

# Good Work Plan 2020

*How to prepare for the  
latest onboarding legislation*



# What is the Good Work Plan?

Late last year the government released its Good Work Plan, which outlined a range of new legislation in response to the Taylor Review of Modern Working Practices that aim to better serve and protect workers in the United Kingdom. Among them was a worker's right to a day one written statement.

At the moment, and until the new legislation becomes law on 6 April 2020, employees who have been working for the same organisation for more than one month are entitled to a written statement of employment particulars.

This must include details such as job title or a description of work, start date, details of pay, holiday and pension entitlements, job location and collective agreements – as part of a contract or separately if not included within the contract – and must be delivered within a two-month window from the beginning of the role.

But things are about to change. “In order for the information in the written statement to be useful, and allow individuals to make informed choices, the Taylor Review highlighted that it needs to be made available much sooner than two months into employment,” Rt Hon Greg Clark MP – then Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy – states in the Good Work Plan.

“We agree, and will therefore bring forward legislation to make access to a written statement a day one right. We also want to ensure the content of a written statement is as useful as possible to both the individual and the employer so will be expanding the information required.”

Initially set to be a right only for those termed ‘employees’, or those with an official contract, it will now also cover all types of worker. “The current legislation excludes workers, meaning some individuals do not have transparent information about their employment relationship,” says Clark. “We believe all workers should have the same clarity as employees so they can fully understand what they are signing up to.” >>

*A written statement of particulars includes pay, pension and holiday entitlements*



« For the worker, this means entitlement to a more comprehensive package of information about their role on or before the day they begin a new job. For the employer, it means that from 6 April 2020 they will no longer enjoy the two-month grace period they do currently to disclose such particulars.

“Businesses have to know what worker rights exist and what the terms and conditions are that they are offering,” says Matthew Taylor, who chaired the initial review. “So there is minimal burden in giving this information to workers.”

*Businesses already know which worker rights exist and what T&Cs they’re offering*

While that is perhaps true in theory, in many cases this new legislation will mean businesses require a new method of working lest they fall foul of increasing fines for non-compliance: penalties have in fact been quadrupled to a maximum of £20,000 for those who continually fail to deliver a full written statement on or before day one of an employee starting their new role.

That is where cloud-based technology can provide a solution, but nonetheless Taylor says the majority of organisations should not view the new legislation as anything of a punishment.

“Day one written statements simply ensure that workers are aware of their rights,” he says. “This is important because the review found examples of unscrupulous employers who – while not explicitly denying rights – were very happy for workers not to know about or claim entitlements like holiday pay.”



# What the legislation says

So what does the new legislation actually say? As well as providing a contract and offer letter by the time a new employee starts work, the new written statement must include:

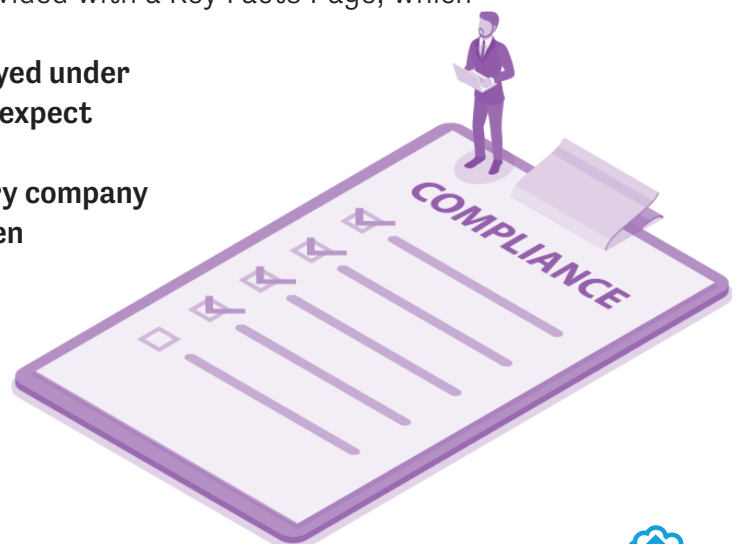
- **How long a job is expected to last, or the end date of a fixed-term contract**
- **How much notice an employer and worker are required to give to terminate the agreement**
- **Details of eligibility for sick leave and pay**
- **The duration and conditions of any probationary period**
- **All remuneration, not just pay, including contributions in cash or kind for example vouchers and lunch**
- **Which specific days and times workers are required to work.**

