HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

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1. POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 It is our policy to foster a positive health and safety culture throughout our organisation. We believe in high standards of health and safety both morally and commercially.

1.2 We are committed to:

a) providing and maintaining adequate controls of the health and safety risks arising from our work activities,

b) working to prevent accidents and work-related ill health,

c) maintaining safe and healthy working conditions and practices at our premises, working from home or working elsewhere on our behalf,

d) maintaining adequate welfare and hygiene facilities at our work premises,

e) providing and maintaining safe plant and equipment,

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f) using and maintaining the proper safe plant and equipment needed for each task, including all Personal Protection Equipment where needed,

g) ensuring safe handling and use of substances,

h) providing clear health and safety information, instructions and supervision to Staff

i) consulting with our Staff on matters affecting their health and safety,

j) ensuring all Staff are competent to do their tasks,

k) providing adequate training to Staff on the health and safety aspects of their roles, and our general workplace practices,

l) ensuring the safety of our clients/customers at all times, and

m) implementing our emergency procedures, when needed.

1.3 This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and it may be amended at any time. We may also vary elements, such as any time limits, as appropriate in any case.

2. WHO IS COVERED BY THIS POLICY?

2.1 This policy applies to all employees, directors and other officers, workers and agency workers, volunteers and interns.

2.2 We also require in any contracts with self-employed consultants or contractors that they comply with this policy. We will ensure they are given access to a copy.

2.3 All individuals covered in sections 2.1 and 2.2 are referred to as 'staff' in this policy .

3. WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS POLICY?

3.1 All Staff have responsibility for making sure this policy is complied with. Please take the time to read and understand it, and to go back to your manager with any questions you may have.

3.2 References to Directors in this policy mean the most senior people within our organisation. The Directors have overall responsibility for health and safety and the operation of this policy.

3.3 **Directors** are specifically responsible for:

a) ensuring that adequate resources are available for the effective implementation of this policy,

b) ensuring accident/incident reporting and risk assessments are completed and reviewed regularly,

c) assigning appropriate levels of health and safety accountability within our organisation, and ensuring those individuals fulfill their responsibilities,

d) promoting safe conduct at work, and

e) setting a personal example and role model of good practice.

3.4 **Managers** are specifically responsible for:

a) ensuring they understand our approach to health and safety management,

b) ensuring this approach is carried out and complied with by themselves and all those they manage,

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c) contributing to continual improvement of our health and safety culture,

d) promoting and encouraging safe workplace behaviours,

e) ensuring all materials, equipment (including Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)) and working conditions are fit for purpose, safe and maintained,

f) ensuring risk assessments are in place for all significant hazards, and actions are taken to control risks to an acceptable level,

g) reporting and investigating all accidents, incidents or work-related ill health, taking appropriate measures to prevent them happening again,

h) providing appropriate health and safety training to all new Staff,

i) seeking external health and safety support as required, and

j) setting a personal example and role model of good practice.

3.5 All **Staff** are specifically responsible for:

a) ensuring they understand our approach to health and safety management,

b) ensuring they comply with our health and safety rules, policies and guidance,

c) contributing to continual improvement of our health and safety culture,

d) making themselves aware of any risk assessments or safe systems of work related to any activities they undertake, and following any instructions for the use of equipment, including PPE,

e) keeping equipment they use in a good, safe condition, and report any faults or concerns,

f) setting a personal example, particularly by working co-operatively with other Staff, and

g) notifying their manager or a Director of any concern where health and safety might be being compromised.

3.6 All Staff must also recognise that everyone shares responsibility for achieving healthy and safe working conditions. You must consider your acts and/or omissions, the health and safety implications of your acts and/or omissions and take reasonable care for your health and safety and that of others.

4. RISK ASSESSMENTS

4.1 Risk assessment is at the core of managing health and safety. Assessments will be undertaken for all activities with significant risk to our Staff and anyone else who may be affected by our work. Where the Risk Assessments identify the need for changes to the workplace and working practices, these will be considered by the manager of that area.

4.2 Your manager may ask you to undertake or be involved in undertaking Risk Assessments, but responsibility for their content ultimately rests with our Directors.

