee's first day at work”**

about what to wear or avoid, parking or travel, and the like, but you could send them other information too.

For example, you could prepare and send an information pack with an overview of your company, your ambitions, the culture you strive to create and the development opportunities you seek to offer.

Remember the purpose is to create a great impression with the new recruit so they are enthused and motivated to join your business.

Knowing what to expect in the first few days and weeks can reduce stress.





# What to include in your induction process

Your induction process once they start will vary from role to role, but we've given you some ideas to include.

Don't, whatever you do, try to cover them all in the first morning – see the advice below about [how to deliver your induction programme](#).

Some of these activities may seem demanding at first but will take less time than recruiting a replacement if they leave!

## 1 The practicalities

- › Working hours and break times
- › How the phones, photocopier and other kit work (if appropriate for the role)
- › Your IT, internet and social media policy
- › Safe use of equipment and personal protective equipment
- › Information about pay, tax & national insurance, workplace schemes, expenses & expense claims, holidays, sickness & absence procedure, probation period
- › Your policies on health and safety, accident reporting, protective clothing, specific hazards, smoking, security procedures, confidentiality and data protection
- › Your equality & diversity policy, performance management system, disciplinary procedure and grievance procedure

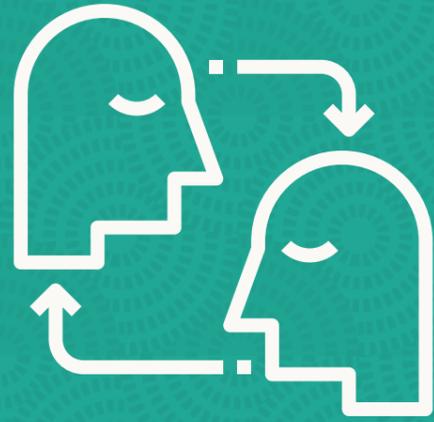
## 2 How they do their jobs

- › Introduce them to the tasks they're required to do, and support them to learn. Where practical, give them a written document describing activities they need to be competent to perform. Include competency measures, such as what a good job looks like, so they understand the standards required.
- › Review regularly how they're progressing with learning job tasks, e.g. after the first day, first few days, first week. They and their line manager could create a development plan which can be reviewed regularly to assess achievement and development needs.
- › Arrange training, coaching, shadowing or mentoring, if appropriate.

## 3 Making them feel good

- › Tell them about your company, ambitions, successes, and community engagement activities (if you haven't done that already - i.e. why we are important).
- › Explain the purpose of their role, how it fits in the team and how it contributes to the success of your business (i.e. why you are important).
- › Arrange a schedule of short meetings with other team members and key people, asking people to explain about their role and welcome the new employee.
- › Tell them (briefly) why a career in food and drink is a good one (see [Promoting food and drink as a great career](#)).
- › Introduce them to people who could help them settle in – anyone from a buddy to a returners' or lunchtime running group.

# How you deliver your induction matters too



There's a huge amount of information in the list above, and it's easy to overload new employees. Spread induction over a period of time - especially with young people and returners - so that they can process the information and meet key people and managers over time.

Who manages the process counts too! It is important that someone manages the process, often this will be the line manager but it may be a role that HR undertake. It's important that the new recruit knows who is managing the process and who he or she can turn to if things aren't going to plan.

It's good practice to introduce the employee to colleagues in their immediate team on their first day at work, and consider allocating a work buddy perhaps for their first few weeks, or longer. This is particularly effective for young people in their first job.

You may need to provide guidance and training for the 'buddy' on how to go about this, e.g. being proactive and having a relaxed chat regularly with them to find out how they're feeling and helping them with any concerns.





# Want to know more?

We hope we've got you eager to get going on structuring your induction processes or improving them. There's some other useful materials below:

## From job offer to induction



Information to guide you through the process from job offer to induction.

## Induction factsheet (CIPD)



A comprehensive guide to induction (free registration with CIPD is required to access the full factsheet).

## Outline of a staff induction checklist



Downloadable template for an induction process that you can adapt to fit your requirements.



# Checklist

## Could you improve your induction process?

★ = Poor   ★★ = Okay   ★★★ = Good   ★★★★ = Excellent

You can use this checklist to help you assess whether you have a robust induction process. As well as looking at these questions yourself, it's good practice to ask your team or a cross-section of employees to give a rating too, so you can compare scores. If you let them do it anonymously, they're more likely to give honest feedback.

