

KPI NOW RECRUITING FROM GLASGOW TO LONDON

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KEY COMMERCIAL SECTOR TRENDS: STRONG JOB GROWTH & MOVE TO PERMANENT

We continue to see strong job growth and with unemployment at a near historic low, hiring and retaining talent remains a top priority. Businesses are continuing to prioritise workforce strategy and prepare for growth in the years ahead to future proof their sustainability.

KPI Commercial has seen an uplift in clients wanting to engage with the top talent. Whilst pay and benefits remain an essential attraction tool, candidates are looking to work for employers who want to look after their professional and personal wellbeing. The added benefit for businesses, is a happier and more engaged workforce. Companies also need to offer employees career development opportunities to continue to increase employee loyalty.

KPI have facilitated recruitment campaigns for SMEs through to multi-national clients, covering a diverse range of roles in HR, Finance, Logistics & Supply chain, Marketing, Sales, Administration and Customer Service.

The market has been defined by permanent recruitment as the number of roles available to candidates has never been so high. To attract the best talent, employers need to be offering candidates permanent roles to align with their need for stability. Prior to the pandemic, we saw a lot more temporary and fixed term contracts, however this is now not the trend.

If you need advice on whether to follow the trend to permanent recruitment or try temporary, you can call the

KPI commercial team for a no obligation chat. We will be on hand to offer a consultative and personally tailored approach to your recruitment needs. We also have some fantastic candidates currently in the HR, Accounts, Admin and Customer Service sectors.



MD'S MEMO

So we are on the brink of a 'recession'.
(Or technically we might just miss one).

A scary word a decade ago, but not now, not since we have survived lockdowns, Brexit, IR35 reform, sizeable living wage increases, strikes, 3 prime minister changes in 2 months, cost of living crisis, energy cost increases and skill shortages. We are now all experts at adapting, managing risk, embracing change, re-inventing ourselves and still smiling at the end of it.

We operate from 9 different geographic locations from Glasgow to Surrey across private and public sectors in ten different industries from manufacturing to service, so I'm in a position to have a good overview of where the UK employment market is. There is certainly a downturn in volume labour requirements from within food processing, warehouse and logistics sectors as spending habits change and people adapt to the higher costs of living. However, the very same companies are not downbeat, but more realistic that this was an expected outcome and have hopes for a busier future and perhaps return to a normal end of the year.

There are vacancies everywhere. Skills, experience, work ethic and commitment are still in high demand in nearly every sector.

There seems to be no lack of confidence in job seekers leaving one job for another, no hesitation, no concern about whether having a stable, secure job is the right thing to hold on to at this point and therefore the market remains buoyant and opportunities are plentiful.

Employers are aware of the difficulty in replacing good colleagues and so counter offers frequently follow letters of resignation.

It's a time that both employees and job seekers have confidence in the timing of their negotiations, package demands, place of work preferences and know their value.

I still see green shoots and confidence. 'People' is still the number one challenge that most organisations face when asked about whether they will achieve the growth they would like in 2023.

*Thanks
Ryan*



KPI LAUNCH TECHNICAL SECTOR

KPI Recruiting have hired experienced recruiters Richard Glennan & Tom Turner to head their Technical Division. Richard joins the KPI team with over 10 years' experience in recruitment. He will focus on recruiting and placing engineers, fabricators, welders and bench joiners, amongst other skilled positions, with SMEs and national companies UK-wide.

Richard is a qualified fabricator and welder having served a 3-year apprenticeship after leaving school, so he understands perfectly the challenges in the engineering sector. His experience in recruitment is wide-ranging having served in resourcing, business development and consulting as well as at branch manager level.

Tom Turner joins KPI with a background in both recruitment and engineering. He originally qualified as a carpenter before moving on to a national agency to set up their permanent division in the Midlands. Tom then joined Gleeson to head the Engineering & Manufacturing sector and is also a qualified electrician.

"Richard and Tom have a wealth of recruitment experience," said KPI MD Ryan Jardine, "but it's their backgrounds in relevant industries that really impressed us. KPI prides itself on understanding and meeting our clients' challenges, and that's precisely the service Richard and Tom will provide."

KPI Technical's resourcing team currently have several experienced candidates in the areas of engineering, fabricating and production. So, if you are looking for a Technical Resource Partner to support with the ongoing growth of your business in the following areas, please contact our Specialist Technical Team who have years of experience in engaging, understanding and delivering on our clients resourcing requirements throughout the UK.

