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AccSec LLP

Quality Standards

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About this Document

This document has been prepared to summarise the guidelines of our working practices. All employees and officers of the company are required to abide by these guidelines. Managers are responsible for making sure that all employees abide by the document. Review procedures will be followed in the event that these standards are not adhered to.

The document covers five main areas:

- Ethical trading policy
- Customer engagement
- Complaints procedure
- Anti-bribery policy
- Equality policy

Feedback Regarding this Document

Feedback, comments and queries relating to this document should, in the first instance be directed to:
Practice Manager, AccSec LLP, 79 Essex Road, London N1 2SF
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Improvement

AccSec LLP are keen to learn from others and would ask if anyone has any ideas or feedback regarding our policy or practice to contact us.

Ethical Trading Policy

AccSec is committed to high ethical standards in the way we conduct our business.

We expect high levels of integrity from all of our employees in all aspects of their working lives.

- We operate under the following Ethical Criteria:
- All employment is freely chosen
- Working conditions are safe and hygienic
- Child labour is not used
- Wages are fair and comparable to industry standard and will always exceed the minimum wage
- Deductions from wages as a disciplinary measure shall not be permitted
- Working hours are not excessive
- No discrimination is practised
- Regular employment is provided for those who are employed on a permanent contract
- No harsh, cruel or degrading treatment or practices are allowed
- No bribery, corruption, blackmailing or bullying is permitted

Third Party Suppliers and buyers are both free to sell and buy from any number of other businesses. No restrictions, as a way of guaranteeing business, are allowed

We also ask all our suppliers to affirm to us that their businesses are also built on these ethical criteria.

We have developed a full policy statement outlining how we expect our practice to develop in order to be able to offer strong guarantees to our customers that the services they receive from us have been ethically designed, managed and implemented.

Our Full Ethical Trade Policy Statement

1. Policy Statement

AccSec LLP recognises that our commercial activities have potential to impact on our suppliers and our locality.

As a socially responsible small business our suppliers, local community and customers have a right to expect:

- All workers involved in the delivery of services provided by AccSec LLP. are treated with full consideration to their basic human rights.
- AccSec LLP acts in an ethical manner above and beyond basic legal requirements.
- AccSec LLP is therefore committed to implementing the principles of the Ethical Trading Initiative Base Code (although we are not members of the ETI).

This policy sets out AccSec LLP's commitment to its suppliers and customers; setting out the measures we are taking to ensure that we are acting in an ethical manner.

2. AccSec LLP Commitment to its suppliers, service providers and customers

AccSec LLP recognises that our ethical and social performance and reputation is a key part of our overall commercial success.

Employees

AccSec LLP is committed to ensuring that our employment practices and the enforcement of corporate regulations ensure the protection of the rights of all those who work for us. In many areas we aim to operate above the minimum standards required by law to ensure our employees are safe, rewarded and valued. As we of course expand and become larger we will be able to offer more opportunities for our staff.

Customers

AccSec LLP is committed to demonstrating its ethical and social responsibility credentials to enable customers to make informed choices about whose services they purchase.

Suppliers

AccSec LLP is committed to monitoring social standards in our supply chain, and we encourage our suppliers to operate to the same ethical standards we employ ourselves.

3. AccSec LLP Ethical Trading Code of Practice

3.1 *This Code of Practice applies to:*

- Staff directly employed by AccSec LLP on temporary or permanent contracts
- Staff employed or provided by contractors or employment agencies to work on AccSec LLP premises or to undertake work for or on behalf of AccSec LLP

3.2 *No forced, bonded or involuntary labour shall be used*

- All employment with AccSec LLP is freely chosen
- Staff are not required to lodge deposits or identity papers with us
- Staff are free to leave AccSec LLP after reasonable notice

3.3 *No child labour shall be used*

- There shall be no recruitment of child labour
- Children or persons under 16 are not employed at any time, day or night
- Children or persons under 18 are not employed full-time

4. *Working conditions are safe and hygienic*

- AccSec LLP takes adequate measures to prevent accidents and minimise potential hazards
- Staff receive regular health & safety training
- Staff have unrestricted access to toilet facilities and drinking water
- AccSec LLP has a published Health & Safety Policy

