



## EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

<b>Responsible Post Holder</b>	<b>HRD</b>
<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>30.4.21</b>
<b>By Whom</b>	<b>CEO</b>
<b>Next Review Date</b>	<b>1.5.23</b>
<b>Publication Method</b>	<b>Online</b>



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## Section 1 – Introduction

### 1. Welcome from Jane Hickie CEO

#### Welcome to AELP!

I am delighted you have decided to join the AELP family and I wish you every success in your role with us. We endeavour to create a supportive and friendly environment where you can achieve your goals. I hope that your time with us will prove challenging, enjoyable and rewarding!

AELP is a national membership organisation that represents the interests of an extensive number of organisations. Our members deliver the majority of Britain's apprenticeships, traineeships and programmes for the unemployed.

The following five key principles underpin our core operational values and are the basis of our Operational Manifesto. AELP believes in:

- The need to ensure the availability of the highest quality and independent careers guidance and advice for learners of all ages, which most importantly dovetails to relevant and realistic employment opportunities. Championing the recognition of apprenticeship outcomes in school performance league tables
- The need to ensure the absolute parity of opportunity, driving social mobility, championing opportunities for the disadvantaged and narrowing social inequality, leading to both meaningful progression opportunities and also sustainable outcomes
- The need to ensure the combination of high quality Traineeships and Apprenticeships should be the preferred flagship routes to skills training wherever possible and practical
- Championing work-based and work-related learning, and the contextualised value which they bring to both the learner and their employer
- The need to ensure both a fair and a transparent skills funding system, regardless of actual programme, provision or the provider of that training

We expect our teams to develop and deliver outstanding products and services to our members and stakeholders and enable them to do so through fostering a workplace where ideas and innovation are welcomed and individuals are encouraged and supported to achieve their potential. We invest in our teams through apprenticeships, individual development, training and mentoring creating and providing opportunities for people to grow and develop with the business.



We recognise that every individual is unique and we are proud to promote an environment of inclusivity and a celebration of individuality - AELP does not discriminate and is proud to be working towards the Investors in Diversity accreditation.

This Handbook has been developed to describe some of the expectations we have of our employees and to outline the policies, processes and benefits available to you together with giving you an overview of how we work at AELP.

Once again, welcome to AELP.

**Jane Hickie**

**CEO**



## Section 2 - Important Information

### 2. Personal Details

It is a statutory duty under data protection legislation for AELP to maintain accurate personnel records. It is a team member's responsibility to inform AELP promptly of any change to their personal details.

Periodically we may ask team members to confirm personal details to ensure records are up-to-date and complete. Generally, the information required is:

- Name, home address and telephone number
- National Insurance Number - required for payroll and tax purposes
- Bank details
- Next of kin and/or emergency contact names
- Proof of eligibility to work in the UK (e.g. passport or other acceptable documentation)
- A copy of a driving licence if a team member may need to drive on Company business

It is expected that upon application for their position, team members have given correct details and providing false information will be considered to be against Company policy.

The information provided is held in each team member's personnel file. Information required for payroll purposes is forwarded to the payroll/accounts department.

Information and files are kept confidentially and in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 & the General Data Protection Regulations (EU) 2016/679 which came into force in the UK in 2018.

Prior to commencing employment with AELP or on their first day team members must provide documentary evidence of their eligibility to work in the UK. Acceptable documents include: a UK or EU passport, or a passport with the correct visa stamps giving leave to work in the UK. Failure to provide adequate proof of Eligibility to work in the UK may result in termination of employment.

### 3. References

Employment with AELP is conditional upon receipt of genuine, satisfactory references. Either prior to or upon commencement team members will be asked to provide details of two referees. If unsatisfactory references are received, AELP may have to terminate employment.



#### **4. DBS Checks**

Currently our roles do not require team members to have a DBS check. However, in the future, should we require DBS checks (for example if we are working with a regulated client) then a team member would not be expected to unreasonably withhold their consent if their specific role or involvement with such a client was dependent on them being subject to a DBS check.

#### **5. Probationary Period**

All appointments are subject to team members achieving a satisfactory level of performance and conduct during their probationary period of employment (as detailed in individual contracts of employment). Normally probationary periods with AELP are 3 months.