MANAGER/DIRECTOR POSITIONS:

- Engineering Manager/Director
- Operations Manager/Director
- Production Supervisor/Manager
- Quality Manager
- Manufacturing Engineer/Manager



ENGINEERING AND MANUFACTURING ROLES KPI TECHNICAL SPECIALISE IN:

- Welder (MIG, TIG, etc.)
- Plater
- Fabricator
- Pipe Fitter
- Finishers/Metal Polisher
- Steel Erector/Installer
- Site/Line Engineer
- Multi-Skilled Engineer
- Mechanical Engineer
- Electrical Engineer
- Maintenance Operatives
- Mechanical & Electrical
- Fitter/Assembler
- Panel Wirer
- Machine Operatives
- CNC Miller/Turner, Setter & Operator
- Design Engineers (CAD/CAM)
- Bench Joiner
- Quality Engineer/Inspector



WHY AN INFLATIONARY ECONOMY COULD BE GOOD NEWS FOR FINANCE PROFESSIONALS

With no sign of the war in Ukraine ending, businesses are still steering their way through the insecurity of an inflationary economy. But the one consistent factor that Finance professionals can be certain of is that vacancies will continue to open.

With core costs for businesses (food, energy and fuel prices) all rising significantly (some by as much as 50%) there has been an inevitable impact on wages. But with so much pressure on costs, finance departments have never been more important. Who better to guide a business through economic turbulence than the finest finance minds?

How will price rises affect positions in finance moving forward?

Fixed costs inflation

High inflation in core costs, or overheads, causes a 'domino' effect, where most organisations feel price pressure from internal expenses, external suppliers, and a down-force on profits causing the following

- Closer monitoring of overheads
- Recruitment for new positions slowing, or put on hold
- Costs passed on to consumers through higher prices, causing further inflation
- Alternatively, companies absorbing price rises leading to reduced profits
- Re-evaluation of the cost of labour

This means companies employing finance professionals face tough choices to make where the cost of their existing workforce is concerned.

On one hand, guaranteeing that an organisation runs smoothly, costs are scrutinized and profits are monitored effectively is the finance team's responsibility. That's why keeping the finance department intact should be crucial through these uncertain times. If inflation has caused damage to your business overall, there is a strong reason to make savings in other areas to keep a finance department fully operational. Monitoring the cost of labour is something that organisations will need to assess from all angles.

On the other hand, inflation should really require organisations to recruit MORE finance professionals to monitor and manage the impact on company funds and identify the best areas cost savings.



It's this reason why the impact inflation is having on the finance sector is actually POSITIVE rather than negative.

Despite a lot of organisations tightening their purse strings in order to stay afloat as inflation increases, many businesses are also in a position to invest in their finance team in order to monitor profit margins.

ONS data points to increase in finance vacancies

After an initial downward turn in 2022, vacancies in the finance sector are now higher than in 2021. Statistics published by The Office of National Statistics (ONS) late last year stated that unfilled finance posts ran at 5 vacancies in every 100 as against 3 the previous year.

Trading conditions of course vary from industry to industry, but the overall picture for the UK finance sector is one of hope, not fear. With the expertise of finance professionals in public and private sectors, the UK economy appears to be well-placed to recover quickly.

Finance teams are essential: especially when times are tough

Despite variations in the volume of positions, and recruitment campaigns being scaled back by some and amplified by others, the skills and knowhow of finance executives will continue to be in high demand by those companies best placed to ride the current inflationary storm.

So, despite a year of financial and political turmoil in 2022, and considerable challenges to business growth, finance professionals have never been more in demand.

If your business needs a finance professional to steer it through the current economic challenges, call Lily James on 01925 637871 for advice on how best to approach your recruitment campaign.



HOSPITALITY BATTLES SOARING COSTS & UNFILLED VACANCIES BUT IS STILL 4% UP YEAR ON YEAR

After overcoming Brexit and COVID, the struggles for the Hospitality sector continue with spiralling costs and recruitment challenges. But KPI's Head of Hospitality Nick Icke feels there is light at the end of the tunnel.

"Of all the sectors in the UK, Hospitality has probably had the perfect storm in terms of challenges," said Nick. "Initially Brexit caused problems by diverting labour pools away from hotels, bars and restaurants, then COVID meant that even more people left the sector and caused closures. Now with energy and ingredients costs spiraling upwards – plus the challenge of dealing with the ban on single use plastics – the problems seem to be never-ending.