5. *Working hours and remuneration are reasonable and comparable to other companies in our sector and regular employment is provided*

- Staff pay rates are above the national legal minimum standards
- Staff are not forced to work in excess of 48 hours per week, a voluntary opt out agreement is available for those wishing to work in excess of 48 hours per week
- Staff are provided 2 days off per week
- Staff are given written terms and conditions of employment that detail the employment relationship between and the respective obligations of the employee and employer, rates of pay, working hours, grievance and disciplinary procedures, holiday entitlement, absence and sick pay rules and notice periods for termination of employment
- No deductions are made from wages as a disciplinary measure, and payslips detailing lawful deductions are provided for each pay period
- Labour-only contracting, sub-contracting and fixed term contracts are not used as a means to avoid obligations under labour or social security laws

6. *No discrimination is practised*

- There is no discrimination in pay, hiring, compensation, access to training, promotion, and termination of employment or retirement on the grounds of race, nationality, religion, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, union membership or political affiliation
- Opportunities for personal and career development are equally available to all employees

7. *No harassment, threats, abuse or intimidation shall be practised. Physical, verbal and sexual threats, abuse, harassment or intimidation is expressly prohibited and grounds for summary dismissal, if proved*



8. Organisation

AccSec LLP Partners have overall responsibility for all aspects of ethical trading at work within the business.

Customer Engagement

Customer Engagement

Purpose and Scope

To ensure that when we engage with customers, we do so in a fair, honest and professional manner.

Company Policies – Customer Engagement

- Customer details, including name of customer, site address(es), primary contact name and contact details will be recorded at the outset of any engagement
- A record of all customer meetings will be kept
- Our statements to customers will be based on fair and honest evaluations of their requirements. Overstating our capabilities is not tolerated
- The salient points of our engagements with customers will be confirmed in writing (usually by email)
- When engaging with a prospect customer, all communications, quotes and orders will comply with our prevailing anti-bribery policy.

Quoting Procedure

Purpose and Scope

To make sure that when we quote for a job, that we have the capacity to meet the customer's requirement, and that we provide an accurate quotation.

Company Policies – Quoting

- The decision to quote will be based on an evaluation of the activity required, our perceived ability to complete the job successfully and the availability of our team to carry out the work in the timescales provided.
- The quote will be based on information provided by the customer including the nature of the task at hand, supporting technical information (such as network topology diagrams, project scope etc.)
- Our ability to quote accurately is based upon the customer's ability to share accurate information with us. Our quotes will reflect the information provided.
- The amount of detail on a particular quote may vary; it must be suitable for the nature of the job and the degree of commercial risk.
- Each quote is given a unique quote number.
- Unless purely hardware based, the quote will most likely be accompanied by an outline scope of works. A more formal scope document will be developed as part of the activity.
- When a quote is submitted, a copy of the quote must be stored in the relevant quote file on the network, by Customer name. If accepted, the quote is then used as input to the ordering procedure
- The quote folder must contain all relevant information used for the quote. This includes copies of drawings, specifications, any calculations or assumptions used, etc.

Responsibilities

- A partner will decide when a quote is required, and is also the final authority on whether to submit a quote for a particular job.
- AccSec LLP reserves the right to no-bid for any reason.
- Any partner may do quotes, or delegate authority to another employee (eg, supervisor).
- A partner will review quotes before release.
- Where a complex quote is proposed, peer review will be sought before the quote is released.
- Any variation or change in our ability to provide the service required, or the price of the service required will be notified to the customer in a timely fashion.

Ordering Procedure

Purpose and Scope

To make sure that when we accept a job, that we deliver the service in an efficient and professional manner.