If a satisfactory level is not achieved, we may choose to terminate employment either during or at the end of the probationary period giving the appropriate notice period. Alternatively, we may choose to extend the probationary period, and this will be confirmed in writing together with any specific improvements required.

#### **6. Medical Questionnaire**

Team members may be asked to complete a medical questionnaire when they join the company or at other times during employment. This is to ensure that team members are fit to carry out their job and/or to highlight any reasonable adjustments that may need to be made.

Where a medical questionnaire highlights any health concerns, we reserve the right to request a team member's consent to write to a medical practitioner or undertake an assessment with an Occupational Health Advisor for further information.

AELP will always try to accommodate any reasonable adjustments as required in line with the Equality Act 2010.





## Section 3 – Pay & Benefits

### 7. Payment

Team members will be paid at the times and by the methods set out in their individual contract of employment. We reserve the right to vary the method of payment and will let team members know about any change of this nature in writing, giving no less than 2 months' notice.

Team members will receive a payslip detailing how the payment made has been calculated and show the deductions that have been made and the reasons for them, for example, Tax, National Insurance, etc.

### 8. Overpayments / underpayments

Team members who have inadvertently been overpaid or underpaid for any reason must let their line manager know straight away. The over or underpayment will normally be corrected at the next salary cycle.

If it is later discovered that a team member has been overpaid, we reserve the right to deduct the overpayment from the team member's next salary payment. Arrangements may be made for a longer period of repayment in cases of hardship.

### 9. PAYE Tax Office

The Company's PAYE office is: **HM Revenue & Customs, Direct, BX5 5BD**

The PAYE reference number is **531 / PX00106006**

### 10. Pay reviews

Pay reviews will normally be held annually in July. This does not mean that team members will automatically receive a pay increase. Performance levels and the profitability will be also be taken into account. Any changes in team members' salary will be confirmed in writing and a record will be retained in the personnel file.

### 11. Expenses

We will reimburse all reasonable authorised expenses incurred by team members during the course of their duties on behalf of the company. A VAT receipt must be provided where appropriate.

Team members should claim expenses monthly and pass their expenses sheet to their line manager for approval.



In order to receive reimbursement for expenses team members must claim for expenses incurred within three months of the expenditure. We reserve the right to withhold payment or refuse payment where receipts are not provided.

Please refer to the ***Expenses Policy and Procedure*** for full clarification

## **12. Allowances**

Team members may be eligible for certain non-contractual allowances, as are applicable at the time.

These will be communicated in writing by AELP and will specify the type and level of any allowance to which team members may be entitled. Any subsequent withdrawal or variation will be notified in writing.

## **13. Hours of Work**

General hours of work are detailed in the contract of employment. The company operates flexible office hours to enable team members to travel to work at less congested times. The office is open from 8am to 7pm.

Team members must be in the office for the core hours of 11am to 4pm but can work the remainder of their day before 11am or after 4pm so long as the full day is worked and their line manager has agreed the proposed time of working.

## **14. Time sheets or recording**

Team members are required to complete a monthly time sheet and record their hours of work. Time recording may be required for accounting and billing purposes, a general record of work or to monitor workflow and help improve systems & procedures.

All time sheets must be completed and returned to the line manager by the end of each month. Submitting false or inaccurate time sheets may lead to disciplinary action that could result in dismissal without notice for gross misconduct.

## **15. Time Off in Lieu (TOIL) and Overtime payments**

Where a contract provides for TOIL for working additional hours, team members should agree this in advance with their line manager in accordance with the TOIL Policy.

Please refer to the ***TOIL Policy and Procedure*** for full clarification

The company does not pay overtime.



## **16. Pension Scheme**

The company operates an occupational pension scheme and team members will be automatically enrolled if they are eligible in accordance with Government guidelines. Full details of the scheme are provided to team members separately by the pension provider after enrolment.

The pension scheme is subject to the terms of the scheme as set out and interpreted by the pension provider. The company contributes to the pension scheme on a sliding scale up to a maximum of 7% of a team member's salary.

The scheme is discretionary (non-contractual) and is subject to change or withdrawal by the company without notice or compensation.

## **17. Death in Service Benefit**

After successful completion of the probationary period, team members are eligible to be covered by the Company Group Death in Service Insurance Scheme.

**17.1** The Scheme provides benefit of 4 times basic salary, which is paid to a team member's nominated beneficiary(s), or, in the event that no beneficiaries have been nominated, payment will be made to the employee's estate.