"To compound the sector's recruitment issues, the Government announced in March that it would not add hospitality roles to the UK's shortage occupation list," said Nick, "Which seems absurd given the dearth of talent available for Chefs, Hotel and Restaurant Managers and many other positions." Trade body statistics have revealed that there still over seventy percent more vacancies in the hospitality industry than before the pandemic – a scary thought for major recruiters and small business owners.

"Despite the stack of obstacles in front of us," said Nick, "the great news is that the Hospitality sector is nearly 4% up in February against 2022, which demonstrates the genuine resilience of the sector. And whilst unfilled vacancies are a problem, they are also a sign that pubs, hotel and restaurants have more business than they can currently cope with – which is great news."

"The other good news is that KPI have a unique pool of candidates which are perfect for the hospitality sector," said Nick. "KPI are now supplying hospitality staff across the UK such is the demand for our candidates."

If you need help with a recruitment campaign or just a one-off position Nick's team can help. Email info@kpihospitality.co.uk or call 0161 694 9758.



KPI BRAND EVOLVES TO HIGHLIGHT NEW SECTORS

KPI launched a new brand earlier this year to highlight new sectors and reinforce the values that have seen the company grow from a single-branch operation in 2008 to a multisite limited company with coverage from Glasgow to London.

"Our previous logo served us well," said MD Ryan Jardine. "There is always an emotional attachment to a brand that helped build a company as successful as KPI is. We needed to better reflect our growth and values, which have seen the launch of our ninth sector earlier this year, whilst remembering what got KPI to this point. The new branding does exactly that."

The new brand retains the arrow and heart from the previous logo but uses a simpler and more modern typeface and each sector is now colour coded to represent the breadth of KPI's services.



THE PATH OF THE NATIONAL LIVING WAGE

The Government's plan to put the National Living Wage on a path to reach two-thirds of median hourly pay (of those aged 21 and above) by 2024 has taken another step forward as of 1 April this year.

As recommended by the Low Pay Commission (LPC), the standard National Living Wage (for those aged 22 or over) will increase to £10.42 (up 9.7%). Other ages bands receive the same percentage increase, apart from those aged 21 – 22 who see an increase of 10.7% as the Government seeks to equalise minimum pay for all those 21 or over by 2024.

The new National Living Wage Rates apply from April 1st 2023:

Age Band	Rate from April 2023	Annual increase (£)	Annual increase (%)
National Living Wage	£10.42	£0.92	9.7%
21-22 Year Old Rate	£10.18	£1.00	10.9%
18-20 Year Old Rate	£7.49	£0.66	9.7%
16-17 Year Old Rate	£5.28	£0.47	9.7%
Apprentice Rate	£5.28	£0.47	9.7%

The LPC estimates the recommendation of £10.42 will be 63.9 per cent of median hourly pay in October 2023 which takes a big step towards the 2024 target.

In the last 12 months, nominal pay growth and projections for future pay advances have increased, raising the estimate of the 2024 target from £10.70 to £11.08. The LPC predicts that a lesser rise will be required next year (6.2 per cent, £0.66) to meet the 2024 target, than the 2023 proposal (9.7 per cent, £0.92).

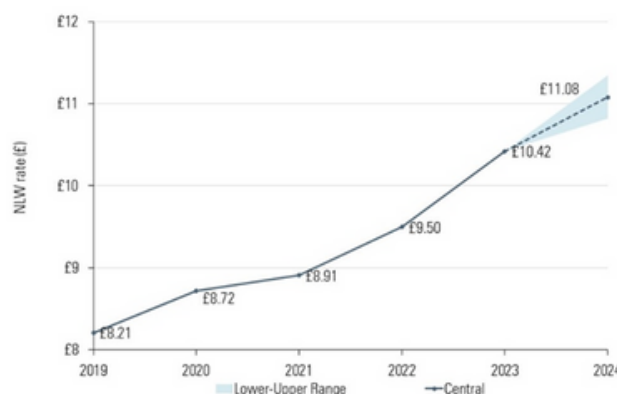


This predicted lesser rise is due to:

- Wage growth forecasts are stronger for this year than next: median pay is estimated to grow by 5.5 per cent between April 2022 and April 2023, but only 4.2 per cent next year.
- Next year 21 year olds and 22 year olds are due to become eligible for the NLW. This will reduce median hourly pay for the NLW-eligible population, lowering the increase required to hit the target.

