



Staff Handbook Human Resources Policies and Procedures

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Access Floors Limited

Est. 2004



Since 2004, Access Floors Limited have been committed to providing quality flooring solutions.

Initially specialising in the supply and installation of raised access floors, the company has since built an excellent reputation for delivering a professional service to meet the needs of our clients for all manner of associated floor finishes; whether it be in the form of Hard Finishes such as tiling and timber, or Soft Finishes such as carpet or vinyl. In recent years AFL has been operating in the Aviation Industry, providing our expertise on flooring installations for various

projects at airports across the UK.

Within Access Floors Limited we are committed to achieving high standards of quality in all areas of our activities to ensure that we meet and, in many cases, exceed customer expectations. In all cases, rigid quality control procedures are in place from the procurement through to completion of the installation process. With our vast knowledge and experience within the commercial flooring supply and installation industry, we offer an exceptional service through all phases of projects that we are involved in.

We also pride ourselves in working safely together to achieve the best results whilst maintaining high standards of Health and Safety. At AFL, we believe we all have a right to expect to work in an environment where concerns for wellbeing are paramount. Our record of not having had a single reportable accident or incident on site since our inception, is testament to the continued effectiveness of the systems we have in place for the welfare of our staff.

Access Floors Limited - Quality without Compromise.

Accident Investigation Policy

Policy wording

The Company will investigate all accidents and near misses to determine their underlying cause for the purpose of ensuring that there is no recurrence and using the lessons learnt to improve health and safety performance within the Company. The Company adopts a no blame culture when investigating accidents for the purpose of improving health and safety performance.

The type and level of the investigation will be appropriate to the circumstances. Those involved in the accident investigation will be competent to be so and will be provided with adequate training, information and support. The investigation report will provide a factual account of the accident, draw objective conclusions and identify practical recommendations. Agreed actions will be implemented within realistic timescales.

In the event of an external investigation by the enforcement authorities, full cooperation will be provided.

Procedure wording

Once the area has been made safe the accident should be investigated promptly by the health and safety manager, managing director or by the person that he/she nominates [department manager]. The decision as to who will investigate the accident will be made after consideration of the type of accident. Should this be a person nominated by the MD, which could be the H&S manager or the site manager.

The competent person conducting the investigation will appoint an investigation team if necessary and obtain specialist advice from technical experts when required. An accident investigation form should be used to record the details of the investigation. The level and type of investigation will depend on the circumstances and severity (or potential severity) of the accident.

The person conducting the investigation will (if necessary):

- obtain factual information regarding the accident, including the accident location, the time and date of the accident, the work activity being undertaken, the people involved and the sequence of events;
- conduct an inspection of the accident site once the area has been made safe, and take appropriate photographs;
- obtain written statements from all relevant parties;
- conduct and document interviews with relevant personnel;
- if relevant, obtain physical evidence (equipment, damaged products, etc);
- obtain and review relevant documentation (training, inspection, maintenance records, work procedures, etc); and
- review existing relevant risk assessments and corresponding arrangements.

Once the facts have been obtained and any required testing, analysis, etc completed, the underlying causes should be established. The investigation team should draw conclusions and identify practical recommendations to ensure that the accident does not recur. Assistance should be sought from relevant parties if required. The recommendations must be agreed with the relevant staff and the actions prioritised. The accident investigator (or nominated person) will track the actions to ensure that they are completed within the given timescales.

Relevant risk assessments will be reviewed and, where necessary, updated following the accident report.

The investigation report and form and any corresponding information will be kept for a minimum of three years.

Overseas Adoption Leave Policy

Introduction to adoption rights and benefits

This policy sets out the rights of employees who adopt a child from overseas to statutory adoption leave and pay.

An employee who adopts a child from overseas and has received "official notification" in respect of that child is entitled to a period of adoption leave provided that he/she has at least 26 weeks' continuous service, ending with the week in which the official notification was received or starting with the week in which his/her employment with the Company began.

An official notification is defined as written notification, issued by or on behalf of the "relevant domestic authority", that it is prepared to issue, or has already issued and sent, a certificate to the overseas authority concerned with the child's adoption, confirming that the adopter is eligible to adopt and has been assessed and approved as being a suitable adoptive parent.

The relevant domestic authority is defined as the Secretary of State, except in the case of an adopter to whom the Intercountry Adoption (Hague Convention) Regulations 2003 apply and who is habitually resident in Wales, in which case it is the National Assembly for Wales, or one to whom the Intercountry Adoption (Hague Convention) (Scotland) Regulations 2003 apply and who is habitually resident in Scotland, in which case it is the Scottish Ministers.

The employee's entitlement is to take up to 26 weeks' ordinary adoption leave followed immediately by up to 26 weeks' additional adoption leave. The employee's maximum entitlement is thus to take up to 52 weeks' adoption leave.

All employees who take adoption leave have the right to return to work at any time during either ordinary adoption leave or additional adoption leave subject to their following the correct notification procedures as set out below.

Who qualifies for statutory adoption pay and how much will the employee receive?

Employees who qualify for adoption leave will also qualify for statutory adoption pay provided that their average weekly earnings are not less than the lower earnings limit for national insurance contributions. Statutory adoption pay is payable for up to 39 weeks at a rate set by the Government for the relevant tax year, or at 90% of the employee's average weekly earnings, if this figure is lower than the Government's set weekly rate.

Statutory adoption pay is treated as earnings and is therefore subject to PAYE and national insurance deductions.

Timing of adoption leave

Adoption leave can start on the day on which the child enters Great Britain or on a chosen date no later than 28 days after the child enters Great Britain.

In order to make administration as easy as possible, the employee should discuss the timing of his/her adoption leave with his/her immediate manager as early as possible.

Notice requirements

In order to be entitled to take adoption leave and receive statutory adoption pay, the employee is required to give the Company written notification of his/her intention to take adoption leave. No later than 28 days after the date he/she receives the official notification, or the date on which he/she completes 26 weeks' continuous service with the Company (whichever is later), he/she must give notice of both the date the official notification was received and the date the child is expected to enter Great Britain.

At least 28 days prior to the date that he/she has chosen as the beginning of his/her adoption leave period, he/she must give notice of the chosen start date, and a declaration that he/she has chosen to receive statutory adoption pay and not statutory paternity pay (adoption). He/she must also produce a copy of the official notification.

Within 28 days of the child's entry into Great Britain the employee must inform the Company of the date of entry and provide evidence of this date in the form of a plane ticket or copies of entry clearance documents.

The employee is permitted to bring forward his/her adoption leave start date, provided that he/she advises the Company in writing at least 28 days before the new start date or, if that is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable. The employee may also postpone his/her adoption leave start date, provided that he/she advises the Company in writing at least 28 days before the original proposed start date or, if that is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable.

Any failure to give proper notice of an intention to start adoption leave will be regarded as a disciplinary offence, leading potentially to disciplinary sanctions for misconduct if appropriate.

Within 28 days of receiving the employee's notice of the date on which he/she intends to begin his/her adoption leave, the Company will write to the employee confirming the latest date on which the employee must return to work after adoption leave. Where the employee has provided notice of a revised start date, within 28 days of the date on which the employee's adoption leave period began, the Company will write to the employee confirming the latest date on which the employee must return to work after adoption leave.

Rights during adoption leave

During ordinary adoption leave and additional adoption leave, all terms and conditions of the employee's contract except normal pay will continue. Salary will be replaced by statutory adoption pay if the employee is eligible to receive it.

This means that, while sums payable by way of wages or salary will cease, all other benefits will remain in place.

Employees are encouraged to take any outstanding holiday due to them before the commencement of adoption leave. Employees are reminded that holiday must be taken in the year that it is earned.

Contact during adoption leave

The Company reserves the right to maintain reasonable contact with employees during adoption leave. This may be to discuss employees' plans for return to work, to discuss any special arrangements to be made or training to be given to ease their return to work or to update them on developments at work during their absence.

Keeping-in-touch days

Employees can agree to work for the Company (or to attend training) for up to 10 days during their adoption leave without that work bringing their adoption leave to an end and without loss of a week's statutory adoption pay. These are known as "keeping-in-touch" days. Any work carried out on a day shall constitute a day's work for these purposes.

The Company has no right to require employees to carry out any work and employees have no right to undertake any work during their adoption leave. Any work undertaken, including the amount of salary paid for any work done on keeping-in-touch days, is entirely a matter for agreement between employees and the Company.

Returning to work after adoption leave

The employee may return to work at any time during ordinary adoption leave or additional adoption leave, provided that he/she gives the appropriate notification. Alternatively, the employee may take his/her full period of adoption leave entitlement and return to work at the end of this period. If the employee wishes to return before the full period of adoption leave has elapsed, he/she must give at least eight weeks' notice in writing to the Company of the date on which he/she intends to return.

The employee has the right to resume working in the same job if returning to work from ordinary adoption leave. If the employee returns to work after a period of additional adoption leave, he/she is entitled to return either to the same job, or if this is not reasonably practicable, to another suitable job that is on terms and conditions not less favourable.

Failure to return to work by the end of adoption leave will be treated as an unauthorised absence unless the employee is sick and produces a current medical certificate before the end of the adoption leave period.

If the employee decides during adoption leave that he/she does not wish to return to work, he/she should give written notice of resignation to the Company as soon as possible and in accordance with the terms of his/her contract of employment.

Transfer of adoption leave

If an employee proposes to return to work by giving proper notification, his/her spouse, civil partner or partner may be eligible to take up to 26 weeks' additional paternity leave (and additional statutory paternity pay) once he/she has returned to work.

The earliest that additional paternity leave may commence is 20 weeks after the date on which the adopted child enters Great Britain and it must end 12 months after the date of entry. The minimum period of additional paternity leave is two consecutive weeks and the maximum period is 26 weeks.

Further details should be obtained from the employee's spouse's or partner's employer. He/she will be required to submit a written and signed declaration form to that employer, which may also make additional enquiries of the Company to verify its employee's entitlement to additional paternity leave and pay.

Introduction to adoption rights and benefits

This policy sets out the rights of employees to statutory adoption leave and pay.

An employee who adopts a child through an approved adoption agency is entitled to up to 52 weeks' adoption leave provided that he/she has at least 26 weeks' continuous service calculated as at the week in which notification of matching is given by the adoption agency.

The employee's entitlement is to take up to 26 weeks' ordinary adoption leave followed immediately by up to 26 weeks' additional adoption leave. The employee's maximum entitlement is thus to take up to 52 weeks' adoption leave.

All employees who take adoption leave have the right to return to work at any time during either ordinary adoption leave or additional adoption leave subject to their following the correct notification procedures as set out below.

Who qualifies for statutory adoption pay and how much will the employee receive?

Employees who qualify for adoption leave will also qualify for statutory adoption pay provided that their average weekly earnings are not less than the lower earnings limit for national insurance contributions. Statutory adoption pay is payable for up to 39 weeks at a rate set by the Government for the relevant tax year, or at 90% of the employee's average weekly earnings, if this figure is lower than the Government's set weekly rate.

Statutory adoption pay is treated as earnings and is therefore subject to PAYE and national insurance deductions.

Timing of adoption leave

Adoption leave can start on the day the child is placed for adoption, or up to 14 days earlier.

In order to make administration as easy as possible, the employee should discuss the timing of his/her adoption leave with his/her immediate manager as early as possible.

Notice requirements

In order to be entitled to take adoption leave and receive statutory adoption pay, the employee is required to give the Company written notification of his/her intention to take adoption leave no later than seven days after the date on which notification of the match with the child was provided by the adoption agency. Notice, which must be in writing if the Company requests it, must specify the date the child is expected to be placed with the employee for adoption and the date the employee intends his/her adoption leave to start.

The employee is permitted to bring forward his/her adoption leave start date, provided that he/she advises the Company in writing at least 28 days before the new start date or, if that is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable. The employee may also postpone his/her adoption leave start date, provided that he/she advises the Company in writing at least 28 days before the original proposed start date or, if that is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable. The employee must also, if the Company requests it, provide evidence of

entitlement to adoption leave and pay by producing a "matching certificate" from the adoption agency.

Any failure to give proper notice of an intention to start adoption leave will be regarded as a disciplinary offence, leading potentially to disciplinary sanctions for misconduct if appropriate.

Within 28 days of receiving the employee's notice of intention to take adoption leave, the Company will write to the employee confirming the latest date on which the employee must return to work after adoption leave.

Rights during adoption leave

During ordinary adoption leave and additional adoption leave, all terms and conditions of the employee's contract except normal pay will continue. [Salary/wages] will be replaced by statutory adoption pay if the employee is eligible for it.

This means that, while sums payable by way of wages or salary will cease, all other benefits will remain in place.

Employees are encouraged to take any outstanding holiday due to them before the commencement of adoption leave. Employees are reminded that holiday must be taken in the year that it is earned.

Contact during adoption leave

The Company reserves the right to maintain reasonable contact with employees during adoption leave. This may be to discuss employees' plans for return to work, to discuss any special arrangements to be made or training to be given to ease their return to work or to update them on developments at work during their absence.

Keeping-in-touch days

Employees can agree to work for the Company (or to attend training) for up to 10 days during their adoption leave without that work bringing their adoption leave to an end and without loss of a week's statutory adoption pay. These are known as "keeping-in-touch" days. Any work carried out on a day shall constitute a day's work for these purposes.

The Company has no right to require employees to carry out any work and employees have no right to undertake any work during their adoption leave. Any work undertaken, and the amount of salary paid for any work done on keeping-in-touch days, is entirely a matter for agreement between employees and the Company.

Returning to work after adoption leave

The employee may return to work at any time during ordinary adoption leave or additional adoption leave, provided that he/she gives the appropriate notification. Alternatively, the employee may take his/her full period of adoption leave entitlement and return to work at the end of this period. If the employee wishes to return before the full period of adoption leave

has elapsed, he/she must give at least eight weeks' notice in writing to the Company of the date on which he/she intends to return.

The employee has the right to resume working in the same job if returning to work from ordinary adoption leave. If the employee returns to work after a period of additional adoption leave, he/she is entitled to return either to the same job, or if this is not reasonably practicable, to another suitable job that is on terms and conditions not less favourable.

Failure to return to work by the end of adoption leave will be treated as an unauthorised absence unless the employee is sick and produces a current medical certificate before the end of the adoption leave period.

If the employee decides during adoption leave that he/she does not wish to return to work, he/she should give written notice of resignation to the Company as soon as possible and in accordance with the terms of his/her contract of employment.

Transfer of adoption leave

If an employee proposes to return to work by giving proper notification, his/her spouse, civil partner or partner may be eligible to take as additional paternity leave (and additional statutory paternity pay) once he/she has returned to work.

The earliest that additional paternity leave may commence is 20 weeks after the adopted child's placement and it must end no later than 12 months after the date of placement. The minimum period of additional paternity leave is two consecutive weeks and the maximum period is 26 weeks.

Further details should be obtained from the employee's spouse's or partner's employer. He/she will be required to submit a written and signed declaration form to that employer, which may also make additional enquiries of the Company to verify its employee's entitlement to additional paternity leave and pay.

Alcohol and Substance Abuse Policy and Procedure

Policy wording

The Company is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its employees and those affected by its activities. It will take all reasonable steps to reduce, if not eliminate, the risk of injuries or incidents occurring due to individuals suffering from the effects of alcohol or substance abuse. This policy applies to all employees and all persons coming onto the Company premises. Including when staff work on customer sites.

The Company will take all reasonable steps to prevent employees [and contractors] carrying out work-related activities if they are considered to be unfit/unsafe to undertake the work as a result of alcohol consumption or substance abuse.

The Company expressly prohibits the use of any illegal drugs or any prescription drugs that have not been prescribed for the user. It is a criminal offence to be in possession of, use or distribute an illicit substance. If any such incidents take place on company premises, in company vehicles or at a company function, they will be regarded as serious, will be investigated by the Company, and may lead to disciplinary action and possible reporting to the police.

Procedure wording

No employee or other person under the Company's control shall, in connection with any work-related activity:

- report, or endeavour to report, for duty having consumed drugs or alcohol likely to render him/her unfit and/or unsafe for work;
- consume or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on duty unless, in the case of alcohol, with the agreement of line management for the purposes of official company entertaining;
- store drugs or alcohol in personal areas such as lockers and desk drawers; or
- attempt to sell or give drugs or alcohol to any other employee or other person on the company premises.

Employees must inform their line manager, or the Human Resources Manager regarding any prescribed medication that may have an effect on their ability to carry out their work safely and must follow any instructions subsequently given. Drugs that cause drowsiness must not be used while at work.

Any employee suffering from drug or alcohol dependency should declare such dependency, and the Company will subsequently provide reasonable assistance, treating absences for treatment and/or rehabilitation as any other sickness absence. (Failure to accept help or continue with treatment will render the employee liable to normal disciplinary procedures.)

Attendance procedure

Procedure wording

The organisation aims to encourage all its employees to maximise their attendance at work. However, it is recognised that a certain level of absence from work is inevitable for a variety of reasons, including sickness. [For guidelines on sickness absence, see the organisation's separate policies on long-term sickness absence and short-term sickness absence.]

While the organisation understands that there will inevitably be some absence among employees, it must also pay due regard to its business needs. If an employee is frequently absent from work or is absent for a lengthy period (for whatever reasons), this can damage efficiency and productivity, and place an additional burden of work on the employee's colleagues. By implementing this policy/procedure, the organisation aims to strike a reasonable balance between the pursuit of its business needs and the genuine needs of employees to be absent from work because of sickness or for family, domestic or other reasons. The key aim of the policy/procedure is to encourage reliable attendance among all employees, so that a dependable staffing base can be established to meet the organisation's needs.

All employee absences will be counted for the purpose of this policy/procedure except approved holidays, family leave periods (e.g. maternity leave), approved compassionate or special leave, pregnancy-related absences, absences resulting from a workplace accident, and (unless it is justifiable to include them) absences that are related to an employee's disability.

The application of this attendance policy/procedure does not imply that an employee is doing, or has done, anything wrong. The procedure is a means of managing attendance and should not be confused with the disciplinary procedure.

Overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy/procedure lies with the Managing Director.

Procedure

Managers responsible for staff are expected to manage and control their employees' attendance.

This procedure has three stages and involves the application of absence "trigger points". It also involves the allocation of responsibility to individual line managers to interview any employee whose level of absence has reached a defined trigger point and, depending on the circumstances, issue a warning about unsatisfactory attendance.

Stage 1 of the procedure is activated at or after:

- 12 working days' absence in any 12-month period; or
- Four separate occasions of absence in any 12-month period.

The result of an employee reaching stage 1 of the attendance procedure will be an attendance review meeting with the line manager, which will normally result in a first written warning for unsatisfactory attendance.

Stage 2 of the procedure is activated if at any time during the following 12 months the employee has:

- 10 working days' absence in total; or
- three separate occasions of absence.

The result of reaching stage 2 will be an attendance review meeting with the line manager, which will normally result in a second written warning.

Stage 3 of the procedure involves a repeat of the stage 2 trigger points. Reaching stage 3 of the procedure will normally result in the employee's dismissal, unless there are mitigating factors making it reasonable for the employer to decide not to dismiss.

Where an employee has triggered stage 1 of the attendance procedure, but his/her level of attendance improves so that it falls below the relevant trigger point during the following 12 months, the employee will be removed from the procedure.

Where the attendance level of an employee who has reached stage 2 of the procedure falls below the trigger point for the next period, he/she will automatically revert to the previous stage of the procedure for the following 12 months.

Managers may, in appropriate circumstances, use their discretion to discount certain absences (for example on compassionate grounds), and not issue a first or second written warning where stage 1 or 2 of the procedure has been triggered. However, an attendance review meeting should still take place in these circumstances. If an exception is to be made, the reason for it should be discussed and clearly recorded. Similarly, the employer may decide not to dismiss an employee who has reached stage 3 of the procedure if there are special circumstances justifying this course of action. Again, a record should be made of the reasons for the decision.

Whenever a trigger point is activated, the manager should take the following actions:

- Check the employee's absence record to gain an accurate assessment of the number of days' absence that he/she has had and the number of separate occasions on which he/she has been absent.
- Write to the employee inviting him/her to a formal attendance review meeting, enclosing a statement summarising the employee's periods of absence during the relevant defined time period and advising him/her of the right to be accompanied by a fellow worker or trade union official at the meeting.
- Notify the HR department that an attendance review meeting is being set up with the employee. A member of HR department may elect to be present at the meeting.
- At the meeting, invite the employee to explain the reasons for his/her absences, and give him/her the opportunity to put forward any mitigating factors.
- Ensure that the employee understands the requirements of the attendance procedure, the reasons why the procedure is in place, the stage that he/she has reached in the procedure, and the possible consequences of a continuing unsatisfactory level of attendance.
- Enquire whether there is anything that the manager can do to facilitate an improvement in the employee's level of attendance.
- Keep a record of the key points discussed at the meeting and the outcome.

- After a stage 1 or stage 2 meeting, issue a written warning for unsatisfactory attendance, unless the circumstances merit a different approach.
- If the meeting was a stage 3 meeting, the matter should be referred to the Human Resources Manager and the Managing Director who will, in conjunction with the line manager, consider whether or not the employee should be dismissed.

Payment of Basic Salary

Policy wording

Salaries for permanent and temporary members of staff (excluding agency workers) are paid monthly by transfer directly into each individual's bank or building society account.

Payments to employees are made on the last working day of each month. (Payments to casual workers, freelancers and contractors are made in line with the contractual terms agreed following approval of their invoice)

Employees will receive an itemised pay statement of their earnings and deductions on the date on which they are paid.

It is the responsibility of each employee to ensure that the organisation:

- has details of his/her bank or building society account number and sort code;
- is advised of any changes to his/her bank or building society account; and
- is told about any payment anomalies that the employee discovers (eg overpayment of wages).

Employees who have any queries or problems concerning payment of their salary should contact their Line Manager in the first instance.

Levels of basic pay

The organisation is committed to ensuring that:

- its salaries remain competitive in the labour market, through conducting an annual pay review, paying individuals in line with normal industry practice and standards, and benchmarking salaries against other employers;
- it recognises individual performance and rewards employees financially for this through merit pay;
- it regularly consults staff and employee representatives on pay levels and during the annual pay review;
- individuals are not discriminated against because of gender, marital or civil partnership status, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, or because they work part time or on a fixed-term contract; and
- workers are paid at the level of at least the national minimum wage.

Pay reviews

Employees' basic rates of pay will normally be reviewed annually in December, although any increases will be at the absolute discretion of the organisation and will be implemented with effect from the 1st January following the review. Reviews may take place at other times of the year to reflect a change in circumstances. Any resulting changes to pay will be notified to employees in writing.

Company Maternity Policy

Policy wording

Introduction

This policy sets out the statutory rights and responsibilities of employees who are pregnant or have recently given birth and gives details of the arrangements for antenatal care, pregnancy-related illness, and maternity leave and pay.

The organisation recognises that, from time to time, employees may have questions or concerns relating to their maternity rights. It is the organisation's policy to encourage open discussion with employees to ensure that questions and problems can be resolved as quickly as possible. As the maternity provisions are complex, if an employee becomes pregnant she should clarify the relevant procedures with [name] to ensure that they are followed correctly.

The following definitions are used in this policy:

"Expected week of childbirth" means the week, starting on a Sunday, during which the employee's doctor or midwife expects her to give birth.

"Qualifying week" means the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth.

Notification of pregnancy

On becoming pregnant, an employee should notify her line manager as soon as possible. This is important as there are health and safety considerations for the organisation.

By the end of the qualifying week, or as soon as reasonably practicable afterwards, the employee is required to inform the organisation in writing of:

- the fact that she is pregnant;
- her expected week of childbirth; and
- the date on which she intends to start her maternity leave.

The employee must also provide a MAT B1 form, which is a certificate from a doctor or midwife confirming the expected week of childbirth. The form must have either the doctor's name and address or the midwife's name and registration number on it.

The employee is permitted to bring forward her maternity leave start date, provided that she advises the organisation in writing at least 28 days before the new start date or, if that is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable. The employee may also postpone her maternity leave start date, provided that she advises the organisation in writing at least 28 days before the original proposed start date or, if that is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable.

The organisation will formally respond in writing to the employee's notification of her leave plans within 28 days, confirming the date on which she is expected to return to work if she takes her full 52-week entitlement to maternity leave.

Time off for antenatal care

Once an employee has advised the organisation that she is pregnant, she will be entitled not to be unreasonably refused paid time off work to attend antenatal appointments as advised by her doctor, registered midwife or registered health visitor.

In order to be entitled to take time off for antenatal care, the employee is required to produce a certificate from her doctor, registered midwife or registered health visitor, stating that she is pregnant. Except in the case of the first appointment, the employee should also produce evidence of the appointment, such as a medical certificate or appointment card, if requested to do so.

Antenatal care may include relaxation and parent craft classes that the employee's doctor, midwife or health visitor has advised her to attend, in addition to medical examinations.

The employee should endeavour to give her line manager as much notice as possible of antenatal appointments and, wherever possible, try to arrange them as near to the start or end of the working day as possible.

Health and safety

The organisation has a duty to take care of the health and safety of all employees. We are also required to carry out a risk assessment to assess the workplace risks to women who are pregnant, have recently given birth or are breastfeeding where the work is of a kind that could involve a risk of harm or danger to her health and safety or the health and safety of her baby and the risk arises from either processes, working conditions or physical, chemical or biological agents in the workplace. If applicable, the organisation will provide the employee with information as to any risks identified in the risk assessment. If the risk assessment reveals that the employee would be exposed to health hazards in carrying out her normal job duties, the organisation will take such steps as are reasonably necessary to avoid those risks, such as altering the employee's working conditions. In some cases, this may mean offering the employee suitable alternative work (if available) on terms and conditions that are not substantially less favourable.

If it is not possible for the organisation to alter the employee's working conditions to remove the risks to her health and there is no suitable alternative work available to offer her on a temporary basis, the organisation may suspend her from work on maternity grounds until such time as there are no longer any risks to her health. This may be for the remainder of her pregnancy until the commencement of her maternity leave. If an employee is suspended in these circumstances, her employment will continue during the period of the suspension and it does not in any way affect her statutory or contractual employment and maternity rights. The employee will be entitled to her normal salary and contractual benefits during the period of her suspension, unless she has unreasonably refused an offer of suitable alternative employment.

Sickness absence

If an employee is absent from work during pregnancy owing to sickness, she will receive normal statutory or contractual sick pay in the same manner as she would during any other sickness absence provided that she has not yet begun ordinary maternity leave. If, however,

the employee is absent from work due to a pregnancy-related illness after the beginning of the fourth week before her expected week of childbirth, her maternity leave will start automatically.

If the employee is absent from work wholly or partly because of pregnancy during the four weeks before the expected week of childbirth, she must notify the organisation in writing of this as soon as reasonably practicable.

Maternity leave

All pregnant employees are entitled to take up to 26 weeks' ordinary maternity leave and up to 26 weeks' additional maternity leave, making a total of 52 weeks. This is regardless of the number of hours they work or their length of service. Additional maternity leave begins on the day after ordinary maternity leave ends.

Ordinary maternity leave can start at any time after the beginning of the 11th week before the employee's expected week of childbirth (unless her child is born prematurely before that date in which case it will start earlier). Maternity leave will start on whichever date is the earlier of:

- the employee's chosen start date;
- the day after the employee gives birth; or
- the day after any day on which the employee is absent for a pregnancy-related reason in the four weeks before the expected week of childbirth.

If the employee gives birth before her maternity leave was due to start, she must notify the organisation in writing of the date of the birth as soon as reasonably practicable.

