

**GLOBAL ACCREDITATION
GA(G)4.1: 2009-10-13
CODE OF PRACTICE**

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CODE OF PRACTICE : PROVIDERS OF PRODUCTS AND SERVICES.

Approved

Date

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0.1 FOREWORD

- 0.1.1 This document is prepared for use by organisations seeking to develop a code of practice for their own use that encompasses ethical principles.
- 0.1.2 Producers of products and services shall be cognizance of and shall meaningfully respond to, GA Policies.
- 0.1.3 The Organisation believes that it is not possible to pick and choose ethical behaviour and that one is either ethical or one is not. Whilst this may be an idealistic viewpoint and, in view of the number of ethical viewpoints that the organisation has identified, a rather improbable goal to achieve, it is not unreasonable to attempt to be ethical in all areas for, not to do so is to knowingly set standards that will fall short of some expectations that could reasonable be held by certain sectors of the general public.
- 0.1.4 Nonetheless GA believes that in the general scheme of things some aspects of practice will occur more frequently and have greater visibility and consciousness than others. For this reason GA has grouped this Code of Practice into three sections that organisations may practice.
These are: -
- 1 Marketing and Sales.
 - 2 Quality Assurance and Control.
 - 3 Corporate Governance.
- 0.1.5 Demonstration of Compliance
- 0.1.5.1 Demonstration of cognizance and compliance with the above policies is not a requirement but organisations, it is hoped, should aspire for independent audit and assessment against this code of conduct.
- 0.1.5.2 Every endeavour has been taken to keep these policies as simple as possible. Nonetheless, members are encouraged to familiarise themselves with this document on a regular basis.

0.2 INTRODUCTION

- 0.2.1 This document is made available to the public. It may be used and modified at will to suit the particular needs and environment of individual organisations.

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1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to provide material suitable for use by most organisations. The material is generic and not designed for any one particular organisation
- 1.2 This document may be used for assessment and certification purposes solely by those organisations that are members of Global Accreditation. In such instances a it may only be used if an appropriate scheme has been developed by the certifying organisation and it is accredited by an Accreditation Member of Global Accreditation.

2.0 SCOPE

- 2.1 This is a publicly Available Document of Global Accreditation.
- 2.2 This document is applicable to any organisation that chooses to adopt it.

3.1 REFERENCES AND DEFINITIONS.

None.

3.2 SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

GA Global Accreditation

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SECTION 4.1

4.1.1 MARKETING AND SALES

4.1.1 Advertising and Promotion Policy

Organisations shall be honest and truthful in all that they say and do.

In the practice of honesty and truthfulness advertisements and promotional material should be careful in what they say and what they do not say when it is reasonable that such aspects are relevant.

Organisations shall avoid intentionally misleading those with whom they do business and shall ensure that any claims are substantiated by credible sources. True and accurate perceptions of their products and services shall be created.

Organisations shall take care of the customer's interests when products are aimed at particularly vulnerable markets such as an aged or a confused customer. The costs of advertising and promotion shall be a proportionate part of the total price.

Organisations shall comply with statutory requirements. Sources of information are contained in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2. Organisations shall not breach Codes of Advertising Practice, typically such as the British code referenced:

(http://www.asa.org.uk/asa/codes/cap_code/CodeIndex.htm?code_id=19#expanded).

4.1.2 Competitors Policy

Competitors are to be respected as fellow participants within an industry that together Organisations are responsible for its reputation. Competitors shall not be maligned, nor shall industrial espionage or tactics to obtain confidential information be employed. Competition is encouraged as a healthy motivation for business growth and wasteful or hurtful associations, cartels and monopolies that damage the economy, the environment and its peoples are to be avoided.

Reasonable and prudent measures shall be put in place to prevent the incursion of competitors who may not subscribe to this policy.

4.1.3 Customers Policy

Customers shall be treated with respect and a win-win outcome for all transactions and exchanges where neither party walks away feeling aggrieved or mistreated shall be achieved.

