



Our HR Services

The HR Branch Ltd,
Commerce House,
Carlton Boulevard,
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01522 275105
info@thehrbranch.co.uk

www.thehrbranch.co.uk



Our Service

We have a UK-wide team of senior level HR professionals with comprehensive HR knowledge, expertise and skills. Our team is backed up by an independent employment lawyer for contentious employment matters. Our focus is on providing business owners and managers with the key day-to-day HR support they require, which extends to much more than just contracts, handbooks and employee relations. We stay on top of employment law changes and HR trends, meaning you don't have to.

We have a range of options for you to consider depending on the size of your business and your specific needs.

Why Outsource part or all of your HR?

Whether in part or full, HR outsourcing is ideal for companies with no internal HR function; an in-house HR team seeking additional advice or support; or busy HR teams in need of an additional pair of hands on an ad-hoc basis.

We work with over 50 SMEs in over 20 sectors plus a number of local authorities and other public sector organisations across the UK. We are approachable and adaptable, providing support via email, phone, or virtual meetings. We get to know you, your business and your team and prioritise building strong client relationships and becoming a trusted HR partner. Our advice is fair and consistent, offering practical, commercial, and effective solutions.

We offer on-site presence as and when required by our clients and different options to suit all requirements and budgets.

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HR Essentials Helpline

£75 plus VAT for up to 60 minutes of HR support per month

- Advice on the practical implementation of UK employment law
- Advice and guidance relating to employee relations (discipline, grievance, sickness absence, maternity and much more)
- Advice and guidance regarding headcount reduction (redundancy, layoffs, short time working)
- Advice and guidance relating to lawful termination of employment
- Advice and guidance relating to absence including family leave, maternity leave and more
- Advice on the practical implementation of UK employment law
- Review of documents and letters provided by the client.
- General advice and guidance via email, the telephone or online relating to HR matters between 9.00am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday
- Monthly newsletter
- Quarterly employment legislation updates and notable changes to employment practices

NB. This package does not include any standard documentation or drafting of any documents.

Retained HR Service – HR Enhance

£260 plus VAT for up to 120 minutes of HR support per month

- The provision of an 'HR document pack' including a standard contract of employment and a standard employee handbook which contains a summary of key HR policies
- The provision of other standard template HR policy documents which include Disciplinary, Grievance, Sickness Absence & Medical Capability, HR Data Protection, Employee Privacy Notice, IT & Acceptable Use policies.
- Advice on the practical implementation of UK employment law
- Dedicated, named, HR Adviser.
- Advice and guidance relating to employee relations (discipline, grievance, sickness absence, maternity and much more)
- Advice and guidance regarding headcount reduction (redundancy, layoffs, short time working)

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- Advice and guidance relating to lawful termination of employment
- Advice and guidance relating to absence including family leave, maternity leave and more
- The provision of letters in relation to the advice and guidance provided
- General advice and guidance via email, the telephone or online relating to HR matters between 9.00am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday.
- Proactive quarterly check-in's to review emerging issues and trends such as absence trends, potential risk areas etc.
- HR task list to ensure key requirements are scheduled.

Retained HR Service – HR Elevate

£625 plus VAT for up to 240 minutes (4 hours) of HR support per month

The support we offer under the retained service includes the following:

- Dedicated, named HR Consultant
- The provision of an 'HR starter pack' including a standard job offer template, standard contract of employment and a standard employee handbook containing a summary of key HR policies
- The provision of standard HR policy documents – which include Disciplinary, Grievance, Sickness Absence & Medical Capability, HR Data Protection, Employee Privacy Notice, IT & Acceptable Use, Anti Bullying & Harassment, Capability & Performance policies
- The provision of standard forms and checklists including New Starter Process, Driving for Work, Confidentiality Agreement, Training Fee Refund Agreement
- Advice on the practical implementation of UK employment law
- Advice and guidance relating to employee relations (discipline, grievance, sickness absence, maternity and much more)
- Advice and guidance regarding headcount reduction (redundancy, layoffs, short time working)
- Advice and guidance relating to lawful termination of employment
- Advice and guidance relating to absence including family leave, maternity leave and more
- The provision of letters in relation to the advice and guidance provided

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- Bespoke case-related documentation including scripts for employee meetings, HR process flows, forms and templates
- Creation and review of job descriptions
- Support with workforce communications
- Advice on pay and reward (employees, freelancers, consultants and self-employed workers)
- Advice and guidance on recruitment and retention
- General advice and guidance via email, the telephone or online relating to HR matters between 9.00am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday
- Out-of-hours support for urgent crisis management
- Monthly newsletter
- Quarterly employment legislation updates and notable changes to employment practices
- Proactive monthly check-in's to review emerging issues and trends such as absence trends, potential risk areas etc.
- Proactive HR action plan to ensure future risks and issues are considered and planned.