The law obliges all employees to take a minimum of two weeks of maternity leave immediately after the birth of the child.

Ordinary maternity leave

During the period of ordinary maternity leave, the employee's contract of employment continues in force and she is entitled to receive all her contractual benefits, except for salary. In particular, any benefits in kind such as private use of a company car, laptop, and mobile phone will continue; contractual annual leave entitlement will continue to accrue.

Salary will be replaced by SMP if the employee is eligible to receive it.

Employees are encouraged to take any outstanding annual leave due to them before the commencement of ordinary maternity leave. Employees are reminded that holiday must be taken in the year that it is earned and therefore if the holiday year is due to end during maternity leave, the employee should take the full year's entitlement before starting her maternity leave.

Additional maternity leave

During the period of additional maternity leave, the employee's contract of employment continues in force and she is entitled to receive all her contractual benefits, except for salary.

Any benefits in kind such as private use of a company car, laptop, mobile phone will continue, and contractual annual leave entitlement will continue to accrue.

Salary will be replaced by statutory maternity pay (SMP) for the first 13 weeks of additional maternity leave if the employee is eligible to receive it. The remaining 13 weeks of additional maternity leave are unpaid.

Statutory maternity pay

Statutory maternity pay is payable for up to 39 weeks during maternity leave. An employee is entitled to SMP if:

- she has been continuously employed by the organisation for at least 26 weeks at the end of the qualifying week and she is still employed during that week;
- her average weekly earnings in the period between the last normal pay day before the Saturday at the end of the qualifying week and the last normal pay day at least eight weeks before that date are not less than the lower earnings limit for national insurance contributions;
- she is still pregnant 11 weeks before the start of the expected week of childbirth (or has already given birth);
- she provides a MAT B1 form stating her expected week of childbirth; and
- she gives the organisation proper notification of her pregnancy in accordance with the rules set out above.

For the first six weeks, SMP is paid at the higher rate, which is equivalent to 90% of the employee's average weekly earnings calculated over the period between the last normal pay day before the Saturday at the end of the qualifying week and the last normal pay day at least eight weeks before that date. For the purpose of calculating average weekly earnings, shift allowances, overtime payments, bonuses and commission are all included.

The standard rate of SMP is paid for the remaining 33 weeks (or less if the employee returns to work sooner). This is paid at a rate set by the Government for the relevant tax year, or 90% of the employee's average weekly earnings calculated over the period between the last normal pay day before the Saturday at the end of the qualifying week and the last normal pay day at least eight weeks before that date if this is lower than the Government's set weekly rate.

If the employee becomes eligible for a pay rise between the start of the original calculation period and the end of her maternity leave (whether ordinary maternity leave or additional maternity leave), the higher or standard rate of SMP will be recalculated to take account of the employee's pay rise, regardless of whether SMP has already been paid. This means that the employee's SMP will be recalculated and increased retrospectively, or that she may qualify for SMP if she did not previously. The employee will be paid a lump sum to make up any difference between SMP already paid and the amount payable as a result of the pay rise.

Statutory maternity pay is treated as earnings and is therefore subject to PAYE and national insurance deductions.

Payment of SMP cannot start prior to the 11th week before the employee's expected week of childbirth. Statutory maternity pay can start from any day of the week in accordance with the date the employee starts her maternity leave.

Statutory maternity pay is payable whether or not the employee intends to return to work after her maternity leave.

Employees who are not entitled to SMP may be entitled to receive maternity allowance payable directly by the Government. If an employee is not entitled to SMP, the Company will provide the employee with an SMP1 form to allow her to pursue a claim for maternity allowance.

Contact during maternity leave

Shortly before an employee's maternity leave starts, the organisation will discuss the arrangements for her to keep in touch during her leave, should she wish to do so. The organisation reserves the right in any event to maintain reasonable contact with the employee from time to time during her maternity leave. This may be to discuss the employee's plans for return to work, to discuss any special arrangements to be made or training to be given to ease her return to work or simply to update her on developments at work during her absence.

Keeping-in-touch days

Except during the first two weeks after childbirth, an employee can agree to work for the organisation (or to attend training) for up to 10 days during either ordinary maternity leave or additional maternity leave without that work bringing the period of her maternity leave to an end and without loss of a week's SMP. These are known as "keeping-in-touch" days. Any work carried out on a day shall constitute a day's work for these purposes.

The organisation has no right to require the employee to carry out any work, and the employee has no right to undertake any work, during her maternity leave. Any work undertaken, including the amount of salary paid for any work done on keeping-in-touch days, is entirely a matter for agreement between the organisation and the employee. Any keeping-in-touch days worked do not extend the period of maternity leave. Once the keeping-in-touch days have been used up, the employee will lose a week's SMP for any week in which she agrees to work for the organisation. It may also bring maternity leave to an end.

Returning to work

The employee will have been formally advised in writing by the organisation of the date on which she is expected to return to work if she takes her full 52-week entitlement to maternity leave. The employee is expected to return on this date, unless she notifies the organisation otherwise. If she is unable to attend work at the end of her maternity leave due to sickness or injury, the organisation's normal arrangements for sickness absence will apply. In any other case, late return without prior authorisation will be treated as unauthorised absence.

While the employee is under no obligation to do so, it would assist the organisation if she confirms as soon as convenient during her maternity leave that she will be returning to work as expected.

If the employee wishes to return to work earlier than the expected return date, she must give the organisation at least eight weeks' notice of her date of early return, preferably in writing. If she fails to do so, the organisation may postpone her return to such a date as will give the organisation eight weeks' notice, provided that this is not later than the expected return date.

If the employee decides not to return to work after maternity leave, she must give notice of resignation as soon as possible and in accordance with the terms of her contract of employment. If the notice period would expire after maternity leave has ended, the organisation may require the employee to return to work for the remainder of the notice period.

Transfer of maternity leave

If an employee proposes to return to work by giving proper notification in accordance with the rules set above, her spouse, civil partner or partner may be eligible to take up to 26 weeks' additional paternity leave (and additional statutory paternity pay) on her return to work.

The earliest that additional paternity leave may commence is 20 weeks after the date on which the employee's child is born and it must end no later than 12 months after the date of birth. The minimum period of additional paternity leave is two consecutive weeks and the maximum period is 26 weeks.

Further details should be obtained from the employee's spouse's or partner's employer. She will be required to submit a written and signed declaration form to that employer, which may also make additional enquiries of the organisation to verify its employee's entitlement to additional paternity leave and pay.

Rights on and after return to work

On resuming work after ordinary maternity leave, the employee is entitled to return to the same job as she occupied before commencing maternity leave on the same terms and conditions of employment as if she had not been absent.

On resuming work after additional maternity leave, again she is entitled to return to the same job as she occupied before commencing maternity leave on the same terms and conditions of employment as if she had not been absent. However, if it is not reasonably practicable for the organisation to allow the employee to return to the same job, the organisation may offer the employee suitable alternative work, on terms and conditions that are no less favourable than would have applied if she had not been absent.

An employee who worked full-time prior to her maternity leave has no automatic right to return to work on a part-time basis or to make other changes to her working patterns. However, all requests for part-time work or other flexible working arrangements will be considered in line with the operational requirements of the organisation's business. If an employee would like this option to be considered, she should write to her line manager setting out her proposals as soon as possible in advance of her return date, so that there is adequate time for full consideration of the request. The procedure for dealing with such requests is set out in [the organisation's policy on flexible working].

Confidentiality Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a safe environment where company's information is treated confidentially. It is based on the principal that all information relating to the staff; clients and company's intellectual property should be treated as confidential.

Scope

This policy applies to all members of staff.

Principles

Any staff members should not at any time whether before, during or after the termination of the employment with Access Flooring Limited relating to AFL and its clients. For the purposes of this agreement, information shall be secret and/or confidential if it relates to or consists of details of clients, any project or process used by AFL or any organisation and/or persons associated with the company. The confidentiality also relates to the company's computer programs, applications, software specifications, user and/or instruction manuals and/or any other documentation relating to such computer programs or applications, databases, product lists, price lists, marketing plans, staff and salary details, financial, management and organisational information of AFL or any associated with the company.

Intellectual Property

Within the duration of the employment with the company, employees will be developing or/and creating intellectual property relating to AFL. All intellectual property developed by the employees of AFL, will be fully owned by the company.

Definition of Intellectual Property: patents, rights to Inventions, copyright and related rights, trade marks, trade names and domain names, rights in goodwill or to sue for passing off, rights in designs, rights in computer software, database rights, rights in confidential information (including know-how and trade secrets) and any other intellectual property rights, in each case whether registered or unregistered and including all applications (or rights to apply) for, and renewals or extensions of, such rights and all similar or equivalent rights or forms of protection which may now or in the future subsist in any part of the world.

Definition of Inventions: inventions, ideas and improvements, whether patentable, and whether or not recorded in any medium.

Employees of AFL should acknowledge that all Intellectual Property, Inventions and works shall automatically, on creation, belong to the Company.

This document may be changed from time to time in line with current best practice and statutory requirements, and to ensure that the company's needs are met. Employees of Kato Enterprises will be consulted and advised of any changes as far in advance as possible, unless the change is a consequence of new or amended legislation.

Please sign below to acknowledge you have read and understood the terms and conditions

Sign _____ Date _____

Print _____

Dignity At Work Policy

Policy wording

Our commitment

The organisation is committed to creating a work environment free of harassment and bullying, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

Harassment and bullying can have very serious consequences for individuals and the organisation. Harassment or bullying may make people unhappy, may cause them stress and affect their health and family and social relationships, may affect their work performance and could cause them to leave their job. Severe cases of harassment and bullying can even lead to mental illness and suicide. Effects on the organisation can include loss of morale, poor work performance, increased turnover of staff, legal claims and damage to the organisation's reputation. Employees found guilty of harassment or bullying may face disciplinary penalties, up to and including dismissal, could be personally liable to pay compensation in legal claims, and may find their own family and social relationships are adversely affected. Serious harassment may be a criminal offence.

The organisation will not tolerate bullying and harassment of any kind. All allegations of bullying and harassment will be investigated and, if appropriate, disciplinary action will be taken. The organisation will also not tolerate victimisation of a person for making allegations of bullying or harassment in good faith or supporting someone to make such a complaint. Victimisation is a disciplinary offence.

The scope of this policy

This policy covers bullying and harassment of and by managers, employees, contractors, agency staff and anyone else engaged to work at the organisation, whether by direct contract with the organisation or otherwise. If the complainant or alleged harasser is not employed by the organisation, e.g. if the worker's contract is with an agency, this policy will apply with any necessary modifications such as that the organisation could not dismiss the worker but would instead require the agency to remove the worker, if appropriate, after investigation and disciplinary proceedings.

The policy covers bullying and harassment in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside the workplace, e.g. business trips and work-related social events.

What is bullying and harassment?

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, and/or an abuse or misuse of power that is meant to undermine, humiliate or injure the person on the receiving end.

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to relevant protected characteristics, which are sex, gender reassignment, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief and age, that:

- has the purpose of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person; or
- is reasonably considered by that person to have the effect of violating his/her dignity or of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for him/her, even if this effect was not intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Conduct may be harassment whether or not the person behaving in that way intends to offend. Something intended as a "joke" may offend another person. Different people find different things acceptable. Everyone has the right to decide what behaviour is acceptable to him/her and to have his/her feelings respected by others. Behaviour which any reasonable person would realise would be likely to offend will be harassment without the recipient having to make it clear in advance that behaviour of that type is not acceptable to him/her, eg sexual touching. It may not be so clear in advance that some other forms of behavior would be unwelcome to, or could offend, a particular person, e.g. certain "banter", flirting or asking someone for a private drink after work. In these cases, first-time conduct which unintentionally causes offence will not be harassment, but it will become harassment if the conduct continues after the recipient has made it clear, by words or conduct, that such behaviour is unacceptable to him/her.

Harassment may also occur where a person engages in unwanted conduct towards another because he/she perceives that the recipient has a protected characteristic (for example, a perception that he/she is gay or disabled), when the recipient does not, in fact, have that protected characteristic. For example, it would be harassment for an individual to tease repeatedly an individual because of an incorrect belief that that the recipient is deaf. Similarly, harassment could take place where an individual is bullied or harassed because of another person with whom the individual is connected or associated, for example if his/her child is disabled, wife is pregnant, or friend is a devout Christian.

Harassment also includes circumstances where an individual is subjected to unwanted conduct from a third party, such as a client or customer. For example, it might be that a client makes a series of racist remarks to a black employee. If an employee feels that he/she has been bullied or harassed by customers, suppliers, vendors or visitors, he/she should report any such behaviour to their manager who will take appropriate action. Bullying or harassment of customers, suppliers, vendors or visitors or others will be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure.

A single incident can be harassment if it is sufficiently serious.

All bullying and harassment is misconduct and is a disciplinary offence which will be dealt with under the organisation's disciplinary policy. Bullying or harassment will often be gross misconduct, which can lead to dismissal without notice.

Bullying or harassment will constitute unlawful discrimination where it relates to one of the protected characteristics, which are sex, gender reassignment, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief and age. Serious bullying or harassment may amount to other civil or criminal offences, eg a civil offence under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 and criminal offences of assault.

Examples of bullying or harassment

Bullying and harassment may be misconduct that is physical, verbal or non-verbal, e.g. by letter or email (so-called "flame-mail").

Examples of unacceptable behaviour that are covered by this policy include (but are not limited to):

- physical conduct ranging from unwelcome touching to serious assault;
- unwelcome sexual advances;
- the offer of rewards for going along with sexual advances, eg promotion, access to training;
- threats for rejecting sexual advances, e.g. suggestions that refusing advances will adversely affect the employee's employment, evaluation, pay, advancement, assigned work, or any other condition of employment or career development;
- demeaning comments about a person's appearance;
- unwelcome jokes or comments of a sexual or racial nature or about an individual's age, disability, sexual orientation or religion;
- questions about a person's sex life;
- unwanted nicknames related to a person's age, race or disability;
- the use of obscene gestures;
- excluding an individual because he/she is associated or connected with someone with a protected characteristic, e.g. his/her child is gay, spouse is black, or parent is disabled;
- ignoring an individual because he/she is perceived to have a protected characteristic when he/she does not, in fact, have the protected characteristic), e.g. an employee is thought to be Jewish, or is perceived to be a transsexual;
- the open display of pictures or objects with sexual or racial overtones, even if not directed at any particular person, e.g. magazines, calendars or pin-ups;
- spreading malicious rumours or insulting someone;
- picking on someone or setting him/her up to fail;
- making threats or comments about someone's job security without good reason;
- ridiculing someone;
- isolation or non-cooperation at work; and
- excluding someone from social activities.

What is victimisation?

Victimisation is subjecting a person to a detriment because he/she has, in good faith, complained (whether formally or otherwise) that someone has been bullying or harassing him/her or someone else, or supported someone to make a complaint or given evidence in relation to a complaint. This would include isolating someone because he/she has made a complaint or giving him/her a heavier or more difficult workload.

Provided that you act in good faith, i.e. you genuinely believe that what you are saying is true, you have a right not to be victimised for making a complaint or doing anything in relation to a complaint of bullying or harassment and the organisation will take appropriate action to deal with any alleged victimisation, which may include disciplinary action against anyone found to have victimised you.

Making a complaint that you know to be untrue, or giving evidence that you know to be untrue, may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you.

What should I do if I think I am being bullied or harassed?

You may be able to sort out matters informally. The person may not know that his/her behaviour is unwelcome or upsetting. An informal discussion may help him/her to understand the effects of his/her behaviour and agree to change it. You may feel able to approach the person yourself, or with the help of someone in human resources, a manager, trade union representative or another employee. Alternatively, an initial approach could be made on your behalf by one of these people. You should tell the person what behaviour you find offensive and unwelcome and say that you would like it to stop immediately. You may want to add that, if the behaviour continues, you intend to make a formal complaint to your manager or human resources. You should keep a note of the date and what was said and done. This will be useful evidence if the unacceptable behaviour continues and you wish to make a formal complaint.

If an informal approach does not resolve matters, or you think the situation is too serious to be dealt with informally, you can make a formal complaint by using the organisation's grievance procedure. In the case of grievances about bullying or harassment, the normal grievance procedure is modified so that you can choose whether to raise your grievance with your manager or directly with the human resources department. The organisation will ensure that you can bring your complaint in the first instance to someone of your own sex, if you so choose.

In very serious cases, a criminal offence may have been committed and you may wish to report matters to the police. The human resources department can arrange for someone to accompany you to make a complaint to the police.

All complaints will be investigated promptly and, if appropriate, disciplinary proceedings will be brought against the alleged harasser. You will have the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative of your choice at any meeting dealing with your grievance. You will be kept informed of the general progress of the process of investigation and the outcome of any disciplinary proceedings. The organisation will decide on a balance of probabilities, after considering all available evidence, whether or not harassment or bullying has occurred.

The organisation will treat complaints of bullying and harassment sensitively and maintain confidentiality to the maximum extent possible. Investigation of allegations will normally require limited disclosure on a "need to know" basis. For example, your identity and the nature of the allegations must be revealed to the person you are complaining about, so he/she is able to respond to the allegations. Some details may also have to be given to potential witnesses, but the importance of confidentiality will be emphasised to them. If the complaint is upheld, and a person who has been found to have harassed you is kept in the organisation's employment, managers may need to be given some information where this is necessary for them to manage the risk of further harassment by that person against you or others.

Wherever possible, the organisation will try to ensure that you and the alleged harasser are not required to work together while the complaint is under investigation. This could involve giving you the option of remaining at home on special leave, if you wish. In a serious case,

the alleged harasser may be suspended while investigation and any disciplinary proceedings are underway.

If your complaint is upheld, and the person found to have bullied or harassed you remains in the organisation's employment, every effort will be made to ensure that, if possible, you do not have to continue to work alongside the harasser, if you do not wish to do so. We will discuss the options with you. These may include the transfer of the harasser or, if you wish, you may be able to transfer to another post.

If your complaint is not upheld, the human resources department will support you, the alleged harasser and your manager(s) in making arrangements for you both to continue or resume working and to help repair working relationships. The organisation will consider making arrangements to avoid you and the alleged harasser having to continue to work alongside each other, if either of you do not wish to do this.

You have a right not to be victimised for making a complaint in good faith, even if the complaint is not upheld. However, making a complaint that you know to be untrue may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you.

Some types of bullying or harassment may constitute unlawful discrimination and may give rise to the possibility of other civil claims or criminal proceedings. Claims to an employment tribunal about unlawful discrimination must be presented to the tribunal within three months beginning with the act complained of.

What can I do to help stop bullying and harassment?

We all have a responsibility to help create and maintain a work environment free of bullying and harassment. You can help to do this by:

- being aware of how your own behaviour may affect others and changing it, if necessary - you can still cause offence even if you are "only joking";
- treating your colleagues with dignity and respect;
- taking a stand if you think inappropriate jokes or comments are being made;
- making it clear to others when you find their behaviour unacceptable, unless it should be obvious in advance that this would be the case;
- intervening, if possible, to stop harassment or bullying and giving support to recipients;
- making it clear that you find harassment and bullying unacceptable;
- reporting harassment or bullying to your manager or human resources and supporting the organisation in the investigation of complaints; and
- if a complaint of harassment or bullying is made, not prejudging or victimising the complainant or alleged harasser.

Managers have a particular responsibility to:

- set a good example by their own behaviour;
- ensure that there is a supportive working environment;
- make sure that staff know what standards of behaviour are expected of them;
- intervene to stop bullying or harassment; and

- report promptly to human resources any complaint of bullying or harassment, or any incident of bullying or harassment witnessed by them.

What happens if I am accused of bullying or harassment?

If someone approaches you informally about your behaviour, do not dismiss the complaint out of hand because you were only joking or think the complainant is being too sensitive. Remember that different people find different things acceptable and everyone has the right to decide what behaviour is acceptable to him/her and to have his/her feelings respected by others. You may have offended someone without intending to. If that is the case, the person concerned may be content with an explanation and an apology from you and an assurance that you will be careful in future not to behave in a way that you now know may cause offence. Provided that you do not repeat the behaviour that has caused offence, that may well be the end of the matter.

If a formal complaint is made about your behaviour, this will be fully investigated and the organisation may bring disciplinary proceedings, if appropriate. The organisation will follow its disciplinary procedure and you will have the rights set out in that procedure. You will have the right to be informed of the allegations against you and to put your side of the story and to be accompanied to meetings by a trade union representative or work colleague of your choice. The procedure will be implemented at the appropriate stage for the seriousness of the allegation. Complaints of bullying and harassment will often be allegations of gross misconduct that, if proved, could lead to dismissal without notice.

The organisation will treat complaints of bullying and harassment sensitively and maintain confidentiality to the maximum extent possible. Investigation of allegations and future management of risk, if complaints are upheld, will normally require limited disclosure on a "need to know" basis. For example, some details may have to be given to potential witnesses, but the importance of confidentiality will be emphasised to them.

Wherever possible, the organisation will try to ensure that you and the complainant are not required to work together while the complaint is under investigation. If the allegation is of gross misconduct, you may be suspended on full pay during the investigation and, if a disciplinary hearing is to be called, until disciplinary proceedings have been concluded.

If the complaint against you is upheld, on a balance of probabilities, a disciplinary penalty may be imposed up to and including dismissal, having regard to the seriousness of the offence and all relevant circumstances. If the complaint is upheld, but you are not dismissed, the organisation could decide to transfer you to another post.

If a complaint is made against you that is not upheld and the organisation has good grounds for believing that the complaint was not made in good faith, the organisation will take disciplinary action against the person making the false complaint.

You must not victimise a person who has made a complaint in good faith against you or anyone who has supported him/her in making the complaint or given evidence in relation to such a complaint. Disciplinary action will be taken against you if the organisation has good reason to think that you may have victimised the complainant or someone else.

If the complaint against you is not upheld, the human resources department will support you, the complainant and your manager(s) in making arrangements for you both to continue or resume working and to help repair working relationships. The organisation will consider making arrangements to avoid you and the complainant having to continue to work alongside each other, if either of you do not wish to do this.

Some types of bullying or harassment may constitute unlawful discrimination and allegations may give rise to the possibility of other civil claims or criminal proceedings against you, which would proceed independently of the organisation's disciplinary proceedings. You could be personally liable to pay compensation to the complainant if a successful claim in the employment tribunal or other courts was brought against you. Criminal proceedings could lead to conviction and criminal penalties.

Making this policy work

The organisation will provide training to all existing and new employees and others engaged to work at the organisation to help them understand their rights and responsibilities under this policy and what they can do to help create a working environment free of bullying and harassment. We will provide additional training to managers to enable them to deal more effectively with complaints of bullying and harassment.

The organisation will review the outcomes of cases where complaints of bullying and harassment have been made to check that the proper procedures have been followed and to identify any points that can be learned from those cases and implement any necessary changes.

The organisation will also periodically monitor how successful it is being in creating a workplace free of bullying and harassment by other means which may include confidential staff surveys.

Disciplinary Procedure

Introduction

It is necessary for the proper operation of the organisation's business and the health and safety of the organisation's employees that the organisation operates a disciplinary procedure. The following procedure will be applied fairly in all instances where disciplinary action is regarded as necessary by the organisation's management save to the extent that a minor reprimand is given for any minor act of misconduct committed by an employee.

The organisation reserves the right to implement the procedure at any stage as set out below taking into account the alleged misconduct of an employee. Employees will not ordinarily be dismissed for a first disciplinary offence.

Where time limits are referred to in the course of this procedure they may be varied by agreement between the employee and the organisation.

Employees have the right to be accompanied at a formal disciplinary hearing by a fellow worker or a recognised trade union official of their choice.

Matters that the organisation views as amounting to disciplinary offences include (but are not limited to):

- persistent bad timekeeping;
- unauthorised absence;
- minor damage to the organisation's property;
- failure to observe the organisation's procedures;
- abusive behaviour;
- unreasonable refusal to follow an instruction issued by a manager or supervisor;
- poor attendance;
- smoking in non-designated areas of the organisation's premises; and
- bribery offences under the Bribery Act 2010.

Investigation

An employee's supervisor or manager will promptly and thoroughly investigate any matter that is reasonably suspected or believed to contravene any of the organisation's policies or rules or may otherwise be a disciplinary matter. The employee will be informed as soon as possible as to the fact of an investigation and when it has been concluded.

There may be instances where suspension with pay is necessary while investigations are carried out. The organisation has the right to suspend with pay where there are reasonable grounds for concern that evidence may be tampered with, destroyed or witnesses pressurised before the disciplinary hearing, or if there is a potential risk to the business or other employees or third parties in allowing the employee to remain at work.

Depending on the circumstances of the case, the employee may be invited to attend an investigatory interview. If such an interview is held prior to a disciplinary hearing, the employee will be informed at the outset that the interview is an investigatory interview. There is no right for employees to be accompanied at a formal investigatory interview. The

organisation reserves the right to dispense with an investigatory interview and to proceed directly to a formal disciplinary hearing.

Procedure

Where, upon completion of an investigation, there are reasonable grounds to believe that an employee has committed an act of misconduct; the employee will be invited to attend a disciplinary hearing before the employee's department manager or manager of a similar level to the departmental manager. In the event of poor performance by an employee, disciplinary hearings will usually be undertaken only where counselling of the employee, further training (if appropriate) and oral warnings have failed to produce a satisfactory improvement to performance.

In the event of a disciplinary hearing taking place the organisation will:

- a. give the employee a minimum of two working days' advance notice of the hearing;
- b. tell the employee the purpose of the hearing and that it will be held under the Employer's disciplinary procedure;
- c. explain the employee's right to be accompanied at the hearing by a fellow worker or a recognised trade union official;
- d. give the employee written details of the nature of his/her alleged misconduct; and
- e. provide to the employee all relevant information (which should include statements taken from any fellow employees or other persons that the organisation intends to rely upon against the employee) not less than two working days in advance of the hearing.

Where the employee is unable to attend a disciplinary hearing and provides a good reason for failing to attend, the hearing will be adjourned to another day. The organisation will comply with (a) above in respect of giving notice of the rearranged hearing. Unless there are special circumstances militating against it, if the employee is unable to attend the rearranged hearing, the rearranged hearing will take place in the employee's absence. The employee's fellow worker or recognised trade union official may attend in such circumstances and will be allowed the opportunity to present the employee's case. The employee will also be allowed to make written submissions in such a situation.

Where the chosen companion is unavailable on the day scheduled for the meeting, it will be rescheduled, provided that the employee proposes an alternative time within five working days of the scheduled date.

Role of companion

The employee's chosen companion has the right to address the hearing to put the employee's case, sum up the case and respond on the employee's behalf to any view expressed at the hearing. The companion may also confer with the employee during the hearing. However, there is no requirement for the employer to permit the companion to answer questions on behalf of the employee, or to address the hearing where the employee indicates that he/she does not wish this.

The disciplinary hearing

A disciplinary hearing will normally be conducted by the employee's department manager together with the organisation's HR Manager (the panel). Any member of management responsible for the investigation of the disciplinary offence(s) shall not be a member of the panel, although such managers may present any supporting facts and material to the disciplinary hearing. The employee will be entitled to be given a full explanation of the case against him/her and be informed of the content of any statements provided by witnesses. The employee will be able to call his/her own witnesses. He/she will be permitted to set out his/her case and answer any allegations. The employee will be given a reasonable opportunity to ask questions, present evidence and call relevant witnesses. He/she will also be given the opportunity to raise points about any information provided by witnesses. Where the organisation intends to call relevant witnesses, it will give the employee advance notice of this. The employee must also give advance notice if he/she intends to call relevant witnesses.

