



QUARTERLY UPDATE FOR THE THREE MONTHS ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025

10 October 2025



Financial Summary

Net fee performance for the quarter ended 30 September 2025 (Q1 26)

	Actual	YoY Growth LFL
Germany	(5)%	(7)%
United Kingdom & Ireland (UK&I)	(9)%	(9)%
Australia & New Zealand (ANZ)	(10)%	(5)%
Rest of World (RoW)	(9)%	(10)%
Total	(8)%	(8)%
Temp & Contracting	(5)%	(5)%
Permanent	(13)%	(13)%
Total	(8)%	(8)%

Note: Unless otherwise stated, all growth rates in this statement are LFL (like-for-like) net fees, representing year-on-year organic growth of continuing operations at constant currency.

Highlights

- Group net fees down 8% YoY with Temp & Contracting and Perm down 5% and 13% respectively
- Temp & Contracting volumes have rebuilt through the quarter in line with prior years. Perm markets remain challenging with longer time to hire
- Consultant net fee productivity growth improved to 7% YoY driven by our continued focus on resource allocation. Consultant headcount reduced by 4% sequentially in the quarter and by 15% YoY
- Initiatives to deliver further structural cost savings of c.£45m per annum by the end of FY29 are progressing well and consequently our periodic cost base⁽¹⁾ has improved to c.£74m from c.£75m in Q4
- c.£40m net debt (30 June 2025: £37.0m net cash) reflecting seasonal outflows and timing of month end payments
- The September net fee growth rate was in line with the quarter at minus 8% working day adjusted and we continue to expect near term market conditions to remain challenging

Dirk Hahn, Chief Executive Officer, commented:

"Despite ongoing macroeconomic uncertainty and challenging Perm conditions, we experienced a normal recovery in post-summer activity levels and trading was stable on a seasonally adjusted basis through the quarter. We continue to make significant strategic and operational progress, and were pleased to deliver 4% net fee growth with large Enterprise clients and good Temp & Contracting net fee growth in several of our Focus countries⁽²⁾.

Our initiatives to improve consultant net fee productivity in real terms through our Five Levers strategy and structurally lower our cost-base will be key drivers of profit recovery. Driven by strong consultant fee productivity growth and good cost discipline Group pre-exceptional operating profit was broadly stable YoY in Q1, including YoY increases in the UK&I and ANZ, and in line with our expectations. We are executing well against our strategy and I remain confident that we will benefit materially when markets recover."

(1) Due to our internal Group reporting cycle, the Group's annual cost base equates to c.12.3x our cost base per period.

(2) Our Focus countries are Austria, France, Italy, Japan, Poland, Spain, Switzerland, and the United States.

Group

Q1 trading overview; A normal seasonal recovery in net fees and good cost discipline

Group net fees decreased by 8% year-on-year on a like-for-like basis. On an actual basis, net fees also decreased by 8% due to a modest tailwind from exchange rate movements offset by our previously communicated action to close our operations in Chile and Colombia.

Temp & Contracting net fees decreased by 5% with activity levels and volumes rebuilding through the quarter in line with normal seasonal trends. Group Temp & Contracting volumes decreased by 8% YoY, including Germany down 9%, ANZ down 9%, UK&I down 12%, and RoW down 1%. The latter once again included strong Temp & Contracting net fee performances in several of our Focus countries, particularly Spain up 27%, Italy up 12% and USA up 2%. The average Group Temp margin was up 3% YoY.

Perm net fees decreased by 13%, driven by a 13% decline in volumes with the Group average Perm fee flat. Perm job flow and activity levels have returned to pre-summer levels in the majority of our markets but placement volumes remain subdued due to longer than normal time-to-hire.

The September growth rate was minus 8% on a working day adjusted basis, as net fees declined by 14% YoY in Perm and, on a working day adjusted basis, by 4% in Temp & Contracting.

