



Being a Good Employer

There are many things to consider to make your organisation an effective, flexible and efficient employer. These range from legal compliances (many of which come under contracts and terms and conditions as outlined in *Factsheet 16: Contracts of Employment*) to effective management practices. This factsheet looks at a range of issues from legal paperwork to effective supervision in order to give you a guide to understanding good practice in employment and to help you to balance that with the needs of the organisation. This Factsheet covers a number of specific areas that you might want to think about but is not an exhaustive list of best practice or legal necessities and should be used only as a guide.

1: Insurance

It is vital for you as an employer to make sure that you have employers liability insurance. This is a legal requirement if you employ staff. It might also be worth your while looking at other kinds of insurance such as professional liability insurance if your staff are involved in activities such as advice giving or advocacy. This would protect them and the organisation in the event of a loss or problem due to incorrect information or advice being given. For more information on types of insurance and where to get further information please refer to *Factsheet 18: Insurance*.

2: Paperwork

As a legal employer you are required to keep payroll and National Insurance contributions records. It is also good practice to keep records of employee sick and holiday leave. You might also want to keep records of employees' hours, particularly if you operate a Time Off in Lieu (TOIL) or other flexible working scheme (see *Factsheet 16: Contracts of Employment* for more information about working hours).

3: Supervision

Employees need to be effectively supervised in order to ensure that their work is properly planned, carried out and monitored. Supervision is also a mechanism for making sure that staff are supported in their work and for highlighting any issues and working out any problems. You should make it clear who is supervising each position, and how and when supervision will take place. It is also useful for both the employer and the employee to keep records of supervision sessions.

4: Organisational policies

These are the formal written documents that outline the processes by which the organisation is run and will all have an impact on staff, their working conditions and the boundaries within which they work. These are outlines of the main points of the main policies you should consider having in your organisation:

- **Health and safety**

This policy will give details of working conditions, safety requirements and procedures and whether the building is non smoking, etc. For more information on creating a health and safety policy see *Factsheet 17: Health and Safety*.

- **Equal opportunities**

Your staff will require a good understanding of equal opportunities and how it might affect their work, particularly if they work with members of the public and minority groups. For more information about equal opportunities, including how to create a policy for your organisation see *Factsheet 5: Equal Opportunities*.

- **Grievance and disciplinary**

These are the procedures by which an organisation deals with problems between employees and the organisation. The disciplinary procedure outlines the steps that the organisation would take in the event of a complaint against an employee or in the case of poor performance by an employee. The grievance procedure covers the process that would be initiated should an employee have a problem with their employment.

- **Expenses and allowances**

This policy would explain what expenses, built up in the line of their regular employment, an employee could claim from the organisation. It should outline what amounts they can claim and what they can claim for (e.g. meals, transport, etc.).

- **Redundancy**

Here you should cover what systems the organisations will implement in the event of the need for redundancies among the staff. Should the organisation need to make staff redundant then there may be measures, over and above the basic legal requirements, that the organisation might want to take. For more information about redundancy seek advice from the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) whose contact details are below in the further help section.

- **Re-grading**

Re-grading is the process of re-evaluating the role and job description of a specific staff member to determine whether or not the role has changed sufficiently to require that the post itself should be re-graded in terms of the pay scale that it relates to. This policy will outline the process that occurs when an organisation chooses to consider re-grading or when a member of staff thinks it may be necessary. Once again for more information on policies and procedures in this area contact ACAS.

- **Representation**

This would relate to trade union and other representation of the employees individually and collectively in the workplace to the employer or other bodies. There are legal minimums and regulations covering this area and ACAS produces a guide to issues of representation for small employers.

5: Training and staff development

This area might include information on how staff go about requesting funds for training courses, procedures for promotions, mentoring support, etc. You might want to set up specific systems for ensuring that staff training is prioritised in the organisation and that all staff get information about appropriate training and know about budgets for such things.

6: Further help

Green Fish Partnership - www.green-fish.org.uk

Voluntary Action Manchester - 0161 236 3206 or www.vamanchester.org.uk

Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) - 08457 474747 or www.acas.org.uk

Inland Revenue Employers Helpline - 08457 143 143