The organisation may adjourn the disciplinary proceedings if it appears necessary or desirable to do so (including for the purpose of gathering further information). The employee will be informed of the period of any adjournment. If further information is gathered, the employee will be allowed a reasonable period of time, together with his/her fellow worker or trade union official, to consider the new information prior to the reconvening of the disciplinary proceedings.

As soon as possible after the conclusion of the disciplinary proceedings, the employee's department manager will convey the decision of the panel to the employee and will also inform the employee what disciplinary action, if any, is to be taken. The decision will be confirmed in writing. The employee will be notified of his/her right of appeal under this procedure.

Disciplinary action

Where, following a disciplinary hearing, the organisation establishes that the employee has committed a disciplinary offence; the following disciplinary action may be taken:

- a. Where a minor offence or offences have been committed, a recorded oral warning may be given. The warning will ordinarily state that any further misconduct will render the employee liable to further, more severe disciplinary action. The employee should be informed of the period that the warning will remain "live". During this period, the organisation may rely on such a warning in the event of further misconduct on the part of the employee.
- b. Where either a more serious disciplinary offence has been committed or further minor offences have been committed by an employee following a recorded oral warning that remains "live", the employee will receive a first written warning. The warning will:
 1. set out the nature of the offence committed;
 2. inform the employee that further misconduct is liable to result in further disciplinary action under this procedure;
 3. specify the period for which the warning will remain "live", after such period [the organisation will review the warning/the warning will automatically lapse]; and
 4. state that the employee may appeal against the warning.

- c. Where a serious disciplinary offence amounting to gross misconduct has been committed, thereby justifying summary dismissal, but the organisation decides, after taking into account all appropriate circumstances, that a lesser penalty is appropriate, or, where an employee commits further disciplinary offences after a first written warning has been issued and remains "live", a final (or combined first and final) written warning may be given. Such a warning will:
 - 1. set out the nature of the offence committed;
 - 2. inform the employee that further misconduct is likely to result in his/her dismissal; and
 - 3. state that the employee may appeal against the warning.
- d. Where the employee has committed further acts of misconduct (these being acts of misconduct other than gross misconduct) following a final written warning given under c. above, the employee may be dismissed with notice or with pay in lieu of notice.
- e. Where the organisation establishes that an employee has committed an act of gross misconduct, the employee may be summarily dismissed.
- f. Where a final written warning is given to an employee under c. above, the organisation may also impose on the employee:
 - 1. disciplinary suspension;
 - 2. demotion;
 - 3. in line with any provision in the contract of employment, stoppage of pay for such period as the organisation thinks fit in the circumstances subject to a maximum of [number of weeks]; or
 - 4. in line with any provision in the contract of employment, transfer to a job of a lower status.

The above sanctions may be imposed in conjunction with other forms of disciplinary action, or as an alternative to dismissal.

Appeal

An employee may appeal against any disciplinary sanction imposed against him/her, with the exception of an informal oral warning. The appeal will be heard by a senior manager who has not been involved in the decision to impose the disciplinary sanction on the employee. The senior manager is obliged to consider any representations made by the employee, the employee's fellow employee or trade union official and those of the manager who conducted the investigation and the manager who conducted the disciplinary hearing and imposed the disciplinary sanction. The senior manager hearing the appeal must decide on the basis of both sets of representations, together with any subsequent facts that may have come to light, whether or not to uphold the disciplinary sanction. In the event that the senior manager finds for the employee, the senior manager shall allow the appeal and shall remove all records of the disciplinary sanction from the employee's record. In the event that the senior manager does not accept the representations made by or on behalf of the employee, the senior manager must uphold the disciplinary sanction.

When lodging an appeal, the employee should state:

- a) the grounds of appeal; and
- b) whether he/she is appealing against the finding that he/she has committed the alleged act or acts of misconduct, or against the level of disciplinary sanction imposed.

The employee must provide written notice of the appeal within five working days of being informed of the disciplinary sanction being imposed against him/her.

Appeal hearings will normally take place within 14 days of receipt of the employee's written notice of appeal.

Upon completion of the appeal, the senior manager conducting the hearing will convey his/her decision to the employee. The decision will be confirmed in writing within one week. The organisation's decision at the appeal is final.

Where an appeal lies against a dismissal by the panel, the panel's decision to dismiss will have had immediate effect and, therefore, if the dismissal is by notice, the period of notice will already have commenced on the date that the decision was given by the panel. If the panel's decision was to dismiss the employee summarily without notice, the organisation will be under no obligation to reinstate or pay the employee for any period between the date of the original dismissal and the appeal decision and the original date of termination will stand. In the event that the panel's decision to dismiss is overturned, the employee will be reinstated with immediate effect and he/she will be paid for any period between the date of the original dismissal and the successful appeal decision. His/her continuous service will not be affected.

Gross misconduct

Gross misconduct is misconduct of such a serious and fundamental nature that it breaches the contractual relationship between the employee and the organisation. In the event that an employee commits an act of gross misconduct, the organisation will be entitled to terminate summarily the employee's contract of employment without notice or pay in lieu of notice.

Matters that the organisation views as amounting to gross misconduct include but are not limited to:

- stealing from the organisation, members of staff or the public;
- other offences of dishonesty;
- falsification of a qualification that is a stated requirement of the employee's employment or results in financial gain to the employee;
- falsification of records, reports, accounts, expense claims or self-certification forms, whether or not for personal gain;
- sexual misconduct at work;
- fighting with or physical assault on members of staff or the public;
- deliberate damage to or misuse of the organisation's property;
- serious damage to the organisation's property;
- drunkenness or being under the influence of illegal drugs while at work;
- possession, custody or control of illegal drugs on the organisation's premises;
- serious breach of the organisation's rules, including, but not restricted to, health and safety rules and rules on computer use;
- gross negligence;
- conviction of a criminal offence that is relevant to the employee's employment;
- conduct that brings the organisation's name into disrepute; and
- discrimination or harassment of a fellow worker on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, race, disability, age or religion or belief.
- Other acts of misconduct may come within the general definition of gross misconduct.

Display Screen Equipment Policy

The Company will take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of "users" and "operators" of display screen equipment (DSE), where "users" are employees, including temporary employees, and operators are self-employed persons.

The Company recognises that risks associated with DSE are directly related to the type and layout of the workstation, the nature of the work and the physical and mental attributes of the person using the DSE. The Company will therefore provide all necessary information, training and support to users and operators to enable them to understand and manage these risks. The Company will also ensure that suitable and sufficient DSE risk assessments are undertaken and, whenever possible, eliminate or, if not, reduce all identified risks to as low as is reasonably practicable.

The Directors, will:

- ensure that all DSE workstations in the Company's workplace(s) comply with the minimum requirements specified in the Schedule to the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992;
- ensure that DSE assessments are performed for individual workstations for each DSE user or operator (other than very occasional users);
- review all completed DSE assessments and initiate risk control measures indicated in the assessments (e.g. provision of new or modified equipment or aids, modification of working methods, training);
- ensure that DSE assessments are reviewed for their confirmed application at least once every 12 months and when any significant change is made to the workstation;
- ensure that an eye and eyesight test by a competent person is arranged for any user that requests such a test and that, where such a test had been arranged, further tests are arranged at regular intervals, as specified by the competent person;
- ensure that users are reimbursed up to £50.00 towards the cost of basic spectacles or contact lenses prescribed specifically for use with DSE at work;
- ensure that adequate training is provided to all users to enable them to use DSE in a safe and healthy manner;
- ensure that work activities are planned to avoid prolonged periods of DSE use.

The appointed person, will:

- either conduct and record DSE assessments by means of an interview with the DSE user or operator and a visual assessment [using the assessment record checklist], or review an assessment conducted by each user or operator;
- submit the DSE assessment for review and approval by the Director;
- advise the DSE user or operator of the findings of his/her individual assessment;
- maintain a file of all DSE assessments;
- provide general advice and information to all DSE users and operators on the optimum arrangement of their workstation and action they can take (posture, exercise, breaks, etc) to ensure comfort and the avoidance of repetitive strain injuries or other harm arising from DSE use.

Dress and Appearance Policy

Policy wording

This policy is designed to guide employees on the required standards of dress and appearance. All employees' appearance must be professional at all times both within the workplace and when representing the Company.

The policy is not exhaustive in defining acceptable and unacceptable standards of dress and appearance, and staff must use common sense in adhering to the principles underpinning the policy. The management of the Company will be the sole judge of what is and is not appropriate for the purposes of this policy.

The Company recognises the diversity of cultures and religions of its employees and will take a sensitive approach when this affects dress and uniform requirements. However, priority will be given to health and safety, security and other similar considerations.

All employees are required to be neat, clean and well-groomed while at work, whether working on the Company's premises or elsewhere. Employees must adhere to the following standards, particularly when in contact with clients/customers/members of the public:

- A business suit or smart jacket/blazer plus coordinating trousers/skirt and smart shirt/blouse should be worn during all working hours. Male employees must also wear a tie. Female employees may wear a dress and jacket as an alternative to a suit.
- Hair should be neat, tidy and well groomed. Unconventional styles and colours are not acceptable.
- Any jewellery should not be excessive or unconventional.
- Earrings must not be obtrusive or ostentatious. No other jewellery worn through body piercings is permitted.
- Uniform provided for marketing, promotions or sales activities must be clean and in a good state of repair at all times and all items worn at the events provided for. For example, and clarity this includes T Shirts, Hats, and Aprons etc... If an item of uniform becomes damaged, please contact your line manager to arrange for a replacement item.

As an exception to the above formal dress requirements, employees may wear casual clothing to work on dress down days, these will be notified to all employees. Unless advised otherwise by their manager and subject to business requirements, employees may attend the office in smart casual clothing on dress down days, clothing must be neat, clean and in a good state of repair. Employees who are meeting with clients or contacts on dress down days must adhere to the formal dress code.

PPE will be supplied for site work. It is the user's responsibility to maintain the PPE provided in accordance with the manufacturer's guidance. Any PPE that requires replacing will not be charged for unless there is evidence of misuse. Footwear will be the responsibility of the employee to purchase and they must be compliant.

Email and Internet Usage Policy & Procedure

Introduction

The Company encourages its employees to use email and the internet at work where this can save time and expense. However, it requires that employees follow the rules below. It is a term of each employee's contract that he/she complies with these rules, and any serious breach could lead to dismissal. Any employee who is unsure about whether something he/she proposes to do might breach this email and internet policy should seek advice from his/her manager.

Although the Company encourages the use of email and the internet where appropriate, their use entails some risks. For example, employees must take care not to introduce viruses on to the system and must take proper account of the security advice below. Employees must also ensure that they do not send libellous statements in emails as the Company could be liable for damages.

These rules are designed to minimise the legal risks to the Company when its employees use email at work and access the internet. Where something is not specifically covered in this policy, employees should seek advice from their manager.

Technology and the law change regularly, and this policy will be updated to account for changes as and when necessary. Employees will be informed when the policy has changed but it is their responsibility to read the latest version of this document.

Use of email

Contents of emails

Emails that employees intend to send should be checked carefully. Email should be treated like any other form of written communication and, as such, what is normally regarded as unacceptable in a letter is equally unacceptable in an email communication.

The use of email to send or forward messages which are defamatory, obscene or otherwise inappropriate will be treated as misconduct under the appropriate disciplinary procedure. In serious cases this could be regarded as gross misconduct and lead to dismissal.

Equally, if an employee receives an obscene or defamatory email, whether unwittingly or otherwise and from whatever source, he/she should not forward it to any other address.

Statements to avoid in emails include those criticising the Company's competitors or their staff, those stating that there are quality problems with goods or services of suppliers or customers, and those stating that anyone is incompetent.

Corporate information to be included in emails

Employees should ensure that official corporate information is given on any emails that they send. An example of the email layout is provided below:

First Name Surname

firstname@access-floors-ltd.co.uk

This message is intended for the use of only the person(s) ("intended recipient") to whom it is addressed. It may contain information that is privileged and confidential. Accordingly, any dissemination, distribution, copying or other use of this message or any of its content by any person other than the intended recipient may constitute a breach of civil or criminal law and is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please contact the sender as soon as possible.

CCing

Employees should exercise care not to copy emails automatically to all those copied in to the original message to which they are replying. Doing so may result in disclosure of confidential information to the wrong person.

Attachments

Employees should not attach any files that may contain a virus to emails, as the Company could be liable to the recipient for loss suffered. The Company has virus-checking in place but, if in doubt, employees should check with their Line Manager / IT provider.

Employees should exercise extreme care when receiving emails with attachments from third parties, particularly unidentified third parties, as these may contain viruses.

Personal use of email

Although the email system is primarily for business use, the Company understands that employees may on occasion need to send or receive personal emails using their work address. When sending personal emails, employees should show the same care as when sending work-related emails.

Monitoring of email

The Company reserves the right to monitor employees' emails but will endeavour to inform an affected employee when this is to happen and the reasons for it. The Company considers the following to be valid reasons for checking an employee's email:

- If the employee is absent for any reason and communications must be checked for the smooth running of the business to continue.
- If the Company suspects that the employee has been viewing or sending offensive or illegal material, such as material containing racist terminology or nudity (although the Company understands that it is possible for employees inadvertently to receive such material and they will have the opportunity to explain if this is the case).
- If the Company suspects that an employee has been using the email system to send and receive an excessive number of personal communications.
- If the Company suspects that the employee is sending or receiving emails that are detrimental to the Company.

When monitoring emails, the Company will, save in exceptional circumstances; confine itself to looking at the address and heading of the emails. Employees should mark any personal emails as such and encourage those who send them to do the same. The Company will avoid, where possible, opening emails clearly marked as private or personal.

The Company reserves the right to retain information that it has gathered on employees' use of email for a period of one year.

Use of internet

Authorised internet users

Where an employee has been provided with a computer with internet access at his/her desk, he/she may use the internet at work.

Not everyone in the Company needs access to the internet at work. Anyone who does not have access but believes that he/she requires it should contact his/her manager and make a written request, setting out the reasons why access should be allowed.

Sensible internet use

Where employees are allowed access to the internet at work they are expected to use it sensibly and in such a manner that it does not interfere with the efficient running of the Company. For example, where it would be quicker to make a telephone call than to engage in an internet search for the required information, then the telephone call should be made.

Employees may be called upon to justify the amount of time they have spent on the internet or the sites that they have visited.

The Company encourages employees to become familiar with the internet and does not currently impose any time limitation on work-related internet use. It trusts employees not to abuse the latitude given to them, but if this trust is abused it reserves the right to alter the policy in this respect.

Removing internet access

The Company reserves the right to deny internet access to any employee at work, although in such a case it will endeavour to give reasons for doing so.

Registering on websites

Many sites that could be useful for the Company require registration. Employees wishing to register as a user of a website for work purposes are encouraged to do so. However, they should ask their manager before doing this.

Licences and contracts

Some websites require the Company to enter into licence or contract terms. The terms should be printed off and sent for approval in advance or emailed to the Directors of the Company before an employee agrees to them on the Company's behalf. In most cases, there will be no

objection to the terms, and it is recognised that the free information provided by the website in question may save the Company money. Employees should, however, always consider whether the information is from a reputable source and is likely to be accurate and kept up to date, as most such contract terms will exclude liability for accuracy of free information.

Downloading files and software

Employees should download files on to only those PCs with virus checking software and should check how long the download will take. If there is any uncertainty as to whether the software is virus-free or whether the time the download will take is reasonable, the relevant line manager and the Company's IT department should be consulted.

Using other software and hardware at work

The Company staff handbook does not allow employees to bring software or hardware into the office without the Directors / IT providers consent and nothing in the email and internet policy modifies the Company's general view on this.

Personal use of the internet

Although the email system is primarily for business use, the Company understands that employees may on occasion need to use the internet for personal purposes. Employees may access the internet at work for personal purposes provided that:

- such use is limited to no more than 30 minutes in any day;
- the internet is not used to access offensive or illegal material, such as material containing racist terminology or nudity;
- they do not enter into any contracts or commitments in the name of or on behalf of the Company; and
- they do not arrange for any goods ordered on the internet to be delivered to the Company address without the express permission of the Directors or order them in the Company's name.

Employees should not use the internet for personal purposes before working hours begin or after they end. The Company has security concerns about staff arriving early and leaving late and it is harder to monitor use of the internet at such times.

Monitoring of internet access at work

The Company reserves the right to monitor employees' internet usage but will endeavour to inform an affected employee when this is to happen and the reasons for it. The Company considers the following to be valid reasons for checking an employee's internet usage:

- If the Company suspects that the employee has been viewing offensive or illegal material, such as material containing racist terminology or nudity (although the Company understands that it is possible for employees inadvertently to view such material and they will have the opportunity to explain if this is the case).
- If the Company suspects that the employee has been spending an excessive amount of time viewing websites that are not work related.

The Company reserves the right to retain information that it has gathered on employees' use of the internet for a period of one year.

General

The aim of these rules is to be helpful, and to set guidelines on the use of email and the internet at work for the smooth and efficient running of the business.

If there is anything in these rules that an employee considers to be unworkable or does not understand, he/she should notify his/her manager.

Self-employed contractors, agency workers or any other individuals working temporarily in the Company should be made aware of the rules regarding the use of email and the internet.

New members of staff should be shown this policy as part of their induction.

Employee Wellbeing Policy

Policy wording

Introduction

The Company has developed this employee wellbeing policy to manage its obligations to maintain the mental health and wellbeing of all staff. It covers the Company's commitment to employee health, the responsibilities of managers and others for maintaining psychological health, health promotion initiatives, communicating and training on health issues, the range of support available for the maintenance of mental health, and organisational commitment to handling individual issues.

Objectives

The aim of this policy is to describe the Company's commitment to the mental health and wellbeing of employees in its broadest, holistic sense, setting out how the Company fulfils its legal obligations, the responsibilities of different functions and specialists and the range of services available to help employees maintain health and wellbeing. The Company recognises that wellbeing and performance are linked. Improving employees' ability to handle pressure and to balance work and home life will ultimately lead to improved individual and organisational performance.

Organisational commitment

The Company has legal obligations under health and safety legislation to manage risks to the health and safety of employees. In addition to reducing safety risks, this means operating the business in a way that minimises harm to employees' mental health, for example by ensuring that the demands of jobs are not unacceptable and having policies and procedures in place to support individuals experiencing mental ill health at work.

The Company will put in place measures to prevent and manage risks to employee wellbeing, together with appropriate training and individual support. It will also seek to foster a mentally healthy culture by incorporating these principles into line manager training and running regular initiatives to raise awareness of mental health issues at work.

Responsibilities

Company

The Company has a legal duty of care to employees to ensure health at work, as set out in the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. The Company will ensure that its policies and practices reflect this duty and review the operation of these documents at regular intervals.

Line managers

Line managers will put in place measures to minimise the risks to employee wellbeing, particularly from negative pressure at work. Managers must familiarise themselves with the Health and Safety Executive's stress management standards and use these to mitigate

psychological risks in their teams. For example, managers should ensure that employees understand their role within the team and receive the necessary information and support from managers and team members to do their job. Managers must also familiarise themselves with the Company's policies on diversity and tackling inappropriate behaviour in order to support staff, for example on bullying and harassment issues.

In particular, line managers must ensure that they take steps to reduce the risks to employee health and wellbeing by:

- ensuring that the right people are recruited to the right jobs and that a good match is obtained between individuals recruited and job descriptions/specifications;
- keeping employees in the team up to date with developments at work and how these might affect their job and workload;
- ensuring that employees know who to approach with problems concerning their role and how to pursue issues with senior management;
- making sure jobs are designed fairly and that work is allocated appropriately between teams; and
- ensuring that work stations are regularly assessed to ensure that they are appropriate and fit for purpose.

Human resources

The HR department will develop organisation-wide policies and procedures to protect the wellbeing of employees, assist line managers in supporting individuals, and liaise as appropriate with occupational health and other medical professionals, with the object of helping employees to maintain good psychological health.

Employees

Employees must take responsibility for managing their own health and wellbeing, by adopting good health behaviours (for example in relation to diet, alcohol consumption and smoking) and informing the Company if they believe work or the work environment poses a risk to their health. Any health-related information disclosed by an employee during discussions with managers, the HR department or the occupational health service is treated in confidence.

Health promotion initiatives

The Company will develop and run a range of health promotion initiatives designed to raise awareness of health and lifestyle issues affecting mental health and wellbeing. The HR department will have primary responsibility for leading these programmes, but line managers and employees will be expected to participate. These programmes will be evaluated to determine their effectiveness.

The programmes will cover:

- stress management;
- disability awareness;
- bullying and harassment;
- handling violence and traumatic incidents at work;

- lifestyle behaviours, with voluntary screening (for example in relation to alcohol, drugs and smoking); and
- physical activity and fitness.

Employees will also be encouraged to establish clubs and groups designed to foster wellbeing, for example lunchtime walking.

Training and communications

Line managers and employees will regularly discuss individual training needs to ensure that employees have the necessary skills to adapt to ever-changing job demands. An examination of training needs will be particularly important prior to, and during, periods of organisational change.

Managers and employees are encouraged to participate in communication/feedback exercises, including stress audits and staff surveys. All employees are expected to be aware of the importance of effective communication and to use the media most appropriate to the message, for example team meetings, one-to-one meetings, electronic communications and organisation-wide methods. The Company will ensure that structures exist to give employees regular feedback on their performance, and for them to raise concerns.

The Company will consider special communication media during periods of organisational change.

If employees believe that their work, or some aspect of it, is putting their wellbeing at risk they should, in the first instance, speak to their line manager or the HR department. The discussion should cover workload and other aspects of job demands and raise issues such as identified training needs.

Other measures available to support employees in maintaining health and wellbeing include [delete as appropriate and insert more details on specific programmes and policies]:

- procedures for reporting and handling inappropriate behaviour (for example bullying and harassment);
- subsidised gym/sports facilities;
- special leave arrangements;
- opportunities for flexible working;
- support for workers with disabilities; and
- the Company's grievance policy.

Relationship with other policies

This employee wellbeing policy should be read in conjunction with other policies and procedures covering attendance and health, including policies on work-life balance, special leave, flexible working, the management of short and long-term absence, sick pay, bullying and harassment, violence at work, equal opportunities and staff training and development.

Equal Opportunities Policy and Procedure

Policy wording

Our commitment

The organisation is committed to providing equal opportunities in employment and to avoiding unlawful discrimination in employment and against customers.

This policy is intended to assist the organisation to put this commitment into practice. Compliance with this policy should also ensure that employees do not commit unlawful acts of discrimination.

Striving to ensure that the work environment is free of harassment and bullying and that everyone is treated with dignity and respect is an important aspect of ensuring equal opportunities in employment. The organisation has a separate dignity at work policy, which deals with these issues.

The law

It is unlawful to discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership. These are known as "protected characteristics".

Discrimination after employment may also be unlawful, e.g. refusing to give a reference for a reason related to one of the protected characteristics.

Staff should not discriminate against or harass a member of the public in the provision of services or goods. It is unlawful to fail to make reasonable adjustments to overcome barriers to using services caused by disability. The duty to make reasonable adjustments includes the removal, adaptation or alteration of physical features, if the physical features make it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services. In addition, service providers have an obligation to think ahead and address any barriers that may impede disabled people from accessing a service.

Types of unlawful discrimination

Direct discrimination is where a person is treated less favourably than another because of a protected characteristic. An example of direct discrimination would be refusing to employ a woman because she is pregnant.

In limited circumstances, employers can directly discriminate against an individual for a reason related to any of the protected characteristics where there is an occupational requirement. The occupational requirement must be crucial to the post and a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Indirect discrimination is where a provision, criterion or practice is applied that is discriminatory in relation to individuals who have a relevant protected characteristic

(although it does not explicitly include pregnancy and maternity, which is covered by indirect sex discrimination) such that it would be to the detriment of people who share that protected characteristic compared with people who do not, and it cannot be shown to be a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Harassment is where there is unwanted conduct, related to one of the protected characteristics (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity) that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity; or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It does not matter whether or not this effect was intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Associative discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed for association with another individual who has a protected characteristic (although it does not cover harassment because of marriage and civil partnership, and (according to guidance from the Government and ACAS) pregnancy and maternity).

Perceptive discrimination is where an individual is directly discriminated against or harassed based on a perception that he/she has a particular protected characteristic when he/she does not, in fact, have that protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity).

Third-party harassment occurs where an employee is harassed and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic (other than marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity), by third parties such as clients or customers. For an employer to be liable:

- the harassment must have occurred on at least two previous occasions (although not necessarily by the same harasser or suffering the same type of harassment);
- it must be aware that the previous harassment has taken place; and
- it must have failed to take reasonable steps to prevent harassment from happening again.

Victimisation occurs where an employee is subjected to a detriment, such as being denied a training opportunity or a promotion because he/she made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance under the Equality Act 2010, or because he/she is suspected of doing so. However, an employee is not protected from victimisation if he/she acted maliciously or made or supported an untrue complaint. There is no longer a need for a complainant to compare his/her treatment with someone who has not made or supported a complaint under the Equality Act 2010. For example, if a blind employee raises a grievance that the employer is not complying with its duty to make reasonable adjustments and is then systematically excluded from all meetings; such behaviour could amount to victimisation.

Failure to make reasonable adjustments is where a physical feature or a provision, criterion or practice puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage compared with someone who does not have that protected characteristic and the employer has failed to make reasonable adjustments to enable the disabled person to overcome the disadvantage.

Equal opportunities in employment

The organisation will avoid unlawful discrimination in all aspects of employment including recruitment, promotion, opportunities for training, pay and benefits, discipline and selection for redundancy.

Person and job specifications will be limited to those requirements that are necessary for the effective performance of the job. Candidates for employment or promotion will be assessed objectively against the requirements for the job, taking account of any reasonable adjustments that may be required for candidates with a disability. Disability and personal or home commitments will not form the basis of employment decisions except where necessary.

The organisation will consider any possible indirectly discriminatory effect of its standard working practices, including the number of hours to be worked, the times at which these are to be worked and the place at which work is to be done, when considering requests for variations to these standard working practices and will refuse such requests only if the organisation considers it has good reasons, unrelated to any protected characteristic, for doing so. The organisation will comply with its obligations in relation to statutory requests for contract variations. The organisation will also make reasonable adjustments to its standard working practices to overcome barriers caused by disability.

The organisation will monitor the ethnic, gender and age composition of the existing workforce and of applicants for jobs (including promotion), and the number of people with disabilities within these groups and will consider and take any appropriate action to address any problems that may be identified as a result of the monitoring process.

Dignity at work

The organisation has a separate dignity at work policy concerning issues of bullying and harassment on any ground, and how complaints of this type will be dealt with.

Customers, suppliers and other people not employed by the organisation

The organisation will not discriminate unlawfully against customers using or seeking to use goods, facilities or services provided by the organisation.

Employees should report any bullying or harassment by customers, suppliers, visitors or others to their manager who will take appropriate action.

Training

The organisation will provide training in equal opportunities to managers and others likely to be involved in recruitment or other decision making where equal opportunities issues are likely to arise.

The organisation will provide training to all existing and new employees and others engaged to work at the organisation to help them understand their rights and responsibilities under the dignity at work policy and what they can do to help create a working environment free of bullying and harassment. The organisation will provide

additional training to managers to enable them to deal more effectively with complaints of bullying and harassment.

Your responsibilities

Every employee is required to assist the organisation to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination.

Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, the organisation for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees or customers are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under the organisation's disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

Grievances

If you consider that you may have been unlawfully discriminated against, you may use the organisation's grievance procedure to make a complaint. If your complaint involves bullying or harassment, the grievance procedure is modified as set out in the dignity at work policy.