Building a structurally more profitable and resilient business

We are making progress on our strategy to build a structurally more resilient, profitable and growing business underpinned by our culture and talented colleagues worldwide. Through our Five Levers, we will achieve this by increasing our exposure to the most in-demand future job categories, higher skilled and higher paid roles, growing industries and end-markets, large Enterprise clients, and Temp & Contracting. Our strategy is not 'one-size-fits-all' and we will tailor each region and country to its market and customer needs.

Business line prioritisation, optimised resource allocation, and scaling our eight Focus countries will establish a broader base and enable the Group to return to, and then exceed, our previous peak profits of £250m.

Sustaining our strong momentum in consultant net fee productivity

We continue to manage our consultant capacity on a business line basis and, despite challenging markets, our actions drove an acceleration in YoY average consultant net fee productivity growth to 7% in Q1 including notable increases in the UK&I, ANZ, and Germany. This continues the encouraging trend we demonstrated through FY25 and, on a seasonally adjusted basis, productivity has increased now for eight consecutive quarters.

The most potent driver of our sector-leading momentum over this period was a more forensic analysis of our business lines to reallocate consultants to those with the most attractive productivity and long-term structural growth opportunity.

Group consultant headcount decreased by 4% sequentially in the quarter and by 15% year-on-year.

Continued net fee growth with Enterprise clients in Q1

Our Enterprise business was again strong and we delivered 4% YoY net fee growth in Q1. We have grown within existing clients driven by headcount investment, higher fill rates, and geographic expansion.



Successfully providing a consistent global approach to how we engage with clients, how we contract with them, and how we deliver services, provides opportunities to capture more share of client spend by growing geographically and by cross-selling our suite of services. Enterprise currently has a substantial bid pipeline, particularly in North America, and our win rate has significantly improved over the last two years driven by our growing reputation for excellent client service and enhancements to our deal qualification discipline under a new global sales process.

Periodic constant currency cost base has improved further to c.£74m

Our programme to deliver c.£80m per annum structural cost savings by the end of FY29, comprising the c.£35m delivered in FY25 and the additional c.£45m target we communicated at our full year results, continues to progress well and our non-consultant headcount exited the quarter down 17% YoY. Consequently, our cost base on a periodic and constant currency basis has improved to c.£74m from c.£75m in Q4 25.

Trading outlook

Given ongoing macroeconomic uncertainty, we expect near term market conditions to remain challenging and, although we have limited forward visibility, we believe this is likely to persist through FY26.

We were pleased with our net fee productivity through Q1 and believe our Group consultant headcount capacity is appropriate for current market conditions and therefore expect it to remain broadly stable in Q2 as we balance focused investment in high performing and potential business lines with improving productivity in more challenging areas.

In addition, we will continue to structurally reduce our cost base, to position Hays strongly for when end markets recover.

There are no material working-day impacts anticipated in either H1 26 or FY26.

Divisional Net Fee Analysis

	Temp & Contracting		Perm		Total	
	% of Divisional net fees	LFL	% of Divisional net fees	LFL	% of Group net fees	LFL
Germany	85%	(5)%	15%	(18)%	33%	(7)%
United Kingdom & Ireland	57%	(10)%	43%	(9)%	20%	(9)%
Australia & New Zealand	69%	(2)%	31%	(9)%	12%	(5)%
Rest of World	44%	(4)%	56%	(14)%	35%	(10)%
Total	63%	(5)%	37%	(13)%	100%	(8)%

Germany: Resilience in Contracting; Temp and Perm remain challenging

Germany net fees were down 7%. Temp & Contracting net fees decreased by 5% with volumes down 9%. Contracting volumes remain solid overall with fewer finishers offsetting lower numbers of starters. In addition, we saw a modest YoY reduction in average hours worked through the summer offset by improved margin and mix. In Temp, volumes and starter numbers remain weak, although automotive headwinds steadied over the summer and the sector contributed only c.8% of divisional total net fees in the quarter, down from c.14% two years ago. Perm remained challenging and net fees decreased by 18%.

Our largest specialism of Technology, 35% of Germany net fees, decreased by 1%, with our second largest, Engineering, down 16%. Accountancy & Finance was down 15%. Construction & Property performed strongly again and increased by 44% driven by our focus on infrastructure and the energy sector. Public sector net fees, which represented 17% of Germany, was flat.