**17.2** Team members will be asked to provide details of beneficiaries and must inform the company, in writing, of any changes to beneficiaries during their employment.

**17.3** To enter and be covered by the scheme, team members must be employed by the company at the time of any claim being made.

**17.4** The scheme, and entry to the scheme, is subject to the rules of the current provider and the current provider will determine any payments from the scheme and their decision is final.

**17.5** The scheme will be written under trust and full details of the scheme are available on request.

**17.6** The scheme is discretionary (non-contractual) and is subject to change or withdrawal by the company without notice or compensation



## Section 4 - General Standards

AELP may be required to change or amend these standards from time to time to suit the needs of the business. Any changes will be communicated appropriately.

Breaches of the standards or rules will be dealt with appropriately either informally or formally depending on the severity. Serious breaches or repeated breaches will be dealt with through the formal disciplinary procedure.

### **18. Additional employment**

Team members must devote the whole of their time, attention and abilities during their hours of work to the company. Team members must not, whether directly or indirectly, undertake any other duties of any kind during their hours of work.

**18.1** If a team member plans to take up additional employment outside of their normal working hours, they must discuss the nature of the additional employment with their line manager in order to comply with the Working Time Regulations 1998 & The Working Time (Amendment) Regulations. This is to assess the effect that the additional employment will have on a team member's ability to perform work for us.

**18.2** Team members must obtain written authorisation from the Chief Executive for any additional employment.

**18.3** Team members are not permitted to engage in any additional duties for any client or potential client for their own personal gains unless they have written authorisation from AELP.

### **19. Lateness**

Team members should ensure that they arrive at their place of work sufficiently early to be ready to commence work at their official start time and, if unable to get to work on time, must contact their line manager to inform of their expected time of arrival.

Team members who fail to do this and turn up late, or turn up late on a frequent basis, may face formal action. Team members may be required to make up some or all of the time lost due to lateness or have money deducted for the time not worked.

### **20. Behaviour outside work**

Normally AELP has no jurisdiction over team members outside working hours. However, if their activities outside work adversely affect AELP then they will become an issue. The following may result in disciplinary action:



- Bringing the name of the company into disrepute
- Adverse publicity
- Actions that result in loss of faith in the company by third parties
- Actions that result in loss of faith in the integrity of the individual (this includes harassment, bullying and any other inappropriate behaviour)

**20.1** The detriment suffered by the company will determine the level of misconduct and most suitable disciplinary stage considering the circumstances.

**20.2** Employment could be terminated if a team member's actions cause extreme embarrassment or serious damage to the reputation or image of the company.

**20.3** Disciplinary action will only be taken after we have fully investigated the facts.

**20.4** If necessary, we will suspend a team member for this period of time, during which they will receive their normal rate of pay and benefits. The rules and procedures covering disciplinary hearings and appeals will still apply.

## **21. Standards of dress**

We expect team members to dress appropriately for the job that they are doing. All team members, whether or not they come into contact with clients and members of the public, should present a professional image with regard to appearance, standards of dress and personal hygiene. Poor personal hygiene can result in an unpleasant working environment – all team members are expected to take steps to ensure good levels of personal hygiene.

**21.1** AELP's dress code can be described as smart and business like. Team members who have contact with customers and clients should dress in formal business attire.

**21.2** AELP operates a "dress down Friday" policy for office based team members, however, team members should dress appropriately if they are expecting clients or members for meetings in the office on a Friday.

**21.3** We reserve the right to ask team members to return home to change if we believe a team member's dress or appearance is inappropriate for the environment in which they are working.

**21.4** If a team member is asked to return home to change, we may ask for this time to be made up, or, alternatively deduct a payment from salary for the working time that is lost.

**21.5** Cases where a team member regularly reports for work inappropriately dressed will be dealt with through the disciplinary procedure.



## **22. Driving & Mobile phones**

Drivers are reminded that it is a criminal offence to drive whilst using a mobile telephone that is not attached to a hands-free set. 'Driving' includes being in control of the vehicle while it is stationary with the key in the ignition. 'Using a mobile telephone' includes making and receiving calls and sending and reading text messages. Hand held mobile telephones should only be used when parked with the engine off and key removed from the ignition.

**22.1** AELP takes this matter very seriously and using a hand held mobile telephone whilst driving (see above definition) in a company vehicle (at any time) or on business (in any vehicle) may result in disciplinary action.