4.3 Assessments will be developed and reviewed annually, or as a result of the identification of additional hazards, potentially unsafe working practices and accidents/incidents.

4.4 Risk Assessments are available from your manager should you wish to review them or make suggestions.

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5. ACCIDENT REPORTING AND FIRST AID

5.1 Any accident at work involving personal injury or damage to property must be recorded in the Accident Book, which is available via your manager. All Staff must co-operate with any resulting investigation.

5.2 Details of first-aid facilities and any trained first aiders are displayed in the Health and Safety Documents section of our HR software and prominently at our work premises.

5.3 We are also keen to learn of incidents that had the potential to cause injury, etc, so near misses are also recorded; the difference between no injury and serious injury can be chance – we may not be lucky next time.

5.4 Certain accidents must be reported to the Health and Safety Executive under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR). These include:

a) **Death of any person** if it arises from a work-related accident,

b) **Seven day injuries** – which is when a work-related accident results in someone having more than seven days off work in a row, and

c) **Specified injuries** – these include broken bones, amputations, injury that may lead to sight loss, crush injuries, burns or scalding, loss of consciousness caused by head injury and injuries in confined space. (Full details are available on the HSE website.)

6. WELFARE AND HYGIENE

6.1 We will do our best to ensure that any workspaces we provide will have suitable welfare and hygiene provisions. This means we will provide spaces that:

a) are adequately lit, heated, ventilated and kept clean,

b) give Staff access to toilets, handwashing facilities and other hygiene measures,

c) have access to clean drinking water, and

d) are kept smoke free.

6.2 While at work, we ask you to:

a) wash your hands frequently,

b) take steps to clean surfaces in common areas after use, using cleaning materials we provide, and

c) report immediately to your manager or a Director any hygiene or welfare concerns.

7. NATIONAL HEALTH ALERTS

7.1 In the event of an epidemic or pandemic alert, we will organise our business and operations and provide advice on steps to be taken by Staff, to reduce the risk of infection at work as far as possible. This may include hygiene, social distancing and ventilation measures. We will work in accordance with official guidance. Any questions should be referred to your manager.

7.2 It is important for the health and safety of all our Staff that you comply with instructions issued by us in these circumstances, even outside of the workplace. Failure to do so may be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

7.3 It is also important for employees to continue to follow any government

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regulation or official guidance when outside the workplace, in order to reduce risk to other Staff. Failure to do so may be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

8. EQUIPMENT

8.1 Managers are responsible for ensuring that:

a) all equipment you use is safe, has all necessary safety devices installed, and is properly maintained, and

b) any appropriate protective clothing is provided.

8.2 All Staff must use equipment in accordance with operating instructions, instructions given by managers and any relevant training. Any fault with, damage to or concern about any equipment or its use must be reported immediately to your manager.

8.3 No Staff member should attempt to interfere with or repair equipment unless trained to do so. Failure to report damage to or a fault with equipment or failure to use it as directed may result in action under our Disciplinary Procedure.

9. COMPUTERS AND DISPLAY SCREEN EQUIPMENT

9.1 If you habitually use a computer screen or other Display Screen Equipment (DSE) as a significant part of your work:

a) you should try and organise your activity so that you take frequent short breaks from looking at the screen,

b) you are entitled to a workstation assessment, and you can undertake a self-assessment using the DSE Workstation Set-Up Checklist,

c) you are entitled to have an eye test carried out by an optician.

9.2 You should contact your manager to request a workstation assessment or an eye test.

9.3 Eye tests should be repeated at regular intervals as advised by the optician, usually every two years. However, if you experience visual difficulties that may reasonably be caused by DSE work (such as headaches, eyestrain or difficulty in focusing) you can request a further eye test at any time.

9.4 We will pay the cost of eye tests. We will not pay for the cost of glasses or contact lenses, unless the optician advises that you have visual defects requiring glasses specifically designed for the distance of the display screen, and which cannot be corrected by normal glasses or contact lenses. In such circumstances, we would expect the glasses/lenses to be left at your workplace overnight.

10. MANUAL HANDLING, HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

10.1 You will be given information during your induction about:

a) lifting and carrying loads,

b) substances that you may come across during your work that could be hazardous, and

c) electrical equipment use.