Consultant headcount decreased by 2% in the quarter and decreased by 13% year-on-year. Driven by our ongoing resource allocation and back-office efficiency initiatives, consultant net fee productivity increased by 6% YoY in Q1 and non-consultant headcount reduced further.

United Kingdom & Ireland: Improved productivity & cost discipline

Net fees in the United Kingdom & Ireland decreased by 9% with Temp & Contracting and Perm down 10% and 9% respectively. Temp & Contracting net fees were subdued through the quarter, notably in the Public sector, and Perm remained challenging but stable. The Private sector (74% of UK&I net fees) declined by 5% YoY but the Public sector was tougher, down 20%.

Most regions traded broadly in line with the overall UK&I division. Ireland decreased by 7%.

At the specialism level, Accountancy & Finance and Technology decreased by 7% and 2% respectively. Construction & Property decreased by 12% YoY. Enterprise performed strongly with net fees up 16%.

We reduced consultant headcount by 7% in the quarter and by 25% year-on-year. We have taken decisive action over the last nine months to improve consultant net fee productivity which increased by 14% YoY in Q1 and have made good progress with operational efficiency. Our sustained focus on cost discipline, including initiatives to delay

management and optimise our office portfolio, will drive a further structural improvement in costs in FY26. As a result of these actions, pre-exceptional operating profit in the UK&I increased YoY in Q1.

Australia & New Zealand: Stable activity through the quarter

Net fees in Australia & New Zealand fell by 5% with activity stable through the quarter. Temp & Contracting decreased by 2%, although conversion of Perm activity remained challenging and Perm net fees were down 9%. Private sector net fees, 64% of ANZ, decreased by 3%, with the Public sector again tougher and down 7%.

Australia net fees decreased by 4%. Our largest regions of New South Wales and Victoria, which together represented 47% of Australia net fees, decreased by 5% and 7% respectively. ACT and Queensland fell by 14% and 4%, with Western Australia up 3%. New Zealand, 5% of ANZ net fees, remained tough and decreased by 17%.

At the ANZ specialism level, Construction & Property (20% of ANZ net fees) declined by 4%, Technology decreased by 2%, Accountancy & Finance decreased by 5%, and Office Support was flat.

Consultant headcount decreased by 4% in the quarter and by 11% year-on-year. Driven by our focus on resource allocation, consultant net fee productivity increased by 5% YoY in Q1. As a result of these actions, pre-exceptional operating profit in ANZ increased YoY in Q1.

Rest of World: EMEA remains challenging; Growth in Asia

Net fees in our Rest of World division, comprising 26 countries, decreased by 10% with Temp & Contracting down 4% and Perm down 14%. Our actual growth rate includes the impact from our previously communicated action to close our operations in Chile and Colombia.

EMEA ex-Germany (63% of RoW) net fees decreased by 13%. France, our largest RoW country, remained tough and loss-making with net fees down 20% but our actions to address productivity and costs are being delivered on plan. Spain and Portugal performed strongly, up 18% and 5%, whereas Switzerland, Italy and Poland were down 20%, 15% and 11% respectively.

The Americas (20% of RoW) net fees decreased by 10%. Following a subdued summer but stronger September and improving outlook, the US and Canada were down 6% and 18% respectively. Latam, down 14%, was again challenging but stable.

Asia (17% of RoW) net fees increased by 2%, with mixed but improved activity overall through the quarter. Japan grew by 5% as our strategy to develop local language recruitment services alongside our existing multinational clients drove record net fees in Q1. Mainland China and Hong Kong increased by 2% and 1% respectively, and we delivered good growth in our Temp & Contracting business.

RoW consultant headcount decreased by 4% in the quarter and was down 13% year-on-year.

Cash flow and balance sheet

Net debt of c.£40m (30 June 2025: £37.0m net cash) reflected normal seasonal outflows and timing of month end payments, with DSOs maintained through the quarter at 37 days.