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4.1.3 Integrity Policy

Conduct shall be such that all partners may trust an organisation and believe in its integrity.

Conduct shall be open, honest, truthful and consistent with an organisation's policies in all its dealings.

End of Section 4.1

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SECTION 4.2

4.2. QUALITY ASSURANCE AND CONTROL

4.2.1 Environment Policy

The Environment is a stakeholder in all businesses. A management system shall be employed to minimise any adverse environmental impact of an organisation's activities whether through the manufacture of items that are purchased, its internal business activities or the operation of the products and services that it provides. Organisations shall endeavour to quantify its environmental performance as a means of controlling it and shall set targets for environmental performance.

Maximum use will be made of generic standards such as ISO 14001 in the achievement of this policy.

4.2.2 Health and Safety Policy

The organisation shall take effective steps to remove or minimise risks to the health, safety, welfare and security of others.

The organisation shall take account of and act in accordance with appropriate legislation such as Health and Safety at Work Act 1994 and subsequent legislation and regulation. Further information may be obtained from <http://www.hse.gov.uk/index.htm>.

Where appropriate, use of management standards such as OHSAS 18001 for the achievement of health safety and welfare shall be used and third party assessment techniques used to gauge their effectiveness.

4.2.3 Management Policy

Organisations shall provide a framework within which employees can work, doing a good job, despite occasional limitations.

Teamwork will be fostered and the elements that make a workplace happy and effective are created.

Organisations will use whatever management standards as are deemed applicable to manage particular functions and to assess the effectiveness of their arrangements.

4.2.4 Monitoring, Awareness and Audit Policy

Organisations shall audit and monitor what is happening within their activities and shall review results. Where deemed appropriate external,

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third party assessors or auditors shall be employed so as to ensure objective and dispassionate results. Results shall be viewed in relation to the organisation's policies and shall be available to all employees.

4.2.5 Quality Management Policy

Organisations shall be committed to the provision of a service that complies with the requirement to achieve customer satisfaction.

Organisations will give careful attention to customer needs as contained in contract, including on-time services, competitive prices, service quality and continual quality improvement. This should be endorsed by:

- (i) Defining and reviewing quality objectives,
- (ii) A documented quality system,
- (iii) Internal and external audit,
- (iv) Regular review of the quality system.

All policies and procedures shall be structured to meet the requirements of ISO 9001. Each member of staff shall be aware of the business' commitment to quality, and should be required to observe quality requirements at all times.

4.2.6 Quality Product and Service Policy

Products and services shall be fit for purpose. They shall be compliant with specification and the claims of marketing material and literature and customers shall be happy in the ownership of these products or received services.

4.2.7 Supplier Policy

Relationships with suppliers shall be mutually beneficial.

4.2.8 Training Policy

All staff shall be competent and trained to an appropriate level. The activities necessary for compliance with this policy are subsumed by those for the Quality Management Policy.

End of Section 4.2

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SECTION 4.3

4.3.0 CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

4.3.1 Business and Profit Policy

Profit shall be obtained in an ethical and just manner.

Profit shall be obtained through the provision of customer acceptable product and service levels. It shall be related to the need for remuneration, the maintenance of business overheads, product and service costs and the need to invest for the future. Profit shall be unrelated to what the market or individual customer can bear.

4.3.2 Confidentiality Policy

Anything that is personal to an individual is personal and shall not be disclosed.

The laws of the land, particularly regarding data protection, shall be complied with. Information may be obtained from the relevant National Information Commissioner's Office. For the UK this is at The Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF . Telephone: 01625 545745 - Helpline 01625 545740 - Notification helpline 01625 545700 - Fax: 01625 524510 <http://www.ico.gov.uk/>

Anything that is personal to an individual, including their feelings, and even the organisations own observations is confidential, unless it is clearly for public consumption. All information entrusted shall be treated with discretion and responsibility and the use of tools that might limit the privacy of others shall be avoided.