Company Policies – Ordering

- Customer orders are accepted in writing only (whether by email or hard copy).
- All orders will be entered into AccSec LLP's tracking system within 1 working day of receipt.
- An order acknowledgement will be sent to the customer (usually by email) within one working day from receipt
- A clear record of the service ordered and the accompanying scope of works will be maintained.
- Nominated contacts for service delivery will be notified to the customer within five working days of order receipt
- A schedule for work will be published to the customer in a timely fashion based on mutual agreement
- Logs will be kept regarding effort expended and goods provided
- On completion of the activity, or at the end of each calendar month (whichever is sooner), sign-off will be sought for work completed and an outstanding list of tasks published including next steps (should this be required)
- On completion of the activity, or at the end of the calendar month (whichever is sooner), an invoice will be generated to the customer compliant with our invoicing procedure.

Responsibilities

- The office manager will be responsible for entering all details into AccSec LLP's tracking system and will liaise with the project lead regarding work expended.
- A partner, project manager or technical lead will be nominated to oversee all work on a particular activity and will be responsible for its delivery
- The nominated project lead will be responsible for communicating all timescales and invoicing schedules to the customer in a timely fashion
- Where a complex activity is being delivered, peer review will be sought at agreed intervals throughout the activity in order to ensure that projects stay on track.
- Any variation or change in our ability to provide the service required, or the price of the service required will be notified to the customer in a timely fashion

Invoicing Procedure

Purpose and Scope

To make sure that work carried out is invoiced in an accurate and professional manner

Company Policies – Invoicing

- An invoice will be triggered by completion of the work or the end of each calendar month, whichever is sooner
- Invoices will be based on work completed on a time and materials basis, based upon the customer order and supporting documents regarding completion of works or time expended
- Invoices will be communicated to the customer electronically within one working day of production by email, with hard copy follow up if required by the customer.

Responsibilities

- The office manager will be responsible for the accurate production of invoices
- Any variation or change in work ordered vs work invoiced will be communicated to the customer and agreed prior to invoice.

Invoicing Queries

- Should an invoice query arise, these will be treated professionally by AccSec LLP accounts staff and further information given or an amendment made within five working days of receipt of the query.
- Where a mistake has been made, peer review will be used to identify cause and to provide feedback for improved future performance.

Service Delivery

Purpose and Scope

To make sure that services are delivered in an efficient and professional manner

Company Policies – Service Delivery

- An order acknowledgement will be sent to the customer (usually by email) within 1 working day of receipt
- A clear record of the service ordered and the accompanying scope of works will be maintained
- Nominated contacts for service delivery will be notified to the customer within five working days of order receipt
- A schedule for work will be published to the customer in a timely fashion based on mutual agreement
- Logs will be kept regarding effort expended and goods provided. This information will be communicated to the customer as the project progresses.
- On completion of the activity, or at the end of each calendar month (whichever is sooner), sign-off will be sought for work completed and an outstanding list of tasks published including next steps (should this be required)
- On completion of the activity, or at the end of the calendar month (whichever is sooner), an invoice will be generated to the customer compliant with our invoicing procedure

Remedial Work

- Where remedial work is required, the project leader may invoke a peer review of work carried out
- An investigation into the reasons for remedial work will be carried out in order to document reasons for failure (if any) and to provide feedback for future improvement
- Schedules for remedial work will be published to the customer in a timely fashion

Responsibilities

- A partner, project manager or technical lead will be nominated to oversee all work on a particular activity and will be responsible for its delivery
- The nominated project lead will be responsible for communicating all timescales and invoicing schedules to the customer in a timely fashion
- Where a complex activity is being delivered, Peer Review will be sought at agreed intervals throughout the activity in order to ensure that projects stay on track
- Any variation or change in our ability to provide the service required, or the price of the service required will be notified to the customer in a timely fashion

Complaints

Purpose and Scope

To ensure that we handle complaints in a professional and consistent manner and that where identified, improvements can be made to our service

Company Policies – Complaints

- We encourage all customers to raise any concerns with their project manager or technical lead at any time; this often leads to early resolution and the need to raise a complaint is negated.
- We are committed to providing high quality services our customers.
- We value complaints and use information learnt from them to help us improve the services we offer. If something goes wrong or you are dissatisfied with what we are providing please tell us – you should feel free to raise matters of concern without risk of disadvantage.
- All complaints are logged and reviewed in order to facilitate improvements to our service
- Where a complaint is unable to be resolved quickly, an investigation is undertaken to understand what has gone wrong and where lessons can be learned.