10.2 The relevant training materials are available on our HR software, in the Health and Safety Documents section under Training.

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10.3 In addition you may also be given extra information during the course of your employment, including at Staff meetings/ briefings.

10.4 It is essential that you adopt safe handling techniques and know your own limits – think first.

11. STANDARDS OF WORKPLACE BEHAVIOUR

11.1 In addition to the obligations contained in our policy statement in section 1 above, you must co-operate with colleagues and managers on health and safety matters and comply with any health and safety instructions. We welcome ideas to improve business performance and safety at work.

11.2 Any health and safety concern, however trivial it might seem, including any potential risk, hazard or malfunction of equipment, must be reported to your manager.

11.3 You will be required to co-operate in the investigation of any accident or incident that has led, or which we consider might have led, to injury.

11.4 Failure to comply with health and safety rules and instructions or any other requirements of this policy may be treated as misconduct and dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure.

12. INFORMATION AND CONSULTATION

12.1 We are committed to providing clear information, instruction and supervision on health and safety matters for all Staff, as well as consulting with them regarding arrangements for health and safety management.

12.2 The HSE poster 'What you need to know' and our Health and Safety Policy Statement are on display in the workplace, and you will be shown these during your induction.

12.3 This policy is available to all employees on our HR software, and for any other Staff who request a copy.

13. LONE WORKING

13.1 We will seek to avoid lone working. However, we recognise that, on occasion, employees may be required to work alone during the course of their work.

13.2 Lone working will only be allowed after a Risk Assessment has been carried out to assess the nature of the work, the workplace and the specific risks to the individual.

13.3 Where it is not possible for the work to be done safely by one person, arrangements will be made to provide back up and assistance.

13.4 Staff who work alone will be given instruction and training on recognising the risks, the precautions to be taken and the procedure for requesting assistance.

14. ESPECIALLY VULNERABLE PEOPLE

14.1 We will undertake specific Risk Assessments to ensure especially vulnerable people are appropriately protected, as we recognise that they potentially face increased risks in the workplace. Especially vulnerable people may be young people (employees under the age of 18), new and expectant mothers, and those with underlying health conditions or restricted mobility.

14.2 In the case of young people, we will take special care to ensure that training does not assume prior knowledge of the working environment, to ensure they are not exposed to risk due to inexperience. We will also meet the specific

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working conditions for young people:

a) they may not work more than eight hours per day or 40 hours per week,

b) if they are required to work more than four and a half hours at a time, they will be entitled to a break of 30 minutes,

c) they are entitled to 12 uninterrupted hours' rest in each 24-hour period in which they work, and

d) they are entitled to two days off each week, and this cannot be averaged over two weeks.

15. EMERGENCY EVACUATION AND FIRE PRECAUTIONS

15.1 Through our Fire Risk Assessment, we aim to minimise the likelihood of fire in our premises and ensure that, in the event of fire, we will suffer no casualties and minimise potential effects on our business and operations.

15.2 You should familiarise yourself with the instructions about what to do in the event of fire or the alarm sounding; these will be explained to you during your induction. You should also know where the fire extinguishers are, ensure that you are aware of your nearest fire exit and alternative ways of leaving the building in an emergency.

15.3 Regular fire drills will be held to ensure that our fire procedures are effective and to ensure you are familiar with them. These drills are important and must be taken seriously.

15.4 You should notify your manager as soon as possible if there is anything (for example, impaired mobility) that might impede your escape in the event of a fire.

15.5 If you discover a fire, you should not attempt to tackle it unless you have been trained and feel competent to do so. You should operate the nearest fire alarm, close doors to contain the fire and inform the person in charge of the location and details of the fire.

15.6 On hearing the fire alarm, you should remain calm and, walking quickly, not running, evacuate the building immediately. Do not stop to collect personal possessions, do not use the lifts, and do not re-enter the building until you are told that it is safe to do so. The 'senior person present' will take control of the situation and may ask you for assistance, such as preventing others from entering the building.

16. MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE POLICY

16.1 We will continue to review the effectiveness of this policy to ensure it is achieving its stated objectives.

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