4.3.3 Corrupt Practices Policy

Practices that seek to obtain commercial advantage, sales, special favour or patronage through actions such as bribes, back-handers or gifts are not acceptable and are considered corrupt practices and shall be avoided.

4.3.4 Director Responsibility Policy

Directors shall demonstrate responsibility to all stakeholders of the business. They shall ensure that it complies with all applicable laws and regulations.

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4.3.5 Employer Responsibility Policy

Employers shall take the opportunity to improve the well-being of employees and should encourage such situations as will give employees pride in their company.

4.3.6 Employee Responsibility Policy

Employees shall recognise that employers provide them with a livelihood and that in return they are expected to earn their keep. Workplace facilities shall not be unreasonably utilised for purposes of a private nature or unrelated to the business of the employer. Employees shall be pleasant, courteous, helpful and supportive to customers, suppliers and other employees and shall seek opportunities to advance the growth of the company.

4.3.7 Equality

Organisations shall respect and encourage diversity within the organisation, its customers and its suppliers as a source of energy and potential growth for its enterprise.

4.3.8 Ethical Trade Policy

Organisations shall avoid trade and investments in countries or with other organisations where there are ongoing violations of human rights. Organisations shall avoid trade or investment in countries or other organisations where employees are paid less than a sustainable living wage in their own community. Organisations shall avoid trade or investment in countries or other organisations where children or the disadvantaged are exploited.

4.3.9 Financial Accounting Policy

Accounts shall accurately reflect the business position. Information should appropriately be made available to business partners so that they may assess any risk. Financial information relevant to the business shall be regularly reviewed in order to maintain effective management of the organisation.

4.3.10 Gifts and Donations Policy

The spirit of generosity and compassion is encouraged. Its expression via gifts and donations by the organisation, or its individual members of staff, to those in need is applauded. Gifts presented and received as a sign of appreciation are acceptable but not as would appear to conflict with the Corrupt Practices Policy.

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Hospitality with trading partners should be shared as appropriate on alternative occasions. Information regarding donations is readily available to any reasonable enquirer and discernable from the accounts and financial reports.

4.3.11 Government Policy

The organisation shall operate within the spirit and the letter of the law. Organisations shall endeavour to be regularly informed about applicable legislation and regulation.

Organisations shall endeavour to change legislation and regulation that it believes is wrong, unjust or immoral.

4.3.12 Intellectual Property Policy

Organisations shall not infringe the copyrights, patents or other intellectual property rights of others. Organisations shall acknowledge the sources of its work

Organisations shall protect its own intellectual property and take steps to prevent a less ethical organisation usurping or abusing its copyright.

4.3.13 Investment Policy

Funds not immediately needed shall be invested in such a manner as to contribute positively to the global economy. Investments in enterprises that are unethical or harmful to life shall be avoided. Surplus funds shall be invested such that they shall be available to the business when needed.

4.3.14 Leadership & Decision Making Policy

A single responsible person shall take the lead for each business situation. Decisions shall be explained to all stakeholders to ensure their participation, where required, in the realisation of the vision for which the decision was reached. The responsible person or leader shall ensure that further to the decision making process, there is adequate action to ensure fruition.

4.3.15 Local Community Policy

Organisations shall organise its affairs such as to be an asset to the local community and not an annoyance.

If asked to support a local activity Organisations shall try and find a way in which to participate.

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4.3.16 Pressure Groups Policy

Organisations shall set aside reasonable time to speak with pressure groups, lobbyists and other stakeholders. Organisations shall endeavour to understand their points of view without necessarily agreeing to adopt them. Organisations shall try and come to an amicable way of resolving conflicts.

4.3.17 Prompt Payment Policy

Bills will be paid on time.