**22.2** The use of a hands-free telephone distracts the driver's attention and AELP does not authorise the use of hands-free telephones whilst driving. They should only be used to make or receive calls when team members are parked and it is safe to do so. Team members must not write, send or read text messages whilst driving.

**22.3** Team members are required to drive safely with due care and attention on all journeys connected with the company.

## **23. Private mail**

No private mail may be posted at the expense of AELP except in the circumstances where a formal re-charge arrangement has been made. Private mail should not be sent c/o AELP as all mail that is received by us will be opened, including that which is sent to individuals.

## **24. Cash Collections**

Collections of money for gifts for team members are at the discretion of the employee who wishes to start the collection and the relevant line manager. Team members should not feel compelled to contribute to cash collections.

## **25. Employee notices**

It is AELP's policy to keep team members informed of any changes that may affect them -this will be done through the use of the notice board, meetings, email or by letter.

We reserve the right to vary team members' terms and conditions from time to time in line with the needs of the business. Any changes will be discussed with team members prior to the proposed change in a consultation exercise and the appropriate notice will be given.



## **26. Smoking**

We operate a no-smoking policy. Smoking is only permitted in designated smoking areas as signposted and during designated break times.

### **Smoking in Vehicles**

There are no limitations on team members smoking in a vehicle that they own, provided that the vehicle is used primarily for private purposes. Whenever team members are car sharing with each other for business travel purposes smoking is not permitted.

### **Smoking whilst Homeworking**

Homeworkers are not required to refrain from smoking during the course of work that is carried out for AELP in their home, unless they invite other team members into an area of their home for work purposes.

### **Electronic Cigarettes**

AELP acknowledges that some team members may wish to make use of electronic cigarettes ("e-cigarettes") in the workplace, particularly as an aid to giving up smoking. However, E-cigarettes release a visible vapour that contains liquid nicotine and therefore we prohibit the use of e-cigarettes in the workplace.

### **Non-compliance**

Any infringement of these rules by a team member may result in formal action which will be dealt with in accordance with AELP's disciplinary procedure. Team members are also reminded that as set out in the Health Act 2006 it is a criminal offence for team members to smoke in smoke-free areas, with a fixed penalty of £50 or prosecution and a fine of up to £200.

## **27. Company Premises and Facilities**

We provide kitchen facilities for team members to use during authorised breaks and team members are responsible for cleaning and tidying this area after use.

Work areas must be kept clean and tidy at all times to reduce the risk of fire and accidents.

Team members must not use our premises, equipment or services for personal needs.

## **28. Parking**

Team members should park their car in the designated parking areas, personal vehicles are parked at the team member's own risk and AELP do not accept liability for any theft or damage.



**28.1** There is a rota applied for the sharing of parking spaces which is reviewed monthly according to requirements and priority for parking spaces is given to the senior management team.

**28.2** Whilst attending other locations including client sites, team members should ensure they park in accordance with their regulations.

## **29. Medication**

Team members must advise their line manager if they are taking any medication or substances that may affect their ability to carry out their job role.

If AELP believes the medication may have adverse side effects that may pose a risk to either the team member's health and safety, or the health and safety of others, we reserve the right to place team members on alternative duties for the duration of their treatment.

In serious cases, and under advisement from a medical professional, if there are no suitable alternative duties then it may be necessary to suspend team members from work on medical grounds until they are recovered or until the course of medication has been completed. This will be discussed fully with the affected team member in a welfare meeting

## **30. Drugs and Illegal substances**

The use of illegal drugs or substances in the workplace is prohibited and may lead to disciplinary action that could result in dismissal without notice for gross misconduct. The following rules will apply:

- The possession of drugs for any reason other than medical is forbidden
- We may ask team members to undertake a medical examination if we believe that an employee may have a problem in relation to drugs and/or alcohol to assess if this is affecting the team member's ability to work.
- Team members may be suspended from work until the problem is resolved and we decide whether to treat it as a disciplinary matter.
- AELP will inform the police if it believes there has been an abuse of controlled drugs by a team member either in the workplace or when working on behalf of AELP at other premises.

## **31. Alcohol**

Team members should not be under the influence of alcohol during working hours. Alcohol can affect judgement and performance and can therefore be a risk to the business. Being under the influence of alcohol during working hours may be considered as gross misconduct.