Induction	★	★★	★★★	★★★★	Comments
Are you clear about who is responsible for managing the induction of each new recruit?					
Are you sending the information people need before they start?					
Does your induction cover everything people need to know about the business and their role?					
Are you giving them their induction information at the right pace?					
Are you enthusing them about working in your business and in food & drink?					
Do you provide work buddies, especially for young people?					
Is it clear to new recruits who they can turn to for support, or if things aren't going to plan?					
Which aspects of your induction process could be improved and how?					



# Case study

## Joseph Robertson

josephrobertson.co.uk

Joseph Robertson is a family-run business founded in 1878 and is now the largest employer within the food sector in the city of Aberdeen, employing over 240 people and supporting many local businesses.

**Every applicant is provided with a Welcome Guide that gives a brief history of the company, the various departments in the organisation, what roles are available to them and employee testimonials**

At Joseph Roberson we understand the value in having a strong recruitment structure in place for applicants. A recent review of our induction process found that applicants knew little about the business and what roles were available to them. This resulted in levels of high turnover as applicants felt there was a lack of transparency. To give applicants a better visualisation of what it is like to work at Joseph Robertson and communicate the business values and culture we created a 'Welcome Guide'.

Every applicant is provided with a Welcome Guide that gives a brief history of the company, the various departments in the organisation, what roles are available to them and employee testimonials. The inclusion of employee testimonials was seen as the most important segment as it shows real cases of career progression within Joseph Robertson.

One employee said: "I was part of the emerging managers training course that has shown me the ins and outs of a manager's role and how to make the best use of resources provided. This has also helped me in relation with my colleagues and employees that are part of my team. It has meant that I have grown from General Operative to Retail Supervisor to my current role as Shift Manager and who knows where I am going to stop."

During this process we redesigned our application form, by reducing its length and asking the questions that really matter. This has drastically improved the application process for the majority of our applicants whose native language is not English.



All employees are provided with a full induction programme which is then documented to them in an induction pack. Basic training in health & safety, food allergens, whistleblowing and factory rules are provided as part of the induction. Once the employee starts working within the factory their training is then progressed.

We are continually identifying training gaps across the entire organisation, with the help of Skills Development Scotland who have supported us greatly in identifying our development needs. By giving employees the required skills this helped to achieve the business aims as well as grow and develop each individual. We currently have staff studying for Level 2 & 3 SVQs, Masters in Human

Resource Management, ACCA qualification, CIMA qualification, Engineering and Graduate Apprenticeships and MCIPS. We have been able to expand the training we can provide to staff through working with North East Scotland College and Scottish Manufacturing Advisory Service's 'Lean Academy'.

In order to retain employees we believe that they must feel valued. Our quarterly employee voice committee provides an opportunity for employees to collaborate on new ideas, raise concerns and discuss ongoing projects. Managers regularly carry out appraisal meetings with their team members to identify training needs on a one-to-one basis. Our policy guarantees that everyone in the business has a tailored training programme.

**Retention**



# How to get it right on retention



Once you have good people and people with potential, you want to keep and develop them. Having staff who like their jobs and do them well is great for productivity, and developing your people will help look after the future of your business too.

In contrast, recruitment can eat up time and resources; and having high staff turnover can make it harder to attract new people. So, it's worth paying attention to the different factors that can affect whether people stay in a job or leave it – including pay, working hours and environment, career paths, culture, and having line managers who can engage with their teams effectively.

## We need to talk about 'culture'

The really hard one here is culture, because it's not something you can get 'off the shelf'. But it's important. Organisations with a positive culture who value their workforce and provide a great place to work have much better retention rates - including where jobs are low skilled and tasks repetitive.

Most employees experience workplace culture through the attitude and behaviours of their line manager, highlighting why you must equip them to be excellent people managers.



# Twelve steps for improving employee retention



**1** Improve your recruitment and selection processes so you're more likely to hire people who are a good fit in your team. Many employees leave (or are dismissed) within their first year of employment, and better recruitment decisions and induction can help to avoid this.

**2** Be clear about the behaviours and values you want in your business, and ensure your managers model them. Model them yourself too - give recognition and praise where you can, and constructive feedback when required.

**3** Develop your managers so they motivate and develop your people.

**4** Give employees a voice - people are more likely to show commitment to the business if their views are listened to and valued.

**5** Offer a breadth of experience within a role, with exposure to different parts of the business, e.g. through cross-team collaboration or secondments.

