

Policies and Procedures

The HR policies and procedures that your organisation adopt need to be clearly drafted and be 'fit for purpose' for a number of scenarios which, as yet, may not have emerged. This can be a tricky situation to be in as you are effectively dealing with the unknown and taking some degree of risk as to whether your policy will meet a need at some time in the future. The policies and processes you adopt need to 'catch all' and protect you should you face legal challenge and to ensure that there is clarity, equity and parity. All too often we have helped organisations in situations where with the benefit of hindsight they would have drafted their policies very differently. Perhaps having examined the complaint, loopholes or gaps were identified, or the policy and process was not compliant with current legislation. We have also helped organisations in situations where they have arrived at a position, usually a serious or difficult one, and realised too late that they should have had a policy and didn't.

Our view is that policies should be at the core of everything the organisation believes in and is trying to do. Imagine you were building a house which reflects your business. In order to build your house, you might use bricks. Imagine the bricks without any mortar to create the sturdiness of the structure and then think about what might happen should the unthinkable occur which might threaten your building? Those houses with bricks and mortar have a better chance of surviving than those which do not have the mortar. Policies and procedures are your mortar – your insurance policy, if you like; there to protect you from challenge by giving you the best chance of defending your position and recovering from that event.

Policies and procedures are about so much more than just being legally compliant. They are about treating your staff equitably and being fair, but a good organisation can use their policies to differentiate themselves from their competitors to become an attractive employer, to entice new recruits and retain existing ones.

Of course there are 'standard' policies that you can download from the internet or purchase elsewhere, but will these really do what you as a business want for your specific organisation? Each organisation is different and there are choices you can legitimately make about stances you want to take with various issues and therefore the policies and procedures that you adopt.

So how can we help?

Initial Meeting

We like to meet with you to discuss your needs and believe that through an initial discussion about your business we can get your policy and procedure position 'truly fit for purpose'.

Critical Review

We then will critically review your existing policies, or in the case of start up's we look at what the business needs. We will let you know where your business is currently in policy terms.

- Are your policies legally compliant?
- Are there loopholes or problems with your policies which you may wish to close off?
- Are there policies which are not in place which we would recommend?
- Are the policies facilitating the business strategy or standing in its way?
- What your options are in terms of 'must do' or 'choose to do'?

Drafting

Following the critical review and based on your instructions we can draft for your approval policies which are all in synergy with each other.

We then go through a process of drafting and discussion until you are happy with the policies and procedures.

Communication and Implementation

We can then advise on how your policies and procedures should be communicated if they are a change to previous policies and indeed, at your request, aid in the communication either to individual staff or to collective groups. There are ways and means of varying terms and conditions which need careful thought.

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Special Situations

In the case of mergers, acquisitions or transfers we can advise on what is possible and then help harmonise the different sets of terms and conditions, and critically assess what the implications are of changing terms for individual groups of staff and advise and assist in the communication process.

Staff Handbooks / Intranet Guidance

We can write staff handbooks or intranet guidance which explain to staff the policy and procedures to follow in specific situations. Remember the wording of the handbooks and guidance can do much to reinforce HR strategies and outline expectations in a way which can echo and sometimes drive the culture the organisation wants to achieve.

Writing Guidance

We have been extensively involved in not only writing procedures and policies but have also helped organisations 'roll out' their new processes to staff through training or writing guidance for managers to use or a combination of both.

We would be happy to talk through your requirements – every business is different and it is often forgotten that policies and procedures should be 'living documents' which go to the very heart of where the organisation is and aspires to be culturally and professionally and they deserve to have time spent on them.

What Policies?

Some of the policies which your organisation should either have in place or should consider are listed below:

- Grievance
- Discipline
- Equality and Diversity
- Whistle blowing
- Harassment
- Bullying and Violent Behaviour
- Maternity, Paternity, Adoptive and Parental Leave
- Right to request flexible working
- Email / Internet Policy
- Driving Policy
- Health and Safety
- Telephone Policy
- Expense Policy
- Betting Gambling and Touting
- Smoking and Drinking
- Age and Retirement
- Data Protection
- Recruitment Policy
- Manual Handling Policy
- Various standards of conduct / policy positions (usually in staff handbook)