The organisation will take any complaint seriously and will seek to resolve any grievance that it upholds. You will not be penalised for raising a grievance, even if your grievance is not upheld, unless your complaint is both untrue and made in bad faith.

Use of the organisation's grievance procedure does not affect your right to make a complaint to an employment tribunal. Complaints to an employment tribunal must normally be made within three months beginning with the act of discrimination complained of.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be monitored periodically by the organisation to judge its effectiveness and will be updated in accordance with changes in the law. In particular, the organisation will monitor the ethnic and gender composition of the existing workforce and of applicants for jobs (including promotion), and the number of people with disabilities within these groups and will review its equal opportunities policy in accordance with the results shown by the monitoring. If changes are required, the organisation will implement them.

Information provided by job applicants and employees for monitoring purposes will be used only for these purposes and will be dealt with in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Expenses Policy

Policy wording

Purpose

This policy sets out the Company's rules on how employees can claim for expenses incurred in the performance of their duties for the Company. The policy covers travel, meals and accommodation, overseas and relocation expenses, business entertainment, gifts and staff parties.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that employees are properly reimbursed for legitimate business expenses and to ensure that these expenses are treated appropriately for tax purposes.

General procedure

The Company will reimburse you for actual expenditure that is incurred wholly, necessarily and exclusively in connection with authorised duties that you undertake in the course of your employment.

To claim for expenses, you must use the Company's expenses claim forms, available from the Company intranet. You should set out the reasons why the expense was incurred on the claim form.

Expenses will not be paid unless supporting evidence is provided, together with a completed expense claim form. This should include original receipts or invoices with the date and time of the transaction (unless you are claiming for mileage). When claiming for travel expenses on public transport, you should enclose the tickets showing the departure point and destination of your journey, where possible. [Credit and debit card statements will not be accepted.] Where you are submitting a VAT receipt, you should set out:

- the name and VAT registration number of the retailer or service provider;
- the goods and services provided; and
- the amount of VAT payable.

Once completed and signed, you should submit your expenses claim form to your line manager. Once your line manager has approved the claim form, this should be sent to Finance Assistant in the accounts department.

Expenses claims must be submitted within 30 days of the expense being incurred. If this is not practical, written approval for any extension will be required from your line manager. The Company reserves the right to withhold any payment where written approval has not been sought.

The Company may return an expense claim form to you without payment if it is completed incorrectly or lacks supporting evidence.

The Company will pay claims for authorised expenses by BACS transfer into the same bank account into which your salary is paid.

In general, you should not incur expenses other than in the categories listed. However, if you have claims for expenditure other than for those categories listed below, you should seek written approval from your line manager or /the finance manager before incurring the expense.

The Company will accept email as written approval where it is required in this policy.

Any queries in relation to this policy should be directed to the finance controller.

Travel

Employees and line managers should consider whether or not travel is necessary to meet business objectives or if there are more appropriate means (for example, teleconferencing or videoconferencing).

Air

Any flight must be pre-authorized by your line manager in writing before being booked. Where possible, flights should be booked well in advance to benefit from any discounts for early booking.

Personal incentives or rewards associated with specific air travel, such as air miles, should not be a factor in determining which flight is purchased for company business. The key consideration is whether or not the flight is the most cost-effective for the Company, unless there is a valid business reason for taking an alternative flight.

You will usually only be permitted to travel in economy class. Where you are required to travel on a long-haul flight (longer than eight hours), you may be permitted to travel in business class in certain circumstances. Prior written authorisation from the MD is required before any first-class or business class ticket is booked.

Rail

You may claim for standard class rail fares only. Where possible, rail journeys should be booked well in advance to benefit from any discounts for early booking.

You should, where possible, use any rail cards or season tickets that have already been paid for as part of your normal commute to the office towards any journey taken on company business, where this is more economical.

Taxis

You may claim for a taxi fare only in limited circumstances. These are:

- where taking a taxi would result in a significantly shorter travel time than using public transport;
- where there are several employees travelling together; or
- where personal security and safety of employees is an issue, for example taxis may be permitted after 9.30pm.

You must obtain a receipt with details of the date, place of departure and destination of the journey.

Use of your own car

It may be appropriate and cost-effective to use your own car when travelling on company business, for example if you are travelling with several employees or, where there is limited public transport to your destination, or the journey time is significantly shorter than using public transport. Any use of your own car on company business is subject to you/resources

- holding a full UK driving licence;
- ensuring that your car is roadworthy and fully registered; and
- holding comprehensive motor insurance that provides for business use.

Prior authorisation should be sought from your line manager before using your own car on company business.

The Company accepts no liability for any accident, loss, damage or claim arising out of any journey that you make on company business [unless caused by the Company's negligence]. The Company will not pay for the cost of any insurance policy on your own car.

To claim for petrol expenditure, you should set out the distance of the journey undertaken on your expenses claim form. The Company will pay you a mileage allowance of 45p per mile for mileage under 10,000 miles and 25p per mile for mileage over 10,000 miles, or such other rate as set out from time to time by HM Revenue and Customs.

The Company will pay for tolls, congestion charges and parking costs incurred, where applicable, but not any fines associated with driving or parking related in the course of business.

Late night/early morning transport

The Company will, in exceptional circumstances, reimburse you for late night or early morning transport, including a taxi, if you are required to travel to or from the office, airport, railway station or other destination for specific business reasons. This will apply only where you are required to be at work before 7am or after 9.30pm, or at the airport or railway station before 7am or after 9.30pm. No transport expenses will be reimbursed for any staff social events held by the Company or company employees.

You should seek prior written authorisation for late or early departures from or to work where possible from your line manager. If this is not possible, you should set out the reasons for the late or early departure in your expenses claim.

Meals/accommodation

As a guideline for business travel, you should book accommodation equivalent to three-star standard or less. You may book hotel accommodation of up to £100 maximum in a major city and £75 elsewhere.

It is your responsibility to ensure that any hotel reservations are cancelled within the required cancellation period if they are no longer required.

If you are required to be away from home on company business, you may claim up to:

- £15 for breakfast (if this is not included in the hotel room rate);
- £25 for dinner

The maximum amounts above are inclusive of drinks.

In the event that you are inviting clients or other business contacts for breakfast, lunch, or dinner to discuss business matters, these maximum rates will not apply. However, where possible, you should obtain prior written approval from your line manager before making any reservations.

You should supply receipts and invoices for all hotel and meal expenses.

Overseas expenses

The meal and hotel allowances set out above also apply when travelling overseas on company business.

You should provide the applicable currency exchange rate for the date on which the expense was incurred. The Company will verify the exchange rate submitted as part of any overseas expenses claim.

The Company will reimburse you for any travel visas required for business travel. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have a valid passport with a minimum of six months remaining prior to the expiry date.

The Company will provide business travel insurance for any trips authorised by the Company.

Relocation expenses

If you are required to work overseas for the Company for longer than three months, the Company will write separately to you about your individual circumstances and the Company's assistance for you and your family.

The Company will reimburse you for reasonable relocation costs up to a maximum of £5,000

Business entertainment/gifts

The Company recognises that corporate entertainment can provide opportunities to strengthen business relationships, enhance the Company's reputation and deepen prospective clients' or suppliers' understanding of the business. Any entertainment booked for clients, suppliers or other business contacts must be approved in advance by your line manager and the finance controller. You should submit:

- details of the individuals whom you wish to invite;
- the name of the company that they represent;
- the nature of the entertainment, including date and location; and
- the business reasons for the entertainment.

The Company will only approve business entertainment proposals that demonstrate a clear business objective and that are appropriate for the nature of the business relationship. The Company will not approve business entertainment where it considers that a conflict of interest may arise or where it could be perceived that undue influence or a particular business benefit is being sought (for example, prior to a tendering exercise).

Any gifts, rewards or entertainment that you receive from clients or suppliers or other business contacts should be reported immediately to the finance manager controller. In certain circumstances, it may not be appropriate to retain such gifts and you may be asked to return gifts to the sender, for example, where there could be a real or perceived conflict of interest. As a general rule, small tokens of appreciation, for example flowers or a bottle of wine, may be retained by employees.

If you wish to provide gifts to suppliers, clients or other business contacts, you must seek prior written approval from your line manager or the finance controller, with details of the intended recipients, reasons for the gift and the business objective. These will only be authorised in limited circumstances and will be subject to a cap of £50 per recipient.

Christmas parties/annual events

Any team event such as a Christmas meal or celebration for a team or department will be subject to your team manager's approval, which must be authorised by the managing director.

Any Company-wide event hosted by the Company, such as the Christmas party will be communicated to employees via the Company's intranet. The budget for such events will be managed centrally.

Please note that the scale of celebrations may vary from year to year, depending on the performance of the Company. The Company may choose not to approve or host celebrations for employees where it is not appropriate to do so given the financial circumstances. Alternatively, the Company may request that employees contribute to their team celebrations or parties, if they wish to attend. Such contributions will not be reimbursable via the expenses procedure.

Expenses that will not be reimbursed

The Company will not reimburse you for:

- the cost of any travel between your home and usual place of work (except in exceptional circumstances for early morning/late night transport as set out above);
- the cost of any travel undertaken for personal reasons;
- the cost of any travel for your partner or spouse;
- any fines or penalties incurred while on company business for whatever reason, including penalties for not paying for a rail ticket in advance of boarding the train and

- penalties or fines associated with motoring offences, including speeding or parking fines, clamping or vehicle recovery charges;
- any expenses incurred for personal benefit or to improperly influence or reward a business contact; or
- cash advances or withdrawals from an ATM machine.

You are required to pay for any travel costs incurred by your partner or spouse in the event that he or she accompanies you on company business. Your spouse or partner must have adequate travel insurance for that journey.

False claims

If the Company considers that any expenditure claimed was not legitimately incurred on behalf of the Company, it may request further details from you. The Company will thoroughly investigate and check any expenses claim as it sees fit. It may withhold payment where insufficient supporting documents have been provided. Where payment has been made to you prior to the discovery that the claim was not legitimate or correct, it may deduct the value of that claim from your salary.

Any abuse of the Company's expenses policy will not be tolerated. This includes, but is not limited to:

- false expenses claims;
- claims for expenses that were not legitimately incurred;
- claims for personal gain;
- claims for hospitality and/or gifts to induce a client or other business contact to take improper action; and
- receipt by you of hospitality and/or gifts from business contacts that may be perceived to influence your judgment.

The Company will take disciplinary action where appropriate and, in certain circumstances, may treat a breach of this policy as gross misconduct, which may result in your summary dismissal. In addition, the Company may report the matter to the police for investigation and criminal prosecution.

First Aid Policy and Procedure

Policy wording

The Company is committed to providing adequate first-aid personnel, equipment and facilities to deal with ill health and injuries to employees while they are at work. Emergency first-aid treatment can save lives and prevent minor injuries becoming major injuries.

The Company will provide first-aid personnel with sufficient training, information and support to undertake their responsibilities.

Procedure wording

The Company Directors, will:

- undertake an assessment to determine the number of first-aid personnel and the facilities required, giving consideration to the factors detailed in the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981;
- ensure that first-aid personnel are given sufficient time for training and carrying out their responsibilities; and
- ensure that all staff are aware of the first-aid personnel.

The HR Manager will act as first-aid coordinator and will:

- organise training from an approved course provider for first-aid personnel;
- keep training records and copies of certificates for first-aid personnel;
- organise refresher training when required;
- ensure that there is adequate first-aid cover on a day-to-day basis;
- organise the purchase of supplies for first-aid kits when requested; and
- keep first-aid personnel notices updated.

First-aid personnel will:

- take charge of injury/ill health situations;
- provide first-aid assistance or advice within their training;
- seek support from the emergency services where necessary;
- ensure that the accident book and internal company accident forms are completed;
- keep their first-aid kits stocked, in date and in a suitable location;
- inform the first-aid coordinator when refresher training is required; and
- provide advice on precautions required to prevent the potential spread of blood borne disease when attending to an injury.
- Follow the site incident reporting process if working on a customer's site

Fixed Term Working Policy Procedure

Policy wording

It is the organisation's policy that its employees will, as the norm, be employed on permanent contracts of employment, terminable on the giving of notice by either party. Where the need for a particular job to be done is clearly temporary, the contract of employment offered will be for a fixed term. Fixed-term contracts will generally be offered where:

- it is known in advance that a particular job will come to an end on a specific date;
- the employment is for the purpose of completing a particular task;
- the employment is for the purpose of replacing an employee who is to be absent from work for a period of time (for example on maternity leave);
- the post is dependent on external funding and it is thought likely that the funding will be available for only a temporary period of time.

Any employee engaged on a fixed-term contract will be entitled to terms and conditions of employment that are not less favourable on a pro-rata basis than the terms and conditions of a comparable permanent employee, unless there is an objective reason for offering different terms. A comparable permanent employee is someone who is engaged in the Company's workforce, in the same or broadly similar work, taking into account whether the fixed-term employee and the permanent comparator have a similar level of qualifications and skills.

Fixed-term employees will be treated in the same way as comparable permanent employees in relation to opportunities for training, promotion, transfer and appraisal.

Employees engaged on fixed-term contracts will be encouraged to apply for permanent vacancies and will be informed of all available vacancies as they arise via the staff noticeboards.

Flexible Working Policy and Procedure

Policy wording

The organisation believes that the promotion of flexible working can increase staff motivation, promote work-life balance, reduce employee stress and improve performance and productivity.

The law grants employees who have a minimum of 26 weeks' continuous service and who have parental responsibility for a child under the age of 17 (or 18 where the child is disabled) the right to request flexible working and to have their request considered seriously by their employer.

Employees who have a minimum of 26 weeks' continuous service and who have caring responsibilities for an adult aged 18 or over who is their spouse, partner or civil partner; a relative; or someone who lives at the same address also have the right to request flexible working.

A "partner" can be the other member of heterosexual couples who are not married but are living together as if they were husband and wife, or of a same-sex couples who are not civil partners but are living together as if they were.

A "relative" includes a mother, father, adopter, guardian, special guardian, parent-in-law, step-parent, son, step-son, son-in-law, daughter, step-daughter, brother, step-brother, brother-in-law, sister, step-sister, sister-in-law, daughter-in-law, uncle, aunt or grandparent. Adoptive relationships with these relatives are included.

A request for flexible working in this context can include a request for a change to the number of hours that the employee works, a request for a change to the pattern of hours worked and a request to perform some or all of the work from the employee's home.

It is the organisation's policy to endeavour to be flexible on working patterns for all employees, not just those who have the statutory right to submit such requests. Nevertheless, precedence will be given to employees who have the statutory right to request flexible working to ensure that the organisation is complying with its legal obligations.

The organisation will take all reasonable steps to accommodate an employee's request for flexible working and will arrange a meeting with the employee within no more than 28 days of receiving his/her written request. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the changes the employee has proposed, the effects of the proposed changes and any possible alternative arrangements that might suit both parties.

Each request will be dealt with individually, taking into account the likely effects that the proposed changes to working hours or place of work are likely to have on the organisation, the work of the department in which the employee making the request is employed and the employee's colleagues. Agreeing to one employee's request will not therefore set a precedent or create a right for another employee to be granted a similar change to his/her working pattern.

Employees who wish to submit a request for flexible working should do so in writing. Information on how to make a request and a standard form are available from the H R Manager.

Grievance Policy

Policy wording

Introduction

The organisation believes that all employees should be treated fairly and with respect. If you are unhappy about the treatment that you have received or about any aspect of your work, you should discuss this with your line manager, who will attempt to resolve the situation on an informal basis. If you feel unable to approach your line manager directly, you should approach the HR manager, who will discuss ways of dealing with the matter with you.

Where attempts to resolve the matter informally do not work, it may be appropriate for you to raise a formal grievance under this procedure. A formal grievance should be concerned with the way in which you have been treated by the organisation or managers acting on its behalf. If your complaint relates to bullying or harassment on the part of a colleague, the matter should be dealt with under the bullying and harassment procedure. Complaints that amount to an allegation of misconduct on the part of another employee will be investigated and dealt with under the disciplinary procedure and you will be informed of the outcome.

Grievances may be concerned with a wide range of issues, including the allocation of work, your working environment or conditions, the opportunities that you have been given for career development or the way in which you have been managed.

Complaints that you may have about any disciplinary action taken against you should be dealt with as an appeal under the disciplinary procedure.

Grievances raised while you are subject to disciplinary proceedings will usually be heard only when the disciplinary process has been completed. Insofar as a grievance has any bearing on the disciplinary proceedings, it can be raised as a relevant issue in the course of those proceedings.

Mediation

It may be appropriate for the matter to be dealt with by way of mediation, depending on the nature of your grievance. This involves the appointment of a third-party mediator, who will discuss the issues raised by your grievance with all of those involved and seek to facilitate a resolution. Mediation will be used only where all parties involved in the grievance agree.

The right to be accompanied

You have the right to be accompanied by a fellow worker or a recognised trade union official at any grievance meeting or subsequent appeal. The recognised trade union official need not be an employee of the organisation, but if he/she is not a fellow worker or an employee of his/her union, the organisation may insist on him/her being certified by the union as being experienced or trained in accompanying employees at grievance hearings.

The choice of companion is a matter for you, but the organisation reserves the right to refuse to accept a companion whose presence would undermine the grievance process. Please note that individual workers are not obliged to agree to accompany you. Companions will be given

appropriate paid time off to allow them to accompany colleagues at a grievance hearing or appeal hearing.

At any hearing or appeal hearing, your chosen companion will be allowed to address the meeting, respond on your behalf to any view expressed in the hearing, and sum up the case on your behalf. However, both the hearing and appeal hearing are essentially meetings between the employer and you, so any questions put directly to you should be dealt with by you and not your companion.

Where the chosen companion is unavailable on the day scheduled for the meeting or appeal, the meeting will be rescheduled, provided that you can propose an alternative time within five working days of the scheduled date.

Accessibility

If any aspect of the grievance procedure causes you difficulty on account of any disability that you may have, or if you need assistance because English is not your first language, you should raise this issue with the HR manager, who will make appropriate arrangements.

Conducting the grievance procedure

The organisation recognises that a formal grievance procedure can be a stressful and upsetting experience for all parties involved. Everyone involved in the process is entitled to be treated calmly and with respect. The organisation will not tolerate abusive or insulting behaviour from anyone taking part in or conducting grievance procedures and will treat any such behaviour as misconduct under the disciplinary procedure.

Formal grievance procedure

Making the complaint

The first stage of the grievance procedure is for you to put your complaint in writing. This written statement will form the basis of the subsequent hearing and any investigations, so it is important that you set out clearly the nature of your grievance and indicate the outcome that you are seeking. If your grievance is unclear, you may be asked to clarify your complaint before any meeting takes place.

Your complaint should be headed "Formal grievance" and sent to your line manager. If your complaint relates to the way in which your line manager is treating you, the complaint may be sent to the HR manager.

Further attempts may be made to resolve the matter informally, depending on the nature of your complaint. However, if you are not satisfied with the outcome, you may insist on the matter proceeding to a full grievance hearing.

Before proceeding to a full grievance hearing, it may be necessary to carry out investigations of any allegations made by you, although the confidentiality of the grievance process will be respected. If any evidence is gathered in the course of these investigations, you will be given a copy long enough in advance of the hearing for you to consider your response. In exceptional circumstances, the evidence given by individuals may have to remain

confidential. Where confidentiality is necessary, this will be explained to you and an appropriate summary of the evidence gathered will be given to you.

The grievance hearing

The hearing will be held as soon as is reasonably practicable and, subject to any need to carry out prior investigations, within five working days of the receipt of your written complaint. It will be conducted by your line manager and attended by an HR Manager. At the meeting, you will be asked to explain the nature of your complaint and what action you feel should be taken to resolve the matter. Where appropriate, the meeting may be adjourned to allow further investigations to take place.

You should ensure that you attend the meeting at the specified time. If you are unable to attend because of circumstances beyond your control, you should inform your line manager as soon as possible. If you fail to attend without explanation, or if it appears that you have not made sufficient attempts to attend, the hearing may take place in your absence.

While you will be given every opportunity to explain your case fully, you should confine your explanation to matters that are directly relevant to your complaint. Focusing on irrelevant issues or incidents that took place long before the matters in hand is not helpful and can hinder the effective handling of your complaint. The manager conducting the hearing will intervene if he/she thinks that the discussion is straying too far from the key issue. The manager may also intervene to ensure that the meeting can be completed within a reasonable timeframe, depending on the nature and complexity of your complaint.

Following the meeting, you will be informed in writing of the outcome within seven working days and told of any action that the organisation proposes to take as a result of your complaint. You may discuss this outcome informally with either your manager or HR manager.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome, you may make a formal appeal.

Appeal

Your appeal should be made in writing to the manager who conducted the initial grievance hearing/HR manager. You should clearly state the grounds of your appeal, ie the basis on which you say that the result of the grievance was wrong or that the action taken as a result was inappropriate. This should be done within seven working days of the written notification of the outcome of the grievance. An appeal meeting will be arranged to take place within five working days of the submission of your formal appeal.

You should ensure that you attend the meeting at the specified time. If you are unable to attend because of circumstances beyond your control, you should inform your line manager of this as soon as possible. If you fail to attend without explanation, or if it appears that you have not made sufficient attempts to attend, the hearing may take place in your absence.

The appeal hearing will be conducted by your head of department/director, who will consider the grounds that you have put forward and assess whether or not the conclusion reached in the original grievance hearing was appropriate. The appeal is not a rehearing of the original grievance, but rather a consideration of the specific areas with which you are dissatisfied in

relation to the original grievance. The manager conducting the appeal may therefore confine discussion to those specific areas rather than reconsider the whole matter afresh.

Following the appeal meeting, you will be informed of the outcome within seven working days. The outcome of this meeting will be final.

Harassment Complaints Policy

Policy wording

Introduction

The organisation is committed to ensuring equal opportunities and fair treatment in the workplace for its entire staff. One of the key aims of the policy is to enable the organisation to provide a working environment in which all staff feel comfortable and in which everyone is treated with respect and dignity, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, transgender status, marital or family status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, creed, culture, religion or belief, age, disability or any other personal factor or quality.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the organisation's dignity at work policy, which aims to ensure that no employee or other worker within the organisation is subjected to any form of harassment or bullying. The purpose of this policy is to provide a route for members of staff who believe that they have been harassed or bullied to raise a complaint either informally or formally.

The organisation will treat all complaints of harassment seriously and will investigate them promptly, efficiently and in confidence. The main aim of this policy is to provide a framework for resolving complaints of harassment or bullying and for stopping any behaviour that is causing offence or distress.

Right to report harassment/bullying

Employees have an absolute right to complain if they are treated in a manner that they believe constitutes harassment or bullying. This will include behaviour that has caused offence, humiliation, embarrassment or distress. Apart from complaints about the behaviour of colleagues, employees have the right to complain if they believe that they have been bullied or harassed by a third party, for example a customer, client or supplier. Employees who raise a genuine complaint under this policy will under no circumstances be subjected to any unfavourable treatment or victimisation as a result of making a complaint.

However, if it is established that an employee has made a deliberately false or malicious complaint against another person about harassment or bullying, disciplinary action will be taken against that employee.

Any employee who witnesses an incident that he/she believes to be the harassment or bullying of another member of staff should report the incident in confidence either to his/her line manager or to the Human Resources Manager. The organisation will take all such reports seriously and will treat the information in strict confidence as far as it is possible to do so.

How to make a complaint

Before raising a formal complaint, the employee is encouraged in the first instance to talk directly and informally to the person whom he/she believes is harassing him/her and explain clearly what aspect of the person's behaviour is unacceptable, or is causing offence, and request that it stop. It may be that the person whose conduct is causing offence is genuinely

unaware that his/her behaviour is unwelcome or objectionable and that a direct approach can resolve the matter without the need for formal action. Where an employee would like support to make such an approach, he/she should contact the Human Resources Manager.

If, however, the employee feels unable to take this course of action, or if he/she has already approached the person to no avail, or if the harassment is of a very serious nature, he/she may elect to raise a formal complaint. Formal complaints may be raised with either the employee's line manager or, if preferred, the Human Resources Manager.

In bringing a complaint of harassment/bullying, the employee should be prepared to state:

- the name of the person whose behaviour he/she believes amounts to harassment or bullying;
- the type of behaviour that is causing offence, together with specific examples if possible;
- dates and times when incidents of harassment or bullying occurred, and where they occurred;
- the names of any employees who witnessed any incidents, or who themselves may have been the victims of harassment or bullying by the same person; and
- any action that the employee has already taken to try to deal with the harassment.

Responsibility on line managers to deal with complaints

Managers who receive a complaint of harassment have a duty to investigate the matter thoroughly and objectively and to take corrective action in order to ensure that the organisation's dignity at work policy is complied with. Line managers should be responsive and supportive towards any worker who raises a genuine complaint of harassment or bullying. The human resources department will assist any line manager in dealing with complaints of harassment or bullying. All incidents of harassment/bullying should, in any event, be reported to the human resources department.

The organisation reserves the right, at its discretion, to suspend any employee who is under investigation for harassment or bullying for a temporary period whilst investigations are being carried out. Such suspension will be for as short a time as possible and will be on full pay.

Any employee accused of harassment or bullying will be informed of the exact nature of the complaint against him/her and afforded a full opportunity to challenge the allegations and put forward an explanation for his/her behaviour in a confidential interview, with a companion present if he/she wishes. No employee will be presumed guilty following an allegation of harassment or bullying against him/her.

The organisation regards all forms of harassment and bullying as serious misconduct, and any employee who is found to have harassed or bullied a colleague will be liable to disciplinary action up to and including summary dismissal.

The organisation will maintain records of investigations into alleged incidents of harassment or bullying, the outcome of the investigations and any corrective or disciplinary action taken. These records will be maintained in confidence and in line with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment Policy

Policy wording

The organisation will ensure that hazards are identified, and that suitable and sufficient risk assessments are undertaken on all of the business' undertakings. Where possible, identified hazards will be eliminated; otherwise the risks associated with the hazards will be reduced to as low as is reasonably practicable and those affected will be informed of the significant findings of the risk assessments.

The organisation will ensure that those undertaking the risk assessments are competent to do so and are provided with adequate time, resources and support.

Employees should report any hazards that they discover so that remedial steps can be taken to reduce any harm.

Procedure wording

The directors, will:

- ensure that a workplace hazard identification exercise is completed for the area of the business and all hazards are recorded
- ensure that hazards are eliminated where possible and recorded
- identify and list the tasks that require risk assessment;
- ensure that the risk assessments are completed in risk priority order;
- ensure that persons conducting risk assessments are competent to do so;
- ensure that members of staff conducting risk assessments are provided with adequate information, instruction, training, supervision, time and support to undertake the assessments;
- ensure that any health and safety risks identified by the assessments are reduced to as low as is reasonably practicable;
- ensure that staff members are provided with training in the safe systems of work resulting from the risk assessments;
- ensure that other parties, such as members of the public, visitors and contractors, who may be affected are informed of the significant findings of the assessments;
- encourage members of staff to complete hazard reporting forms when required;
- ensure that a fire risk assessment is completed by a competent person using the appropriate form;
- ensure that risk assessments are reviewed for their confirmed application at least once every 12 months and when any significant change is made; and
- ensure that relevant risk assessments are reviewed following an accident, incident or near miss.