**6** Provide clear development pathways and career options. Ambitious, capable people will look for career development opportunities beyond just the next role. Young people, in particular, will want to know what the possibilities are.

**7** Provide development opportunities and promote. This gives a strong message to your workforce that you're willing to invest in them if they show commitment.

**8** Investing in the health and wellbeing of your people has been shown to have a positive impact on productivity as well as increasing retention and reducing sickness absence.

**9** Offer flexible working arrangements and opportunities for remote working where possible.

**10** Demonstrate a commitment to equal opportunity and social responsibility.

**11** Consider becoming a [Fair Work employer](#). Give workers an effective voice, respect, security, fulfilment and opportunities for development and progression.

**12** If retaining young people is important to your business, make sure you create a youth-friendly culture. Consider signing up to the [Young Person's Guarantee](#), an initiative to connect every 16 to 24 year old in Scotland to an opportunity. As an employer, you can build a workforce with the right skills and experience and put young people at the heart of what you do.



# Want to know more?

You may not have the resources for all our 12 steps on improving employee retention, but at least try to implement some of them. The links below will be helpful:

## Employee turnover and retention factsheet (CIPD)



Insights into best practice for employee retention (free registration with CIPD is required to access the full factsheet).

## Employee engagement factsheet (CIPD)



Valuable insights into employee engagement and motivation, and practical tips on how to improve this in your business.

## Upskilling and reskilling



Upskilling is all about building on your employees' existing skills. It can help you reduce costs while improving productivity.

## Flexible and hybrid working (CIPD)



Thinking about the implications, challenges and benefits.

## Flexible working: Q&As



Commonly asked questions on the legal issues relating to flexible working requests.

## Flexibility Works



A social business working closely with the Scottish Government to support employers to develop more flexible workplaces.



# Useful resources

These are places to check for schemes, funding and grants for training and people development that will help with employee retention.

## Find Business Support



A searchable guide to public sector support for businesses in Scotland, including grants, funding, training, innovation, international trade and net zero.

Also check with your local authorities for specific employer support schemes.

## Scottish Enterprise



Helping businesses to innovate and scale to transform Scotland's economy.

## South of Scotland Enterprise



Economic and community development agency for Dumfries & Galloway and the Scottish Borders.

## Flexible Workforce Development Fund



Open to all employers, you can use this fund to access flexible workforce development training opportunities.

## Highlands and Islands Enterprise



Economic and community development agency for the north and west of Scotland.



# Checklist

## Are you doing enough to retain good people?

★ = Poor   ★★ = Okay   ★★★ = Good   ★★★★ = Excellent

You can use this checklist to help you assess whether you have robust retention processes. As well as looking at these questions yourself, it's good practice to ask your team or a cross-section of employees to give a rating too, so you can compare scores. If you let them do it anonymously, they're more likely to give honest feedback.

Retention	★	★★	★★★	★★★★	Comments
How do you think your business performs in terms of retaining staff?					
Do you think your recruitment processes are bringing the right people to the business?					
Do you and your line managers model behaviours and values you want in your business?					
Do managers receive training so they can motivate and develop people?					
Can employees raise challenges or make suggestions?					
Do you provide clear development pathways and career options, including promotions?					
Do you and your managers show a commitment to equal opportunity and inclusion?					
Do you invest in the health & wellbeing of your people?					
Do you offer employees the opportunity to work in different parts of your business and gain knowledge and skills that could help them move to other roles?					
Do you offer flexible working arrangements and opportunities for remote working where possible?					
Do you have a culture where young people are involved in decision-making and ideas?					
Could you do any of these aspects better, and how?					

# What is Fair Work?



Fair Work is work that provides workers with an effective voice, respect, security, fulfilment and opportunities for development and progression within the workplace.

The Scottish Government's vision is for Scotland to be a leading Fair Work nation by 2025 and is committed to promoting fair work.

There are five dimensions:

**1 Effective Voice:** workers have the appropriate channels to allow them to be heard and to participate in decision-making processes that affect their work.

**2 Opportunity:** access to training and development opportunities to enhance skills and allow career progression.

**3 Security:** security of employment, work and income to enable workers to live a successful life.

**4 Fulfilment:** workers are supported in achieving their full potential and are recognised for their contributions in the workplace.

**5 Respect:** being treated with dignity and respect with diversity and differences being valued.

The adoption of Fair Work practices does not have to be costly to employers.

Many employers in Scotland already implement work practices providing safe and secure working environments and promoting positive workplace cultures where staff are engaged and have their voices heard.

