

Standards Verification UK

Corporate Social Responsibility Policy

Our principles:

Standards Verification UK (SVUK) strives to be a good corporate citizen in all aspects of its work and activities. We recognise that we must integrate our business values and operations to meet the expectations of our stakeholders. This means we have a responsibility to ensure good working practice is evident throughout the organisation, coupled with a respect for our stakeholders, customers, employees, suppliers, community, and environment.

We recognise that our social, economic, and environmental responsibilities to our stakeholders are integral to our business. We aim to demonstrate these responsibilities through our actions and within our corporate policies. This corporate social responsibility policy brings together our overarching operating principles, and so serves as a guide to all employees. Further details of each component of the policy can be found within the following individual documents: the staff handbook; the Leeds office handbook; the quality manual; and in stand alone policies such as the health and safety policy; the lone worker policy; the home worker policy; and the customer charter.

The Chief Officer is responsible for the implementation of this policy and will make the necessary resources available to realise our corporate responsibilities. The responsibility for our performance to this policy rests with all employees throughout the company.

Our policy divides in to 4 main areas:

1. Workplace activity
2. Business conduct
3. Employee relations
4. Environmental and social impact

Workplace activity:

- SVUK has statutory obligations placed upon it by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. SVUK recognises and accepts its responsibilities as an employer to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its employees whilst at work and other persons affected by its undertakings.
- The responsibility for health, safety and welfare is the responsibility of all employees and, in particular, managers. In addition, the Act places a duty upon all employees to take reasonable care for the health and safety, of not only themselves and colleagues, but also visitors to the company's premises.
- We recognise that there may be a potential increase in risks and hazards when employees work alone, from home or remotely and our associated duty to ensure that they are not placed at greater risk than office based employees. We will assess and monitor the additional risks to these employees and will take appropriate action in so far as is reasonably practicable to reduce the risk, ensuring the health, safety and security of our employees.
- SVUK is fully committed to compliance with the legal duties and responsibilities concerning data protection and data management. Through a series of detailed procedures, all employees are provided with appropriate, safe and secure working practice to ensure the confidentiality and care of personal details, both inside and out of the office.

Business conduct:

- We shall maintain our certification to ISO 9001:2008.
- We shall ensure a high level of business performance while minimising and effectively managing risk.
- We will register and resolve customer complaints in accordance with our customer charter and quality management system.
- We shall uphold the values of honesty, integrity, transparency and fairness in the delivery of our services and regulatory responsibilities to stakeholders.
- Our contracts will clearly set out the agreed terms, conditions and the basis of our relationship.
- We will operate in ways that safeguard against unfair business practice.
- We shall encourage suppliers and contractors to adopt responsible business policies and practices for mutual benefit.
- We take seriously all feedback that we receive from our stakeholders and, where possible, maintain open dialogue.
- We shall be open and honest in communicating our strategies, targets, performance and governance to our stakeholders in our continual commitment to sustainable development.
- As part of our policy-making process, we shall identify possible impacts on sustainable development and on equality and diversity. Where possible, take action to enhance positive impacts and mitigate negative ones.
- Guidelines for the sustainable and socially responsible procurement of goods and services shall be incorporated in to SVUK's operating procedures and will be considered in all tender evaluations.

Employee relations:

- We shall operate a policy of equal opportunities for all current and potential employees.
- We will offer our employees clear and fair terms of employment and remuneration and will maintain participation in employee forums for consultation and business involvement.
- We shall provide our employees with an annual appraisal system incorporating the people development and performance review process to support their continuous learning and improvement.
- We have committed through our skills pledge to encourage and support our employees to gain the skills and qualifications that meets the needs of our business and will support their future employability.
- We shall provide safeguards to ensure that all employees are treated with respect and without sexual, physical, or mental harassment.
- We shall adopt exemplars of good practice in diversity.
- We will ensure that all actual or potential employees are treated fairly, regardless of: age, disability, family responsibility, marital status, race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, religion or belief or non belief, gender, sexual orientation, trade union activity, part time or full time hours, fixed term or permanent status, unrelated criminal convictions, or other irrelevant criteria.
- We will treat all employees, stakeholders and partners with respect and dignity, and will provide a working environment free from harassment, discrimination, and victimisation. We will not tolerate any form of discriminatory behaviour against our employees from other employees, from suppliers, stakeholders or others.
- We shall promote the Employee Assistance Programme, enabling all staff members to access confidential advice, independent support and a range of information on various personal and family issues.


Environmental and social impact:


- We shall strive to improve our environmental performance through the implementation of sustainable development and environmental policies.
- We shall make the most efficient and effective use of all resources, encouraging all staff to develop a sustainable approach to their work.
- Staff members will be encouraged to use sustainable methods of transport while travelling on SVUK business and in their commute to and from work.
- Through effective partnerships, we shall continue our initiatives on recycling, waste minimisation, and environmental improvements, reducing the amount of waste generated and disposed of in landfills.
- We shall work together to manage our operations, minimising our environmental impact and promoting good environmental practice.
- We shall encourage employees to support agreed nominated charitable organisations and to help local community organisations through fundraising and voluntary activities.

Monitoring and review:

The corporate social responsibility policy shall be monitored and its effectiveness evaluated enabling the identification of further opportunities for continuous improvement and good practice. Findings from performance evaluations shall be reported to the SVUK board.

This corporate social responsibility policy will be adopted by the SVUK board for an initial period of one year and will be reviewed on an annual basis in order to ensure its continuing suitability.

Signed: 
Professor Derek Fraser
(Chair)


Susan Edge
(Chief Officer)

Date: 11 June 2009

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Review Date: June 2010