The nominated risk assessor will:

- identify the workplace hazards using the provided form;
- eliminate hazards where possible;
- review the list of tasks to be assessed and complete them in risk priority order;
- obtain assistance from specialist parties where required;
- involve the person undertaking the task in the risk assessment process;

- conduct and record risk assessments on the provided form;
- identify specific risk assessments, such as manual handling, hazardous substances and display screen equipment, if they are required;
- inform members of staff of the significant findings of the risk assessments;
- ensure that the level of detail of a risk assessment and the time spent on it are proportional to the risk;
- consider the hierarchy of control when identifying measures to control a risk;
- during the assessments inform members of staff of the hazard reporting forms and process;
- give consideration to the greater risks to new and expectant mothers, young persons and other higher-risk groups;
- maintain a file of risk assessments; and
- review the risk assessments for their confirmed application at least once every 12 months and when any significant change is made, and following an accident, the completion of a hazard report form or a near miss.

Employees will:

- follow appropriate systems for work laid down for their health and safety;
- make proper use of any equipment and personal protective equipment provided for their health and safety;
- inform their manager if they identify hazards and/or complete a hazard report form; and
- take care to ensure that their activities do not put others at risk.

Hazardous Substances Policy & Procedure

Policy wording

The Company will ensure that health risks associated with hazardous substances are assessed and that exposure to substances hazardous to health is prevented, or, where this is not reasonably practicable, adequately controlled.

The Company will also ensure that those who undertake assessments in accordance with the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 are competent to do so.

The Company will provide suitable and sufficient information, instruction, training and supervision to employees regarding the control of substances hazardous to health and the associated hazards. Employees will make proper use of any equipment and systems of work provided for their safety. The Company will take all reasonable steps to ensure that control measures are properly used.

The Company will ensure that adequate arrangements are in place to deal with accidents, incidents and emergencies related to the presence of substances hazardous to health in the workplace.

Procedure wording

The Directors will be responsible for ensuring the following:

- compile an inventory of all hazardous substances on site/with which employees may come into contact;
- ensure that material safety data sheets are available for all hazardous substances;
- review work activities and processes and identify what control of substances hazardous to health assessments are required;
- prioritise the completion of control of substances hazardous to health assessments based on risk;
- ensure that those undertaking control of substances hazardous to health assessments are competent to do so;
- ensure that staff are informed of the hazards associated with the substances and the significant findings of the assessments;
- ensure that control of substances hazardous to health assessments are reviewed for their confirmed application at least once every 12 months, when an accident or near miss occurs, when any significant change is made and when the results of any monitoring show it to be necessary;
- ensure that any control measures in place are adequately maintained, examined and tested;
- organise air monitoring if required;
- ensure that arrangements and procedures are in place to deal with accidents, incidents, spillages and emergencies and that staff are aware of these procedures;
- put arrangements in place, including supervision, to ensure that employees properly use control measures;
- organise health surveillance if required and ensure that records are kept for at least 40 years.
- Provide suitable storage for all COSHH items

The control of substances hazardous to health assessor will:

- conduct and record control of substances hazardous to health assessments in accordance with his/her training;
- give consideration to the greater risks to new and expectant mothers and young person's within the assessment;
- involve those who are undertaking the activity in the assessment;
- ensure that occupational exposure limits do not exceed those detailed in the Approved Code of Practice EH40;
- identify measures to control the exposure to substances hazardous to health in accordance with the order of priority detailed in reg.7 of the Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002;
- advise those involved in the activity of the significant findings of the assessment;
- submit the control of substances hazardous to health assessment for review and approval by the Owners and Directors if required;
- identify if any monitoring is required;
- maintain a file of all control of substances hazardous to health assessments;
- review control of substances hazardous to health assessments at least once every 12 months, when an accident or near miss occurs, when any significant change is made and when the results of any monitoring show it to be necessary.

Health and Safety Policy

Policy wording

The Company regards the management of health and safety as an integral part of its business and as a management priority. It is our policy that all activities and work will be carried out in a safe manner and we will ensure the health, safety and welfare of our employees and others who may be affected by our activities.

Our target is for zero accidents and zero work-related ill health to be achieved by applying current best practice in health and safety management. Compliance with current health and safety legislation is therefore regarded as the absolute minimum standard acceptable.

Proper management of health and safety issues is seen as an integral part of the efficient management of the Company's activities, and critical to developing the professional culture of the Company and establishing and maintaining a solid reputation with all our clients.

The organisation and arrangements to meet the above objectives and for the implementation of this policy are detailed within the Company's more detailed health and safety policies.

The objectives of this policy are fundamental to our business and the company directors are responsible for ensuring that the requirements of this policy are achieved.

Management, staff and operatives have responsibility for implementing the specific arrangements made under this policy throughout the Company. All employees are expected to read the relevant sections of the manual, familiarise themselves with its provisions and carry out their defined responsibilities. A copy of the manual will be held in the HR department and will be made available to all employees.

Employees are expected and encouraged to be proactive on health and safety issues as part of the continued development of the health and safety culture of the organisation.

All employees, contractors and sub-contractors are required to cooperate with the Company and their colleagues in implementing the policy and shall ensure that their own work is without risks to themselves and others as far as reasonably practicable.

The Company will provide appropriate training and make available competent health and safety advice and adequate resources including time and money so that legal obligations may be met.

Holiday / Annual Leave Policy

The holiday year runs from 1 January to 31 December. All full-time and part-time employees are entitled to 22 days' paid holiday per annum plus statutory bank holidays. Leave must be retained for the Christmas Shutdown the amount of days required will be notified at the start of each holiday year.

All holiday must be taken during the holiday year in which it is accrued. In exceptional circumstances a maximum of five days may be carried over from one holiday year to the next but this can be done only with the prior written approval of the Managing Director. In this case, any holiday carried over must be taken no later than end of March of the year following its accrual.

All holiday dates must be approved in advance by the employee's line manager. As much notice as possible of proposed holiday dates must be given to the line manager to ensure adequate staffing coverage at all times. Such notice must be at least twice the number of days' leave that the employee wishes to take as annual leave.

Leave will be granted on a first come first serve basis where multiple requests are received for the same periods of leave.

Holiday pay

Holiday pay is calculated on the basis of the employee's previous 12 weeks earnings.

There will be no payment in lieu of any holiday not taken (except on termination).

Public and bank holidays

The organisation recognises eight public/bank holidays a year, the dates of which vary from year to year. All recognised public and bank holidays are permitted as paid holiday in addition to the annual holiday entitlement specified above. The exact dates of public and bank holidays will be notified to all employees at the start of each holiday year.

An employee will not be paid or where appropriate a deduction will be made from salary for any bank or public holiday if he/she is absent from work (other than on the organisation's business or unless expressly authorised) immediately before or after the bank or public holiday. If absence immediately before or immediately after the bank or public holiday is due to sickness, payment for the bank or public holiday will be made only if a medical certificate is provided. The organisation will in these circumstances reimburse the employee for the cost of obtaining the medical certificate. Where a medical certificate is provided, sick pay will be paid for the absence subject to the terms of the organisation's sick pay scheme.

Holiday entitlement in year of commencement

If the employee joins the organisation part way through a holiday year, he/she will be entitled to a proportion of his/her holiday entitlement based on the period of his/her employment in that holiday year.

During the employee's first year of service, he/she will not normally be allowed, unless otherwise agreed by the Directors, to take more holiday than he/she has actually accrued at the time holiday is taken. Entitlement during the employee's first year is calculated monthly in advance at the rate of one-twelfth of the full year's entitlement.

Holiday pay on termination of employment

If the employee leaves the organisation's employment part way through a holiday year, he/she will be entitled to be paid for any accrued annual leave for that holiday year that has not been taken by the date of termination.

If, on the employee's date of termination, he/she has taken paid holiday leave in excess of earned entitlement, he/she will be required to reimburse the organisation by means of deduction from salary if necessary, in respect of such holiday.

No payment in lieu of accrued contractual holiday will be made to the employee and where appropriate a deduction will be made from salary in the event of his/her termination for gross misconduct or in the event of the employee giving inadequate notice of termination or leaving before the contractual notice period has expired. Contractual holiday for these purposes means all and any leave entitlement provided for in the employee's contract that is over and above the minimum statutory leave period provided for in the Working Time Regulations 1998.

Sickness during holiday

Where an employee falls sick or is injured while on holiday, the organisation will allow the employee to transfer to sick leave and take replacement holiday at a later time. This policy is subject to the following strict conditions:

- The total period of incapacity must be fully certificated by a qualified medical practitioner.
- The employee must contact the organisation by telephone if possible, as soon as he/she knows that there will be a period of incapacity during a holiday.
- The employee must submit a written request no later than 10 days after returning to work setting out how much of the holiday period was affected by sickness and the amount of leave that the employee wishes to take at another time.
- Where the employee is overseas when he/she falls ill or is injured, evidence must still be produced that the employee was ill by way of either a medical certificate or proof of a claim on an insurance policy for medical treatment received at the overseas location.

Where the employee fulfils all of the above conditions, the organisation will grant the employee the same number of days' replacement holiday leave as the number of holiday days lost due to sickness or injury.

If an employee is ill or is injured before the start of a period of planned holiday, the organisation will agree to the employee postponing the holiday dates to another mutually agreed time. Any period of sickness absence will then be treated in accordance with the organisation's normal policy on sickness absence. The employee must submit a written

request to postpone the planned holiday and this must be accompanied by a letter from his/her doctor confirming that he/she is unfit, or is still likely to be unfit, to take the holiday.

An employee must request to take any replacement holiday in accordance with the organisation's normal holiday policy and should endeavour to take the replacement holiday in the same holiday year in which it was accrued. However, where an employee has good reason for not being able to do so, the organisation will allow the employee to carry that leave forward into the next holiday year. The organisation may require an employee to take all or part of his/her replacement holiday on particular days and it is not required to provide the employee with any minimum period of notice to do this, although it will aim to provide reasonable notice.

Holiday entitlement during sick leave

An employee who is absent on sick leave will continue to accrue his/her full statutory holiday entitlement. However, contractual holiday entitlement over and above the minimum statutory holiday entitlement provided for by the Working Time Regulations 1998 will not accrue during any paid or unpaid period of sick leave once an employee has been continuously absent for a period of 12 months. For the purpose of calculating the period of continuous absence, the organisation may disregard a return to work that is less than 10 working days.

An employee on sick leave may apply to take his/her accrued holiday entitlement while on sick leave. The holiday dates must be approved in accordance with this policy.

Improved Performance Review Policy and Procedure

Procedure wording

Introduction

This procedure runs parallel with, but is not part of, the disciplinary procedure. The organisation recognises that poor job performance and incapability should not be treated as "disciplinary offences".

The first stage in dealing with poor job performance is to determine whether the matter is one of capability or misconduct. This can normally be ascertained by counselling and investigation. Incapability is where the employee has received all necessary training but still cannot achieve a satisfactory level of performance through no fault of his/her own, for example as a result of poor health. If, on the other hand, the employee fails to reach the required standard of performance as a result of carelessness, negligence or lack of effort, this will be treated under the disciplinary procedure as misconduct.

Initial counselling session

The employee's manager will investigate the cause of the employee's poor performance. Causes could include lack of skills, inadequate training, lack of support staff, tools or other resources, lack of communication or problematic working relationships. The manager carrying out this initial counselling will give the employee factual examples of his/her unsatisfactory performance and the employee will be asked for his/her explanation, which will subsequently be followed up and checked where appropriate.

Where the reason for unsatisfactory performance is lack of the required skills, the employee will, where practicable, be assisted through training and be given reasonable time to reach the required standard of performance. If it is a question of lack of support staff, tools or other resources or facilities, attention should be paid to this and assistance provided if appropriate.

Formal warnings

Where, despite support, the employee is unable to reach the required standard of performance, the consequences of any failure to meet this standard should be explained to the employee in writing.

This will take the form of the following.

Stage one - recorded oral warning

The employee will be fully informed of the precise nature of the poor performance, the level of improvement required and the time limit for achieving that improvement, review periods during the currency of the warning, the consequences of failure to achieve or maintain the improvement and the length of time the warning will remain "live" on the employee's file.

Stage two - first written warning

If there is no improvement or insufficient improvement after a stage one warning, or if improvement is not maintained for the period stated in the stage one warning, the employee will be given a first written warning setting out the details as outlined above in the oral warning.

Stage three - final written warning

If there is no improvement or insufficient improvement after a stage two warning, or if improvement is not maintained for the period stated in the stage two warning, the employee will be given a final written warning setting out the details as outlined above in the oral warning. The stage three warning will include a statement that a failure to improve to the required standard is likely to result in dismissal.

Length of time the warning will remain "live"

Oral and first written warnings will normally have a time limit of six months, while the time limit for a final written warning will normally be 12 months. After the relevant period of time, the organisation will disregard the warning but retain it on the employee's record. In each case, the organisation will specify the length of time that the warning will remain "live", but reserves the right to extend the time period in appropriate circumstances.

Stage four - dismissal

If there is still no improvement or insufficient improvement after a stage three warning, or if improvement has not been maintained for the period stated above, the employee will normally be dismissed with notice or pay in lieu. Alternatively, at the Employer's entire discretion, alternative work elsewhere in the Employer's organisation may be offered to the Employee if any suitable posts are available.

Stage five - appeals

The same appeals procedure as set out in the organisation's disciplinary procedure will be used.

Right to be accompanied at formal meetings

Employees may be accompanied by a fellow worker or a recognised trade union official at any formal meetings that are held to discuss a failure to meet the required standard of performance.

Internal promotions

Where the employee is promoted, the consequences of failing to meet the necessary standards of performance for the new post should be clearly and fully explained to the employee at the time the promotion is offered. In some cases, the employee will be promoted on the basis of a probationary period in the new job, with the condition that the organisation has the right to transfer or downgrade the employee should he/she fail to satisfy his/her immediate manager that he/she is competent in the promoted post. In other cases, the "promoted" member of staff will remain on the same grade and salary for the duration of the probationary period and will

receive an "acting up" allowance during such time. If the probationary period is not confirmed, the employee will not transfer to the higher grade.

Incapability Policy

Policy wording

The organisation operates the following policy in relation to incapability.

Ill health

Incapability in this context is defined as any period of ill-health absence lasting more than four weeks.

It is the organisation's policy to support employees who are genuinely sick and unable to come to work and, where an employee's absence is four weeks or more, actively to manage his/her absence and subsequent return to work.

Employees will be paid in accordance with the terms and conditions of their employment in relation to sickness absence, provided that they comply with the organisation's rules on notification and the provision of ongoing medical evidence.

The organisation will adopt a "case management" approach when dealing with employees who are incapable of working due to ill health. This means regularly reviewing an employee's absence and state of health or fitness to see whether or not there is any improvement and if the organisation can do anything to facilitate the employee's recovery and return to work. Case reviews will normally be held monthly, and these will involve the employee's line manager and the HR Manager.

Part of the case management will be for the organisation to keep in touch with the employee. The employee will be consulted about how contact will be maintained, for example by telephone, email and/or visits to the employee's home at agreed times. The employee's views on how contact should be made will be sought and respected.

When an absent employee is well enough to return to work, the organisation will meet with the employee to discuss the terms of his/her return. The discussions will include:

- the employee's opinion about his/her capabilities, for example whether the employee is confident that he/she is capable of full job performance or only partial performance;
- whether the employee should return full time or have a phased return;
- whether or not the employee will be taking any medication after his/her return to work that might have side effects, for example tiredness;
- any special arrangements, additional support or adjustments to the employee's duties, working conditions or environment that would help the employee to reintegrate into the workplace; and
- whether or not an induction programme is desirable or necessary, for example if the employee's absence has been lengthy and if a number of organisational or procedural changes have taken place.

Employees may be requested by the organisation to consent to be examined by an occupational doctor (at the organisation's expense) and to agree to allow the doctor to provide a medical report to the organisation. The terms of all employees' contracts are that they must give such consent when reasonably asked to do so by the organisation. The organisation will

routinely ask an employee who has been absent from work for four weeks or more to be medically examined by an occupational doctor to confirm that he/she is genuinely capable of returning to work.

After the employee's return, the organisation will:

- monitor the employee's progress over the first few weeks to ensure that he/she is coping with the work and the day-to-day pressures of working life;
- make sure that the employee is not "thrown in the deep end", for example is not required to deal with a huge backlog of work caused by the period of absence; and
- take all reasonable steps to facilitate the employee's reintegration into the workplace.

The organisation will not consider terminating the employment of an employee who is absent from work due to genuine sickness or injury during the first six months of absence.

Thereafter the position will be reviewed every three months and ultimately it may become necessary from a business perspective to consider termination of employment. In these circumstances, the organisation will:

- review the employee's absence record to assess whether or not it is sufficient to justify dismissal;
- consult the employee;
- obtain up-to-date medical advice;
- advise the employee in writing as soon as it is established that termination of employment has become a possibility;
- meet with the employee to discuss the options and consider the employee's views on continuing employment;
- review if there are any other jobs that the employee could do prior to taking any decision on whether or not to dismiss;
- allow a right of appeal against any decision to dismiss the employee on grounds of long-term ill health;
- arrange a further meeting with the employee to determine any appeal;
- following this meeting, inform the employee of its final decision; and
- act reasonably towards the employee at all times.

Induction Programme

Purpose

The Company will provide all new permanent and temporary employees, whether employed on a full-time or part-time basis, with a full programme of induction training.

The purpose of induction is to integrate a new employee into the organisation so that he/she is encouraged to become an effective and motivated member of the team. Effective induction is a major contributory factor in retaining newly appointed staff.

The induction programme

An effective induction programme is not a one-off event but takes place over a period of some weeks and is an ongoing process to ensure that the new employee settles well into the organisation and is confident carrying out the full scope of his/her duties. Essential information should be supplied to the new employee in a planned and systematic way to avoid information overload and to ensure that he/she is able to absorb it.

Although all new employees should be supplied with the core information set out under the induction checklist, the design and content of the induction programme will depend on factors such as the new employee's role, level of responsibility and previous work experience. Managers should therefore be prepared to vary the induction programme to suit the particular needs of the new employee and his/her role specification.

Induction checklist

The manager should provide a newly appointed employee with a range of information and training about the Company and his/her new job, including:

- core business objectives and values;
- departmental structure;
- the workplace;
- the purpose and key responsibilities of his/her new role;
- fire and health and safety procedures;
- the individuals with whom he/she will be working;
- expected standards of behaviour and performance;
- probationary arrangements;
- completion of all necessary documentation relating to his/her appointment; and
- all policies, procedures and rules, including those concerning equal opportunities.

The manager should use an induction checklist to ensure that the new employee is provided with an induction pack containing all the relevant information relating to these areas. The induction checklist should be signed by the new employee and returned to the human resources department within one month of employment commencing to confirm that this stage of the induction programme has been carried out.

Delivery of the programme

The induction programme should involve input from a number of different managers and work colleagues who are best placed to supply the new employee with the full range of relevant information and assistance. Individuals who are likely to be involved in the programme, in addition to the line manager who is responsible for induction, include:

- the new employee's head of department;
- the human resources department, to impart information relating to terms, conditions and training;
- health and safety representatives, to cover health and safety rules and accident reporting;
- other departmental heads, to give the new employee an overview of the organisation's other functions;

Responsibility for induction

The overall responsibility for ensuring that an effective induction policy and programme are communicated throughout the organisation lies with the human resources department. The human resources department is also responsible for advising line managers on the induction process and dealing with any problems or queries with the probationary period, or provision of any specific training needed in order to equip a new employee with any new skills necessary to perform the job.

Responsibility for ensuring that a new employee is properly inducted lies with the relevant line manager.

Review meeting

A review meeting should be held with the new employee at the end of his/her first month of employment in order to discuss how the first few weeks with the organisation have gone, and to identify any gaps in his/her induction.

The opportunity should be taken to review the individual's job description and answer any queries the employee may have about his/her duties and responsibilities.

The review meeting should also be used to agree some short-term objectives, to be reviewed at the end of the first three months of employment. The next review date should be set to take place in eight weeks' time (three months into employment).

Induction Training

Policy wording

The Company will provide permanent employees, temporary employees, contract staff and transferred employees with adequate health and safety training and information prior to their starting work in any workplace, whether on a permanent or temporary basis.

The induction training will be conducted during working hours and the information provided will be appropriate to the level of training, knowledge and experience of the individual in question.

Induction training is seen as the first step in providing health and safety information. Training needs will be identified at regular intervals and any necessary training, including refresher training, will be provided when required.

Procedure wording

The department manager, will ensure that:

- arrangements are in place to identify individuals who require induction training;
- arrangements are in place for induction training to be completed prior to individuals' starting work/being on site;
- those undertaking the induction training are competent to do so;
- the induction training includes the necessary health and safety information; and
- where children are participating in work experience on site their parents or guardians are given information at the induction on the key findings of risk assessments prior to their starting work.

The health and safety induction trainer will:

- train employees, temporary employees, contract staff and transferred employees on the health and safety arrangements in the workplace, including first aid, fire and evacuation procedures;
- ensure that information on hazards and their control measures are included in the training;
- ensure that particular consideration is given to young persons and children to ensure that they understand the information provided;
- ensure that the training is in a format that is understood by the individuals undergoing the induction;
- identify further health and safety training needs;
- update the induction training when any changes are made;
- complete an induction training record for each person and file it appropriately; and
- confirm the understanding/knowledge gained by individuals during the induction course, either verbally or by using a written questionnaire.

Information and Communications Policy and Procedure

Policy wording

It is the policy of this Company to communicate information about the Company's activities to all employees on a regular basis, and to encourage employees to provide ideas and feedback to management on all aspects of the Company's operations. The Company believes that a regular flow of information from management to staff and vice versa will enhance its effectiveness and productivity.

Specifically, the Company will hold monthly meetings with members of its employees. During these meetings information will be provided by management representatives to employees about matters such as:

- the organisation's general progress and profitability;
- any recent and probable developments in the business, for example information about company performance and strategic planning;
- recent and probable developments concerning the organisation's economic situation, for example contracts won or lost;
- planned structural changes within the organisation, especially if circumstances arise which might create a threat to job security;
- any management decisions likely to lead to changes in work organisation;
- any potential changes to policies and procedures and/or the terms and conditions of employees' employment;
- information about health and safety issues;
- information about equal opportunities matters; and
- departmental information, for example changes in work methods or specific issues that have arisen locally.

In communicating information to employees about the company's activities and plans for the future, the Company also wishes to encourage employees to provide feedback, including ideas, suggestions and proposals as to how the Company can improve the way in which it operates its business.

In addition to information and consultation the Company will:

- communicate general information and news about its activities through a quarterly newsletter, copies of which will be made available to every department;
- send out email alerts to individual employees to communicate important news items or new developments;
- post notices on notice-boards to remind employees of important information, including statutory notices; and
- regularly update its staff handbook and make copies of the handbook available to all employees.

The Company believes that regular communication of this nature will produce benefits for all, including:

- improved motivation and commitment;
- better identification of and solutions to day-to-day problems;

- better management decisions;
- increased understanding about management decisions or the need for change; and
- increased levels of trust and improved working relationships.

All employees are encouraged to come forward to their manager if they have an idea, suggestion, proposal, problem or any type of feedback that they believe could improve efficiency and/or benefit the Company in the running of its day-to-day affairs. The Company believes in the "open-door principle", ie that every employee should feel comfortable in approaching his/her manager to raise and discuss any issues that are of concern or interest to him/her.

The Company has appointed the H R Manager to hold responsibility for ensuring that regular communication takes place between management and staff.

Procedure wording

The Directors, Managers and Staff will meet regularly to enable a full exchange of information and views as between management and staff. During these meetings, management will provide information on a range of issues to the employees, who will also be invited to put forward their views on these and/or other matters. Employee will also be invited to put forward matters for consideration by management.

Management will take employees' views, suggestions, proposals and queries on board and give them full and fair consideration, although no guarantee can be given that any particular suggestion or request will be implemented. Appropriate feedback will be provided at the following meeting or, if possible, before that time..

Minutes of the meetings will be produced by appointed minute taker. These will be made available to all employees.

Employees who wish to communicate any idea, suggestion, proposal or problem to management should do so by raising the matter as an agenda item prior to the monthly meeting. Alternatively, an employee may raise the matter directly with his/her own line manager on a face-to-face basis at any time.

Internet and Social Networking Website Policy

General

This policy on social networking websites is in addition to the Company's existing policy on email and internet use.

As employees are aware, the internet is provided primarily for business use. The Company recognises that many employees use the internet for personal purposes and that many employees participate in social networking on websites such as Facebook, Twitter, etc.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the responsibilities of employees using the internet to access social networking websites.

Personal use of the internet

The Company permits employees to access social networking websites on the internet for personal use during certain times (provided that they are not undertaking overtime). These times are:

- before and after work hours; and
- during the 30 minute break at lunch.

The Company reserves the right to restrict access to these websites.

Personal conduct

The Company respects an employee's right to a private life. However, the Company must also ensure that confidentiality and its reputation are protected. It therefore requires employees using social networking websites to:

- refrain from identifying themselves as working for the Company;
- ensure that they do not conduct themselves in a way that is detrimental to the employer; and
- take care not to allow their interaction on these websites to damage working relationships between members of staff and clients of the Company.

Monitoring of internet access at work

The Company reserves the right to monitor employees' internet usage but will endeavour to inform an affected employee when this is to happen and the reasons for it. The Company considers that valid reasons for checking an employee's internet usage include suspicions that the employee has:

- been spending an excessive amount of time viewing websites that are not work-related; or
- acted in a way that damages the reputation of the Company and/or breaches commercial confidentiality.

The Company reserves the right to retain information that it has gathered on employees' use of the internet for a period of one year.

Disciplinary action

If the Company monitors employees' internet use to ensure that it is in accordance with this policy, access to the web may be withdrawn in any case of misuse of this facility.

If appropriate, disciplinary action may also be taken in line with the Company's disciplinary policy.

Security and identity theft

Employees should be aware that social networking websites are a public forum, particularly if the employee is part of a "network". Employees should not assume that their entries on any website will remain private. Employees should never send abusive or defamatory messages.

Employees must also be security conscious and should take steps to protect themselves from identity theft, for example by restricting the amount of personal information that they give out. Social networking websites allow people to post detailed personal information such as date of birth, place of birth and favourite football team, which can form the basis of security questions and passwords. In addition, employees should:

- ensure that no information is made available that could provide a person with unauthorised access to the Company and/or any confidential information; and
- refrain from recording any confidential information regarding the Company on any social networking website.

Recruitment

At no stage during the recruitment process will HR and line managers conduct searches on prospective employees on social networking websites. This is in line with the Company's equal opportunity policy.

Lone Working Policy and Procedure

Policy wording

The Company will avoid the need for employees to work alone where reasonably practicable. Where lone working is necessary, the Company will take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of employees working alone.

The Company will ensure that a risk assessment is conducted and that arrangements are in place prior to employees working alone.

Procedure wording

The Directors, will ensure that:

- lone working is avoided as far as is reasonably practicable;
- emergency procedures are in place so that members of staff working alone can obtain assistance if required;
- a risk assessment is completed by a person competent to do so prior to employees working alone;
- any employee working alone is capable of undertaking the work alone;
- arrangements are in place so that someone else is aware of a lone worker's whereabouts at all times;
- persons working alone are provided with adequate information, instruction and training to understand the hazards and risks and the safe working procedures associated with working alone; and
- training records are kept.

The person conducting the lone working assessment will:

- give consideration to the greater risks to expectant mothers and young persons;
- involve the employee who is working alone in the assessment process and the development of safe working methods;
- advise the employee undertaking the lone working of the findings of the assessment; and
- maintain a file of all lone working assessments.

Employees working alone will:

- follow the safe working arrangements developed by the Company for lone working;
- take reasonable steps to ensure their own safety; and
- inform their line manager/assessor of any incidents or safety concerns.

Long Term Sickness Policy and Procedure

Policy wording

The organisation operates the following policy in relation to long-term sickness absence.

