

Hiring back on the agenda as professional vacancies rise again

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- Vacancies for professional permanent roles up 18% month on month
- Professional contract vacancies up 14% month on month
- Year on year figures still down but gap decreasing

Job opportunities for the professional sector – including sectors such as IT, professional services, life sciences, finance, marketing, HR and engineering, have continued to improve, with July marking the second month in a row that vacancies have increased. While year on year figures are understandably still down, there are signs of improvement with decreases contracting by around 10% from last month. That's according to the latest monthly Recruitment Trends Snapshot report from The Association of Professional Staffing Companies (APSCo).

Gap in year on year hiring continues to close

The data, provided by growth analytics platform, cube19, revealed that while year on year vacancy numbers are down 36% for permanent and 31% for contract roles, the annual gap has decreased by around 10% since June.

Month on month vacancies have continued to rise, with permanent vacancies up 18% in July - contract positions also saw a 14% uptick. This marks the second month in a row that the UK has seen an increase in monthly figures, suggesting that the Prime Minister's plans to 'build, build, build' further bolstered recruitment activity as we entered July.

Daily tracking shows vacancies increase in lead up to summer holidays

The report also tracks daily hiring activity which revealed an average 6% increase in interviews in the last week of July compared with the first – a good indicator that hiring is set to continue through the summer. The number of permanent new vacancies added during July showed a small increase of an average of 1% in the last week of the month compared with the first week. However, as we enter the holiday period it's normal to see the registering of new roles slow, so any increase, no matter how small, is a positive indication. Contract roles also saw an uptick in demand, with an average

increase of 7% in the last week of July compared with the beginning.

Ann Swain, CEO of APSCo comments:

“As more of the UK aims to get back to work, it's encouraging to see recruitment activity continuing to grow month on month. While the yearly decreases certainly paint a clear picture as to the significant impact the pandemic has had on hiring, the fact that we're increasingly seeing smaller drops in annual comparisons suggests we're heading in the right direction.”

Joe McGuire, Global Sales Director of cube19 added:

“Our main focus should be on the month on month figures. Year on year data in this scenario is a good reminder of the tough position the industry is in but another month of growth across vacancies, placements and sales is very positive. Going into the holiday months, double-digit growth in most of the metrics is testament to the UK's determination to get back on track. We usually expect to see things slow over the summer so we will be keeping a close eye on the data to see if we buck the trend this year.”

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