

Recruitment in South of England continues on upwards trajectory

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Hiring levels across the South of England continue to grow with Q2 recruitment levels set to rise by 15.7% year-on-year despite vacancies in April dropping by 8.4% month-on-month. That's according to recent research from the Association of Professional Staffing Companies (APSCo).

The data, provided by business intelligence specialist Vacancysoft, also revealed that vacancies in the South of England saw growth through to March, with the final month of Q1 reporting a high of 12,613 vacancies and a 20.5% year-on-year increase. This suggests that the dip in April will have largely been impacted by the Easter holidays.

Across the sectors, the technology, media and telecoms (TMT) arena dominates the professional hiring landscape across England's southern regions, with 28,000 published vacancies so far this year, constituting a 96.4% year-on-year rise. The fastest growing industry for new jobs is healthcare and pharma, where vacancies are experiencing a growth rate of 48.5% as the Government rolls out its plans to strengthen the sector following unprecedented challenges brought on by Covid-19. The smallest increase of 2022, following a 93.5% year-on-year jump in 2021 in new jobs, is being felt across financial services, though the sector is currently on track for an 11.9% year-on-year uplift in recruitment. This may, however, pick up in the coming months as the Government looks to deregulate financial services post-Brexit.

Elsewhere, the leading institution for recruitment across the south is Santander and with hiring levels currently up 180%, the firm also has the fastest growth across the top 20 table. Santander looks to be thriving, with 2022 vacancies so far (800) nearly matching last year's total (856). This will no doubt be bolstered by the news of Juan Ignacio Echeverria joining the UK team in a bid to build up the bank's people strategy. Meanwhile, JPMorgan continues to recruit aggressively in the UK, coming out in second place on the leader board. So far, the firm has published 700 vacancies across the south and hiring levels are up 46.7%.

Ann Swain, CEO of APSCo, commented:

"This latest research clearly demonstrates a sector-wide demand for staff across the South of England. However, with the latest ONS data revealing that there are now more vacancies than unemployed people, there is an immediate need to address the widely reported dearth of resources. There is no doubt that we are still in a situation where demand for skills is far exceeding supply, and we face these issues because the current labour market is not a match for the modern working landscape.

"While there are a number of methods to help alleviate the skills shortages in the UK, including greater flexibility in Apprenticeship Levy usage to support the 'Levelling Up' agenda, as well as the integration of an attractive work visa for self-employed highly skilled contractors, more needs to be done. APSCo continues to call for greater support from the Government, to help make the UK's employment market fit for purpose in the current economic landscape."

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