The organisation aims to encourage all its employees to maximise their attendance at work. It is recognised, however, that a certain level of sickness absence is inevitable. It is the organisation's policy to support employees who are genuinely sick and unable to come to work.

The organisation retains the services of an occupational doctor. Employees may be requested by their manager to consent to be examined by the occupational doctor (at the organisation's expense) and to agree to allow the doctor to provide a medical report to the organisation. The terms of all employees' contracts are that they must give such consent when reasonably asked to do so by the organisation.

The organisation will not consider terminating the employment of an employee who is absent from work due to genuine sickness or injury during the first six months of absence. Thereafter, the position will be reviewed periodically and ultimately it may become necessary from a business perspective to consider termination of employment. In these circumstances, the organisation will:

- review the employee's absence record to assess whether or not it is sufficient to justify dismissal;
- consult the employee;
- obtain up-to-date medical advice;
- advise the employee in writing as soon as it is established that termination of employment has become a possibility;
- meet with the employee to discuss the options and consider the employee's views on continuing employment;
- review if there are any other jobs that the employee could do prior to taking any decision on whether or not to dismiss;
- allow a right of appeal against any decision to dismiss the employee on grounds of long-term ill health; and
- arrange a further meeting with the employee to determine any appeal;
- following this meeting, inform the employee of its final decision; and
- act reasonably towards the employee at all times.

Manual Handling Policy

Policy wording

The Company will take all reasonable steps to reduce health and safety risks to employees from manual handling.

The Company will ensure that manual handling tasks that involve injury risks are avoided where reasonably practicable. Where it is not reasonably practicable to avoid these tasks a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risks will be undertaken and identified risks will be reduced to as low as is reasonably practicable.

The Company will also provide adequate information, instruction, training and supervision to employees regarding manual handling best practice. Employees will make proper use of any equipment and systems of work provided for their safety.

Procedure wording

The Directors will ensure that:

- manual handling tasks that involve injury risks are avoided where reasonably practicable;
- manual handling operations that cannot be avoided are suitably and sufficiently assessed in accordance with sch.1 to the Manual Handling Operations Regulations 1992;
- nominated assessors are competent to undertake manual handling assessments;
- nominated assessors are provided with adequate information, training and support to undertake manual handling assessments;
- the greater risks to young persons and new and expectant mothers from manual handling are included in the assessments;
- any health and safety risks identified by the assessments are reduced to as low as is reasonably practicable;
- manual handling assessments are reviewed for their confirmed application at least once every 12 months and when any significant change is made;
- adequate training is provided to those undertaking manual handling to enable them to carry out their work safely and without risk to health;
- refresher training is provided when required.

The manual handling assessor will:

- conduct and record manual handling assessments using the provided form;
- give consideration to the greater risks to new and expectant mothers and young persons within the assessments;
- submit manual handling assessments for review and approval by the Directors, if required;
- involve the employee who is undertaking the manual handling in the assessment;
- advise the employee undertaking the manual handling task of the findings of his/her individual assessment;
- maintain a file of all manual handling assessments.

Employees undertaking manual handling tasks will:

- follow appropriate systems for work laid down for their safety;
- make proper use of equipment provided for their safety;
- inform their manager if they identify hazardous handling activities;
- advise the assessor of any physical condition that may affect their ability to undertake manual handling operations safely;
- report any problems relating to manual handling to the relevant person;
- ensure that they do not take personal risks such as twisting, overreaching and stretching during manual handling tasks;
- take care to ensure that their activities do not put others at risk.

Notice Periods

Policy wording

This policy is issued to promote guidance on the application of notice periods. It does not form part of employees' terms and conditions of employment or otherwise have any contractual effect. This policy may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time by the organisation at its absolute discretion.

Notice periods

Subject to employees' terms and conditions of employment, which may set out a longer notice period, the organisation will give employees one week's notice to terminate their contract of employment during their probationary period. Following the probationary period, the organisation will give employees one month's notice to terminate their contract of employment, with an additional week's notice per completed year of service after two years' continuous service, up to a maximum of 12 weeks.

The organisation may agree to release an employee from the requirement to serve his/her full notice period. In these circumstances, the organisation will not pay the employee for the portion of the notice period that he/she is not working. The employee will be asked to sign a letter confirming the agreement reached.

In the event of termination of the contract of employment by either party, the H R Manager will confirm the employee's final day of employment.

Resignation

An employee who resigns must provide the organisation with his/her notice of resignation in writing. The organisation will not accept notice of resignation as effective unless it is in writing. Upon resignation, the employee will be required to work his/her full contractual notice period, unless otherwise agreed.

If an employee fails to work his/her full contractual notice period without prior authorisation from the organisation, the employee will not be paid for the portion of the notice period that he/she has not worked. The organisation may refer to this in any reference given on the employee's behalf.

The organisation may deduct from the employee's final pay any costs incurred as a result of the employee failing to work his/her full notice period.

Dismissal

Where the organisation dismisses an employee, it will give the employee his/her full contractual notice and, unless otherwise agreed, will require the employee to work the full period of notice.

In certain circumstances, including dismissals for gross misconduct, the organisation may dismiss the employee without notice. If this is the case, the organisation will explain the reason(s) why.

Redundancy

Where the organisation dismisses an employee by reason of redundancy, it will give the employee his/her full contractual notice and, unless otherwise agreed, will require the employee to work the full period of notice.

An employee who is dismissed by reason of redundancy will be given a reasonable amount of paid time off work to look for alternative employment. The arrangements for time off must be agreed in advance by the employee's manager.

Retirement

If an employee is retiring, notice should be given in accordance with the notice period set out in his/her contract of employment.

Rights and obligations during the notice period

During the notice period, the contract of employment will continue to remain in force and the employee will receive full pay and benefits.

During the notice period, the employee remains bound by all the obligations and restrictions expressly set out or implied in his/her contract of employment and must not take up employment elsewhere. The organisation expects that the employee will conduct him/herself in an entirely appropriate manner during the full period of notice and uphold the high standards of performance required of all employees. This applies no matter who gave notice to terminate the contract of employment and for whatever reason.

If an employee's performance during the notice period falls below the required standards, the organisation may address this as a performance or disciplinary matter and may refer to this in any references given on the employee's behalf.

During the notice period, the organisation may restrict an employee's duties, contact with clients, colleagues and suppliers, access to information or resources and impose any other reasonable practices, to better facilitate a handover and/or to protect business interests.

Return of the organisation's property

The organisation requires employees to hand over to the Line Manager all property that belongs to the organisation on or before their final working day, or as required by their manager.

This may include but is not limited to:

- uniform(s);
- keys and key cards;
- mobile phone, iPads and blackberry device;
- laptop;
- removable data storage device;
- credit or charge cards;

- hardcopies of the organisation's material (including copies or summaries and whether in eye readable or machine readable form);
- company car; and
- any other property belonging to the organisation including tools and equipment.

The employee may be required to sign a form provided by the HR Manger confirming his/her compliance with this requirement.

If the employee fails to return any property belonging to the organisation by the required date, the organisation will withhold the whole or any part of any pay due from the organisation to the employee up to the current market value of the property not returned, ie based on the value of the property at the time that it is not returned and not on a replacement cost basis. The organisation may issue civil proceedings against the employee for breach of contract and/or trespass to goods, to the extent that any outstanding pay withheld does not cover the current market value of the property not returned.

Pay in lieu of notice

The organisation may make a payment in lieu of notice for all or any part of an employee's notice period on termination of his/her employment (rather than the employee working out his/her notice period). This provision, which is at the organisation's discretion, applies whether notice to terminate the contract is given by the employee or by the organisation.

The employee will be compensated by being given a payment in place of this, amounting to the payment that he/she would have received excluding payment for accrued but untaken annual leave if he/she had worked out his/her notice period. A sum constituting the employee's pay in lieu of notice will be transferred into the bank account into which his/her wages are normally paid.

Garden leave

If an employee is placed on garden leave, he/she will not be allowed to come to work, meaning that he/she must stay away from the workplace during the garden-leave period. If he/she is placed on garden leave, the organisation will:

- confiscate any equipment belonging to the organisation that he/she may have, typically a laptop, at the start of the garden-leave period;
- require him/her not to have any contact with clients/customers for work-related purposes during the garden-leave period; and
- prevent him/her from having any contact with another organisation, typically a competitor, during the garden-leave period.

If the employee is placed on garden leave, his/her contract of employment will continue in force until the end of the notice period. This means that, during the garden-leave period, he/she will:

- continue to receive full pay and benefits with the exception of benefits that are given to allow the employee to do his/her job, such as a work mobile phone or company car in the normal way;

- remain bound by all the obligations and restrictions set out in his/her contract of employment, including any confidentiality clauses and restrictive covenants contained in his/her contract of employment, save the duty to attend work;
- not be permitted to take up other employment during the garden-leave period; and
- be required to remain available to be contacted by the organisation.

Holiday during notice periods

During the notice period, the organisation may require employees to take annual leave accrued for that holiday year but not taken by the date of termination. The organisation will give the appropriate notice.

If, prior to notice of termination being given by either party, the organisation has authorised an employee's annual leave request, and the annual leave is scheduled to take place during the notice period, the organisation will seek to honour this arrangement. However, the organisation may, if necessary, for business reasons, require the employee to cancel all or part of his/her annual leave, on giving the appropriate notice.

If, on termination of an employee's employment, the employee has accrued annual leave that he/she has not taken, he/she will be paid in lieu of this as part of his/her final wages. No payment in lieu of accrued contractual holiday will be made to the employee in the event of his/her termination for gross misconduct or in the event of the employee giving inadequate notice of termination or leaving before the contractual notice period has expired.

If, on termination of an employee's employment, he/she has taken paid holiday leave in excess of earned entitlement, he/she will be required to reimburse the organisation by means of deduction from salary if necessary, in respect of such holiday.

Outstanding payments to the organisation

The organisation may deduct from any final pay all monies owing to it from the departing employee. This includes but is not limited to:

- outstanding loans;
- wage advances;
- expenses advances; and
- holiday taken but not yet accrued.

If the employee's final pay is insufficient to cover the sums owed to the organisation, the employee will enter into a contract with the organisation for the repayment of all sums owed. If the employee refuses to do this, or defaults on any repayment agreement, the organisation may bring a civil claim against the employee to recover the monies as a debt and its costs of doing so.

Outstanding payments to the employee

An employee who wishes to claim expenses properly incurred in the course of his/her duties must do so before the end of his/her notice period. The employee must follow the procedure set out in the organisation's expenses policy.

If the employee has not followed the procedure set out in the organisation's expenses policy, the organisation may not repay the expenses to the employee.

Overseas Travel Policy and Procedure

Policy wording

The Company will take all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees when they travel overseas as part of their work.

Advice on overseas travel will be obtained from the relevant government bodies. Where the risk is considered unacceptable, employees will not be allowed to travel overseas as part of their work. Employees may refuse to travel overseas where there are reasonable grounds for them to do so.

Every time employees travel overseas, the Company will ensure that a risk assessment is conducted and that arrangements, including emergency arrangements, are in place prior to the travel. Where possible, identified hazards will be eliminated; otherwise the risks will be reduced to as low as is reasonably practicable.

The Company will provide adequate information, instruction and training to those working overseas. Employees will make proper use of any equipment and systems of work provided for their safety and will use the designated means of transport.

Procedure wording

The Managing Director, will:

- review advice from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, the World Health Organisation and the UK Department of Health prior to allowing members of staff to travel overseas;
- ensure that risk assessments are completed and recorded for all aspects of the travel and the workplace that will be visited;
- ensure that members of staff are informed of the hazards and risks associated with travel overseas;
- ensure that members of staff are informed of the culture and customs of the country that they are visiting in order that they do not inadvertently put themselves at risk;
- ensure that members of staff are trained in the arrangements and safe working procedures to be followed when working overseas;
- ensure that suitable emergency procedures are in place and that members of staff are informed of them;
- ensure that members of staff are trained in undertaking dynamic risk assessments;
- ensure that arrangements are in place for the provision of adequate in-country medical support;
- ensure that procedures are in place for members of staff working overseas to obtain emergency assistance at any time;
- ensure that members of staff working overseas have the required vaccinations and preventative medication, for example for malaria;
- ensure that the overseas travel record is completed prior to the employee's leaving the UK; and
- ensure that adequate travel insurance is in place.

Employees travelling overseas will:

- advise the Employer of any tangible impediment to their travel, e.g. a known medical condition;
- ensure that any required vaccinations are up to date;
- appraise themselves fully of all instructions and warnings given by the Employer prior to their departure;
- keep a copy of the completed overseas travel record;
- ensure that any mobile phones provided are fully charged and that a signal can be obtained in the destination country;
- ensure that they attend a site safety induction when working in a new workplace; and
- not engage in any activity not recognised as being essential to the travel activity.

Employees may refuse to travel overseas where they have reasonable grounds for doing so, for example on advice from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office.

Parental Leave Policy

Policy wording

Introduction to parental leave

An employee is entitled to up to 13 weeks' unpaid parental leave per child if he/she:

- is the parent of a child who is under five years of age;
- has adopted a child under the age of 18 (the right to parental leave lasts for a period of five years from the date of adoption or until the child's 18th birthday, whichever is the sooner); or
- has acquired formal parental responsibility for a child who is under five years of age.

An employee who is the parent or adoptive parent of a child who has been awarded disability living allowance is entitled to up to 18 weeks' unpaid parental leave, which can be taken up to the child's 18th birthday.

To qualify for parental leave, employees must have completed at least one year's continuous service with the organisation.

Rights during parental leave

Qualifying employees will be entitled to a maximum of 13 weeks' parental leave to be taken up until the child's fifth birthday (unless the child is adopted or disabled - see above). During parental leave the employee will remain employed, although pay and most contractual benefits will be suspended. The right to accrue statutory holiday entitlement will, however, remain in place. Certain other terms of employment will remain in force, as follows. During parental leave employees will be entitled to the implied obligation of trust and confidence, and any terms and conditions of employment relating to:

- notice of termination;
- redundancy compensation; and
- disciplinary or grievance procedures.

Employees taking parental leave will be bound by the implied obligation of good faith, and any terms and conditions of employment relating to:

- notice of termination;
- disclosure of confidential information;
- the acceptance of gifts or other benefits; and
- participation in any other business.

Conditions of leave

The organisation has adopted the default scheme for the taking of parental leave and the following conditions apply.

An employee may not exercise any entitlement to parental leave unless he/she has complied with any request made by the organisation to produce evidence as to: his/her entitlement (e.g. parental responsibility or expected responsibility for the child in question; the child's date of birth or date on which placement for adoption began; or, where the employee is exercising a right in relation to a disabled child, details of the child's entitlement to disability living allowance).

The employee must give proper notice of the period of leave that he/she proposes to take. This notice must be given to the organisation at least 21 days before the date on which leave is to start and must specify the dates on which the period of leave is to begin and end.

Where the employee is the father of the child in respect of whom the leave is to be taken and he requests parental leave to begin when his child is born, his notice must specify the expected week of childbirth and the duration of the period of leave. The employee must give this notice at least 21 days before the expected week of childbirth.

Where the parental leave is in respect of an adopted child and is to begin on the date of the placement, the employee's notice must be given to the organisation at least 21 days before the beginning of the week in which the child is to be placed for adoption, or as soon as is reasonably practicable thereafter. It must specify the week in which the placement is expected to occur and the duration of the period of parental leave requested.

The organisation may postpone a period of parental leave (other than where parental leave has been requested immediately after childbirth or immediately after placement for adoption) where the organisation considers that its business would be unduly disrupted if the employee were to take leave during the period requested. In such a case, the organisation will allow the employee to take an equivalent period of parental leave beginning no later than six months after the commencement of the period originally requested. The organisation will give notice in writing of the postponement stating the reason for it and specifying suggested dates for the employee to take parental leave. Such notice will be given no more than seven days after the employee's notice was given to the organisation.

Employees may not take parental leave in blocks of less than one week (except in relation to a child who is disabled).

Employees may not take more than four weeks' leave in respect of any individual child in any year. For these purposes a year is the period of 12 months beginning when the employee first becomes entitled to parental leave in respect of the child in question, and each successive period of 12 months beginning on the anniversary of that date.

Return from leave

At the end of parental leave, the employee will be entitled to return to the same job provided that the leave was for a period of four weeks or less (and did not follow on immediately from a period of additional maternity or adoption leave). If the period of parental leave was longer than four weeks (or followed on immediately from a period of additional maternity or adoption leave), then the employee will be entitled to return to the

same job or, if that is not practicable, to a similar job that has the same or better status, terms and conditions as the previous job.

Part Time Workers Policy

Policy wording

The Company recognises the benefits that can be gained from part-time working. It is appropriate where the workload/duties of a job can be undertaken in less than full-time hours or when the workload/duties of a job allow job-sharing, and where initiatives are needed to attract and retain staff.

Part-time employees, irrespective of hours worked, will be entitled to the same contractual benefits on a pro rata basis as full-time employees doing the same job, unless there is an objective reason for offering a different level of benefits.

The Company will take all reasonable steps to accommodate an employee's request for part-time working and will arrange a meeting with the employee within no more than 28 days of receiving the employee's written request. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss the employee's proposal and its effects, and any possible alternative arrangements that might suit both parties.

Each request will be dealt with individually, taking into account the likely effects that the proposed change to part-time work is likely to have on the Company, the work of the department in which the employee making the request is employed and the employee's colleagues. Agreeing to one employee's request will not therefore set a precedent or create a right for another employee to be granted a similar change to part-time working.

Employees who wish to submit a request for part-time working should do so in writing to their Director and the Human Resource Manager.

Paternity Policy

Introduction

This policy sets out the statutory rights and responsibilities of employees who wish to take paternity leave.

The organisation recognises that, from time to time, employees may have questions or concerns relating to their paternity rights. It is the organisation's policy to encourage open discussion with employees to ensure that questions and problems can be resolved as quickly as possible. As the paternity provisions are complex, employees should clarify the relevant procedures with the HR Manager to ensure that they are followed.

Ordinary paternity leave

An employee whose wife, civil partner or partner gives birth to a child, or who is the biological father of the child, is entitled to two weeks' ordinary paternity leave provided that he/she has 26 weeks' continuous service by the end of the 15th week before the week in which the child is expected.

Ordinary paternity leave is also available to adoptive parents where a child is matched or newly placed with them for adoption. Either the adoptive father or the adoptive mother may take ordinary paternity leave where the other adoptive parent has elected to take adoption leave. A separate policy is available in respect of adoption leave. In respect of an adopted child, the employee must have 26 weeks' continuous service by the week in which the child's adopter is notified of having been matched with the child for adoption.

To qualify for ordinary paternity leave, the employee must also have, or expect to have, responsibility for the upbringing of the child and be making the request to help care for the child or to support the child's mother.

Ordinary paternity leave is granted in addition to an employee's normal annual holiday entitlement. Ordinary paternity leave must be taken in a single block of one or two weeks within eight weeks of the birth or adoption of the child. If the child is born early, it must be taken from the time of the birth but within eight weeks of the expected date of childbirth. Ordinary paternity leave can start either from the date the child is born or placed for adoption or from a chosen number of days or weeks after that date.

Notification of ordinary paternity leave

Where an employee wishes to request ordinary paternity leave in respect of a birth child, he/she must give his/her line manager 15 weeks' written notice of the date on which his/her partner's baby is due, the length of ordinary paternity leave he/she wishes to take and the date on which he/she wishes the leave to commence.

In the case of an adopted child, the employee must give written notice of his/her intention to take ordinary paternity leave no later than seven days after the date on which notification of the match with the child was given by the adoption agency. The notice must specify the date the child is expected to be placed for adoption, the date the employee intends to start ordinary

paternity leave, the length of the intended ordinary paternity leave period and the date on which the adopter was notified of having been matched with the child.

If an employee subsequently wishes to change the timing of the ordinary paternity leave, he/she must give 28 days' written notice of the new dates. The employee must also, if so requested, complete and sign a self-certificate declaring that he/she is entitled to ordinary paternity leave and ordinary statutory paternity pay.

Ordinary statutory paternity pay

Pay during ordinary paternity leave will be at a standard rate of £145.18 per week, or at a rate equivalent to 90% of the employee's average weekly earnings if this figure is less than £145.18 per week. However, employees whose average weekly earnings are below the lower earnings limit for national insurance contributions will not be eligible for ordinary statutory paternity pay.

Statutory paternity pay is treated as earnings and is therefore subject to PAYE and national insurance deductions.

Statutory paternity pay can start from any day of the week in accordance with the date the employee starts his/her paternity leave.

Additional paternity leave

Eligible employees may take up to 26 weeks' additional paternity leave within the first year of their child's life provided that the mother has returned to work.

Additional paternity leave is also available to adoptive parents within the first year after the child's placement for adoption, provided that the child's adopter who elected to take adoption leave (the "primary adopter") has returned to work.

The earliest that additional paternity leave can commence is 20 weeks after the date on which the child is born, or 20 weeks after the date of placement of the child for adoption, and it must end no later than 12 months after that date. Additional paternity leave must be taken as a single block in multiples of complete weeks. The minimum period is two consecutive weeks and the maximum period is 26 weeks.

Additional paternity leave will generally commence on the employee's chosen start date specified in his/her leave notice, or in any subsequent variation notice (see "Notification of additional paternity leave").

During the period of additional paternity leave, the employee's contract of employment continues in force and he/she is entitled to receive all his/her contractual benefits, except for salary. In particular, any benefits in kind will continue and contractual annual leave entitlement will continue to accrue.

If the employee is eligible to receive it, salary may be replaced by statutory paternity pay for some, or all, of the additional paternity leave period, depending on the length and timing of the additional paternity leave.

Employees are encouraged to take any outstanding annual leave due to them before the commencement of additional paternity leave. Employees are reminded that holiday must be taken in the year that it is earned and therefore if the holiday year is due to end during additional paternity leave, the employee should take his/her outstanding entitlement before starting his/her additional paternity leave.

Eligibility for additional paternity leave

In order to be eligible for additional paternity leave, an employee must satisfy each of the following criteria:

- He/she must be the father of the child or married to, the civil partner of, or the partner of, the child's mother, or married to, the civil partner of, or the partner of, the primary adopter, and, in the case of a birth child, expect to have the main responsibility for the upbringing of the child (apart from the mother's responsibility). In the case of adoption, he/she must have been matched with the child for adoption. In both cases, he/she must be taking the leave to care for the child.
- He/she must have a minimum of 26 weeks' service, as at the end of the 15th week before the week in which the child is due to be born or, in respect of an adopted child, as at the end of the 15th week before the week in which he/she was notified of having been matched with the child.
- He/she must remain in continuous employment until the week before the first week of additional paternity leave.
- The mother of the child must be entitled to one or more of maternity leave, statutory maternity pay or maternity allowance. In the case of adoption, the primary adopter must be entitled to one or both of adoption leave or statutory adoption pay. The mother or primary adopter must have returned to work.

Notification of additional paternity leave

Where an employee wishes to request additional paternity leave and pay, he/she must give his/her line manager eight weeks' written notice of the date on which he/she wishes to take the leave and, if applicable, additional statutory paternity pay to commence. The request form must be in writing and specify, in the case of a birth child, the date on which the child was expected to be born and the actual date of birth or, in the case of an adopted child, the date on which the employee was notified of having been matched with the child and the date of placement for adoption. In both cases, the notice must also specify the employee's name and intended start date and end date of additional paternity leave and statutory paternity pay.

The employee must also submit a written and signed self-certification form not less than eight weeks before the proposed start date of additional paternity leave and pay stating that the purpose of the additional paternity leave/statutory paternity pay period is to care for the child and that he/she satisfies the relationship eligibility conditions for additional paternity leave and pay.

At the same time, the mother or primary adopter must submit a written and signed declaration form stating:

- his/her name, address and national insurance number;
- the date that he/she intends to return to work;

- that he/she has given notice to his/her employer of returning to work;
- that he/she is entitled to statutory maternity pay, maternity allowance or statutory adoption pay;
- the start date of his/her maternity or adoption pay period;
- confirmation that the employee satisfies the relationship eligibility conditions;
- that he/she consents to the organisation processing the information contained in the declaration form; and
- that the employee is to his/her knowledge the sole applicant for additional statutory paternity pay and, in the case of a birth child, also that the employee is to his/her knowledge the only person exercising the entitlement to additional paternity leave in respect of the child.

On request by the organisation, the employee must produce the name and business address of the mother's or primary adopter's employer and a copy of the child's birth certificate or, in the case of an adopted child, evidence of the name and address of the adoption agency, the date on which he/she was notified of having been matched with the child and the date on which the agency expects to place the child for adoption. The employee must supply this information within 28 days of it being requested.

The employee is permitted to bring forward his/her additional paternity leave start date, provided that he/she advises the organisation in writing at least six weeks before the new start date or, if that is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable. The employee may also postpone his/her additional paternity leave start date, or cancel his/her additional paternity leave altogether, provided that he/she advises the organisation in writing at least six weeks before the original proposed start date or, if that is not possible, as soon as reasonably practicable.

The organisation will formally respond in writing to the employee's notification of his/her additional paternity leave plans within 28 days, confirming the relevant start and end dates of additional paternity leave and pay.

Additional statutory paternity pay

Additional statutory paternity pay may be payable during some or all of additional paternity leave, depending on the length and timing of the leave. An employee is entitled to additional statutory paternity pay if:

- he/she is the father of the child or married to, the civil partner of, or the partner of, the child's mother, or married to, the civil partner of, or the partner of, the child's primary adopter, and, in the case of a birth child, expects to have the main responsibility for the upbringing of the child (apart from the mother's responsibility) or, in the case of adoption, has been matched with the child for adoption, and in either case intends to care for the child during the additional statutory paternity pay period;
- he/she has a minimum of 26 weeks' service, as at the end of the 15th week before the week in which the child is due to be born or, in respect of an adopted child, as at the end of the 15th week before the week in which he/she was notified of having been matched with the child (the "relevant week");
- he/she remains in continuous employment until the week before the additional statutory paternity pay period begins;

- his/her average weekly earnings for the period of eight weeks ending with the relevant week are not less than the lower earnings limit for national insurance contributions;
- the mother is entitled to statutory maternity pay or maternity allowance or, in the case of adoption, the primary adopter is entitled to statutory adoption pay, and the mother or primary adopter has returned to work;
- the mother or primary adopter has at least two weeks of his/her maternity or adoption pay period that remains unexpired; and
- he/she gives proper notification in accordance with the rules set out above.

Any statutory paternity pay due during additional paternity leave will be paid at a standard rate of £145.18 per week, or at a rate equivalent to 90% of the employee's average weekly earnings if this figure is less than £145.18 per week.

Statutory paternity pay is payable whether or not the employee intends to return to work after his/her additional paternity leave.

Contact during additional paternity leave

Shortly before an employee's additional paternity leave starts, the organisation will discuss the arrangements for him/her to keep in touch during his/her leave, should he/she wish to do so. The organisation reserves the right in any event to maintain reasonable contact with the employee from time to time during his/her additional paternity leave. This may be to discuss the employee's plans for return to work, to discuss any special arrangements to be made or training to be given to ease his/her return to work or simply to update him/her on developments at work during his/her absence.

Keeping-in-touch days during additional paternity leave

An employee can agree to work for the organisation (or to attend training) for up to 10 days during additional paternity leave without that work bringing the period of his/her additional paternity leave and pay to an end. These are known as "keeping-in-touch" days. Any work carried out on a day shall constitute a day's work for these purposes.

