


# Ascensus newsletter: November 2024

08 November 2024  Richard Nicholas

## Welcome to the November edition of the Ascensus newsletter.

In this newsletter we consider the most important recent developments from the perspective of a UK-based in-house lawyer, including:

Changes brought in by the Employment Rights Bill (and what that means for existing and future recruitment strategies HR discussions you may be having)

ESG best practice (something that we are finding is often added to the role of an in-house lawyer); and

Some new developments in one sector in particular.

At our upcoming Ascensus event for in-house lawyers we'll be looking in particular at some of these issues as a group – particularly employment rights, the use of AI (and how in-house lawyers can use it to their advantage), the recent procurement changes and that awkward moment where a key stakeholder denies any knowledge of the advice you gave – just after they ignored it. We'll be looking at how to protect yourself and comply with the SRA's ethical responsibilities even when everyone else around you is pressuring you to do the wrong thing quickly – along with some case studies, stories and some networking. It would be great to see you if you can make it. Details are below.

## Next Ascensus event

### Ascensus: for in-house lawyers

**21 November, Browne Jacobson office, Manchester**

This session aims to bring together in-house legal professionals to explore the latest trends, challenges, and innovations shaping the legal landscape. This event provides an opportunity for you to engage with peers, share insights, and gain valuable knowledge that will empower you in your role.

[Register now](#) →

## ESG survey

### Organisational approaches to ESG matters

In an innovative move to address the pressing ESG challenges facing organisations today, we've embarked on a pioneering research project in partnership with the University of Nottingham. This collaboration aims to delve into the intricacies of how organisations navigate their ESG impacts, leveraging the expertise of legal and academic specialists to forge pathways towards sustainable and responsible business practices.

[Find out more](#) →

## Employment

## Choose your words wisely: Balancing inclusivity and employees' beliefs at work

In the landmark case of *Orwin v East Riding of Yorkshire Council*, the Employment Tribunal navigated the complex terrain of workplace inclusivity versus individual beliefs, setting a precedent on how employees can express their philosophical beliefs. This article by Thomas Mile, delves into the nuances of the case, highlighting the balance between fostering an inclusive environment and respecting personal convictions, a must-read for employers and employees alike in today's diverse workplace landscape.

[Read more](#) →

## Labour's employment law reforms: Employment Rights Bill unveiled

The UK Government has unveiled its ambitious Employment Rights Bill, following through on its manifesto pledge and the recent King's Speech, aiming to implement a sweeping reform of employment law within its first 100 days in office. This comprehensive Bill proposes 28 significant changes, including the abolition of the two year qualifying period for unfair dismissal claims and stringent measures against 'fire and rehire' practices, setting the stage for a transformative impact on both employers and employees across the nation.

[Read more](#) →

## Beyond the Bill: Exploring the horizon of new employment rights and proposed measures

In the wake of the Labour Government's commitment to enhancing employment rights, a new Employment Rights Bill has been introduced, promising significant reforms. Alongside this, the Government's 'Next Steps to Make Work Pay' policy paper outlines additional measures aimed at improving working conditions and ensuring fair pay, marking a pivotal moment for employers and the workforce alike.

[Read more](#) →

## What does the right to switch off mean for employers?

Sarah Linden explores the emerging concept of the 'right to switch off' for UK employers and its implications in the workplace. As the UK Government considers new legislation to protect employees' ability to disconnect outside working hours, this article dives into the potential impacts on employers, including changes in organisational culture and legal considerations

[Read more](#) →

## Manufacturing and industrials

### Food for Thought: Food and drink regulatory update: Autumn 2024

Read the Autumn edition of our quarterly regulatory update, by our dedicated food and drink team. In this issue, we look into crucial regulatory changes on the horizon for 2025, including food waste management and stricter junk food advertising controls, alongside revisiting cultured meats for pet foods and reflecting on the Labour government's future regulatory plans for the food and drink industry.

[Read more](#) →

## Key contact

Richard Nicholas

Partner



[richard.nicholas@brownejacobson.com](mailto:richard.nicholas@brownejacobson.com)

+44 (0)121 237 3992