

The Exposure Index

WHAT IT MEASURES

From 1 January 2027 employees can claim unfair dismissal after six months' service instead of two years, and the cap on compensation goes. The Index scores how exposed a group of employers is to that change, using three measures: how often they dismiss inside the new window, how repeatedly, and whether the decision is written down anywhere that could be produced. The average of the three is the score.

HOW TO READ IT

- 0-100** A score, not a percentage. Higher means more exposure.
- 56** The UK average across all 1,500 employers in the study.
- 3 parts** Shown separately, because the same score can come from different problems.

It is not a prediction of claims, and it cannot score one employer: all three inputs are shares of firms within a group.

RANK	SECTOR		INDEX	DISMISSED 6-24M	THREE OR MORE	NO DEDICATED SYSTEM	BASE
1	Recruitment & staffing		66/100	93%	47%	58%	150
2	Hospitality, food & leisure		62/100	86%	30%	72%	135
3	Health & social care		61/100	85%	35%	61%	110
4	Construction & skilled trades		60/100	82%	29%	69%	140
5	Business support services		58/100	74%	27%	73%	90
6	Transport, logistics & warehousing		56/100	78%	24%	66%	80
7	Retail, wholesale & motor trades		56/100	82%	25%	60%	154
8	IT, software & telecoms		54/100	73%	28%	63%	115
9	Manufacturing, energy & utilities		53/100	78%	21%	60%	120
10	Other professional services		52/100	76%	23%	58%	170
—	Public administration & defence*		52/100	72%	20%	64%	25
—	Agriculture, farming & fishing*		50/100	69%	23%	57%	35
11	Financial services		49/100	80%	18%	50%	80
12	Legal services		49/100	75%	18%	55%	51
—	Education*		44/100	62%	18%	51%	45
All UK SME employers			56/100	80%	27%	62%	1,500

Base: all employers, n=1,500. C1 and B1. Fieldwork 3 to 14 August 2026, UK employers with 10 to 500 staff. * base under 50, shown in place but not ranked. Ranked on the unrounded composite, so two rows can share a rounded score and hold different ranks.

BY COMPANY SIZE

Size moves the Index further than sector does: 10-49 employees score 51, 250-500 score 67. Bigger firms dismiss more often and repeat it more often.

BY REGION

Geography moves it least. Nine points separate Scotland (62) from the North East (53). Where an employer is matters far less than what it does.

WHAT A SCORE IS FOR

Two of the three components describe a business model: how often an employer dismisses inside the first two years, and how often it repeats that. Neither becomes unlawful in January. The third is a decision available this week at no cost, and it decides whether the other two are a risk or just a volume of decisions. **62% of UK SME employers keep no dedicated system for recording performance concerns.**

Calculate your own exposure score

Visit: hrlocker.com/reports/unfair-dismissal-uk-six-month-rule/

Free, ungated and no email required. An indicative self-assessment, not legal advice.