The organisation has no right to require the employee to carry out any work, and the employee has no right to undertake any work, during his/her additional paternity leave. Any work undertaken, including the amount of salary paid for any work done on keeping-in-touch days, is entirely a matter for agreement between the organisation and the employee. Any keeping-in-touch days worked do not extend the period of additional paternity leave. Once the keeping-in-touch days have been used up, the employee will lose any further entitlement to statutory paternity pay for any week in which he/she agrees to work for the organisation. It may also bring the additional paternity leave period to an end.

Returning to work after additional paternity leave

The employee will have been formally advised in writing by the organisation of the end date of his/her additional paternity leave. The employee is expected to return on the next working day after this date, unless he/she notifies the organisation otherwise. If he/she is unable to attend work at the end of additional paternity leave due to sickness or injury, the organisation's normal arrangements for sickness absence will apply. In any other case, late return without prior authorisation will be treated as unauthorised absence.

If the employee wishes to return to work earlier than the expected return date, he/she must give the organisation at least six weeks' notice of his/her date of early return, preferably in writing. If he/she fails to do so, the organisation may postpone his/her return to such a date as will give the organisation six weeks' notice, provided that this is not later than the expected return date.

If the employee decides not to return to work after additional paternity leave, he/she must give notice of resignation as soon as possible and in accordance with the terms of his/her contract of employment. If the notice period would expire after additional paternity leave has ended, the organisation may require the employee to return to work for the remainder of the notice period.

Rights on and after return to work

On resuming work after both ordinary and additional paternity leave (in the latter case where it was an isolated period of leave or taken with certain other types of statutory leave), the employee is entitled to return to the same job as he/she occupied before commencing paternity leave on the same terms and conditions of employment as if he/she had not been absent.

Adoptions from overseas

If an employee has adopted a child from overseas, he/she may still be entitled to additional paternity leave provided again that the primary adopter has returned to work. Special rules apply in these circumstances. For further information, please contact Human Resources Manager.

Personal Protective Equipment

Policy wording

The Company will provide and maintain suitable personal protective equipment when there are risks to the health or safety of employees that cannot be controlled by other means.

The suitability of the personal protective equipment to be provided shall be established by an assessment and the equipment will be provided to employees free of charge. Where more than one item of personal protective equipment is required to be worn by employees the Company will ensure that the items are compatible.

The Company will provide adequate information, instruction, training and supervision to ensure that employees understand the purpose of the personal protective equipment, the risks that it protects against, the manner in which it should be used and the action to be taken to ensure that the equipment is maintained. Employees will make proper use of personal protective equipment provided.

This policy applies to employees, trainee staff, children on work experience and others who may be exposed to the risks that the personal protective equipment is in place to protect against. The Company will consult with employees/employee representatives prior to implementing this policy.

Procedure wording

The department manager will:

- ensure that personal protective equipment is considered as a last resort for controlling workplace risks;
- ensure that an assessment has been completed to determine the suitability of the personal protective equipment;
- consult with employees prior to implementing this policy;
- ensure that employees are involved in the selection and type and style of personal protective equipment;
- ensure that, where more than one item of personal protective equipment is to be used simultaneously, the items are compatible;
- ensure that, when it is necessary for the personal protective equipment to be hygienic, it is provided to a person for his/her sole use;
- issue personal protective equipment and ensure that its issue is recorded in the personal protective equipment issue record;
- ensure that staff are trained in the correct use of personal protective equipment, the risks that it protects against, the purpose of the equipment and actions to be taken to ensure that it remains in an efficient state, properly working and in good repair;
- provide adequate storage facilities so that personal protective equipment can be kept in an efficient state and will not contaminate employees' personal items;
- ensure that personal protective equipment is adequately maintained so that it is at all times efficient and in good working order;
- replace any damaged or worn personal protective equipment where necessary and update the personal protective equipment issue record accordingly;

- take all reasonable steps to ensure that issued personal protective equipment is properly used;
- ensure that personal protective equipment assessments are reviewed for their confirmed application at least once every 12 months and when there is significant change.

Employees will:

- wear and use the provided personal protective equipment in the circumstances where a need for it has been identified by the Company and in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions;
- inspect their issued personal protective equipment daily before use;
- immediately report any damage or defects to the equipment to the issuer for maintenance or replacement;
- not misuse or damage any personal protective equipment provided;
- inform the issuer of any problems in the use of the personal protective equipment.

Personal Telephone Calls Policy

Policy wording

Introduction

This policy governs how employees may use the Company's telephones during the course of their working time. It is important that all employees read this policy carefully as the Company requires compliance from all members of staff at all times.

Purpose and scope

The policy has been devised in order to:

- ensure the effective running of the Company's business;
- inform employees about how they may and may not use the Company's telephones; and
- ensure compliance with legislation.

This policy applies to all employees of the Company and also to other staff who may work for the Company on a temporary or contract basis. It also applies to employees who have the use of mobile phones belonging to the Company while working from home or travelling on Company business.

This policy forms part of the terms and conditions of all employees' contracts of employment and any breach of the policy will be regarded as misconduct, leading to disciplinary action up to and including summary dismissal.

Personal and private use

The Company provides its employees with access to the telephone for work-related purposes. However, because it is accepted that employees may sometimes need to attend to personal matters during working hours, limited personal use is permitted, provided that this does not interfere with employees' work, nor take up an unreasonable amount of time.

It is important to note that employees may not at any time use Company telephones to:

- carry out freelance work, or work for another employer;
- contact recruitment agencies or other employers with a view to seeking alternative employment;
- buy or sell goods, other than when authorised to do so in the course of their job;
- gamble;
- communicate information that is confidential to the Company outside the Company, unless authorised to do so in the course of their job;
- chat for lengthy periods of time to friends or relatives;
- make overseas telephone calls; or
- waste working time using the telephone for purposes not associated with their job or the Company's business.

Monitoring

The Company carries out monitoring of employees' use of Company telephones for security reasons and to deter/detect unauthorised use.

Employees should, therefore, be aware that the telephone calls that they make or receive may be intercepted by the Company.

Probation Policy

Policy wording

Introduction

It is the organisation's policy to operate probationary periods for all new employees, and in some cases at the organisation's discretion in respect of employees who have been transferred or promoted into different posts.

This policy is intended to allow both the employee and the employee's line manager to assess objectively whether or not the employee is suitable for the role. The organisation believes that the use of probationary periods increases the likelihood that new employees will perform effectively in their employment.

The line manager is responsible under this policy for ensuring that all new employees are properly monitored during their probationary period. If any problems arise, the line manager should address these promptly. This will ensure that the employee is aware that some aspect of his/her performance or conduct is unsatisfactory and prevent the problem from escalating.

Length of probation

The organisation's standard period of probation is six months

Extending probationary periods

The organisation reserves the right to extend an employee's period of probation at its discretion. This will be limited to one extension and the total period of probation will be no longer than 12 months.

An extension may be implemented in circumstances where the employee's performance during probation has not been entirely satisfactory, but it is thought likely that an extension to the probationary period may lead to an improvement, or where the employee or the line manager has been absent from the workplace for an extended period during probation.

Before extending an employee's probationary period, the line manager must consult with the HR Manager. If an extension to the probationary period is agreed, the organisation will confirm the terms of the extension in writing to the employee, including:

- the length of the extension and the date on which the extended period of probation will end;
- the reason for the extension and, if the reason is unsatisfactory performance, details of how and why performance has fallen short of the required standards;
- the performance standards or objectives that the employee is required to achieve by the end of the extended period of probation;
- any support, for example further training, that will be provided during the extended period of probation; and
- a statement that, if the employee does not meet fully the required standards by the end of the extended period of probation, his/her employment will be terminated.

Terms of employment during the probationary period

During the probationary period, employees will be subject to all the terms and conditions of their contracts of employment with the exception of those terms noted below.

Except in the case of existing employees who have been transferred or promoted into different roles, the amount of notice that an employee must give to the organisation if he/she wishes to resign, and the length of notice the organisation must give to the employee of dismissal are different during probation. During probation, either party may terminate the employee's contract of employment by giving one week's notice. In the event that the organisation decides to terminate the employee's employment, his/her employment will come to an end immediately and the employee will receive pay in lieu of the one week's notice together with any outstanding holiday pay.

Once the probationary period has been completed, the notice periods will be as defined in the employee's contract of employment.

In the case of existing employees who have been transferred or promoted into different roles, the amount of notice that the employee must give to the organisation if he/she wishes to resign, and the length of notice the organisation must give to the employee of dismissal will be as defined in the employee's contract of employment.

Line managers' responsibilities

Under this policy, the line manager has responsibility for monitoring a new employee's performance and progress during the probationary period. The line manager must ensure that the employee is properly informed at the start of his/her employment about what is expected of him/her during probation, for example the required job outputs or standards of performance.

Reviews during probation

The line manager should review and assess the employee's performance, capability and suitability for the role on at least a monthly basis during the employee's probation, and again at the end of the probationary period. A clear record should be made of each review meeting. A copy of the record should be passed to the employee and the original forwarded to the HR department.

During an employee's probation, the line manager should provide regular feedback to the employee about his/her performance and progress, and, should there be any problem areas, raise these with the employee as soon as possible with a view to resolving them. The line manager is also responsible for providing guidance and support and for identifying and arranging any necessary training or coaching.

Irregularities discovered during the probationary period

If, during an employee's probation, it is suspected or established that the employee does not have the qualifications, experience or knowledge that he/she claimed to have at the time of recruitment, the matter will be discussed with the employee to establish the facts. If the evidence suggests that the employee misrepresented his/her abilities in any way, the

organisation will terminate the employment with immediate effect (giving one week's pay in lieu of notice). If the employee is an existing employee who has been transferred or promoted into a different role, the organisation's normal capability/dismissal procedure must be followed in full.

End of probation

At the end of the probationary period, the line manager should conduct a final review of the employee's performance and suitability for the job. This will involve a meeting with the employee to discuss his/her performance and progress throughout the period of probation. The review must be conducted on or shortly before the date on which the employee's probationary period comes to an end. If the employee's performance is satisfactory, the line manager should notify the HR department to issue a letter of confirmation of appointment to the employee.

If the employee's performance has not met the standards required by the organisation, the line manager should discuss the matter with the HR department before any decision is made to terminate the employee's employment.

Termination of employment

If an employee's performance while on probation has been unsatisfactory (despite support from the line manager), and it is thought unlikely that further training or support would lead to a satisfactory level of improvement, the employment will be terminated at the end of the period of probation.

It is the organisation's policy to allow the employee to complete the designated period of probation rather than terminating employment before the probation has come to an end. This is to give the employee a full opportunity to come up to the required standards. If, however, there is clear evidence prior to the end of the period of probation that suggests the employee is wholly unsuitable for the role, the line manager should consult the HR department with a view to terminating the employee's contract early.

Where a decision is taken to terminate the employee's employment, the employee must be interviewed and informed of the reason for the termination. The employment will come to an end immediately and arrangements made to give the employee pay in lieu of notice. The organisation will write to the employee confirming the termination and the reason for it. There will be no right of appeal.

If an employee's employment is terminated after the expiry of the probationary period, or if the employee is an existing employee who has been transferred or promoted into a different role, the organisation's normal capability/dismissal procedure must be followed in full.

Recruitment Policy

Policy wording

It is the organisation's policy that line managers are responsible for recruitment in conjunction with the human resources department. A line manager who wishes to recruit someone must first obtain approval from the Managing Director and the HR Manager. Where recruitment is planned to fill a vacancy created by a leaver, approval will normally be granted automatically. If, however, the line manager wishes to upgrade a post, or create a new post, justification for this must be presented.

It is the organisation's policy that all vacancies will be posted on noticeboards throughout the organisation and placed on the organisation's intranet. Existing employees are to be encouraged to apply for vacant posts if they have the appropriate qualifications, experience and skills.

The organisation aims at all times to recruit the person who is most suited to the particular job. Recruitment will be solely on the basis of the applicant's abilities and individual merit as measured against the criteria for the job. Qualifications, experience and skills will be assessed at the level that is relevant to the job.

Before embarking on the process of recruitment, the line manager must ensure that there is an up-to-date job description for the post and a clearly drafted employee specification. The job description will describe the duties, responsibilities and level of seniority associated with the post, while the employee specification will describe the type of qualifications, training, knowledge, experience, skills, aptitudes and competencies required for effective performance of the job.

Where the job is to be advertised, the proposed advertisement must be submitted to the HR manager for approval. Line managers should also consider and discuss with the HR department whether or not it is appropriate to post the vacancy in a job centre or place it with an approved employment agency.

The organisation is committed to applying its equal opportunities policy at all stages of recruitment and selection. Short listing, interviewing and selection will always be carried out without regard to gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, colour, race, nationality, ethnic or national origins, religion or belief, age, pregnancy or maternity leave or trade union membership.

Any candidate with a disability will not be excluded unless it is clear that the candidate is unable to perform a duty that is intrinsic to the role, having taken into account reasonable adjustments. Reasonable adjustments to the recruitment process will be made to ensure that no applicant is disadvantaged because of his/her disability.

Line managers conducting recruitment interviews will ensure that the questions that they ask job applicants are not in any way discriminatory or unnecessarily intrusive. The interview will focus on the needs of the job and skills needed to perform it effectively. A record of every recruitment interview must be made and passed to the HR department to be retained for a suitable period of time. On no account should any job offer be made during or at the end of an interview.

Psychometric testing will be used as part of the recruitment process only with the prior approval of the HR department. Any test used must have been validated in relation to the job, be free of bias, and be administered and validated by a suitably trained person.

It is the organisation's practice to seek the successful candidate's consent for it to seek two written references and to ask for documentary proof of qualifications. Any offer of employment will be conditional on both of these being satisfactory.

Redundancy Policy

Policy wording

Introduction

This policy sets out the organisation's approach to dealing with potential redundancies. It does not form part of employees' terms and conditions of employment and may be subject to change at the discretion of management.

Although the organisation's policy is to avoid redundancies wherever possible, the needs of the business may from time to time require a reduction in the overall number of staff employed or organisational changes that result in some employees being made redundant.

Where this is necessary, the organisation will ensure that:

- the total number of redundancies made is kept to a minimum;
- employees and, where appropriate, their representatives are fully consulted on any proposals and their implementation;
- selection for redundancy is based on clear criteria that will, as far as possible, be objectively and fairly applied;
- every effort is made to redeploy or find alternative work for employees selected for redundancy; and
- support and advice is provided to employees selected for redundancy to help them find suitable work when their employment has come to an end.

Consultation

Where there are no employee representatives

Consultations will be carried out with individual employees as appropriate. Where it is proposed that 20 or more redundancies are required [at the same location] over a 90-day period, arrangements will be made for the election of employee representatives who will be consulted over the proposals and the general process to be followed. Individual employees will still be consulted in respect of their own particular circumstances.

Voluntary redundancy

In order to minimise the need for compulsory redundancies, the organisation may consider requests from employees for voluntary redundancies. Whether or not additional payments will be offered in relation to voluntary redundancies will be a matter for consultation and will depend on the circumstances.

The organisation reserves the right at its absolute discretion to decline requests for voluntary redundancy.

Redundancy selection

The criteria used in selecting employees for redundancy will depend on the existing circumstances and the particular needs of the organisation at the time. However, every effort will be made to construct a fair and robust set of criteria following appropriate consultations.

Individual employees who are provisionally selected for redundancy following the application of the criteria will be informed of the fact and invited to a meeting, at which they will be given an opportunity to make representations that the application of the criteria results in unfairness to them or if they feel that there has been a mistake in the application of the criteria.

Alternative work

The organisation will make every effort to redeploy to suitable alternative work any employee who is selected for redundancy. Such employees will be informed of all the available vacancies in the organisation at the time of their selection and will be given an opportunity to discuss with their line manager which vacancies are likely to be suitable for them. While priority will be given wherever possible to employees under threat of redundancy, the organisation reserves the right to select the best available candidate in relation to any given vacancy.

Employees have a separate legal entitlement to be offered any suitable alternative work that is available if they are made redundant while on maternity leave.

Time off work

An employee under notice of redundancy will be entitled to a reasonable amount of paid time off to look for alternative work, attend interviews, etc. Employees wishing to take advantage of this right should make the appropriate arrangements with their line manager.

Termination of employment

Depending on the circumstances, the organisation may waive its right to insist on employees working their notice and instead give a payment in lieu of notice. Employees with two or more years' service may be entitled to a statutory redundancy payment. The amount of this payment will be confirmed when the employee is selected for redundancy and the sum will be paid along with the employee's final salary payment or payment in lieu of notice.

Redundancy Selection Policy and Procedure

Policy wording

Introduction

The organisation is committed to providing long-term job security for all employees. However, the needs of the business may, from time to time, require a reduction in the overall number of employees. This policy sets out the organisation's approach to selecting employees for redundancy should a redundancy situation occur.

This policy does not form part of employees' terms and conditions of employment and may be subject to change at the discretion of the management.

Selection pool

The organisation will identify how many roles are at risk of redundancy and will determine a pool from which employees will be selected for redundancy. The organisation will ensure that the pool for selection has been fairly defined. The pool will normally consist of employees who carry out the same, or similar, work and perform jobs that are interchangeable, whether or not in the same department or location, or on the same shifts. When determining the redundancy pool the organisation will take into account circumstances such as:

- the work that employees carry out on a day-to-day basis;
- the proximity of sites; and
- where employees carry out their work on a regular basis.

In certain circumstances, it will not be appropriate to determine a pool from which to select employees for redundancy, for example where there is only one employee whose role is affected or where the whole business is being shut down.

Selection criteria

Once the organisation has determined the selection pool, it will apply criteria to decide which employees from the pool will be provisionally selected for redundancy. The organisation will ensure that, as far as is possible, the criteria applied are objective, in that they are not based on the subjective opinion of the individuals applying the criteria. The organisation will, as far as possible, use criteria that are measurable and supportable by documentary records, data or other evidence, for example attendance records or sales figures.

The selection criteria that the organisation uses will depend on a number of factors, including the needs of the organisation at the time and the roles under consideration.

The following list gives examples of the criteria that the organisation may apply:

- **Attendance.** To determine an employee's attendance record, the organisation will examine his/her attendance records in the 12 months leading up to the redundancy process. The organisation will not take account of absences due to pregnancy, maternity, other family-friendly leave or disability.

- Disciplinary records. To determine an employee's disciplinary record, the organisation will examine his/her personnel files.
- Performance. To determine an employee's performance, the organisation will review individual sales figures/the extent to which the individual has met his/her targets/the number of contracts the individual has secured/the individual's previous performance appraisals.
- Qualifications and training. The organisation will review what relevant qualifications an employee has and what pertinent training he/she has undertaken.
- Knowledge and experience. The organisation will review an employee's knowledge of his/her job, customers and the organisation, and the depth and breadth of his/her relevant experience.

Application of selection criteria

The organisation will score employees against the selection criteria in a reasonable, fair and consistent manner. At least two managers will apply the criteria and the scores will be added up and an average applied, or the managers will meet to discuss their scores.

The organisation will use a redundancy selection matrix to score each employee. The matrix will set out the criteria against which employees will be assessed in a clear and transparent manner. It will set out the scoring ranges and how much weight or importance the organisation attaches to each criterion. The organisation may decide that it is appropriate to interview employees as part of the selection process. If this is the case, it will give clear instructions about how the selection will be made and more than one manager will be involved in the interview process.

The organisation will score employees against the selection criteria by considering documentary evidence or other knowledge obtained about the employee. Employees will not be scored by comparing them against each other.

The organisation will not apply the selection criteria in a discriminatory manner, for example on the basis of part-time status, pregnancy or maternity leave. If an employee within the pool for selection is disabled, the organisation will make reasonable adjustments to the selection procedure to remove any disadvantage that the disabled employee would otherwise face.

Consultation

In the event that the organisation proposes to make fewer than 20 employees redundant over a 90-day period, the organisation will consult with individual employees employee representatives regarding the composition of the pool and the selection criteria.

The organisation will give serious consideration to any views raised about the composition of the pool and the selection criteria.

Employee representations

Once the organisation has scored employees, it will make a provisional selection for redundancy. Employees who have been provisionally selected for redundancy will be provided with a copy of their completed redundancy matrix, showing how they scored against

each criterion and their overall score, for the purpose of reviewing the completed redundancy matrix.

Employees will be invited to attend individual consultation meetings to discuss how their score was arrived at. They will be able to raise any concerns, objections or challenges about their score and raise any other matters that they see fit about the redundancy situation. The organisation will give serious consideration to any comments raised by the employee, but the ultimate decision on selection will be the organisations.

Following the individual consultation meetings, the organisation will inform the employee of its decision.

Appeal

An employee who has been selected for redundancy and is dissatisfied with the way in which the organisation has applied the selection criteria, or who believes that he or she has been unfairly disadvantaged by the selection criteria or has not been given a fair opportunity to put forward representations, can appeal against his or her selection for redundancy.

Retirement Policy

Policy wording

The Company operates a flexible retirement policy that allows employees to retire at any time.

Employees should intimate to their manager as early as possible what their wishes are in relation to retirement.

Gifts and rewards on retirement

The Company will organise a retirement gift to the value of £100 for employees who have had a minimum of five years' service with the Company. Eligible employees will be consulted about the type of gift that they would prefer to receive.

Short Term Sickness Policy and Procedure

Policy wording

The Company aims to encourage all its employees to maximise their attendance at work while recognising that employees will, from time to time, be unable to come to work for short periods due to sickness. This policy relates to short-term sickness absences from work, which are defined as those lasting up to one working week.

While the Company understands that there will inevitably be some short-term sickness absence among employees, it must also pay due regard to its business needs. If an employee is frequently and persistently absent from work, this can damage efficiency and productivity, and place an additional burden of work on the employee's colleagues. By implementing this policy, the Company aims to strike a reasonable balance between the pursuit of its business needs and the genuine needs of employees to take occasional short periods of time off work because of sickness.

It is the Company's policy to pay employees their normal basic rate of pay during periods of sickness absence of up to one week. Payment is, however, conditional upon an employee complying with the Company procedure for notifying his/her manager of the absence, attending an interview with his/her manager on request to discuss the absence, completing a self-certification form on return to work and agreeing to attend an interview/examination with a Company-nominated doctor at the request of the Company.

Guidelines for managers/supervisors

Managers responsible for staff are expected to manage and control their employees' attendance and absence. They should, as a matter of routine, take the following actions each time an employee has been absent from work for a short period (i.e. a period of up to one working week):

- Create a record whenever an employee phones in to report that he/she is unable to come to work due to sickness. This includes recording when the call was made, the stated reason for the absence and how long the employee expects to be absent.
- Conduct routine "return-to-work interviews". Each time an employee returns to work following a short-term absence, his/her manager should speak to the employee about the absence and the reason for it in a fair and factual way. This approach will alert the employee to the fact that the situation is being monitored and will potentially deter casual absences. The manager should be supportive towards the employee and, where appropriate, seek to identify ways in which to assist the employee to improve his/her attendance in the future.
- Require the employee (on return to work) to complete a self-certification form. This should be signed in front of the manager, who should then countersign it and pass it to the human resources department so that it may be placed in the employee's personal file.
- Be alert to patterns, for example the persistent Monday or Friday absentee. If a pattern is identified, the manager should put his/her observations to the employee directly so that the employee has the opportunity to provide an explanation. The manager should, however, remain open minded and not jump to any hasty conclusions about the employee's absences.

- Try to establish, through investigation and discussion with the employee, the underlying reasons for frequent absences. Until the underlying cause is identified, an appropriate and effective remedy will be impossible to identify.
- Check whether or not absences are in part because of personal or family problems. If this is the case, a reasonable degree of tolerance and sympathy should be shown towards the employee, as the problems may be unavoidable. The manager should be supportive, while at the same time explaining clearly to the employee that continuing frequent absences from work are unacceptable.
- Check whether the employee's absences are in any way work related, for example as a result of workplace stress. If the problem is work related, the manager should take prompt steps to remove or reduce the factor that is causing the employee's problem.
- Seek medical advice, if appropriate, to determine whether there is any underlying medical cause for the employee's frequent absences. [Details of relevant procedures are available from the human resources department.]
- Set reasonable targets and time-limits for improvement in attendance and ensure that the employee is committed to achieving them. [Advice is available from the human resources department.]
- Warn the employee of the consequences of continuing unsatisfactory attendance, ie that he/she may eventually be dismissed.
- Keep confidential records of all absences, discussions and medical certificates and make sure that the records clearly identify the reasons for an employee's various absences.
- Schedule a follow-up meeting at an agreed time to monitor the ongoing situation.

Before taking any formal action in respect of an employee who has had frequent absences from work, the manager/supervisor should take the following action:

- Check the employee's absence record to gain an accurate assessment of the number of days' absence that he/she has had, the number of separate occasions that he/she has been absent and whether or not his/her record is tangibly worse than that of other employees in the Company.
- Check with the human resources department, which will advise on the appropriate action to take in line with the Company's procedures.

Absences from work will be regarded as frequent if, during any period of 12 consecutive months, an employee is absent from work for 10 or more working days, or on three separate occasions.

Guidelines for employees

An employee who needs to be absent from work due to sickness must comply with the following rules:

- Notify his/her line manager by telephone if he/she is ill [or unable to attend work for any other reason]. Notification should be as early as possible and, in any event, no later than one hour after the employee's start time. The employee should be prepared to state the reason why he/she cannot attend work, and how long he/she thinks the absence will last.
- Attend an interview with his/her line manager on return to work to discuss the absence and the reason for it. One of the purposes of this interview will be to establish

whether or not the line manager can provide any support to the employee that could facilitate attendance at work in the future (for example, if the employee's absence was in any way work related).

- Complete and submit a self-certification form on return to work for all periods of sickness absence not exceeding seven days.
- Provide a doctor's certificate or "fit note" for a period of sickness absence not exceeding seven days if the Company specifically requests it. In these circumstances the Company will reimburse the employee for the cost of obtaining a certificate if it has to be obtained privately.
- Agree on request to be interviewed and/or examined by an occupational doctor nominated by the Company and to authorise the release of any medical report from the doctor to the Company. The Company will meet all costs associated with any such examination and/or medical report.
- Cooperate with the employer with regard to the possible implementation of any adjustments to job duties, hours or working conditions, resulting from recommendations made by his/her doctor, notwithstanding the fact that the advice on a "fit note" is not binding on the employer.

Smoking Policy

Introduction

The Company recognises that the health, safety and welfare of employees, sub-contractors and anyone else directly affected by the Company's operations are of prime importance. The Company has therefore developed and enforces a dedicated smoking policy, conforming to the requirements of the smoke-free (Premises and Enforcement) Regulations 2006, smoke-free (Exemptions and Vehicles) Regulations 2007, smoke-free (Signs) Regulations 2007, and other related legislation.

Application

This policy is applicable to all employees at whatever level of the Company's hierarchy, as well as sub-contractors who undertake activities on behalf of the Company and any visitors to/customers on the Company's premises. This policy and its mandatory application will be communicated to all employees, sub-contractors, visitors/customers and interested parties.

As part of the Company's induction process, new starters should be told about this policy and shown where it is located in the Company's staff handbook. The human resources department is responsible for informing job applicants of this policy. Employees are responsible for informing their visitors to the premises/customers that they are serving of this policy.

Prohibition on smoking

Smoking is strictly prohibited on all parts of the Company's premises, including at entrances or anywhere on its grounds. This includes areas that are outside but that form part of the Company's premises.

Employees who go outside to smoke are restricted to taking one short smoking break in the morning and one in the afternoon, with a maximum of ten minutes per break. Employees should inform their manager if they wish to take a smoking break and ensure that there is sufficient cover before taking a break.