What is a complaint?

We regard a complaint as any expression of dissatisfaction about our action or lack of action, or about the standard of service provided by us or on our behalf.

Complaint Criteria

Customers and/or prospects can complain about:

- The quality and standard of any service we provide
- Failure to provide a service
- The quality of our resources
- Unfair treatment or inappropriate behaviour by a staff member
- Failure of AccSec LLP to follow an appropriate administrative process
- Dissatisfaction with AccSec LLP policies
- A complaint may involve more than one aspect of the above, more than one department, or be about someone working on our behalf.

There are some things we cannot deal with through our complaint handling procedure. These include:

- A routine, first-time request for a service
- Our decision to no-bid a particular activity or piece of work
- A request under Freedom of Information or Data Protection legislation
- A request for information or an explanation of policy or practice
- An issue which is being, or has been, considered by a court or tribunal
- A request for compensation only

- an attempt to have a complaint reconsidered where we have already given our final decision following an investigation.

We will not normally treat information received through routine feedback mechanisms – such as responses to questionnaires – as complaints.

Who can complain?

- Anyone who receives, requests or is directly affected by our services can make a complaint to us.

Complaints Procedure

- Complaints can be made in person, by phone, in writing, or by email.
- It is easier for us to resolve complaints if they are raised as soon as you become aware of the issue, and directly to the delivery manager concerned. Please talk to the project lead in the first instance that they can try to resolve any problems quickly

Complaint Resolution

- We aim to resolve complaints quickly as possible. This may include an explanation if something has clearly gone wrong, and action to resolve the problem.
- Where possible, you should raise your concerns with the project lead. This can be done face-to-face, by phone, in writing or by email.
- We aim to resolve (or schedule remedial work to resolve) complaints at this stage within five working days of receipt.

Complaint Investigation

- Some complaints are complex and require detailed investigation. We accept complaints that are made in person, in writing, by email or telephone.
- The initial complaint and any supporting documents will be seen by the person investigating your complaint, by anyone named in the complaint and by relevant staff in the department(s) being complained about.
- When investigating a complaint, we will:
 - Acknowledge receipt of the complaint within three working days and nominate a partner or senior staff member to investigate
 - Discuss the complaint with the complainant and seek timely resolution.
 - Give a full response to the complaint as soon as possible and within 20 working days.
 - If our investigation will take longer than 20 working days, we will agree revised time limits and keep the complainant advised on progress.

Investigation Scope

Investigations consider:

- The effect of issue upon the complainant and on finding a satisfactory resolution to the problem, including exploring options for remediation works
- The cause of the issue
- What might have been done differently
- What procedures may be changed in order to avoid a similar issue in the future
- Documentation of lessons learned
- If necessary, findings will be passed to HR for further review.

Anti-Bribery Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish controls to ensure compliance with all applicable anti-bribery and corruption regulations, and to ensure that the Company's business is conducted in a socially responsible manner.

Policy Statement

Bribery is the offering, promising, giving, accepting or soliciting of an advantage as an inducement for action which is illegal or a breach of trust. A bribe is an inducement or reward offered, promised or provided in order to gain any commercial, contractual, regulatory or personal advantage.

It is our policy to conduct all of our business in an honest and ethical manner. We take a zero-tolerance approach to bribery and corruption. We are committed to acting professionally, fairly and with integrity in all our business dealings and relationships wherever we operate and implementing and enforcing effective systems to counter bribery.

We will uphold all laws relevant to countering bribery and corruption in all the jurisdictions in which we operate. However, we remain bound by the laws of the UK, including the Bribery Act 2010, in respect of our conduct both at home and abroad.

Bribery and corruption are punishable for individuals by up to ten years' imprisonment and a fine. If we are found to have taken part in corruption, we could face an unlimited fine, be excluded from tendering for public contracts and face damage to our reputation. We therefore take our legal responsibilities very seriously.

Scope

Who is covered by the policy?