This is in addition to current requirements of a written statement:

- **The business's name**
- **The employee's name, job title or a description of work and start date**
- **If a previous job counts towards a period of continuous employment, the date the period started**
- **How much and how often an employee will get paid**
- **Hours of work and if employees will have to work Sundays, nights or overtime**
- **Holiday entitlement and if that includes public holidays**
- **Where an employee will be working and whether they might have to relocate**
- **If an employee works in different places, where these will be and what the employer's address is**
- **Collective agreements**
- **Pensions**
- **Who to go to with a grievance, how to complain about how a grievance is handled and how to complain about a disciplinary or dismissal decision.**

Agency workers, meanwhile, must be provided with a Key Facts Page, which would include:

- **The type of contract a worker is employed under**
- **The minimum rate of pay that they can expect**
- **How they are to be paid**
- **If they are paid through an intermediary company**
- **Any deductions or fees that will be taken**
- **An estimate or an example of what this means for their take home pay. »**



« “We want to ensure the content of a written statement is as useful as possible to the individual and the employer,” says Business Minister Kelly Tolhurst MP. “This reform will improve clarity, certainty and understanding of rights and obligations for both workers and employers. It clarifies the terms and conditions both parties are required to enter into at the start of the relationship and understanding what protections apply to stop problems emerging later.”

Matt Creagh, Policy Officer at the Trades Union Congress and an expert in employment policy and rights at work, points to a number of ways in which the Good Work Plan has benefited UK workers.

*Latest legislation should give employees a greater degree of certainty and make life easier to manage*

“I think that increasing awareness and increasing information is always positive because it gives the worker more information about what their rights are in the workplace and the expectations of them, and what they can expect from the employer,” he says. “This latest legislation does go further than the existing rights around written statements. So it must tell people what their normal working hours are, days of the week they’re required to work, whether or not the hours can be varied.

“So you’re getting a lot more information, which should give you a greater degree of certainty, which makes your life easier to manage. If you need childcare, you can fit your life around your work better because you’ve got more information about what shifts you’ll be doing and how your hours will work.”





# The consequences of non-compliance

Alongside the new requirements for a day one written statement, the Good Work Plan also legislates to increase the maximum level of penalty that Employment Tribunals can impose in instances of aggravated breach from £5,000 to £20,000.

It also legislates to create an obligation on Employment Tribunals to consider the use of sanctions where employers have lost a previous case on broadly comparable facts, building trust and the deterrence for all businesses to behave as most already do.

“This measure is relatively minor,” says Taylor, “but I believe it could have a significant nudge effect in addressing non-compliance, along with other measures such as the increase in sanctions. Good, law-abiding businesses can sometimes be undercut by bad and exploitative ones, and the new day one statement will make that less likely to happen.”

It is a sentiment with which the Business Minister agrees, reiterating once more that the measures taken in the Good Work Plan, including these increased fines, are designed to help and protect that majority of good businesses by sanctioning any ill-meaning competitors.

“Our ambitious reforms create a level playing field for business,” says Tolhurst “celebrating employers, boosting productivity and ensuring businesses can keep pace with modern ways of working. We have quadrupled the penalty that Employment Tribunals can award where employers have shown malice, spite or gross oversight. This reform acts as an important deterrent against poor employment practices and is an important measure to protect the rights of those working in our flexible economy.”

“It’s welcome that potential fines have been increased,” agrees Creagh. “I think the government has issued guidelines on when tribunals can issue those sorts of penalties, so that’s positive, but we’d like to see them used much more regularly.”

*The Good Work Plan acts as an important deterrent against poor employment practices*



# Benefits to businesses

It isn't only the fact competitors will be kept in check that ought to benefit businesses, though; what is good for the worker, in this case particularly, can be equally beneficial to those employing them.

Many of the accepted recommendations from the Good Work Plan can help improve the relationship between employee and employer, making certain processes less cumbersome and time consuming – thus less costly – and engendering greater job satisfaction and more positive working relationships from day one, that will in turn keep the best candidates in the right jobs for longer.

