

Employment Legislation Timetable

1 January 2012	Revised FSA Remuneration Code came into force <p>The FSA has widened the circumstances in which guaranteed or discretionary bonuses are void if they are provided in breach of the Code to certain staff in the financial services industry.</p>
1 February 2012	New compensatory award limits <p>The Employment Rights (Increase of Limits) Order 2011 increased the limits of certain employment tribunal awards and other amounts payable under employment legislation. The maximum unfair dismissal compensatory award rose from £68,400 to £72,300 and the maximum amount of a week's pay for the purpose of calculating a statutory redundancy payment and the basic and additional awards for unfair dismissal increased from £400 to £430.</p>
29 February 2012	Biometric residence permits introduced <p>The Immigration (Biometric Registration) (Amendment) Regulations came into force. All migrants from outside the European Economic Area applying to stay in the UK for over 6 months are required to register their fingerprints and photograph. Successful applicants will be given a biometric residence permit to prove immigration status and entitlements in the UK.</p>
March 2012	Guidelines on whistleblowing in the NHS <p>Changes made to the NHS constitution on 8 March 2012 to encourage NHS staff to raise concerns about safety, malpractice or wrongdoing at work. The General Medical Council guidelines reflecting these changes came into force on 12 March 2012.</p>
22 March 2012	Increase in personal allowance and national insurance contributions for employees announced in Budget 2012 <p>The primary employee threshold for national insurance contributions increased by £364. The personal allowance for income tax for basic rate tax payers under the age of 65 increased by £630.</p>
22 March 2011	Increase in national insurance thresholds and contributions for employers announced in Budget 2012 <p>Employers' national insurance thresholds increased by £8 per week.</p>
2012/2013 tax year	Reduction in corporation tax <p>An additional 1% reduction in the corporation tax rate to 24%.</p>
April 2012	Basic pension uprated <p>Increases to the state pension and benefit payments based on the highest of the increase in earnings, prices (as measured by the Consumer Price Index) or 2.5%.</p>

April 2012	<p>Plans to simplify personal taxation</p> <p>HM Treasury has announced plans to reform income tax and national insurance contributions by aligning the two more closely. A detailed consultation is due to be launched and it is currently envisaged that the reforms will take place around 2017.</p>
April 2012	<p>Introduction of a new apprenticeship structure</p> <p>Provisions of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 come into force. These provisions will introduce a new apprenticeship structure to facilitate the creation of a prescribed form of apprenticeship agreement and the provision of apprenticeship certificates.</p>
6 April 2012	<p>Reduction of annual and lifetime pension allowances</p> <p>HM Treasury will cut the total amount of pension savings by an individual that receives favourable tax treatment from £1.8 million to £1.5 million.</p>
6 April 2012	<p>Statutory benefits increase</p> <p>The Social Security Benefits Up-rating Order 2012 will come into force. The standard rates for statutory maternity pay, statutory paternity pay and statutory adoption pay will increase from £128.73 to £135.45. The weekly earnings threshold for these payments will rise from £102 to £107. Maternity allowance will increase from £124.88 to £135.45, with the earnings threshold remaining at £30. Statutory sick pay will increase from £81.60 to £85.85, with the weekly earnings threshold also rising from £102 to £107.</p>
6 April 2012	<p>Section 147 of Equality Act 2010 amended</p> <p>The Equality Act 2010 (Amendment) Order 2012 (SI 2012/334) will introduce new wording that will rectify a drafting anomaly in section 147 of the Equality Act. Under the new wording, when a claimant enters a compromise agreement, their lawyer will not be precluded from acting as an independent adviser.</p>
6 April 2012	<p>Amendments to PAYE treatment of post-P45 payments</p> <p>Employers will have to use the OT code when operating PAYE on all post-P45 payments, including payments under compromise agreements and income arising under employee share plans</p>
6 April 2012	<p>Unfair dismissal qualifying period extended</p> <p>The Unfair Dismissal and Statement of Reasons for Dismissal (Variation of Qualifying Period) Order 2012 will increase the qualifying period to claim unfair dismissal from one year to two years. The changes will not affect employees whose period of continuous employment begins before 6 April 2012.</p>
6 April 2012	<p>Employment Tribunal reforms</p> <p>The Employment Tribunals (Constitution and Rules of Procedure) (Amendment) Regulations 2012 (SI 468/2012) come into force. For cases presented on or after 6 April 2012, witness statements will stand as evidence-in-chief and will be taken as read, witness expenses will be borne by the losing party at the tribunal's discretion and employment judges will have the power to order deposit orders of up to £1,000 and costs of up to £20,000 (increased from £10,000).</p>

