

**POLICY**

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is about the way in which organisations meet their wider economic, social environmental obligations, both to employees and to other interest groups including customers, suppliers, investors, and local communities. It includes, but is not limited to, sustainable development practices, corporate citizenship, corporate governance, and business ethics.

As a responsible company, we recognise that our activities (operations, product and services) have a wider impact on, and can therefore contribute to, the society in which we operate, and aims to take this into account by taking appropriate actions, as outlined in this policy, that are over and above compliance with legal minimum requirements.

The business benefits that can be obtained from applying a successful CSR policy include:

- Reduced costs and increased cost-efficiency e.g., reduction in utility bills.
- Improved brand reputation and public relations because of making the CSR policy well known.
- Customer and employee loyalty because of making the CSR policy well known.
- Managing risk e.g., through corporate governance procedures
- Improved internal and external relationships e.g., through commitment to community services, staffing policies and customer services.

The Company aims to ensure CSR becomes an integral part of business practice. For this to happen there are key characteristics (based on the CSR Academy's Competency Framework) that must underpin our commitment to CSR. These are:

- Having a sound understanding of the roles in the society in which we operate – e.g., the environment, the government, educational establishments, local labour market etc.
- Being open to new ideas and practices and ways of thinking, and challenging our existing methods where appropriate
- Building solid stakeholder relations – identifying stakeholders, engaging in consultation, and balancing demands
- Valuing and harnessing diversity and adjusting our approach as appropriate.
- Building the capacity of staff, suppliers etc to help implement our CSR activities effectively.

This policy should be considered in conjunction with, or with reference to, a variety of other internal policy and procedural documents, some of which may be mentioned below. These include various staffing policies and procedures, codes of conduct and regulatory and compliance frameworks.

**Guidelines****Environment**

Sustainable development is concerned with issues such as pollution control, sustainable use of natural resources and energy conservation, to ensure that the Company's development is within the limits of the planet's environment and not at the expense of limited resources. The Company has a 'Reduce-Reuse-Recycle' policy. This includes, but is not restricted to, energy and water consumption, waste materials and paper use.

Ways in which we can achieve this include the following:

**Reduce**

Reducing energy consumption by:

- Switching off lights, air conditioning units, printers, PCs, screens etc when not in use
- Using energy saving light bulbs
- Using screen savers
- Only boiling the required amount of water in kettles
- Car sharing for business trip.
- Reducing water consumption by:
  - Turning off taps fully
  - Using water saving devices such as cistern bags to reduce water used in toilet flushes.
  - Regularly checking for leaks in bathrooms and kitchens and fixing

Immediately Reducing paper usage by:

- Cancelling junk mail and unwanted publications
- Using only internal envelopes for internal mail
- Photocopying and printing documents two-sided where possible
- Only printing the required pages of a document, not the whole document
- Sending electronic documents and emails instead of hard copies and memos where possible
- Avoiding overproduction of marketing and publicity materials by reviewing and updating distribution lists regularly
- Proof reading documents before going to print or copying them.
- Cancelling runs of photocopies and printing if there is a problem.

Reducing waste and pollution by:

- Selling empty toner and ink cartridges to a collections firm
- Using solar - powered rather than battery-operated calculators.
- Compacting waste (e.g., flattening milk cartons) to reduce volume and collections.

**Re-use**

- Using glasses, mugs, crockery, and metal cutlery instead of disposable plastic or paper cups, plates, cutlery etc.
- Using paper printed on one side for draft printing or scrap note pads.

**Recycle**

Using recycled products or products with a high recycled or reconditioned content where possible, such as:

- Office paper
- Toilet rolls
- Remanufactured toner cartridges

Collecting items for recycling such as:

- Using office paper recycling bins for paper collection
- Taking glass bottles and aluminium cans to local recycling bins
- Returning toner cartridges for remanufacture
- Donating items such as old office furniture to charities instead of disposing of them

### **Marketplace and workplace**

Responsible business practices include pursuing high standards of governance, raising employment standards for employees, and doing business with other organisations that complement our CSR policies.

Ways in which we can achieve this include the following:

### **Staffing policies and procedures**

- Achieving/Retaining the Investors in People standard, which now includes CSR evidence requirements.
- Maintaining staffing policies that are family-friendly, allow equality of opportunity, occupational health and safety and are generally concerned with the well-being of employees, such as:
  - Maternity and paternity provision
  - Flexible working policy to ensure work-life balance.
  - Information and consultation arrangements to maximise employee involvement and empowerment.
  - Well-being Policy and Employee Counselling Service to minimise work-related stress in employees.
  - Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work policies to ensure we are valuing diversity.
  - Health and safety policy including an Occupational Health Service
  - Objective and merit-based approaches to promotion, compensation, and benefits etc.

### **Trade partnerships**

- Buying Fair Trade tea and coffee
- As far as possible, ensuring that we use suppliers and service providers that are aware of our CSR policies and encouraging them to develop their own.
- Buying and using products which have a minimal environmental and social impact.
- Use local community businesses where possible.
- Purchase second-hand items where practical, such as furniture.

**Corporate governance**

- Financial statements are prepared each year to comply with company law and publicised in the Annual Accounts.
- Internal controls are reviewed continually.
- A policy of ethical investment whereby the organisation does not invest in businesses whose activities would conflict with the aims of the organisation or are likely to alienate a significant proportion of our customers.

**Community**

Key social and community issues for the Company include enabling more disadvantaged members to have access to our qualifications and services, as well as considering how we can have a positive impact on our local social and business community.

Ways in which we can achieve this include the following:

**Contributions to society**

- Donating empty toner and ink cartridges to charities for fundraising f Company donations to local charities and fundraising events
- Staff participation in national charity fundraising events
- Staff participation in local community help schemes

**Integration**

To achieve success with CSR initiatives it is critical to gain commitment at all levels – from senior management, from stakeholders, from suppliers, from employees, and from internal functions that need to act in partnership to implement the initiatives. The following activities will aim to raise awareness of, and commitment to, these issues, to elicit and maintain a change in Company attitudes and behaviours:

- Inclusion of CSR strategies and objectives in the business plan and individual action plans
- Use of poster displays.
- Awareness campaigns throughout the year
- Inclusion of CSR policy in Employee Handbook
- Inclusion of CSR in induction training
- Inclusion of CSR responsibilities in job descriptions
- Further CSR information available to staff
- Ensuring our suppliers and business partners are aware of our CSR policies and promoting sound CSR practices within those organisations.