If payment is to be delayed because of an actual or a perceived shortfall in service or quality from a supplier then the supplier will be informed prior to the expected payment date. If payment can not be made because of a lack of anticipated funds or because of misfortune then suppliers will be advised of the circumstances and a resolution to the difficulty mutually sought and agreed.

4.3.18 Remuneration Policy

Remuneration paid, in whatever form, shall be commensurate with the work done, responsibility and good management. Differences in pay between people doing similar jobs should be logical and understood by all concerned.

4.3.19 Shareholder and Investor Policy

Shareholders shall receive a fair return for their investment and risk. Communications with investors shall be sufficient to inform them of the progress of the company.

All shareholder and investment concerns shall be listened to and considered with regard to the reputation and the sustainability of the business.

4.3.20 Self Care Policy

Individuals within an organisation shall take good care of themselves. They shall develop personal habits, routines and rituals that limit the stress and pressure in their lives and shall develop self discipline so as to work and rest effectively.

4.3.21 Simplicity Policy

Organisations shall encourage simplicity and seek to eliminate superfluous elements throughout all aspects of our business.

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4.3.22 Speculation Policy

Decisions and actions based upon unjustified confidence or optimism or as a result of the excitement of an uncertainty shall be avoided.

4.3.23 Taxes Policy

The payment of excess tax shall be avoided. The evasion of tax a payment that is properly due shall be avoided.

4.3.24 Trade Union Policy

In dealing with trades unions Organisations shall cultivate a mutual trust so as both parties will do their best to make the organisation successful and so best placed to service the requests of trade unions.

4.3.25 Uncertainty and Risk Policy

Organisations shall proactively manage and contain risks so as not to jeopardise the livelihoods of employees or the survival of the business.

4.3.26 Whistle Blowing Policy

Organisations shall be honest and truthful in what they say. When making statements to authorities or regulators Organisations shall be motivated by high ideals and for the public good. Organisations shall avoid action or statement that will not stand the heat or gaze of public scrutiny. Wherever possible, advice and guidance shall be sought from independent parties in order to allow the truth to prevail.

End of Section 3

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Appendix 1

Sources of information regarding advertising and promotion within the UK

The Advertising Standards Authority
Complaints Dept
2 Torrington Place
London WC1 E 7HW
Tel: 0207 580 5555
Fax: 0207 631 3051
Email: inquiries@asa.org.uk
Website: www.asa.org.uk/

Office of Fair Trading
Fleetbank House
2-6 Salisbury Square
London
EC4Y 8JX
Tel: 0207 211 8000 (switchboard)
08457 22 44 99 (general enquiries)
0870 60 60 321 (publication orders)
Fax: 0207 211 8800
Email: enquiries@oft.gov.uk
website: www.oft.gov.uk/

The Independent Television
Commission
33 Foley Street
London
W1W 7TL
Tel: 020 7255 3000
Fax: 020 7306 7800
Website: www.itc.org.uk

Institute of Business Ethics
24 Greencoat Place
London
SW1P1BE
Tel 0202 7798 6040
info@ibe.org.uk
www.ibe.org.uk

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Appendix 2

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• Confidentiality	3
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• Customers	1
• Directors and managers Responsibilities	3
• Employer Responsibilities	3
• Employee Responsibilities	3
• Environment	2
• Equality	3
• Ethical trade	3
• Financial accounting	3
• Gifts and Donations	3
• Government	3
• Health, Safety and Security	2
• Integrity	1
• Intellectual property	3
• Investments	3
• Leadership & decision making	3
• Local Community	3
• Management	2
• Monitoring, awareness and audits	2
• Pressure Groups	3
• Prompt Payment	3
• Quality Management	2
• Quality and safety of products	2
• Remuneration	3
• Shareholders	3
• Self care	3
• Simplicity	3
• Speculation	3
• Suppliers	2
• Taxes	3
• Trade Unions	3
• Training	2
• Uncertainty and risk	3
• Whistle blowing	3

End of Document