

Fair Chance Business Alliance: driving inclusion, innovation, and business success

“Thrilled to see Virgin Management join the Fair Chance Business Alliance, which helps people with a criminal record find meaningful employment. A win-win for businesses and society.” Sir Richard Branson

Our mission

Fair Chance Business Alliance (FCBA) exists to create a better, fairer future for individuals, businesses and communities by recognising the value in every person, regardless of their past. We’re a powerful collaboration for change, equipping employers to unlock the potential of people with criminal records. Focused on purpose-driven inclusion, we empower businesses to be agents of social change while achieving sustainable success.

The case for action

For individuals	For businesses	For communities
<p>9.4 million adults of working age in the UK have a criminal record (<i>Ministry of Justice, 2024</i>). An additional 545 people receive a new criminal record every day (<i>Unlock 2024</i>).</p> <p>Most people with criminal records (90%) have neither been to prison nor committed a violent offence (<i>Prison Reform Trust, 2023</i>), but the majority of employers consider them ‘too high risk’ to hire (<i>Business Barometer, 2024</i>).</p> <p>People with criminal records often face multiple barriers to work – neurodivergence (<i>Criminal Justice Joint Inspection, 2021</i>), ethnic diversity (<i>Ministry of Justice, 2019</i>), and low socioeconomic status (<i>University of Birmingham 2021</i>) are all over-represented in the justice system.</p>	<p>There are 850,000 vacancies in the UK (<i>ONS, October 2024</i>), with 38% of businesses reporting hard-to-fill roles (<i>CIPD, 2024</i>). 62% of employers are suffering skills shortages (<i>Business Barometer, 2024</i>).</p> <p>55% of businesses say that they wouldn’t recruit a person with a criminal record (<i>Working Chance, 2022</i>), yet when you ask fair chance employers 86% rate people with criminal records as good at their job (<i>Working Chance, 2022</i>), and over 80% positively rate their reliability, motivation, attendance and performance (<i>Ministry of Justice, 2023</i>).</p> <p>Getting just one person back into full-time work after a conviction is worth over £24k in social value (<i>Social Value Portal</i>).</p>	<p>There is an annual loss of £11.5bn to GDP by excluding people with criminal records from work (FCBA estimate, based on <i>US CEPR, 2024</i>).</p> <p>People with criminal records who secure a job are 23% less likely to commit further crime (<i>Ministry of Justice, 2013</i>).</p> <p>Stable employment is one of the key factors in reducing reoffending – yet over 1 million people claiming out-of-work benefits have a criminal record (<i>Ministry of Justice, 2011</i>).</p> <p>Lower reoffending and a steady income mean fewer absent parents, stronger role models for children and safer communities.</p>

Who We Are

Founded and funded by employers, for employers, we are a purpose-led, not-for-profit company, seeking to make the recruitment of people with criminal records safe, sustainable and normal.

We were inspired by the success of the employer-led [Second Chance Business Coalition](#) in the US, which now counts over 50 major corporations as members. Here in the UK, we’ve developed our model to support every business, of every size, sector and region of the UK, to employ and progress the best people for their jobs.

The Fair Chance Charter

The cornerstone of the Alliance is our [Employment Charter](#), the world's first and only charter focused solely on the recruitment and progression of people with criminal records. A three-tier model (Bronze, Silver, Gold), it sets new independent standards for business excellence, enabling employers to address skill gaps, support career advancement and create life-changing opportunities, strengthening businesses and communities alike.

Unlike some other employment charters, this one ensures accountability and visibility. Self-assessment is not an option. Employers are independently assessed to check they are meeting each standard. Crucially, they must provide proof that they are actively recruiting people with criminal records within 18 months of achieving our Silver Tier.

Why Join the Fair Chance Business Alliance?

1. Tap Into New Talent Pools

One of the biggest challenges businesses face today is finding skilled and motivated workers. Through the Alliance, you will gain access to a talent pipeline that is often overlooked — individuals looking to reimagine their futures are eager to contribute and excel. From 2025, you'll be able to use our Jobs Board to leverage this untapped talent pool and reduce your hiring costs.

2. Achieve Your Diversity Goals

Those from low socio-economic backgrounds, ethnically diverse individuals, care leavers, veterans and people with neurodiversity are all over-represented in the criminal justice system. Any comprehensive social mobility, ethnic diversity or disability strategy must include supporting those with criminal records into good work too.

3. Strengthen Your Brand

Consumers, clients, and investors increasingly value businesses that prioritise diversity, equity, and inclusion. Aligning with our mission not only helps change lives but also demonstrates your commitment to making a meaningful social impact, positioning your company as a socially responsible leader, enhancing brand reputation and fostering trust among stakeholders

4. Influence Policy and Drive Industry Change

As a member of the Alliance, you'll gain exclusive access to advocacy initiatives that influence positive change in employment laws and regulation. You'll enjoy thought leadership opportunities to showcase your success, innovations and leadership in fair chance hiring through our platforms and speaking engagements.

5. Access Comprehensive Support and Resources

You won't be alone in your journey. We offer tailored support, including expert guidance on fair hiring practices. You'll also benefit from access to the latest research, best practice toolkits, and a network of like-minded business leaders who are committed to fostering a more inclusive economy.

6. Partner with leading voluntary sector organisations

As a member of the Alliance, you'll be introduced to a broad network of not-for-profit and voluntary sector organisations, creating mutually beneficial partnerships that strengthen your hiring and training initiatives. Leverage their expertise to enable you to deliver successful employee integration and long-term success.

Make a Difference - Join Us

We are building a movement where businesses like yours can lead the way in creating a fairer, more equitable world—while simultaneously gaining access to motivated, high-potential talent that will drive growth. By becoming a member, you will be part of a bold, innovative solution that not only benefits your business but also transforms lives and communities.

Join us in creating a fairer, more inclusive future where everyone, regardless of their past, can thrive.