It may be acceptable to partake of alcohol if there are authorised events or celebrations. However, even in such circumstances, consumption should be kept to a reasonable level and important work should not be carried out while under the influence of alcohol.

Please refer to the ***Social Events Policy*** for full details.

## **32. Social Events**

We have an expectation of the highest level of employee behaviour whilst at corporate social events. Full details of the company policy on social events can be found in our ***Social Events Policy***.

## **33. Statements to the media**

The Director of Public Affairs is the only person authorised to give statements about AELP or matters connected with the company to reporters from the newspapers, radio, television etc. Any request from any representative of the media for information, statements or comment about AELP must be referred to the Director of Public Affairs.

## **34. Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures**

All team members are required to make themselves familiar with our Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures. These policies are designed to enable managers and team members to deal with matters fairly and consistently.

Please refer to the ***Disciplinary & Capability Policy and Procedure*** and the ***Grievance Policy and Procedure*** for full guidance.

## **35. Lone Working**

It is not expected that team members will find themselves in a lone working situation regularly, however, full guidance on lone working can be found in the ***Lone Working Policy***.

## **36. Flexible Working**

AELP has a positive approach to flexible working and will try to accommodate requests where possible.

Please refer to the full ***Flexible Working Policy*** for details on how to make a request.



### **37. Home Working**

Sometimes team members need to request to work from home. AELP has specific responsibilities under health and safety legislation to assess and monitor a team member's suitability for home working.

Please refer to the full ***Home Working Policy*** for more details on the procedure for requesting home working.



## Section 5 - General Information

### 38. Client Care

We aim to deliver the highest level of client care and service at all times. Team members are reminded that, whenever they are dealing with a client, they are representing both the company and their department and should always be polite and professional.

### 39. Getting along with Colleagues

Team members should always treat their work colleagues with respect and consideration. AELP aims to create a positive and pleasant working environment for everyone and encourages co-operation and team work at all times. If any team member's conduct is falling short of AELP's expectation this will be dealt with informally or formally as appropriate.

Team members should also refer to the company's *Equality & Diversity Policy* and the *Bullying and Harassment Policy* for further guidance.

### 40. Relationships at Work

We appreciate sometimes team members can form close relationships with work colleagues. Where friendships develop into more personal relationships we need to be informed, especially where team members are working within the same department or one team member is managing the other.

**40.1** Team members should inform their line manager of any personal relationships with work colleagues as soon as practicable. This is to ensure that there can be no actual or perceived conflict of interest or 'favouritism'.

**40.2** AELP does not accept direct line manager / team member relationships. It would not be considered appropriate for one person to be managing another where there is a close personal relationship. In this event we will require one person to move department or job role based on the least disruption to the commercial needs of the business.

### 41. Flexibility

AELP reserves the right to amend a team member's job role if the needs of the company require it. It may also be necessary for team members to temporarily take over duties not normally undertaken, particularly during holiday periods or sickness.



## **42. Training**

AELP undertakes to provide team members with the necessary training to enable them to perform their contracted duties including health and safety training to ensure a team member's own safety and that of their colleagues.

**42.1** Training is regarded as an on-going essential component of our resource requirement, and as such shall be regularly reviewed to meet individuals' job role requirements and to comply with relevant industry standards and specifications.

**42.2** It will be the function of line management to identify and recommend training requirements at appropriate time scales and to evaluate and record progress of said requirements.

**42.3** AELP may choose to train a team member in other duties and it is a condition of employment that such training courses achieve a satisfactory outcome.

**42.4** Team members may be required to sign a training agreement prior to attending any training courses which sets out any cost that may be due to the company should they leave the company within a specified time after the training takes place.

## **43. Career Development**

We believe that every team member should have the opportunity to advance their skills through learning. We are willing to support, where possible, team members to take business related courses to advance their careers.

## **44. Health and safety**

It is essential that team members comply with health and safety regulations and we will give team members full training on what they need to know during induction and on an ongoing basis.

**44.1** If team members wilfully or by neglect fail to observe the company health and safety rules and regulations disciplinary action may be taken, in serious cases, such action may include dismissal without notice for gross misconduct.

**44.2** Team members must read and take note of any health and safety notices that are posted on the notice boards and are expected to take reasonable care for their own well-being, and that of colleagues.