In a time such as this, one of low unemployment and wide availability of jobs, many people have an array of options when it comes to where they want to work. That amplifies the importance of engagement and immediate focus on retention, which the Good Work Plan's legislative changes make almost a necessity.

Still, it means the legislation must be embraced, and a culture of positive onboarding created around it, else you won't just struggle retaining employees but even attracting them in the first place. Almost half of those interviewed in research carried out by cloud-based onboarding company Webonboarding reported a negative onboarding experience, for example, with one in 10 of those having rejected roles as a result.

Simply put, companies are losing their preferred candidates, and reducing productivity and satisfaction of many of those that do stay on, leaving very few in a position to recommend the organisation to other potential recruits. Much of the time this is simply due to not having paperwork in place by the time someone begins a new role: two-thirds of those asked outlined clear communication as a key factor to improving the experience, with more than half wishing to receive information prior to their start date. >>



*With the wide availability of jobs, people have options of where they want to work*

« The latter is now obviously to be required by law from April 2020, but in essence, these statistics highlight the benefit of companies complying with the legislation as soon as possible to steal a march on their competitors and ensure their organisation isn't not shackled by unfit processes.

Easier to measure is the potential time, money and resources saved by well thought out onboarding practice. This can be time spent chasing up successful candidates to return completed or missing documents, manual transference of information to HR and Payroll systems, and the amplification of potential for delays and inaccuracies these things can provoke.

The legislation demanding a day one written statement for all workers won't iron out these creases on its own, but the smartest organisations can use it as an opportunity to review and better streamline their onboarding process to great and widespread benefit.

*Smart organisations  
can use the GWP to  
review and streamline  
onboarding processes*





# How the right software can help solve your onboarding issues

Software such as Webonboarding is designed to streamline the whole process of onboarding, including complying with the new day one written statement legislation, helping companies get new workers in quicker by managing the admin, allowing all parties to track the process – thus also helping a business spot potential drop-outs – and improving engagement between employee and employer.

*The right onboarding software helps companies get new workers settled quickly*

As well as tidying the whole process, this relief of responsibility and stress allows for a new hire's first days and weeks to be focused on the more human elements of onboarding, such as meeting colleagues and discussing workflow and company culture.

And this is one of the most important benefits of a full day one written statement. For the new starter it means that sense of belonging and security, giving them confidence to begin work and actually enjoy their time spent in the office. The business, meanwhile, gets an employee who is ready to hit the ground running much sooner than if their early office hours were spent sorting paperwork and aligning themselves with the company.

With Webonboarding, the entirety of that process is managed via an online portal and is also accessible to new hires via mobile phone. The software uses electronic signatures to allow contracts of employment to be handled digitally. >>



« The move from a paperless process allows onboarding times to be reduced from weeks to days, with no documentation having to be emailed or posted out.

Candidates can also flag up and discuss any part of the information they don't agree with or understand, while communications can be tailored to give candidates control of certain elements such as choosing aspects of their training and information ready for day one in a role.

The use of templates and bulk process management relieves much of the workload on an employer – if you're offering a number of similar roles over time, there is now no need to create bespoke documents from scratch each time – with digital signatures and cloud-based software it also helps businesses work towards compliance with GDPR rulings.

A manual, paper-based process of onboarding can lead to things getting lost in the post, as can the emailing of key documents to be printed and returned by the new starter – not to mention the hassle of finding a printer.

The inevitable hotchpotch of phone calls, emails and paperwork – as well as costing time and money, now unnecessarily – can also quite easily lead to a tide of errors and inaccuracies that are stemmed by relinquishing such GDPR responsibilities to the right software.

In short, this is about problem solving. As we've mentioned, the new legislation will necessitate for many a change in the way they work, regardless of whether the information required is readily available or not.

*Every organisation should be using the opportunity to adapt and subsequently to grow*

But there are numerous benefits to reap should those changes in the Good Work Plan be smartly navigated, and the ideal route is a tool that not only eases the burden but frees an organisation to become better, more streamlined and potentially more profitable as a result.

The obligation to provide a full written statement on day one of a new worker's role is non-negotiable, but every organisation should be using its introduction as an opportunity to adapt and subsequently to grow.





# Webonboarding

Find out how to improve your employee onboarding processes with Webonboarding at:

<https://www.webonboarding.com/good-work-plan>

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*always exceed expectations*