Outsourced HR Service – HR Elevate Plus

from £1039.50* plus VAT for up to 10 hours of HR support per month

The support we offer under the personalised, outsourced service includes the following:

- Dedicated, named HR contact with monthly check-ins
- Customised job-offer template, customised contract of employment and a customised employee handbook containing a summary of key HR policies
- The provision of customised HR policy documents – which include Disciplinary, Grievance, Sickness Absence & Medical Capability, HR Data Protection, IT & Acceptable Use, Anti Bullying & Harassment, Capability & Performance, Whistleblowing, Equality, Diversity & Inclusion plus many more on demand.
- The provision of customised employee life cycle forms, checklists, templates and documents including New Starter Process, Driving for Work, Confidentiality Agreement, Training Refund Fee Agreement plus many more on demand
- Advice on the practical implementation of UK employment law

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- Advice and guidance relating to employee relations (discipline, grievance, sickness absence, maternity and much more)
- Advice and guidance regarding headcount reduction (redundancy, layoffs, short time working)
- Advice and guidance relating to lawful termination of employment (short service dismissal, protected conversations etc.)
- Advice and guidance relating to absence including family leave, maternity leave and more
- The provision of customised letters in relation to the advice and guidance provided
- Bespoke case-related documentation including scripts for employee meetings, HR process flows, forms and templates and many more
- Creation and review of job descriptions
- Advice on pay and reward (employees, freelancers, consultants and self-employed workers)
- Proactive annual HR action plan
- Awareness webinars/toolkits for managers on specific HR topics i.e., absence management, performance management, discipline and grievance
- Support with workforce communications
- Employee lifecycle administration
- Support with appraisals and employee performance management
- Advice and guidance on recruitment and retention
- Administration of recruitment and hiring process*
- Implementation and administration of 1 license for Breathe HR**
- Proactive monthly check in's to review emerging issues and trends such as absence trends, potential risk areas etc.
- Proactive HR action plan to ensure future risks and issues are considered and planned.
- Bi-annual founder/director business development meetings
- General advice and guidance via email, the telephone or online relating to HR matters between 9.00am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday
- Out-of-hours support for urgent crisis management



- Monthly newsletter
- Quarterly employment legislation updates and notable changes to employment practices

*Additional charges may apply per annum for access to Breathe HR Software Platform and Hireful Applicant Tracking system.

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Retained HR Service – HR Extend

£350 plus VAT for up to 120 minutes of HR Director support and employment advice per month

This package is designed to support organisations with existing HR provision in-house. We offer an extension to this in-house provision with highly experienced HR Director level support. The support we offer under the retained service includes the following:

- Dedicated, named HR Director Consultant
- Advice on the practical implementation of UK employment law
- Advice and guidance relating to employee relations (discipline, grievance, sickness absence, maternity and much more)
- Advice and guidance regarding headcount reduction (redundancy, layoffs, short time working)
- Advice and guidance relating to lawful termination of employment
- Advice and guidance relating to absence including family leave, maternity leave and more
- The provision of customised letters and documents in relation to the advice and guidance provided
- Advice on pay and reward (employees, freelancers, consultants and self-employed workers)
- General advice and guidance via email, the telephone or online relating to HR matters between 9.00am and 5.00pm Monday to Friday
- Out-of-hours support for urgent crisis management
- Monthly newsletter
- Quarterly employment legislation updates and notable changes to employment practices

Additional hours for clients on the HR Extend package are charged at £195.00 per hour.

** Subject to terms and conditions - see FAQs for details*

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Our Retained HR Model

Our model is designed specifically to support businesses and organisations who want absolute certainty around what they are paying each month for their HR provision.

Additional support to clients on standard retained packages (HR Enhance & HR Elevate) can be provided at an hourly rate of £145 per hour plus VAT and £125 per hour plus VAT for those clients on outsourced packages (HR Elevate Plus). The standard hourly rate is £165 per hour plus VAT.

Our one-year agreement has a fixed rate for the initial 12-month period. All fees and charges are subject to annual review on or after each anniversary of the agreement, in accordance with The HR Branch's Terms and Conditions. A minimum 24-month contract is required for our Elevate Plus package.

If you use less than one additional hour over and above your standard minutes, we will pro-rata the cost for that hour and you will only be billed for pro-rata time used.

This is a great model if general day-to-day HR support and guidance is all you need. However, you can always buy other services that you may need as you grow or enter challenging times.

Benefits of using this model

Our fees under this model are significantly discounted from our standard consulting rates for SMEs.

Standard contract lengths for support of this nature are around five years from larger organisations.

We provide practical, commercial advice so you don't need to jump through hoops. With our education and experience we do cover most employment matters under the agreement. Where we need a legal opinion, we can secure discounted rates for our clients from legal partners across the UK.