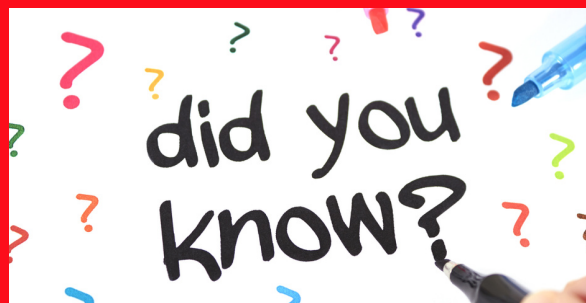
The LPC's forecasts rely on wage projections which are currently more uncertain than usual. Therefore the next increase designed to hit the target rate in 2024 is calculated as a range which spans from £10.82 to £11.35.

Forecasted path for NLW to reach 2/3 of median earnings in 2024



5 THINGS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT KPI

- KPI has 9 offices: Crewe, Derby, Glasgow, Northampton, Sutton, Stoke, Telford, Warrington, & Wigan
- KPI has over 100 recruiters working full time
- KPI has specialist recruiters in: Industrial, Office Support, Driving, Technical & Engineering, Care, Rail & Infrastructure, Hospitality and Executive
- KPI has been in the Recruiters Fast 50 for the last 2 years running
- KPI is celebrating it's 15-year milestone this year



DEMAND FROM 3PLS DRIVES GROWTH FOR KPI DRIVING

As the UK's fastest growing sector, logistics has seen more than its fair share of challenges in the last 3 years. With demand for drivers rocketing due to IR35 and Brexit reducing supply, and the pandemic creating more delivery jobs, drivers became increasingly difficult to recruit. But the good news is that HGV drivers are taking and passing tests in record numbers over the last year. Between March 2022 and May 2022, the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA) carried out 29,384 HGV tests – 54% more than the corresponding period in 2019 before the pandemic.

Demand for van & 7.5 tonne drivers from the sector continues to outstrip supply, however, says Will Stanley KPI's Head of Driving. "We are experiencing a lot of demand from Third Party Logistics companies from all over the UK," said Will. "We've supplied driving staff for courier and haulage companies from Glasgow all the way down to Plymouth. KPI is seeing our relationships with national accounts and 3PLs are growing bigger and stronger as they become more reliant on us to source people other agencies cannot find."

As well as focusing his team on vacancies from Scotland all the way down to the South coast Will has also recently become a radio star in the making. His interview about the current UK labour market and tips to help candidates get jobs went live on Northampton's Revolution Radio in Northampton in March.



KPI RAIL DIRECTORS ATTEND KELTBRAY SAFETY STAND DOWN DAY

As KPI's work with Keltbray continues, Directors Graham Piggott and Alan Clarke attended the client's Safety Stand Down Day in Purfleet. KPI staff are currently working as part of Keltbray's rail team which is part of a £1bn contract to support the transformation of Purfleet-on-Thames into an exciting riverside destination.

Graham said, "KPI staff are working on overhead line renewal in the area, and it's great news that KPI have 'boots on the ground' as part of this project. KPI's mantra is always one of 'Safety without Compromise'. Alan and I see attending these events as crucial to ensure that employee wellbeing and site safety is the number one priority from the very top of the company."

The Safety Stand-Down day included briefings on plant and machinery as well as information on the progress of the project. KPI also continue to supply staff to Keltbray as they complete the Nexus project on the Metro in North East England.

KPI staff are also working on other infrastructure-critical projects including the upgrade of Carstairs Junction on the West Coast mainline with SPL Powerlines, and assisting Van Elle on a blockade at Ipswich to construct a king post retaining wall and in Exeter with on-line route works.





The annual football match between KPI Recruiting and AO takes place at Crewe Alexandra takes place on Sunday 7th May at 10am. Current Champions KPI are looking to retain the trophy whilst AO will be striving to exact revenge.

Nick Mooney, KPI's On-site Manager at AO said: "We took it relatively easy on the AO boys last year but there will be no mercy this time. We'll be looking to soften them up in the first half, then cut them open with our free-flowing football in the second 😊."

If your business would like to take on the cream of KPI's footballing talent at Crewe Alexandra's Mornflake Stadium, call Dan Moore on 01270 589943.

MATCH OF THE DAY

MEET THE NEW KPI TEAM MEMBERS



Jessica Grocott
Recruitment
Consultant



Lauren Myatt
Recruitment
Consultant



Kirsty Woods
Recruitment
Consultant