Please refer to the full version of the AELP ***Health & Safety Policy***



## **45. Eyesight and Eyesight Testing**

AELP acknowledges its responsibilities in relation to team member eyesight care, especially those working with VDUs (computers). We have a full and comprehensive policy for the claiming of reimbursement for eyesight testing and contributions towards eyewear.

Please refer to the AELP *Eyesight and Eyesight Testing Policy*

## **46. Jury service**

If a team member is called for jury service, they should present the Jury Services Notification Slip to their line manager. Team members will be expected to return to work on the days that adjournments make this practicable.

**46.1** If the timing of the jury service conflicts with work needs, team members must let their line manager know as soon as possible.

**46.2** Team members are entitled to claim statutory compensation from the courts in respect of their jury service and we will supplement juror's allowance up to basic salary for a maximum period of 2 weeks.

Full details regarding jury service can be found in the *Absence Policy and Procedure*

## **47. Public duties**

Team members are entitled to reasonable unpaid time off during working hours to perform the duties associated with positions such as Justices of the Peace, members of a local authority, statutory tribunal or police authority and should follow the absence notification procedures and maintain regular contact with the relevant line manager to notify us of their anticipated return.

Full details regarding public duties can be found in the *Special Leave Policy and Procedure*

## **48. Reservists**

The company fully supports those team members who are Reservists in the armed forces.

## **49. Property**

### **Team members' property**

Team members are advised not to bring valuable personal items onto company premises and we do not accept liability for the loss of or damage to any personal items. Any loss or theft of items must be reported.



### **Company property**

Team members are not permitted to use company property for any purpose other than its intended use. Company property must not be removed from the premises unless with prior approval.

### **Damage, loss or theft of Company property**

Team members must notify their line manager of any damage to company property or premises. If company property is damaged, lost or stolen through a team member's negligence or fault, they agree that the Company may deduct the cost of repair or replacement from their salary. Before any decision is made to deduct, the matter will be fully investigated and team members will be given an opportunity to state their case and appeal the decision.

Team members agree to any such deduction pursuant to Part II of the Employment Rights Act 1996, Employment Act 2002 & Employment Act 2008 and any subsequent revisions to the afore mentions Acts.

### **Return of Company property**

Upon termination of employment for whatever reason, team members must return to their line manager all property belonging to the company including computers, portable electronic devices, keys, entry passes, passwords to accounts, records, documents, accounts, letters, papers (including all copies, summaries and extracts) within their possession or control belonging or relating to the affairs and business of the company and its clients.

Team members agree that AELP may deduct the cost of replacement of any items not returned, or repair of items that are returned damaged (save for normal wear and tear), on termination of employment from salary or any monies owed to the team member.

Team members agree to any such deduction pursuant to Part II of the Employment Rights Act 1996, Employment Act 2002 & Employment Act 2008 and any subsequent revisions to the afore mentions Acts.

### **Lost property**

Items of lost property should be handed to the Office Manager, who will retain the items for a period of **3 months**. The property may then be handed over to the police lost property.

## **50. Accidents at work**

Accidents at work, however minor, must be recorded in the accident book. Team members working elsewhere at the time should document the accident on the site where they are working and notify the office immediately.

Team members **MUST** provide details of the nature of the accident or injury, any first aid treatment that was administered, the names of any witnesses and the date and time the accident occurred.



Further details on accidents can be found in the ***Health & Safety Policy***

## **51. Health and hygiene**

Team members who have either been in contact with persons suffering from an infectious or contagious disease, or are suffering from an infectious or contagious disease, must report it before commencing work.

AELP reserves the right to suspend team members from work for such a period of time as considered necessary for the risk of passing the infection to other team members and clients to have ceased.

Team members also reminded that personal hygiene is important in the workplace, clothes should be freshly laundered and team members should have a regular personal hygiene regime.

Further details on health and hygiene can be found in the ***Health & Safety Policy***

## **52. Right to Search**

AELP reserves the right to search team members or any of their property held on our premises, at any time, we believe that our Alcohol and Drugs Abuse Policy is being infringed or if it believes that a team member may have committed a criminal offence.

If the employee refuses to comply with the search, such refusal will normally be treated as constituting gross misconduct and will entitle AELP to take disciplinary action including dismissal.