In this policy, third party means any individual or organisation you come into contact with during the course of your work for us, and includes actual and potential clients, customers, suppliers, distributors, business contacts, agents, advisers, and government and public bodies, including their advisors, representatives and officials, politicians and political parties.

This policy applies to all individuals working at all levels and grades, including senior managers, officers, partners, employees (whether permanent, fixed-term or temporary), consultants, contractors, trainees, seconded staff, homeworkers, casual workers and agency staff, volunteers, interns, agents, sponsors, or any other person associated with us, or any of our subsidiaries or their employees, wherever located (collectively referred to as employees in this policy).

This policy covers:

- Bribes;
- Gifts and hospitality;
- Facilitation payments;
- Political contributions;
- Charitable contributions.

Bribes

Employees must not engage in any form of bribery, either directly or through any third party (such as an agent or distributor). Specifically, employees must not bribe a foreign public official anywhere in the world.

Gifts and Hospitality

Employees must not offer or give any gift or hospitality:

- which could be regarded as illegal or improper, or which violates the recipient's policies; or
- to any public employee or government officials or representatives, or politicians or political parties; or
- which exceeds £100 in value for each individual gift or £100 in value for each hospitality event (not to exceed a total value of £1000 in any financial year), unless approved in writing by the employee's manager.

Employees may not accept any gift or hospitality from our business partners if:

- it exceeds £100 in value for each individual gift or £100 in value for each hospitality event (not to exceed a total of £1000 in any financial year), unless approved in writing by the employee's manager; or
- it is in cash; or
- there is any suggestion that a return favour will be expected or implied.

Where a manager's approval is required above, if the manager is below partner level then approval must be sought from an appropriate partner.

If it is not appropriate to decline the offer of a gift, the gift may be accepted, provided it is then declared to the employee's manager and donated to charity.

We appreciate that the practice of giving business gifts varies between countries and regions and what may be normal and acceptable in one region may not be in another. The test to be applied is whether in all the circumstances the gift or hospitality is reasonable and justifiable. The intention behind the gift should always be considered.

Within these parameters, local management may define specific guidelines and policies to reflect local professional and industry standards. Where this policy requires written approval to be given, the Company Secretary shall put in place a process to maintain a register of all such approvals.

Facilitation Payments and Kickbacks

Facilitation payments are a form of bribery made for the purpose of expediting or facilitating the performance of a public official for a routine governmental action, and not to obtain or retain business or any improper business advantage. Facilitation payments tend to be demanded by low level officials to obtain a level of service which one would normally be entitled to.

Our strict policy is that facilitation payments must not be paid. We recognise, however, that our employees may be faced with situations where there is a risk to the personal security of an employee or his/her family and where a facilitation payment is unavoidable, in which case the following steps must be taken:

- Keep any amount to the minimum;
- Create a record concerning the payment; and
- Report it to the relevant line manager.

In order to achieve our aim of not making any facilitation payments, each business of the Company will keep a record of all payments made, which must be reported to the managing partner, in order to evaluate the business risk and to develop a strategy to minimise such payments in the future.

Political Contributions

We do not make donations, whether in cash or kind, in support of any political parties or candidates, as this can be perceived as an attempt to gain an improper business advantage.

Charitable contributions

Charitable support and donations are acceptable (and indeed are encouraged), whether of in-kind services, knowledge, time, or direct financial contributions. However, employees must be careful to ensure that charitable contributions are not used as a scheme to conceal bribery. We only make charitable donations that are legal and ethical under local laws and practices]. No donation must be offered or made without the prior approval of the compliance manager.

All charitable contributions should be publicly disclosed.

Protection

Employees who refuse to accept or offer a bribe, or those who raise concerns or report another's wrongdoing, are sometimes worried about possible repercussions. We aim to encourage openness and will support anyone who raises genuine concerns in good faith under this policy, even if they turn out to be mistaken.

