

APSCo Launches new manifesto

Submitted by: BlueSky Public Relations Ltd

Wednesday, 17 May 2017

Key policy recommendations aimed at promoting the value of flexible professional talent

The Association of Professional Staffing Companies (APSCo) has launched its new manifesto (<http://www.apsco.org/media/download.aspx?MediaId=1229>) which outlines the value of flexible, professional talent in a global market and contains key policy recommendations for a post-election and post Brexit economy.

The manifesto outlines five main areas of focus:

- A new tax and regulatory framework - which differentiates highly skilled, highly paid professionals and which puts them outside of regulation aimed at protecting vulnerable workers. APSCo believes that this will allow the Government to protect individuals without restricting independent professionals' ability to provide services. APSCo is calling for a new status for incorporated independent professionals which would recognise the right to waive statutory worker protections such as the Agency Worker Regulations.
- Focused Government- industry engagement: APSCo is calling for a junior minister with a specific remit for flexible employment and engagement within the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).
- Recognition that the professional recruitment sector works with SMEs providing services: This is not a typical 'worker' relationship which enhances the Government's ability to differentiate from those who are potentially vulnerable. APSCo would like to see a new employment status test which can adapt to the changing face of modern employment and which applies to tax/NICs and employment law status.
- A reconsideration of the collection and use of the apprenticeship levy: APSCo is advocating a reform which allows the levy pot to be transferred to recruiters' clients or broader access by independent professionals and the self-employed so that these vital contributors to the UK's economy can benefit from it.
- A need to attract and allow access to highly skilled specialist migrants post Brexit: The UK economy will continue to need access to highly skilled specialist migrants and APSCo is asking for expedited visa processes to ensure continued access to these key skills and also that the visa applications should be able to be obtained by recruitment firms so that they can deliver services on client sites.

Commenting on the launch Samantha Hurley, Director of Operations at APSCo said:

"Ever since the phrase gig economy was coined, media attention has consistently focused on lower skilled and lower paid workers and we remain absolutely determined to ensure that the Government recognises that professional independent flexible talent is not only a completely distinctive group within the gig economy but that it also has a critical role to play in the future success of the UK economy."

“The labour market continues to tighten and access to professional talent remains key to growth and competitive advantage. We, along with many policy makers and academics see clearly that a complete review of employment status is urgently needed to ensure continued success in a post Brexit economy. Political policy needs to recognise the changes taking place in the labour market and we will continue to engage with all political parties to call for future policy that is fit for purpose.”

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