Good businesses recognise that a well-paid respected and diverse workforce is more productive.



# The benefits of Fair Work to employer and worker



Benefits to the company include:

- › **Improved worker morale and job satisfaction:** workers who are treated fairly are more likely to be motivated, engaged, and committed to their jobs. This can lead to higher job satisfaction, which, in turn can improve staff retention, reduce staff turnover costs, and increase productivity.
- › **Company reputation:** companies that adopt fair work practices are seen as more responsible and trustworthy, which can enhance their reputation as a good employer.
- › **Increased competitiveness:** companies can attract and retain the best talent, which can give them a competitive edge in the market.
- › **Improved productivity:** fair work practices can lead to a more positive and supportive work environment, which can increase productivity and efficiency.

- › **Better employee health and well-being:** companies that prioritise fair work practices are more likely to promote workers' health and well-being, which can reduce absenteeism and improve overall performance.

Mutual benefits to both workers and companies include:

- › **Fair pay:** paying a fair wage.
- › **Safer working conditions:** helps make sure workers have safe and healthy working conditions which can reduce the risk of workplace accidents and injuries.
- › **Improved work-life balance:** promoting work-life balance by offering flexible work patterns to help workers balance work and personal responsibilities can attract talent and reduce staff turnover.

- › **Greater job security:** job security can reduce the stress and uncertainty associated with job insecurity.
- › **Increased job satisfaction:** by providing workers with opportunities for professional development, recognition for their contributions, and a positive work environment, it can lead to higher job satisfaction
- › **Access to training and development:** fair work practices can provide workers with access to training and development opportunities, which can help them build new skills and advance their careers.



# Want to know more?

Fair Work practices can bring mutual benefit to workers and companies. Find out more here:

## Fair Work employer support tool



This has been developed to support employers across Scotland to embed Fair Work practices within their organisations.

## Fair Work workshops



These give you the time and space to learn more about Fair Work, network with other businesses to hear which Fair Work practices work for them, and how being a Fair Work employer can be beneficial to your business and your workers.

## Fair Work case studies (FDF)



A guide to Fair Work from the Food & Drink Federation Scotland, with examples from individual businesses

## Leadership and management development



Make sure your managers have the right skills to have a positive impact on your workers.



# Case study

**R&W Scott**

randwscott.com

We've all read the headlines about providing a living wage, but what about providing employees with "living hours"?

Lanarkshire-based ingredients supplier R&W Scott is the first UK food manufacturer to be named as both a Living Wage and Living Hours accredited employer.

With millions of low paid workers struggling to get the hours they need to make ends meet, the Living Wage Foundation developed a new "Living Hours" standard. It aims to ensure that people have the predictable working patterns and income to better plan their lives.

R&W Scott has committed to provide their workers with the security and stability of hours they need to meet their everyday needs. This means that workers are entitled to:

- › **at least four weeks' notice of shifts**
- › **a contract that reflects accurate hours worked**
- › **a guaranteed minimum of 16 hours of work per week**

**“It seems only fair that the business should cover the risk of minimum hours”**

The business, which started out as a strawberry harvesting business before moving into jam manufacturing in 1880, employs 96 staff.

It also makes chocolate flavoured coatings, sweet and savoury spreads and speciality soft icings for customers in sectors including retail food service and wholesale worldwide.

Head of People Kirsty Townsend said: "It seems only fair that the business should cover the risk of minimum hours, not our employees.

"We're lucky to have a wide product range, and we're small and agile enough to accommodate both short and longer runs so there are lots of levers we can pull to make shift patterns fit.

"And the result is that the team know when they're working, they are confident about their income, which makes for a happier and more motivated workforce."



# Improve your people management



One of the most common reasons why people leave a business is a poor relationship with their manager. [We've talked in Twelve steps for improving employee retention](#) about managers modelling your values and about learning how to motivate and develop people, but how can you make this happen in practice?

We're not going to go into details on the thousands of different theories about what makes a good manager or leader, but consider the following practices you could implement or improve in your business to improve people management:

- › **Identify the culture and values you aspire to have in your business and the behaviours that support this - for example, team-working, innovation, accountability – that's really up to you. But having chosen these, make sure that managers understand the behaviours you need them to model**
- › **Ask your managers to celebrate success and recognise team and individual achievement**
- › **Communicate potential career paths, and ensure managers are equipped to coach and develop people**
- › **Incorporate performance management practices into your business and include assessment against behavioural competencies so that managers and people are clear about the behaviours expected of them**
- › **Make sure your managers know how to appraise employee performance and give feedback effectively**
- › **Encourage managers to identify rising stars and create development opportunities to engage them**





# Want to know more?

There's so much material available on leadership and management that it's hard to know where to start. We'd recommend the following:

## Managing People for Growth workshops

Find out how you and your managers can attend workshops designed to help you improve people management practices.