We are committed to ensuring no one suffers any detrimental treatment as a result of refusing to take part in bribery or corruption, or because of reporting in good faith their suspicion that an actual or potential bribery or other corruption offence has taken place, or may take place in the future. Detrimental treatment includes dismissal, disciplinary action, threats or other unfavourable treatment connected with raising a concern. If you believe that you have suffered any such treatment, you should inform the compliance manager immediately. If the matter is not remedied, and you are an employee, you should raise it formally using the company's Grievance Procedure.

Training and Communication

Training on this policy forms part of the induction process for all new employees. All existing employees will receive regular, relevant training on how to implement and adhere to this policy. In addition, all employees will be asked to formally accept conformance to this policy on an annual basis.

Our zero-tolerance approach to bribery and corruption must be communicated to all suppliers, contractors and business partners at the outset of our business relationship with them and as appropriate thereafter.

Responsibilities

The partners have overall responsibility for ensuring this policy complies with our legal and ethical obligations, and that all those under our control comply with it.

The managing partner has primary and day-to-day responsibility for implementing this policy and for monitoring its use and effectiveness and dealing with any queries on its interpretation. Management at all levels are responsible for ensuring those reporting to them are made aware of and understand this policy and are given adequate and regular training on it.

Monitoring and Review

The managing partner will monitor the effectiveness and review the implementation of this policy, regularly considering its suitability, adequacy and effectiveness. Any improvements identified will be made as soon as possible. Internal control systems and procedures will be subject to regular audits to provide assurance that they are effective in countering bribery and corruption.

All employees are responsible for the success of this policy and should ensure they use it to disclose any suspected danger or wrongdoing.



Employees are invited to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved. Comments, suggestions and queries should be addressed to the Company Secretary.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time.

Equality Policy

Policy Statement

1. AccSec LLP recognises that discrimination and victimisation is unacceptable and that it is in the interests of the Company and its employees to utilise the skills of the total workforce. It is the aim of the Company to ensure that no employee or job applicant receives less favourable facilities or treatment (either directly or indirectly) in recruitment or employment on grounds of age, disability, gender / gender reassignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation (the **protected characteristics**).
2. Our aim is that our workforce will be truly representative of all sections of society and each employee feels respected and able to give their best.
3. We oppose all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination or victimisation. To that end the purpose of this policy is to provide equality and fairness for all in our employment.
4. All employees, whether part-time, full-time or temporary, will be treated fairly and with respect. Selection for employment, promotion, training or any other benefit will be on the basis of aptitude and ability. All employees will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential and the talents and resources of the workforce will be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
5. Our staff will not discriminate directly or indirectly, or harass customers or clients because of age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation in the provision of the Company's goods and services.
6. This policy and the associated arrangements shall operate in accordance with statutory requirements. In addition, full account will be taken of any guidance or Codes of Practice issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission, any Government Departments, and any other statutory bodies.

Our Commitment

- To create an environment in which individual differences and the contributions of all our staff are recognised and valued.
- Every employee is entitled to a working environment that promotes dignity and respect to all. No form of intimidation, bullying or harassment will be tolerated.
- Training, development and progression opportunities are available to all staff.
- To promote equality in the workplace which we believe is good management practice and makes sound business sense.
- We will review all our employment practices and procedures to ensure fairness.
- Breaches of our equality policy will be regarded as misconduct and could lead to disciplinary proceedings.
- This policy is fully supported by senior management and has been agreed with trades union and/or employee representatives.
- The policy will be monitored and reviewed annually

Responsibilities of Management

Responsibility for ensuring the effective implementation and operation of the arrangements will rest with the managing partner. The managing partner will ensure that he or she and his or her staff operate within this policy and arrangements, and that all reasonable and practical steps are taken to avoid discrimination. Each manager will ensure that:

- All staff are aware of the policy, the arrangements and the reasons for the policy
- Grievances concerning discrimination are dealt with properly, fairly and as quickly as possible
- Proper records are maintained

The Managing Partner will be responsible for monitoring the operation of the policy in respect of employees and job applicants, including periodic departmental audits.