We have a small, focused team of experienced HR professionals managing our retained services, so our approach is very personalised. We really get to know our clients and understand their business.

You will be provided with a dedicated key contact who will be your HR Branch contact, meaning you'll generally speak to the same person each time you need support.

For FAQs on our retained HR model, please refer to the section at the end of this document

This document is provided for information only. All services are supplied subject to contract and The HR Branch's Terms and Conditions.

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Additional HR Services & HR Project Support

Additional HR services are available to all retained clients. The HR Branch provides all HR services, and your consultant can give you a cost estimate for any additional support required.

For clients on standard retained packages (HR Enhance & HR Elevate), our prices are £145 per hour except for fractional HR Director support which is charged at £195 per hour and search/recruitment which is charged on a fixed fee basis. For clients on an outsourced package (HR Elevate Plus) our prices are £125 per hour except for fractional HR Director support which is charged at £175 per hour and search/recruitment which is charged on a fixed fee basis

These services may include but are not limited to:

- The case management of employee relations matters including investigations, hearings and appeals
- Conducting disciplinary, grievance and other investigations
- Assistance or project management of merger and acquisition (M&A) activity including where the Transfer of Undertakings (TUPE) is applicable
- The design and delivery of face-to-face training and development programs including leadership development, management skills, Diversity & Inclusion, sexual harassment and much more
- The design and implementation of reward processes, including benchmarking, job evaluation and incentive plans
- The provision of dedicated recruitment support to recruit to roles
- Advice and guidance on compensation and benefits for employees
- Awareness sessions for managers on specific topics i.e., absence management, performance management, discipline and grievance investigations
- Executive coaching for line managers and senior leaders
- HR consultancy support to review the structure of the HR function and its performance
- HR mentoring programmes
- Trade union engagement
- HR Director attendance at Board meetings
- HR Strategy development

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- Learning & Development Strategy development
- Employment engagement (culture assessment) and developing an HR improvement plan
- Organisational design or change management expertise
- Full range of Health & Safety services
- Interview planning, preparation and attendance
- A full review of your HR policies
- Drafting of settlement agreements
- Fractional HR Director support

Our Team and their Experience

Our team of HR consultants have extensive experience of working in-house in multiple sectors, so they know exactly what you are going through and the challenges you may find yourself facing. In addition to their in-house experience, their experience of consulting means they have dealt with clients of all sizes across various sectors and have experienced most HR situations imaginable.

All our professional adviser team members are qualified to CIPD Level 7 as a minimum and are members of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

We always think we have heard it all and then we get another call and new scenarios every day. Some of the types of clients we work with are below.

Cofistart-Ups & Fast-Growth SMEs	Food & Farming	Hospitality & Catering
Biogas & Energy	Manufacturing SMEs	Agency / Consulting Businesses
Comms Sector	Local Government	Construction & Property
Sport & Leisure	Pharmaceutical	Over 20 sectors in total

Frequently Asked Questions

Is the retained HR model new to The HR Branch?

We have been supporting SMEs with their HR since 2020.

We have been operating retained HR and outsourced HR models since our inception. This option helps clients to budget for their HR on an annual basis.

What makes our retained HR service different to others in the market?

Most models are offered by registered law firms or large corporations who also recommend employment tribunal insurance. This may be a cost-effective solution for many but can be rigid in reality and often provides a very risk averse approach to resolving employment issues. Our clients prefer that we can provide commercial and practical advice as we do not have to work within the complex insurance processes. We have a dedicated contact point and offer a more personalised service. We also understand needs change so do not tie clients into long contracts and operate on a 12- or 24-month contract basis.

We also offer a proactive approach to working with our retained clients in a very different way to retained employment law services and other HR consultants. We work in a proactive way and will agree a proactive delivery approach to address your key areas of focus within your business as well as providing reactive HR advice as required and ensuring your documentation remains compliant and up to date.

As this is a remote service, what happens if I would like someone to come to the client office to help us with a project or case?

We can support you on site, based on the availability of local consultants. Our team are based throughout the UK and many are mobile. This service would be charged at a market-based day rate and would be charged in addition to your retainer fee. Please get in touch for an estimated cost and timeline for delivery.

How many hours of support do I get for my retainer?

Your retainer fee is based on an agreed number of minutes of support per month depending on the package you are on. Typically, this is more than enough for an SME. You can purchase additional support at an hourly rate should you need it.

Will my rates/retainer value increase during the contract term?

Our 12-month agreement will be fixed at the same cost for the duration of the term. The rates will be reviewed at the start of each contractual year in line with market RPI indexes.

How is HR support delivered?

