



# Oakleaf Partnership

## Regional Hubs, Market Distribution and Focus

Content by Rebecca Lancelles-Foskett: Director, Europe & UK Regions

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**Rebecca Lancelles- Foskett**  
Director - Europe & UK Regions



**“Proudly redefining the  
recruitment experience  
one person at a time.”**

## Regional Hubs, Market Distribution and Focus

### Regional Hubs

Our commitment to providing top HR services has led to the establishment of two strategically located regional hubs in key areas of the United Kingdom:

- **Birmingham:** Positioned to serve the Midlands and South West regions, our Birmingham hub caters to the diverse HR needs of businesses and professionals in these areas.
- **Manchester:** Our Manchester hub extends its reach to cover the North of England and Scotland, addressing the specific HR requirements of these regions.

### Market Distribution

Our examination of the market distribution reveals two key categories that constitute a significant portion of the HR talent landscape:

- **Specialist Markets (45%):** This segment includes professionals with focused expertise in specific HR domains such as Compensation & Benefits, Payroll and HR Analytics.
- **HR Generalist (25%):** HR Generalists possess a wide array of skills and knowledge, enabling them to manage various HR functions.
- Collectively, these two categories account for 70% of the market, underscoring the importance of achieving the right blend of specialised expertise and versatile HR support.

### Market Focus

As we continue to build upon our previous focus on Financial Services and Professional Services, we are observing a significant surge in Commerce and Industry sectors. Several key industries within this domain are experiencing substantial growth and demand for HR services:

- **Retail:** With ongoing transformations in consumer behaviour and the rapid shift towards e-commerce, the retail sector is in need of innovative HR strategies to adapt to the evolving landscape.
- **FMCG:** Fast-moving consumer goods companies require agile and adaptable HR approaches to navigate the ever-changing market dynamics.
- **Manufacturing:** The manufacturing sector's need for skilled professionals and efficient workforce management practices presents a wealth of opportunities for HR services.
- **Pharma:** As the pharmaceutical sector continues to grow and innovate, organisations are seeking HR partners who understand their unique talent needs and regulatory environment.
- **Healthcare:** The healthcare industry faces a range of HR challenges, including workforce shortages, regulatory compliance, and the need for continuous learning and development.

## Challenges & Trends

### Candidate Preferences

- Reluctance to travel for off-site roles more than three days per week: As work-life balance becomes increasingly important for job seekers, the reluctance to engage in frequent travel for off-site roles is a significant challenge.
- Preference for work-from-home options over higher monetary compensation: The pandemic has accelerated the shift towards remote work, with many candidates now prioritising work-from-home options over higher pay.

### Trends

- **M&A activity:** The increasing number of mergers and acquisitions is driving demand for HR professionals with project experience, particularly in the areas of employee onboarding, retention, and change management. Organisations undergoing M&A activity require skilled HR practitioners to ensure a smooth transition and integration process.
- **Organisational restructuring:** As businesses adapt to changing market conditions and strategic priorities, organisational restructuring is becoming more prevalent. HR professionals with project experience in this area are well-equipped to manage the complexities of workforce planning, talent management, and employee engagement during periods of change.
- **Digital transformation:** The rapid advancement of technology is driving the need for HR professionals with expertise in digital transformation projects. This includes implementing and managing HR information systems, developing digital learning and development programs, and fostering a culture of innovation within organisations.

## H2 Predictions: Anticipated Market Dynamics & Summary

As we look ahead to the second half of the year, several key trends and market dynamics are expected to shape the HR landscape. Our predictions for H2 include:

- A rise in job volumes across the North UK market: Economic growth and increased business activity in the North of England are likely to drive a surge in job opportunities across various sectors. Organisations must be prepared to compete for top talent in this region, with a focus on providing attractive employment packages and a positive work culture.

- Increased hiring within Law and other Professional Services sectors: The legal industry and other professional services sectors are projected to experience a boost in hiring activity. HR professionals with experience in these industries will be in high demand, particularly those with expertise in talent acquisition, learning and development, and employee engagement.
- Continued demand for HR Business Partnering and Reward roles: As organisations seek to align their HR strategies with overall business objectives, the need for skilled HR Business Partners and Reward professionals will remain strong. These roles are critical in developing and implementing effective HR policies and practices that support organisational success.

## Summary

We anticipate that competition in hiring across UK regions will persist, with a sustained demand for HR professionals in key roles such as HR Business Partnering and Reward. Commerce and Industry sectors are expected to maintain consistent hiring, with a particular emphasis on the previously highlighted industries.

To navigate these anticipated market dynamics successfully, organisations must remain agile and proactive in their HR strategies, focusing on attracting, developing, and retaining top talent. By staying attuned to the evolving trends and challenges, businesses can position themselves for long-term success and sustained growth.

**For more information on Oakleaf Partnership's Regional Hubs & Europe Team please visit:**

[oakleafpartnership.com/regions-hr](https://oakleafpartnership.com/regions-hr)