Responsibilities of Staff

Responsibility for ensuring that there is no unlawful discrimination rests with all staff and the attitudes of staff are crucial to the successful operation of fair employment practices. In particular, all members of staff should:

- comply with the policy and arrangements
- not discriminate in their day to day activities or induce others to do so
- not victimise, harass or intimidate other staff or groups who have, or are perceived to have one of the protected characteristics
- ensure no individual is discriminated against or harassed because of their association with another individual who has a protected characteristic
- inform his or her manager if he or she becomes aware of any discriminatory practice

Third Parties

Third-party harassment occurs where a Company employee is harassed, and the harassment is related to a protected characteristic, by third parties such as clients or customers. AccSec LLP will not tolerate such actions against its staff, and the employee concerned should inform his or her manager / supervisor at once that this has occurred. AccSec LLP will fully investigate and take all reasonable steps to ensure such harassment does not happen again.

Related Policies and Arrangements

All employment policies and arrangements have a bearing on equality of opportunity. The Company policies will be reviewed regularly and any discriminatory elements removed.

Rights of Disabled People

The Company attaches particular importance to the needs of disabled people.

Under the terms of this policy, managers are required to:

- make reasonable adjustment to maintain the services of an employee who becomes disabled, for example, training, provision of special equipment, reduced working hours. (NB: managers are expected to seek advice on the availability of advice and guidance from external agencies to maintain disabled people in employment);
- include disabled people in training/development programmes;
- give full and proper consideration to disabled people who apply for jobs, having regard to making reasonable adjustments for their particular aptitudes and abilities to allow them to be able to do the job.

Equality Training

A series of regular briefing sessions will be held for staff on equality issues. These will be repeated as necessary. Equality information is also included in induction programmes.

Training will be provided for managers on this policy and the associated arrangements.

Monitoring

- The Company deems it appropriate to state its intention not to discriminate and assumes that this will be translated into practice consistently across the organisation as a whole. Accordingly, a monitoring system will be introduced to measure the effectiveness of the policy and arrangements.
- The system will involve the routine collection and analysis of information on employees by gender, marital status, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, religion / beliefs, grade and length of service in current grade. Information regarding the number of staff who declare themselves as disabled will also be maintained.
- There will also be regular assessments to measure the extent to which recruitment to first appointment, internal promotion and access to training/development opportunities affect equal opportunities for all groups.
- We will maintain information on staff who have been involved in certain key policies: Disciplinary, Grievance and Bullying & Harassment.
- Where appropriate equality impact assessments will be carried out on the results of monitoring to ascertain the effect of the Company policies and our services / products may have on those who experience them.
- The information collected for monitoring purposes will be treated as confidential and it will not be used for any other purpose.
- If monitoring shows that the Company, or areas within it, are not representative, or that sections of our workforce are not progressing properly within the company, then an action plan will be developed to address these issues. This will include a review of recruitment and selection procedures, Company policies and practices as well as consideration of taking legal positive action.

Grievances and Discipline

Employees have a right to pursue a complaint concerning discrimination or victimisation via the company grievance or harassment Procedures.

Discrimination and victimisation will be treated as disciplinary offences and they will be dealt with under the company disciplinary procedure.

Review

The effectiveness of this policy and associated arrangements will be reviewed annually under the direct supervision of The Managing Partner.

Quality Auditing and Review

Our processes are drawn up for good reasons, and we expect staff to follow them as a matter of course.

Exceptions do inevitably occur, perhaps to fit with customer timescale, or by human error. Where such exceptions occur, we seek to find out the reasons for these on a case by case basis, to assess both the impact of such action and to discuss whether such action was justified.

Annual Audit

Our processes are audited annually by senior staff and reviewed by the partners. The audit assesses:

- Compliance with procedure
- Incidents of non-compliance
- Reasons for non-compliance
- Whether improvements to processes are necessary or desirable.

Any recommendations for change or improvement are presented to the board for consideration.

Review

All processes are reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that they are still fit for purpose. We welcome feedback from all quarters on areas where processes can be improved, and expect these processes to evolve.

Updates are made to this document following review and at any time throughout the year should ad-hoc changes be made.

Communication

Training is given to all staff on our procedures and is revisited when process changes are made. This document is available to all employees at all times.