## Performance management (CIPD)

A useful factsheet about managing the performance of people (free registration with CIPD is required to access the full factsheet).

## Competency frameworks (CIPD)

The benefits of competency frameworks (free registration with CIPD is required to access the full factsheet).

## Understanding performance appraisals (CIPD)

Find out key information for conducting performance appraisals.

## Managing performance for small firms (ACAS)

Advice on managing the performance of people for small companies.

## Example appraisal form

A selection of example appraisal forms.



# Checklist

## How do you score on managing your people?

★ = Poor   ★★ = Okay   ★★★ = Good   ★★★★ = Excellent

You can use this checklist to help you assess whether you have strong people management practices. As well as looking at these questions yourself, it's good practice to ask your team or a cross-section of employees to give a rating too, so you can compare scores. If you let them do it anonymously, they're more likely to give honest feedback.

Managing people	★	★★	★★★	★★★★	Comments
Do you and your managers know the culture, values and behaviours you want in your business?					
Are you and your managers actually modelling these values and behaviours day-to-day?					
Do you develop your managers so they're equipped to manage, coach and motivate?					
Do you and your managers take time to recognise individual & team achievement day-to-day, and give constructive feedback?					
Are your managers able to appraise employees' performance and give effective feedback?					
Do your managers know how to manage diverse teams effectively?					
Do your managers know your career development opportunities, so they can talk about them to staff?					
Do you have a process to get managers to identify and develop employees with potential?					
Could you do any of these aspects better, and how?					



# Case study

## Castleton Farm

castletonfarm.co.uk.

Anyone involved in creating a positive workforce culture knows it's harder than it sounds, but Castleton Farm has taken it in its stride.

Owner Anna Mitchell knows that organisations with a positive culture who value their workforce and provide a great place to work have much better retention rates. She also feels it's important to be clear to both new recruits and the existing team about the behaviours and values she wants in the business.

**“We know that by working together, and looking after each other, we will achieve more”**

And so the Castleton Code was born. It's a simple set of seven “rules” to guide the team at work, in how they interact with each other and think around everyday problems.

“The Castleton Code starts with what seems really obvious – turn up for your shift on time and ready to work – but sometimes it's worth putting these things down into words,” said Anna.

“Some of our team are quite young and a wee reminder to smile and say ‘good morning’ as they arrive and to display a positive attitude to challenges can be helpful.”

The code also includes some confidence-boosting advice (“you are more capable than you know”) as well the encouragement to try things first, and remember to ask how you can help other team members.

When it came to unveiling the Castleton Code, Anna wanted to use the code as part of the induction process, so she involved the team in how to put it across in a meaningful way.

“Four team members acted out behaviours that showed the code in action, as well as – fairly hilariously – how not to behave,” said Anna.

“Creating a positive workplace culture is so important to us here, and the benefits we reap in an engaged and enthusiastic workforce are immense.”

Castleton Farm is a family-run business located in south Aberdeenshire. As well as growing and supplying fruit, the business also runs a café and farm shop.



# Planning for the medium and long term



Often businesses focus on their immediate people and skills requirements, but it's important to consider the medium and longer term requirements too. This is just as critical to a small, growing business as to a larger business.

Basically, it involves:

- › **Identifying future workforce needs**
- › **Considering the people and skills you currently have in your business**
- › **Assessing the gap**
- › **Developing a plan to address it**

All of this should be undertaken in the context of your strategic business plan, and is fundamentally about making sure you have the roles, people and skills you need at the right time to enable you to deliver your business ambitions.

The climate emergency, technology, automation and global supply chain opportunities mean the business world is changing fast.

It's becoming vital to engage your entire workforce in considering how you can move towards net zero, innovation and the adoption of new processes and technology.

The National Manufacturing Institute Scotland has a [Manufacturing Skills Academy](#) that helps businesses take advantage of new opportunities that increase productivity and boost competitiveness.





# Want to know more?

Where do you start if you want to learn more about workforce planning?

Take a look at these useful links below:

## Workforce Planning Factsheet (CIPD)



Valuable factsheet to help you consider the importance and process for workforce planning.

