### ***EXAMPLE***

### **Code of Conduct Policy**

#### **Purpose**

The Code of Conduct policy sets out clear expectations for employee behaviour, promoting professionalism, integrity, ethics, and respect within the workplace. This policy is designed to ensure that all employees adhere to the highest standards of conduct, both within the company and in interactions with clients, customers, and external stakeholders. It aligns with UK employment law, including the **Employment Rights Act 1996** and the **Equality Act 2010**, and provides a framework for maintaining a respectful, lawful, and productive work environment.

#### **Scope**

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, temporary staff, and anyone acting on behalf of the company. It covers all aspects of workplace behaviour, including communication, conduct with colleagues, clients, and customers, and the use of company property and resources.

### **1. General Principles**

The company expects all employees to uphold the following core principles in their day-to-day activities:

* **Professionalism**: Employees must perform their duties with a high degree of competence, diligence, and professionalism, representing the company in a positive manner at all times.
* **Integrity**: Employees are expected to act honestly and ethically in all interactions, both within and outside the company. Dishonesty, fraud, or unethical behaviour will not be tolerated.
* **Respect**: Employees must treat colleagues, clients, customers, and all stakeholders with respect and courtesy. Bullying, harassment, discrimination, or any form of inappropriate behaviour will result in disciplinary action.
* **Compliance with Laws and Policies**: Employees must comply with all applicable UK laws, regulations, and internal company policies, including health and safety, data protection, equality and diversity, and the company’s Disciplinary Policy.

### **2. Standards of Behaviour**

#### **2.1. Professional Conduct**

* Employees are expected to present themselves in a professional and courteous manner at all times. This includes punctuality, dress code (if applicable), and communication.
* Employees must complete their work duties efficiently, meet deadlines, and maintain the quality of work expected by the company.

#### **2.2. Respect and Inclusion**

* The company is committed to fostering an inclusive and respectful workplace, in line with the **Equality Act 2010**. Discriminatory behaviour, harassment, bullying, or victimisation based on any protected characteristic (such as race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, etc.) is strictly prohibited.
* Employees are encouraged to report any behaviour that undermines the company’s commitment to equality and inclusion through the company’s grievance or whistleblowing procedures.

#### **2.3. Confidentiality**

* Employees must safeguard all confidential information related to the company, clients, suppliers, and colleagues. Confidential information should only be accessed for legitimate work purposes and must not be shared with unauthorised individuals, either inside or outside the company.
* Employees are expected to comply with the **Data Protection Act 2018** and **GDPR** when handling personal data.

#### **2.4. Conflicts of Interest**

* Employees must avoid any situation where personal interests conflict with the interests of the company. Any potential conflicts of interest must be disclosed to management immediately.
* Employees should not use their position within the company to gain personal benefits or preferential treatment for themselves or others.

#### **2.5. Use of Company Resources**

* Employees are responsible for the appropriate use of company property, including equipment, technology, and resources. Company resources must be used for legitimate business purposes only and should not be misused for personal gain.
* The unauthorised use of company property for personal or unlawful purposes is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action.

#### **2.6. Alcohol, Drugs, and Substance Abuse**

* Employees are prohibited from using, possessing, or distributing illegal substances while on company premises or during work-related activities. Employees must not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while carrying out their duties.
* The company may require an employee to undergo testing if there is a reasonable belief that their performance is being affected by drugs or alcohol.

#### **2.7. Workplace Health and Safety**

* Employees are expected to adhere to all health and safety policies and procedures, in accordance with the **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974**. This includes reporting hazards, following safety protocols, and taking care of their own health and safety, as well as that of colleagues and visitors.

### **3. Communication and Representation**

#### **3.1. Internal Communication**

* Employees must communicate in a professional and respectful manner with colleagues and management. Offensive, aggressive, or inappropriate language or behaviour is not acceptable, whether communicated in person, via email, or through other channels.
* Clear, honest, and timely communication is essential for effective teamwork and collaboration. Employees are encouraged to communicate openly while respecting confidentiality and company guidelines.

#### **3.2. External Communication**

* Employees are expected to act as positive representatives of the company when dealing with clients, customers, suppliers, and the public. Professionalism, courtesy, and respect must be maintained in all external communications.
* Any statements to the media or public on behalf of the company must be authorised by management. Employees should not make unauthorised comments or statements that could damage the company’s reputation.

### **4. Digital and Social Media Conduct**

#### **4.1. Use of Technology**

* Employees must use the company’s IT systems, including email and internet access, responsibly. Company technology should only be used for legitimate work purposes, and any misuse of company IT systems (e.g., accessing inappropriate content or unauthorised downloads) will be subject to disciplinary action.
* Employees must ensure that any online communication or use of company systems complies with company policies and UK data protection regulations, including the **Data Protection Act 2018**.

#### **4.2. Social Media Conduct**

* Employees should be mindful of their conduct on social media, both in and outside of work. Social media activity that negatively affects the company’s reputation or breaches confidentiality will be addressed through the company’s disciplinary procedures.
* Employees should avoid posting offensive, discriminatory, or harmful content that could reflect poorly on the company. Any association with the company (e.g., job titles, company information) should be treated with care when using social media platforms.

### **Ethical Behaviour**

#### **5.1. Compliance with Laws**

* Employees must comply with all applicable UK laws and regulations, including but not limited to employment law, health and safety legislation, data protection regulations, and anti-bribery laws.
* Employees are prohibited from engaging in any activities that could be considered fraudulent, dishonest, or illegal. This includes bribery, corruption, theft, and other forms of misconduct.

#### **5.2. Anti-Bribery and Corruption**

* The company is committed to conducting its business with integrity, in accordance with the **Bribery Act 2010**. Employees must not offer, give, or receive bribes or improper payments in exchange for business advantages.
* Employees must report any suspicions of bribery or corruption to management immediately.

#### **5.3. Whistleblowing**

* Employees are encouraged to report any unethical, illegal, or improper conduct within the company through the company’s **Whistleblowing Policy**, in accordance with the **Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998**. Employees who report such conduct will be protected from retaliation or victimisation.

### **6. Disciplinary Action for Breaches**

Any breaches of this Code of Conduct will be taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action. The severity of the action will depend on the nature of the misconduct, and it may include:

* Verbal or written warnings
* Suspension
* Demotion
* Dismissal

In cases of illegal activity (e.g., fraud, theft, harassment), the company may involve the police and pursue legal action.

### **7. Reporting**

Employees who observe or experience behaviour that fails to comply with the Code of Conduct are encouraged to report it to their line manager, HR, or use the company’s whistleblowing procedure. The company will investigate all reports confidentially and take appropriate action.

### **8. Monitoring and Review**

The company will regularly monitor compliance with this Code of Conduct and update the policy as necessary to reflect changes in legislation, best practices, or organisational needs. Employees will be informed of any updates and are expected to comply with any changes.

### **Conclusion**

This Code of Conduct policy sets out the expected standards of behaviour for all employees and ensures that professionalism, respect, integrity, and compliance with the law are maintained within the company. Employees are encouraged to act ethically, support the company’s values, and contribute to a positive and productive workplace environment.