Our HR team is based across the UK, working remotely for our clients. We work with our clients via telephone calls, email and virtually through online tools such as MS Teams and Zoom (or a client preferred tool). We will take time to understand the issue or challenge and work to deliver a solution in a timely manner. Your key account manager will check in with you on a regular basis to ensure you are receiving the level of support you require and to discuss any priorities you may have for your business.

What happens if I don't use all my hours in a month, do they carry forward?

Retained HR services are discounted on the basis we understand that clients will not always use their full allocation of hours. It is not typical for these models to carry forward unused time and as such The HR Branch does not accumulate unused hours.

What happens if I need more support in a month, over and above my retainer?

We understand that from time to time you will require additional support. We can provide additional HR support at a rate of £125-£145 (depending on whether you are on a retained or outsourced package) per hour plus VAT. If you do not use the whole hour, we will pro-rata the additional cost. We would advise you prior to any additional charges. Additional work will only be carried out with your approval, or you may wait until the following month to have the work completed to prevent additional charges.

We recommend discussing any additional requirements with your consultant as there may be a more cost-effective solution for that specific issue or project.

I need an HR audit to be carried out. Is this part of my retainer?

We can provide you with an HR health-check as part of your retained service which consists of a high-level assessment of what is in place and any key gaps.

A full HR audit with report is available starting from £995.00 plus VAT.

I need a new employee handbook, is this covered under my retainer?

If a new handbook is required, our procedure is to ask you to complete a questionnaire which then enables us to provide you with a handbook that is suitable for your business. Additional charges may apply depending on the level of personalisation required.

I have an employee handbook and would like it reviewed, is this part of my retainer?

We can review your handbook under the retainer if this can be completed within the monthly minutes of support. If the employee handbook is significantly out of date, we may recommend using a new version which we will provide that contains all required UK HR policies. If

extensive work is to be carried out to bring your employee handbook up to date and to ensure legal compliance, there may be an additional charge (which your consultant can advise you on once they have reviewed your current documents).

I would like my HR policies to be reviewed and updated, is this covered by my retainer?

On an annual basis we can review your HR policies to ensure that they are compliant with changes in the law. If your policies are significantly out of date, we may suggest that we provide you with updated examples. Should you have an extensive list of HR policies that require significant updating there may be an additional charge which your consultant can confirm once they have reviewed your existing documentation.

When I need HR support, what is the process for requesting this?

Once you have engaged with us you will be assigned a key account manager. They will provide you with their contact details. They will also provide their teams' contact details if your key contact is not available at the time required due to being on leave or being tied up with another client. We are a small, dedicated team so you will receive a personal service regardless of which team member you speak with.

Do you operate 24/7?

We offer a personalised HR service which operates within standard office hours. If you contact us out

of hours you will be a priority call back the next working day. Some retained service options do include provision for out-of-hours support so if you run a business that operates outside of standard working hours and/or you may need crisis management support out of hours periodically you may wish to enquire about a suitable package to meet your needs.

When I need HR support, how quickly will I get it?

We pride ourselves on our response time to clients. In certain circumstances, we do need to prioritise client needs based on the level of urgency of a matter. We aim to respond to all enquiries within 24 hours or the next working day if received over the weekend or on a bank holiday.

Does my retainer include employment tribunal insurance?

Our packages do not include legal cover. We do however offer an option to insure and protect against employment disputes which can be taken up via our partner, Albion Legal. Please ask for more information.

Does my retainer include legal advice?



We are not a law firm and therefore do not provide legal opinion. This means we provide you with practical, easy to understand advice and guidance on the implementation of UK employment law in the workplace, so you do not have to interpret the law. We work with an independent law firm to confirm our advice for complex and/or cases where litigation is highly likely.

How do you know how much time I have used under the retainer each month?

We record all time used by clients where on telephone calls, enquiries and responses via email, drafting documents etc. We can provide usage reports to clients as required.

If I require an additional service, how do I pay for it?

Where a service is used that is not covered by the monthly retainer, you will be invoiced for the service and payment terms will be set out on the invoice as well as our company bank details.

How will payment be taken?

For retained or outsourced services, the relevant monthly fee will be taken in advance monthly by direct debit. Any additional hours will be invoiced at the end of the month they occur, and the invoice should be paid within 7 days from date of invoice.

For project support, an invoice for 50% of the estimated fees will be issued in advance of the project commencing. We will liaise with the client as the project progresses on the estimated fees and advise of any likely amendments. Additional fees shall be invoiced monthly.

Can I have access to Breathe HR and Hireful recruitment system if I am not on an outsourced package?

Yes, absolutely!

Prices for Breathe start from £22 per month, per business and Hireful is a fixed fee of £180.00 per annum.

Breathe HR will allow you to automate some of the time-consuming administration which comes with employing people and keep all your employee data safe in one place. You can also manage holidays and absence via Breathe and keep all employee documents in there for you and the employees to access.

Breathe will save you more money than it will cost. Please ask us for more information.