## Post-EU info hub (CIPD)



Advice and guidance as post-EU arrangements continue to roll out.

# Development

Not everyone wants to be a team leader or manager, but everyone can develop further. They need ongoing development to help them do their current role more effectively and to prepare them to take on new tasks or move into their next role.

So, whatever the skillset, expertise or role, it's worth encouraging team members to learn and develop their skills. Your focus on development should start during the induction process with managers emphasising your commitment to ongoing development. And to develop your workers, you could think about offering [apprenticeships](#).



# Developing your people: why and how



I have found this to be one of the most valuable things I can be doing in my role as leader of a growing food business. There are few other activities that create such sustained value growth. I now know that creating opportunities for people to learn about how to do their work better, sometimes differently, drives engagement. I notice staff turnover levels fall, as do absences and we see productivity rise.

**Creating the time and space to maximise the value of the learning requires commitment from the leadership team; however, the return on investment is real and measurable.**

We have seen this approach build both competitive advantage and business returns. In addition, staff surveys confirm people place real value on this approach.

**Dennis Overton,**  
Chairman of Aquascot Trust Ltd

## Using personal development plans to improve retention

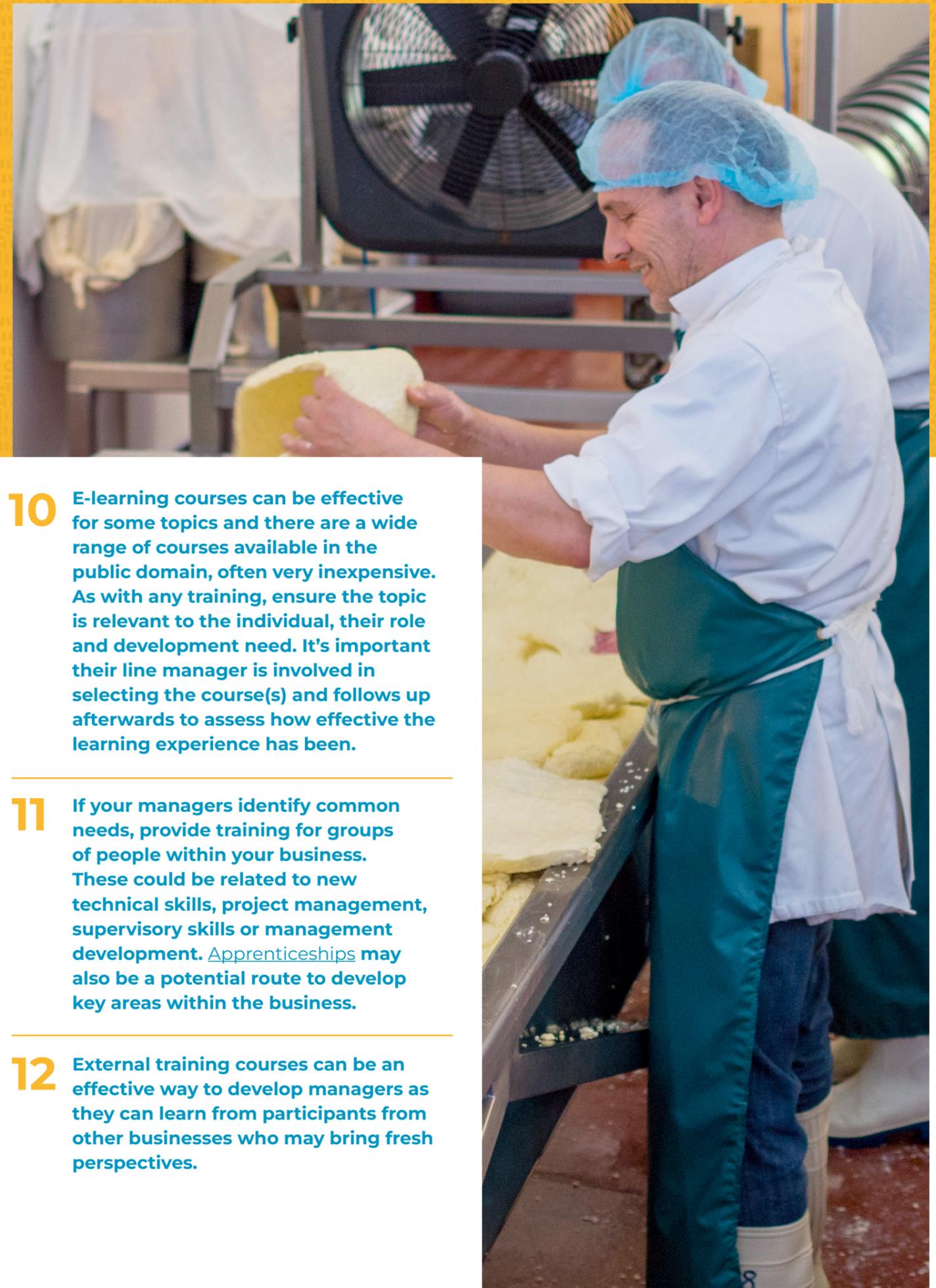
Having opportunities to develop is highly motivational. When people can map out development steps against career paths, it can improve retention. It sends a strong message about your commitment to staff, and increases the likelihood they'll develop the skills your business needs for the future.