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Conference call

James Hilton and Kean Marden will conduct a conference call for analysts and investors at 9:00am United Kingdom time on 10th October 2025. Participants are invited to register via the URL link below:

<https://register-conf.media-server.com/register/BI169debbb683f409db698c736e7c7226b>

Once registered, you will receive a confirmation email, with the details of the call and a personal login link and PIN which will place you directly into the call, without the need to speak to an operator. The call will be recorded and will also be available for playback via [the results centre](#) on our investor website.

Reporting calendar

Trading update for the quarter ending 31 December 2025 (Q2 26)	14 January 2026
Interim results for the six months ending 31 December 2025 (H1 26)	25 February 2026
Trading update for the quarter ending 31 March 2026 (Q3 26)	16 April 2026

Hays Group overview

As at 30 September 2025, Hays had c.9,300 employees in 205 offices in 31 countries. In many of our global markets, the vast majority of professional and skilled recruitment is still done in-house, with minimal outsourcing to recruitment agencies, which presents substantial long-term structural growth opportunities. This has been a key driver of the diversification and internationalisation of the Group, with the International business representing 80% of the Group's net fees in FY25, compared with 25% in FY05.

Our consultants work in a broad range of industries covering recruitment in 21 professional and skilled specialisms. Our four largest specialisms of Technology (25% of Group net fees), Accountancy & Finance (15%), Engineering (11%) and Construction & Property (11%) collectively represented c.62% of Group net fees in FY25.

In addition to our international and sectoral diversification, in FY25 the Group's net fees were generated 62% from Temp & Contracting and 38% from Permanent placement markets. This well-diversified business model continues to be a key driver of the Group's financial performance.

Purpose, Net Zero, Equity and our Communities

Our purpose is to benefit society by investing in lifelong partnerships that empower people and organisations to succeed, creating opportunities and improving lives. Our valued behaviours underpin our proactive and bold approach to how we do business, while recognising the importance of acting with integrity. We champion our customers and our communities, realising the benefit of shared-value creation as a key driver for a more sustainable and equitable future.



Linked to this and our commitment to Environmental, Social & Governance (ESG) matters, Hays has shaped its Sustainability Framework around the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG's), and further details can be found on [pages 54-78 of our FY25 Annual report](#). Hays is proud to be a part of the FTSE4Good Index Series.

Cautionary statement

This Quarterly Update (the "Report") has been prepared in accordance with the Disclosure Guidance and Transparency Rules of the UK Financial Conduct Authority and is not audited. No representation or warranty, express or implied, is or will be made in relation to the accuracy, fairness or completeness of the information or opinions contained in this Report. Statements in this Report reflect the knowledge and information available at the time of its preparation. Certain statements included or incorporated by reference within this Report may constitute "forward-looking statements" in respect of the Group's operations, performance, prospects and/or financial condition. By their nature, forward-looking statements involve a number of risks, uncertainties and assumptions and actual results or events may differ materially from those expressed or implied by those statements. Accordingly, no assurance can be given that any particular expectation will be met and reliance shall not be placed on any forward-looking statement. Additionally, forward-looking statements regarding past trends or activities shall not be taken as a representation that such trends or activities will continue in the future. The information contained in this Report is subject to change without notice and no responsibility or obligation is accepted to update or revise any forward-looking statement resulting from new information, future events or otherwise. Nothing in this Report shall be construed as a profit forecast. This Report does not constitute or form part of any offer or invitation to sell, or any solicitation of any offer to purchase or subscribe for any shares in the Company, nor shall it or any part of it or the fact of its distribution form the basis of, or be relied on in connection with, any contract or commitment or investment decisions relating thereto, nor does it constitute a recommendation regarding the shares of the Company or any invitation or inducement to engage in investment activity under section 21 of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000. Past performance cannot be relied upon as a guide to future performance. Liability arising from anything in this Report shall be governed by English Law, and neither the Company nor any of its affiliates, advisors or representatives shall have any liability whatsoever (in negligence or otherwise) for any loss howsoever arising from any use of this Report or its contents or otherwise arising in connection with this Report. Nothing in this Report shall exclude any liability under applicable laws that cannot be excluded in accordance with such laws.

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