Vehicles

The Company does not permit workers to smoke in company cars.

There are no limitations on an employee smoking in a vehicle that he/she owns, provided that the vehicle is used primarily for private purposes.

Home workers

Home workers are not required to refrain from smoking during the course of work that is carried out for the Company in their home, unless they invite others into an area of their home for work purposes.

Signage

The Company displays signs that make it clear that smoking is prohibited on its premises. The Company also requires that no-smoking signs are displayed in those of its vehicles that are subject to the ban.

Assistance for employees to give up smoking

The Company recognises the difficulty that employees who wish to give up smoking may face. Assistance is available from the NHS smoking Helpline/other NHS services/doctors/local support groups.

Non-compliance

Any infringement of these rules by an employee may result in appropriate disciplinary action, which will be dealt with in accordance with the Company's disciplinary procedure. Employees are also reminded that it is a criminal offence for employees to smoke in smoke-free areas, with a fixed penalty of £50 or prosecution and a fine of up to £200.

Customers who are smoking in smoke-free areas should be reminded of the no-smoking signs and asked to stop. If a customer continues to smoke, employees should explain that the customer is committing a criminal offence and will not be served if he/she continues to do so. If the customer still refuses to stop smoking, staff should ask the customer to leave the premises and, where relevant, direct him/her to where he/she can smoke.

Maintaining this policy

The Company will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and its general compliance within the organisation.

This policy will be kept up to date and amended accordingly to reflect any changes in response to revised legislation and applicable standards and guidelines.

This policy is fully supported by the top management of the Company. In support of this intent, the policy will be reviewed at least annually. The Company will provide sufficient financial support and all other necessary resources for the full implementation of this policy.

Stress at Work Policy and Procedure

Policy wording

The Company will take all reasonable steps to reduce health and safety risks from stress in the workplace to as low a level as reasonably practicable.

Causes of stress (stressors) will be identified and managed. A suitable and sufficient assessment of the risk of these stressors will be undertaken. Identified risks will be reduced to as low as is reasonably practicable through safe systems of work, suitable equipment and information and training. Employees will make proper use of any equipment and systems of work provided for their safety.

Any reports of stress at work will be investigated and individuals will be provided with appropriate support.

The Company will ensure that adequate consultation takes place with all staff, including managers, supervisors, human resources, employee representatives and trade union safety representatives, on the content, implementation, monitoring and review of this policy.

Procedure wording

The Directors will:

- determine if stress in the workplace is a problem by seeking employee views;
- review job descriptions to identify tasks that may involve stressors;
- review job descriptions to identify safety critical roles;
- identify all those who may be affected by work-related stress;
- eliminate work-related stress or, where this is not possible, evaluate the risk of work-related stress, considering the existing arrangements that are in place;
- ensure that significant findings of the risk assessment are recorded;
- identify additional arrangements to reduce the risk of work-related stress to as low a level as reasonably practicable, which could include changing working procedures, providing information and training, improving communication, and changing working procedures;
- review workplace conditions to ensure that they do not contribute to work-related stress;
- ensure that members of staff are consulted on arrangements for reducing work-related stress;
- ensure that grievance and disciplinary procedures are adequate and communicated to all members of staff;
- set up arrangements for individuals to report work-related stress;
- encourage members of staff to inform their line manager (or occupational health nurse) of any concerns regarding stress;
- ensure that support, which may include, for example, confidential counselling, special leave and back-to-work assistance, is provided to members of staff who are suffering from stress at work;
- ensure that, when a work-related stress report is made, the underlying causes and actions to remove these causes are identified;

- ensure that all members of staff, and especially line managers, are trained to identify the symptoms of stress;
- encourage a culture in which stress is not regarded as a sign of weakness;
- ensure that work-related stress risk assessments are reviewed for their confirmed application at least once every 12 months and when any significant change is made; and
- ensure that the arrangements for reducing work-related stress are monitored and reviewed for their effectiveness.

Employees will:

- inform their line manager (or suitable person) if they are suffering from excessive pressure or stress at work; and
- follow appropriate systems for work laid down for their safety.

Training and Development Policy

Policy wording

This policy has been developed in line with the Company's overall vision and strategy and reflects a belief in the need to develop all permanent and temporary employees, whether employed on a full-time or part-time basis. It is based on the following principles:

- The Company thinks of its workforce as an asset as well as a cost, and believes that it should invest in that asset.
- The Company believes that all its employees have the potential to grow, both in their work role and personally, and it shall endeavour to provide opportunities for this growth.
- The Company considers it appropriate to base such training and development opportunities on the requirements of the business, and decisions about investment in staff training and development will be made accordingly.
- The Company believes that responsibility for training and development should be shared between the Company and its workforce.
- The Company will ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to plan, deliver and evaluate training and development activity.
- The Company wants to empower its staff members to take some ownership of their own development, with support from their managers and the Company as a whole.
- The Company believes that its line managers have a key role to play in people development.
- The Company works within recognised good practice guidelines, such as the national standard of Investors in People, to ensure that both the quality and quantity of training and development is relevant and "fit for purpose".
- The Company regularly reviews its overall level of investment in staff training and development to ensure that adequate and appropriate resources are provided.
- The Company plans its training and development activities in line with industry standards, and therefore maintains relationships with relevant bodies, such as Sector Skills Councils.

Training and development initiatives

The Company provides a range of training and development opportunities to staff. These fall into four broad categories:

- **Programmes relating to the enhancement of skills for an employee's current position.** These include internal and external courses providing technical training, for example on the use of software packages, and specialist training relating to the skills that employees require for their job.
- **Programmes leading to a professional or academic qualification.** The Company encourages employees who wish to do so to pursue continuous professional development and where appropriate to gain further qualifications. The Company will pay 50% of the fees at the start of a programme that is approved, and 50% on successful completion. The Company will consider courses of study such as the Higher National Certificate, Higher National Diplomas, the Master of Business Administration, professional accountancy qualifications, and membership of the CIPD.
- **Programmes that have a specific management or supervisory focus.** These include external courses on manager development, supervisory skills for line managers, and leadership development programmes.
- **Health and safety training.** This includes courses in manual handling, risk assessment, fire safety, first aid, and food and hygiene regulations.

Decisions on the suitability and applicability of programmes will be determined through the performance review process, during which individual training and development needs are identified within a personal development plan. Progress on the acquisition of new skills and knowledge will be monitored throughout this process.

Roles and responsibilities for implementation

Both line managers and employees have a responsibility to implement training and development initiatives. There will be an opportunity to discuss development needs through the performance review process and agree appropriate courses of training or study. Line managers should encourage their staff to undertake relevant programmes. Employees are expected to take up the opportunities provided and report back to their line manager on their applicability once completed.

Line managers have a responsibility to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of learning for employees who have undergone training and development. Line managers can contact the HR Manager to give feedback on all training programmes, including their quality and cost effectiveness. Line managers should ensure that employees implement the skills that they have gained through training.

Planning and implementing new initiatives

Any new training initiatives will be planned as a result of training needs analysis activities, which in turn are part of the Company's performance review process. In addition, the Company is committed to reviewing training initiatives so that relevant training and development is provided for skills in specific job areas, where work procedures have changed, or where new standards are introduced. Any new training and development

programmes offered to staff will be publicised through the Company's normal communication channels, including the intranet, staff notices and departmental meetings. The Company will make use, where appropriate, of e-learning, and training will be provided to staff in how to access materials while at work and from home.

Individual requests for training and development

Employees can request training and development at any time but this will usually be done within the performance review process, as outlined above. Employees should channel requests through their line manager.

Monitoring and evaluating investment in training and development

The Company firmly believes that it is critical to the success of both the planning and delivery of training and development activities that the resources invested are monitored and the outcomes achieved are measured. Such outcomes may be demonstrated at an individual, departmental and corporate level. Senior managers have an important role to play in this process. The Company uses its evaluation findings for future business planning and the planning of continued investment in staff training and development. Accordingly the evaluation findings are regularly shared with the shareholders.

Coaching and mentoring

The Company encourages line managers to provide coaching and mentoring support for staff who are undergoing training and development. Managers have a responsibility to ensure that the skills and knowledge of more experienced staff members are shared with more junior employees to ensure that learning occurs in a planned way.

Recording of training and development activities

Following a performance review discussion, a copy of the approved personal development plan is placed in the employee's personnel file. This information is collated annually to form the basis of the Company's forward training and development plan. All training attended will be recorded by the HR department along with costs, including, for example, travel and subsistence expenses and the cost of textbooks. On completion of any internal or external course the employee will complete a course evaluation form, countersigned by the line manager, and return this to the HR department. Analysis of the evaluation forms gathered will be undertaken by HR department and used within the overall evaluation of training and development.

Equal opportunities

Decisions relating to training and development should be made fairly and consistently, and equality of opportunity should be provided for all staff in this area.

Induction training

All new members of staff and all those changing job roles will receive an induction on their job role. The Company provides full programmes of general induction training and health and safety induction training, which are set out in separate policies.

Travel by Car Policy

Policy wording

The Company shall take all reasonable measures to reduce the risks to staff, other road users and the public resulting from driving to as low as is reasonably practicable.

The Company takes a holistic view of the risks associated with travelling by car by considering both the skills required and behaviour while driving, with particular regard to those travelling long distances or during unsocial hours. The Company shall provide adequate information, instruction and training to employees.

At all times while driving employees shall conduct themselves in accordance with the Company's policy and shall use their own judgment to ensure that they reduce the risks to themselves and to others to as low as is reasonably practicable.

Procedure wording

The Directors, will:

- ensure so far as possible that all drivers employed, or acting on behalf of the Company, behave in a safe and considerate manner, obeying all applicable road safety legislation and showing respect for other road users;
- ensure that evidence is provided by all drivers that they hold a full current licence for the classes of vehicle(s) that they drive on Company business;
- ensure that evidence of suitable insurance is demonstrated for all privately owned vehicles used for Company business;
- ensure that all drivers of their own vehicle on Company business provide evidence of a current MOT for the car;
- ensure that all drivers advise the HR Manager in confidence of:

- all endorsements to their driving licence or disqualification from driving;

- any change of a privately owned vehicle used for Company business; and

- any change to insurance conditions;

as soon as is practicable after the penalty is imposed or any change occurs;

- ensure that all vehicles owned or operated by the Company are subject to regular servicing by a reputable garage and routine examination by a nominated, competent member of staff who is responsible for ensuring the vehicles' continued road/operational worthiness;
- ensure that, for Company-owned vehicles, all maintenance procedures, equipment and replacement parts are suitable for the vehicle in question;
- ensure that training is provided by the Company for specific driving skills (4x4 off road, security defensive driving, etc) where required; and
- encourage all drivers to try to improve their driving skills, for example by taking advanced driving courses.

Employees will:

- be responsible for their own safety, for any passengers or loads carried in the vehicle and for ensuring that the vehicle is safe to use (including hired vehicles);
- ensure that passengers are carried only in accordance with the vehicle manufacturer's design specification, with a seat for everyone and only one person per seat;
- ensure that seat belts are installed for the driver and all passenger seats and worn on all journeys;
- take breaks every two hours when driving, especially on long-distance trips, to ensure that they do not suffer fatigue;
- wherever possible, share driving on journeys of over two hours' duration;
- not drive more than a maximum distance of 300* miles in a normal working day;
- not allow travel plus working time to exceed eight* hours per day.
- plan their journeys to avoid travel in adverse weather and/or excessive hours;
- if necessary, due to adverse weather, journey length or the number of hours worked, make use of overnight accommodation arranged at the Company's expense at the discretion of the driver;
- record repairs and maintenance needs for Company-owned vehicles in a vehicle-specific log book and draw any concerns/defects to the attention of the Director, as soon as possible;
- report promptly any problems with the condition of hired vehicles to the supplier and also inform the Director;
- not use mobile telephones while driving, instead switching to a message service and picking up messages when taking breaks from driving;
- find a safe place to park to make telephone calls or receive messages;
- on a long journey take regular breaks to help relax and reduce tiredness; and
- not stop on the hard shoulder of a motorway except in an emergency.

*These figures should be reduced during poor weather or if the situation is likely to continue for extended periods.

Violence at Work Policy and Procedure

Policy wording

The Company considers the risk of work-related violence to be a serious matter and will take all reasonable steps to reduce risks from violence to employees and others who may be affected.

The Company will eliminate work-related violence where possible. Where this is not reasonably practicable it will undertake a suitable and sufficient assessment of the risk of violence. Identified risks will be reduced to as low as is reasonably practicable through safe systems of work, suitable equipment, and information and training. Employees will make proper use of any equipment and systems of work provided for their safety.

Any incidents of violence at work will be investigated and victims will be provided with appropriate support.

The Company will ensure that adequate consultation takes place with all staff on the content, implementation, monitoring and review of this policy.

Procedure wording

The Directors will:

- determine if violence in the workplace is a problem by seeking employees' views;
- review job descriptions to identify tasks that may involve risk from violence;
- identify employees who are intrinsically vulnerable;
- identify customers who pose the highest risk of causing violence, and determine whether the customer relationship should be discontinued;
- identify all those who may be affected by work-related violence;
- take steps to eliminate work-related violence and, where elimination is not possible, evaluate the risk of work-related violence, considering the existing arrangements that are in place;
- ensure that significant findings of the risk assessment are recorded;
- identify additional arrangements to reduce the risk of work-related violence to as low a level as is reasonably practicable, which could include changing the workplace design, providing information and training, and changing working procedures;
- ensure that members of staff are consulted on arrangements for reducing work-related violence;
- identify employees who pose the highest risk of causing violence, and take steps to ensure that extra vigilance is practised in their supervision, which will include discipline and behaviour counselling as necessary;
- set up reporting arrangements for formally reporting, classifying and recording all incidents, including verbal abuse and threats;
- report incidents to the enforcing authority when required to do so under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995;
- report incidents to the police where necessary;
- ensure that all incidents are investigated and that identified action is taken;
- ensure that support, which may include counselling, special leave and advice on legal action, is provided to members of staff who have suffered violence at work;

- ensure that the arrangements for reducing violence are monitored and reviewed for their effectiveness.

Employees will:

- follow safe systems of work that have been developed for their safety;
- report any incidences of violence, including verbal abuse, that have occurred as part of their work to their line manager;
- avoid putting themselves at risk from violent attack;
- inform their manager of any concerns that they have relating to violence at work.

Whistle Blowing Policy

Policy wording

Introduction

This policy applies to all employees and officers of the organisation. Other individuals performing functions in relation to the organisation, such as agency workers and contractors, are encouraged to use it.

It is important to the business that any fraud, misconduct or wrongdoing by workers or officers of the organisation is reported and properly dealt with. The organisation therefore encourages all individuals to raise any concerns that they may have about the conduct of others in the business or the way in which the business is run. This policy sets out the way in which individuals may raise any concerns that they have and how those concerns will be dealt with.

Background

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 amended the Employment Rights Act 1996 to provide protection for workers who raise legitimate concerns about specified matters. These are called "qualifying disclosures". A qualifying disclosure is one made in good faith by an employee who has a reasonable belief that:

- a criminal offence;
- a miscarriage of justice;
- an act creating risk to health and safety;
- an act causing damage to the environment;
- a breach of any other legal obligation; or
- concealment of any of the above;

is being, has been, or is likely to be, committed. It is not necessary for the worker to have proof that such an act is being, has been, or is likely to be, committed - a reasonable belief is sufficient. The worker has no responsibility for investigating the matter - it is the organisation's responsibility to ensure that an investigation takes place.

A worker who makes such a protected disclosure has the right not to be dismissed, subjected to any other detriment, or victimised, because he/she has made a disclosure.

The organisation encourages workers to raise their concerns under this procedure in the first instance. If a worker is not sure whether or not to raise a concern, he/she should discuss the issue with his/her line manager or the human resources department.

Principles

- Everyone should be aware of the importance of preventing and eliminating wrongdoing at work. Workers should be watchful for illegal or unethical conduct and report anything of that nature that they become aware of.

- Any matter raised under this procedure will be investigated thoroughly, promptly and confidentially, and the outcome of the investigation reported back to the worker who raised the issue.
- No worker will be victimised for raising a matter under this procedure. This means that the continued employment and opportunities for future promotion or training of the worker will not be prejudiced because he/she has raised a legitimate concern.
- Victimisation of a worker for raising a qualified disclosure will be a disciplinary offence.
- If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this procedure the organisation's disciplinary procedure will be used, in addition to any appropriate external measures.
- Maliciously making a false allegation is a disciplinary offence.
- An instruction to cover up wrongdoing is itself a disciplinary offence. If told not to raise or pursue any concern, even by a person in authority such as a manager, workers should not agree to remain silent. They should report the matter to a director.

Procedure

This procedure is for disclosures about matters other than a breach of an employee's own contract of employment. If an employee is concerned that his/her own contract has been, or is likely to be, broken, he/she should use the organisation's grievance procedure.

(1) In the first instance, and unless the worker reasonably believes his/her line manager to be involved in the wrongdoing, or if for any other reason the worker does not wish to approach his/her line manager, any concerns should be raised with the worker's line manager. If he/she believes the line manager to be involved, or for any reason does not wish to approach the line manager, then the worker should proceed straight to stage 3.

(2) The line manager will arrange an investigation of the matter (either by investigating the matter him/herself or immediately passing the issue to someone in a more senior position). The investigation may involve the worker and other individuals involved giving a written statement. Any investigation will be carried out in accordance with the principles set out above. The worker's statement will be taken into account, and he/she will be asked to comment on any additional evidence obtained. The line manager (or the person who carried out the investigation) will then report to the board, which will take any necessary action, including reporting the matter to any appropriate government department or regulatory agency. If disciplinary action is required, the line manager (or the person who carried out the investigation) will report the matter to the human resources department and start the disciplinary procedure. On conclusion of any investigation, the worker will be told the outcome of the investigation and what the board has done, or proposes to do, about it. If no action is to be taken, the reason for this will be explained.

(3) If the worker is concerned that his/her line manager is involved in the wrongdoing, has failed to make a proper investigation or has failed to report the outcome of the investigations to the board, he/she should inform a director of the organisation, who will arrange for another manager to review the investigation carried out, make any necessary enquiries and make his/her own report to the board as in stage 2 above. If for any other reason the worker does not wish to approach his/her line manager, he/she should also in the first instance the HR Department. Any approach to the director will be treated with the strictest confidence and the worker's identity will not be disclosed without his/her prior consent.

(4) If on conclusion of stages 1, 2 and 3 the worker reasonably believes that the appropriate action has not been taken, he/she should report the matter to the proper authority. The legislation sets out a number of bodies to which qualifying disclosures may be made. These include:

- HM Revenue & Customs;
- the Financial Services Authority;
- the Office of Fair Trading;
- the Health and Safety Executive;
- the Environment Agency;
- the Director of Public Prosecutions; and
- the Serious Fraud Office.

Work Equipment Policy and Procedure

Policy wording

The Company will take all reasonable steps to reduce health and safety risks from work equipment to employees and others who may be affected.

The Company will ensure that suitable, safe work equipment is provided and that it is maintained, tested and inspected. Adequate information, instruction, training and supervision will be provided to ensure that work equipment is used in a safe manner and without risks to health. Employees will make proper use of any equipment and systems of work provided for their safety.

The Company will ensure that an assessment of the risks associated with the work equipment is conducted by a competent person.

Procedure wording

The department manager will:

- ensure that all work equipment is suitable for its intended purpose and working environment prior to use;
- take account of ergonomic risks when selecting work equipment;
- ensure that the work equipment conforms with European Community Directives (including a declaration of conformity and a CE mark);
- ensure that an assessment of the risks associated with the work equipment is conducted prior to its use;
- ensure that measures are taken to prevent access to dangerous parts of work equipment or to stop their movement before any part of a person enters the danger zone;
- ensure that (where appropriate) work equipment has accessible emergency stop controls and can be isolated from all its sources of energy;
- ensure that the work equipment is properly maintained, inspected and tested, and kept in good repair;
- ensure that if a maintenance log is used it is kept up to date;
- ensure that members of staff who install, inspect, test and maintain work equipment are competent to do this;
- ensure that members of staff who use work equipment and those who supervise its use are provided with adequate information, instruction and training;
- ensure that young person's do not use work equipment that they are prohibited by law from using;
- provide written instructions and safe working methods for the work equipment, where required;
- ensure that where inspections are undertaken records are kept;
- ensure that training records are kept; and
- take reasonable steps to ensure that work equipment is used in a proper manner.

Employees undertaking the work equipment risk assessment will:

- consider all those who may be affected by the equipment hazards;

- identify inspections required if there is a significant risk resulting from incorrect installation, deterioration or exceptional circumstances;
- ensure that the greater risks to young persons and new and expectant mothers from the work equipment are taken into account;
- ensure that work equipment assessments are reviewed for their confirmed application at least once every 12 months and when any significant change is made; and
- maintain a file of work equipment assessments.

Employees using work equipment will:

- use work equipment only if they have been trained and are competent to do so;
- follow the safe methods of work including wearing appropriate personal protective equipment when required; and
- report any defects in the equipment, personal protective equipment and guarding to their line manager.

Work Related Social Events

Policy wording

As a token of its appreciation for the work that employees do for the Company, and to foster team spirit and good working relationships, the Company aims to offer employees the opportunity to attend social events from time to time. The Company may also run work-related social events to which clients, as well as staff, are invited.

Although such social events usually take place away from the workplace and outside of normal working hours, the Company's standard code of conduct applies to such events. While management does not wish to put a dampener on employees' enjoyment of social events, it is in everyone's interests to impose certain rules of conduct for the protection and comfort of all. Specifically, employees who attend work-related social events must adhere to the following rules and principles:

- Employees should consume alcohol only in moderation at work-related social events, irrespective of whether the Company provides or pays for the drinks.
- It is strictly forbidden for any employee to use illegal drugs, including cannabis, at any work-related social event whether on Company premises or not.
- The Company's policy on harassment/bullying applies to work-related social events.
- Employees should not say or do anything at a work-related social event that could offend, intimidate, embarrass or upset any other person, whether as a joke or not.
- Swearing and intemperate language are unacceptable at work-related social events.
- Employees must not behave in any way at any work-related social event that could bring the Company's name into ill repute.

Any breach of the above rules will render the employee liable to disciplinary action under the Company's disciplinary procedure, up to and including summary dismissal.

The above rules are in place for the benefit of all members of staff and to ensure that everyone can enjoy work-related social events in an atmosphere of conviviality without fear of being made to feel uncomfortable by another employee's conduct.

Working Hours Policy

Policy wording

Introduction

This policy sets out the organisation's position regarding working hours. The policy applies to workers only and does not apply to contractors, consultants or any self-employed individuals working for the organisation.

The organisation strives to provide a safe working environment and ensure the safety and wellbeing of all its workers. The organisation seeks to ensure that workers do not exceed reasonable working hours to provide for a satisfactory balance between work and personal life. The organisation is also committed to ensuring that workers' health is not compromised by the workplace.

Workers' managers have a responsibility to ensure that working hours are kept within reasonable limits and will monitor working hours for this purpose. Workers themselves also have a duty to ensure that they are not working excessive hours and inform their manager directly if they consider that they may be doing so.

This policy is issued by way of guidance on the organisation's policy and practice. It does not form part of an employee's contract of employment or otherwise have any contractual effect. This policy may be varied, withdrawn or replaced at any time by the organisation at its absolute discretion.

Normal working hours

Full-time workers are contractually obliged to work 40 hours per week. The organisation's normal hours of work are night shift from 20:00 hours to 04:30 hours from Monday to Friday, with 30 minutes unpaid meal break each shift. These hours will be a worker's normal hours of work unless otherwise agreed between him/her and the organisation. The organisation reserves the right to vary reasonably a worker's hours of work and the days on which he/she works according to business and operational requirements on a temporary or permanent basis.

Workers may be required to work such additional hours in excess of their normal hours of work as are reasonably necessary for the proper performance of their duties and to meet the needs of the business.

If workers are requested to work in excess of their normal contractual hours, the organisation will seek to ensure that they do not work an average of more than 48 hours in a working week. However, the organisation may request that workers sign a form to "opt out" of the Working Time Regulations 1998. The worker has the right to refuse this request and, if he/she signs the opt-out, can give the organisation seven days' notice that he/she wishes to revoke this, without facing any penalty. Any worker who has not signed the opt-out or who has revoked his/her opt-out will not be requested or permitted to work more than 48 hours in one week.

Workers are required to work such hours as are necessary to complete their duties and overtime is to be worked if required. There are no overtime payments.

Rest breaks

Workers have the right to a minimum unpaid rest break of 20 minutes after working for six hours. If operational requirements mean that workers are unable to take these breaks at that time, they will be entitled to compensatory rest to be agreed with their manager. Workers' 30 minute off for meal break each shift will constitute their daily rest break and, during a normal working shift, the worker will not be entitled to rest breaks over and above his/her meal break.

Workers also have the right to a rest period of 11 consecutive hours in each 24-hour period. This does not apply to shift workers who change shifts, which prevents them taking this break. Workers are also entitled to an uninterrupted rest period of at least 24 hours in each seven-day period, 48 hours in each 14-day period or two uninterrupted rest periods of at least 24 hours in each 14-day period. The worker has a duty to inform his/her manager as soon as possible if he/she is or may be at risk of being unable to take these required rest breaks.

Young workers

Young workers are those above school leaving age, but under the age of 18.

The organisation does not permit young people to work in excess of eight hours per day and they are subject to a maximum working week of 40 hours. All young workers are required to inform the organisation immediately if they have a second employer or carry out any casual work while employed by the organisation.

If the organisation requires that a young worker works hours in excess of this to maintain continuity of production or service or to respond to an upsurge in demand, his/her manager should first attempt to find an adult worker to perform the task and before requesting that the young worker perform it, while ensuring that the young worker's education and training are not likely to be adversely affected.

The organisation does not permit young workers to carry out night work and no young worker will be on any shift between the hours of 10pm and 6am.

Every young worker's manager will ensure that as a minimum he/she takes at least two rest days per week, a daily rest break of 12 consecutive hours, a rest break of 30 minutes every four-and-a-half hours. If any young worker is aware that he/she may not be able to comply with these requirements, he/she must inform his/her manager immediately.

Working time

A worker is considered by the organisation to be "working" when he/she is carrying out activities on behalf of the organisation. This may include training, business travel and "on-call" time. It does not include travel from the worker's home to his/her place of work, rest breaks, travel time outside normal working time or non-job related training.

The organisation defines "on-call" time as time when a worker is required to be available throughout the period to perform his/her functions, whether or not he/she is attending his/her usual place of work.

Working time will include time where a worker is required to be at the organisation's premises but is free to rest while waiting for work to be available. It will also include time where a worker is required to travel from site to site for meetings, to attend training or to perform his/her functions at different locations.

However, working time will not include travel to and from a worker's home (or the equivalent if he/she is working away from home at the time), or time when a worker (despite being on the organisation's premises or at his/her place of work) is not available to perform functions for the organisation or is pursuing outside interests during that time.

Miscellaneous

The organisation expects that workers will work their full contractual hours each week and it will pay them monthly in arrears on this basis.

If workers do not perform their full contractual hours, their manager will complete a time sheet for the worker and inform human resources immediately. The worker's wage payment will be adjusted accordingly.

Complaints about working hours

If a worker considers that he/she has been unfairly treated with regard to his/her working hours (for example being required to work excessive hours or temporary flexible working arrangements), he/she is requested to raise this informally with his/her manager. If the worker's complaint relates to his/her manager, he/she is requested to raise it with the human resource manager or their managers senior manager. If a worker is not satisfied following this route, he/she has the right to raise a grievance in accordance with the organisation's grievance procedure.