Personal development plans shouldn't be foisted on people from above, though. Line managers should encourage people to suggest ideas for their own development, and they should work together on a plan (there's an example in the following pages). This is often done as part of the appraisal process.

And remember that development is not all about technical skills. Skills such as team working, effective communication and self confidence will enable people to perform better and contribute to your business success.



# Developing people doesn't have to be expensive



**1** Managers should look for ways to develop team members on a daily basis by giving them effective feedback, either on a job done well or showing what could be improved.

**2** Managers can delegate tasks and projects that will stretch individuals – always with support to ensure they can achieve the results required.

**3** Offer mentoring to talented individuals, perhaps by a more experienced person within your business or by an [external mentor](#).

**4** Ask an individual to mentor another team member - this will encourage development of both the mentor and mentee.

**5** Ask people to undertake specific research tasks for a team project - perhaps you want to look at ways to improve the productivity of a team? Involving people in the project team will develop their confidence, relationship-building skills, analytical skills, and wider understanding of how results are achieved through team working.

**6** Managers can ask people to deputise for them at internal briefings and team meetings.

**7** Give people additional responsibilities which require them to acquire new skills or knowledge. Perhaps becoming a [STEM Ambassador](#) or working with [Developing the Young Workforce in schools](#)?

**8** Offer the opportunity of a short-term job swap – this can help people to develop new skills and give them a wider perspective on how your business works.

**9** Ask people to participate in or undertake customer and supplier visits which will increase their knowledge.

**10** E-learning courses can be effective for some topics and there are a wide range of courses available in the public domain, often very inexpensive. As with any training, ensure the topic is relevant to the individual, their role and development need. It's important their line manager is involved in selecting the course(s) and follows up afterwards to assess how effective the learning experience has been.

**11** If your managers identify common needs, provide training for groups of people within your business. These could be related to new technical skills, project management, supervisory skills or management development. [Apprenticeships](#) may also be a potential route to develop key areas within the business.

**12** External training courses can be an effective way to develop managers as they can learn from participants from other businesses who may bring fresh perspectives.



# Case study

## Reids of Caithness

reidsofcaithness.com

“We have a responsibility to ensure our staff are as well trained as possible. It helps them develop their skills and helps our bakery produce and maintain our award-winning products to the highest standard every day.” It’s a clear statement of intent from Gary Reid, owner of family bakery Reid’s of Caithness. Modern Apprenticeships help businesses

**“We can now identify their strengths and weaknesses and are more aware of the potential stars within the business”**

become more competitive and sustainable by developing the skills and knowledge of their workforce.

In the last 10 years or so, Gary has put over 35 members of his Thurso-based team through apprenticeships in production & processing, bakery skills, food & drink operations, distribution and food manufacturing excellence.

Building a better workforce is the driving force behind Reid’s commitment to apprenticeships, and he’s very clear that the workforce is better as a result.

“We are always looking to train any new and existing staff as this is part of the continuous improvement process within Reid’s bakery,” said Gary.

“Since the training started with the Scottish Bakers’ assessors, I have found that my staff have more knowledge and understanding with regards to problem solving, waste management, yield, and productivity rate.

“We can now identify their strengths and weaknesses and are more aware of the potential stars within the business,” he said.

“I want to see staff trained to an elevated level and as a result the company and our employees see the benefit,” said Gary.

“And there really is something for every part of the business.

“We have been able to promote from within thanks to the knowledge that the employees have gained throughout their apprenticeship.”