June 2012	<p>Equal treatment for self-employed workers</p> <p>This will introduce a new entitlement for self-employed women and female spouses and life partners of self-employed workers, to maternity benefits, including at least 14 weeks' maternity allowance.</p>
1 October 2012	<p>Auto-enrolment under Pensions Act 2008</p> <p>The Pensions Act provides that from 1 October 2012 all eligible workers, who are not already in a workplace pension scheme, are to be automatically enrolled into either their employer's pension scheme or a new savings vehicle, known as a personal account scheme. Employees can choose to "opt-out" of the scheme. To encourage participation, employees' pension contributions will be supplemented by contributions from employers and tax relief.</p>
1 October 2012	<p>Amendments to UK Corporate Governance Code</p> <p>For financial years beginning on or after 1 October 2012, the amendments to the UK Corporate Governance Code will come into force. There will be two amendments that are aimed at strengthening the principle of boardroom diversity; listed companies will be required to report annually on their boardroom diversity policy and will be required to consider gender diversity when evaluating board effectiveness.</p>
2013	<p>School leaving age is raised to 18</p> <p>The Education and Skills Act 2008 changes the statutory framework to put a duty on all young people in England to participate in education or training until the age of 18. It also amends legislation about the provision of adult education and training, and support for young people.</p>
2013	<p>Reforms to Criminal Records Bureau checks</p> <p>The Protection of Freedoms Bill will make changes to the vetting and barring scheme and CRB checks will be instantly accessible online and will be portable.</p>
March 2013	<p>Revised Parental Leave Directive comes into force</p> <p>This will implement the revised Framework Directive on Parental Leave and repeal Directive 96/34/EC. Parental leave will increase from 3 to 4 months.</p>
April 2013	<p>Reforms to legal aid, litigation funding and costs</p> <p>Part 2 of the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Bill 2010-12 Conditional Fee Agreements is expected to come into force. This will reform the legal aid system and make various changes to how litigation fees and costs are recovered.</p>
2013/2014 tax year	<p>Further decrease in corporation tax, decrease in top rate of tax on earnings and rise in personal allowance</p> <p>The corporation tax rate is to be reduced to 23%. The top rate of tax on earnings over £150,000 will be reduced from 50% to 45%. The personal allowance will be raised by a further £1,100 to £9,205.</p>

2014

Steps to reform health and safety regulations

The Government intends to implement the key recommendations from Professor Lofstedt's review of health and safety legislation by the end of 2014. These will include a consolidation of existing health and safety regulations and the deregulation of most self-employed people.

2014/2015 tax year

Reduction in corporation tax

The corporation tax rate is to be reduced to 22%.

2015

"Flexible" maternity and paternity leave is expected to be introduced

Changes will be made to maternity and paternity leave to give parents more flexibility as to when they take time off. It is expected that the changes will allow both parents to take leave at the same time, instead of the mother having to have returned to work before the father can take additional paternity leave, and allow parents to take time off in blocks, rather than all in one go.

April 2016

Equalisation of state pension age for women

The state pension age for women is equalised with the state pension age for men by November 2018, with an expedited increase from April 2016.

December 2018

State pension age rises to 66 years

The Pensions Act 2007 raises the state pension age from 65 to 66 years to reflect the ageing nature of the population. The rise in the state pension age to 66 for men and women begins gradually from December 2018 until April 2020.

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