# Example of a personal development plan



A personal development plan should relate to the activities and responsibilities of the employee's role, and it's important to show how any development activities will benefit the team or business. It's useful to break development activities down into skills, knowledge and behaviours.

Below is an example of a development plan for a team leader in a warehouse, showing one example for each skill, knowledge and behaviour. In reality, when you create a personal development plan with an employee, they may have several development priorities for each of these.

After the sample plan is a template you can use yourself.

<b>Name:</b> A N Other <b>Role:</b> Warehouse Team Leader				
Skill / Knowledge / Behaviour	Current position	Desired position	Benefit to team / organisation	Development action
<b>Skill:</b> Create appropriate staffing rotas	Poor – does not understand how to create rotas	Able to create effective rotas	More efficient use of staff resources which can help reduce costs	Work with Warehouse Manager to learn how to create rotas by September
<b>Knowledge:</b> Safe operation of rider operated lift trucks	Aware of current good practice and standards	To remain aware of good practice and standards	Reduces the risk of health and safety related incidents which could be very damaging for the business	Organise a refresher course for self and relevant team members by September
<b>Behaviour:</b> Being confident and assertive in interactions with team	Quite confident and well-liked by the team. However, not always perceived to be assertive which impacts on work tasks not always being completed on time by team members	Confident and assertive, able to direct and motivate team members to work together effectively to complete tasks on time	Increases the efficiency and effectiveness of the team which results in work tasks being completed and deliveries to customers being dispatched on time	Work with Warehouse Manager to improve the way I am perceived by August  Attend self-confidence and assertiveness training course

# A personal development plan template



You can use this template to discuss development needs with your team members and create personal development plans.

<b>Name:</b>				
<b>Role:</b>				
<b>Skill / Knowledge / Behaviour</b>	<b>Current position</b>	<b>Desired position</b>	<b>Benefit to team / organisation</b>	<b>Development action</b>
<b>Skill:</b>				
<b>Knowledge:</b>				
<b>Behaviour:</b>				



# Want to know more?

Here's where to go for more information on your legal obligations:

## Developing people (ACAS)



Best practice information for developing people.

## Identifying learning and development needs (CIPD)



Informative factsheet on how to identify learning and development needs.



# Checklist

## How do you rate on developing people?

★ = Poor   ★★ = Okay   ★★★ = Good   ★★★★ = Excellent

You can use this checklist to help you assess whether you have great people development practices. As well as looking at these questions yourself, it's good practice to ask your team or a cross-section of employees to give a rating too, so you can compare scores. If you let them do it anonymously, they're more likely to give honest feedback.

Developing people	★	★★	★★★	★★★★	Comments
Are your managers equipped with knowledge and skills to coach and develop people?					
Are you communicating to people at all levels how to access development opportunities?					
Do all your employees have a personal development plan?					
Are there apprenticeship opportunities for employees?					
Do managers review and follow up on personal development plans?					
Do you offer mentoring to people – for example if they're talented or need support to improve?					
Do you offer training in how to mentor?					
Do you offer opportunities for staff to learn about other parts of the business, suppliers or customers?					
Do you offer access to e-learning opportunities for different staff?					
Are you inclusive in terms of developing people, for example offering opportunities to people with different experiences, perspectives and working patterns?					
Could you do any of these aspects better, and how?					



# Case study

## Duncan Farms

duncanfarms.co.uk

Duncan Farms is a leading egg business in Turriff, Aberdeenshire.

When they diversified into egg production in 2011, recruitment was a challenge for them. There were few people available locally with relevant stock management experience or to work in their packing centre.

**All staff are aware of opportunity for promotion, regardless of their current position**

To grow the business, they've had to rely on training and developing their own staff. They've built a strong culture of developing people from within, using a mix of external and in-house training. All staff are aware of the opportunity for promotion, regardless of their current position.

They use online training for food safety and general health and safety, and staff have attended courses from a range of organisations from the British Egg Industry Council to the British Retail Consortium to Lantra to SRUC.

But with their stock people, the external courses on offer were too broad and/or not available locally. Instead, they developed their own blended training schemes, which include shadowing and one-to-one coaching.

All of their stockperson-supervisors began at entry-level positions and now act as role models for other staff.

They're now one of Scotland's leading egg producers, and proud that their hens are typically more productive than the breed standard. They believe this illustrates the success of their approach to development and training – especially when many of their recruits have no previous experience of working with animals.



# Recruitment and Retention

All information correct as of August 2023

**SCOTLAND**  
**FOOD & DRINK**  
PARTNERSHIP