## **53. Extreme Adverse Weather**

We recognise that, at times, extreme adverse weather may prevent team members from attending the office. Whilst team members are expected to make every reasonable effort to attend for work, they are not to compromise their health and safety.

Please refer to the ***Adverse Weather Policy*** for full details.

## **54. Computers, Email, Social Media etc.**

AELP has a formal policy relating to computers hardware, software, emails, internet access, social media etc. It is important team members familiarise themselves with this policy and adhere to the guidelines at all times.

Please refer to the ***Computers, Internet and Social Networking Policy***



## **55. Use of data and confidential information**

Complicated legislation covers the way we process data and keep information confidential. It is the responsibility of every AELP employee to adhere to the guidelines and comply with all our legislative requirements.

Please refer to the ***Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy***





## Section 6 - Holidays (Annual Leave)

Our holiday year begins on 1<sup>st</sup> January and finishes on 31<sup>st</sup> December each year and holiday entitlement is detailed in the contract of employment.

If a team member starts or finishes their employment during the year, holiday entitlement will be calculated as a ratio of the annual entitlement for each completed day of service during that holiday year (rounded up to the nearest day).

### 56. Bank / public holidays

We recognise 8 bank/public holidays each year. These are Good Friday, Easter Monday, May Day, Spring Bank Holiday, Late Summer Bank Holiday, Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

### 57. Rules regarding annual leave

All holidays should be authorised before any travel arrangements are made. We will do our utmost to ensure that a request is accommodated, but please be aware that the operational running of the company must be maintained at all times.

Full details regarding the annual leave process can be found in the ***Annual Leave Policy and Procedure***.

### 58. Religious Holidays

Leave for religious festivals, except where those days fall on recognised Bank/Public holidays or non-working days, must be taken from annual holiday entitlement.

We fully appreciate the diversity of religious beliefs amongst our team members and commit that requests for leave at times of religious festivals will be given careful consideration alongside the operational needs of the business.



## Section 7 – Sickness Absence and Special Leave

### 59. Time off

Team members wishing to take time off, for whatever reason, need to get the permission of their Line Manager beforehand. Where possible, team members should arrange medical, dental and other personal appointments outside working hours.

### 60. Unplanned Absence

Team members unable to get to work when expected to be present, for whatever reason, should must follow the absence reporting procedure as detailed in the ***Sickness Absence and Special Leave Policies***.

Where a team member fails to contact us without good reason the absence will be classed as unauthorised absence. Unauthorised absence will lead to disciplinary action and, if circumstances warrant it, result in dismissal without notice for gross misconduct.

### 61. Absence levels

We continually monitor absence levels and high levels of absence may lead to disciplinary action and warnings. Please be assured that each case will be assessed on its merits. In order to investigate absence from work the company believe it is important to make home visits from time to time as considered necessary and we reserve the right to do this.

### 62. Family Leave

Arrangements regarding Maternity Leave, Paternity Leave, Adoption Leave, Shared Parental Leave, Emergency Time off for Dependants & Parental Bereavement Leave are detailed in the **AELP Parental Policies**.

### 63. Compassionate Leave

Full details on our arrangements for compassionate leave can be found in the ***Special Leave Policy and Procedure***



## **64. Sickness Absence and Statutory Sick Pay (SSP)**

Team members who are absent due to sickness will be entitled to payments under Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) rules, provided that they meet the requirements for SSP payments as set out by HMRC and have complied with the correct absence notification procedure.

Full details regarding the Statutory Sick Pay arrangements can be found in the ***Absence Policy and Procedure***

## **65. Company Sick Pay**

In addition to SSP team members may receive payments under the Company Sick Pay Scheme. All payments are made at the absolute discretion of AELP and are subject to team members having completed their probationary period and followed the correct absence notification procedure.

A guide to the payments that team members may be entitled to can be found in their written terms and conditions.

Full details regarding the Company sick pay scheme can be found in the ***Absence Policy and Procedure***

If absence is due to the actionable negligence of a third party in respect of which damages are recoverable, the team member must advise us immediately. We will require the team member to refund a sum equal to the amount of any salary paid during the period of absence, or part thereof as is deemed appropriate, but not exceeding the amount of the damages recovered. In the event of the claim for damages being settled on an apportioned basis, we will require full details and will determine the actual proportion to be refunded. Any payments made are therefore considered to be a loan from AELP.

No payment (except SSP if entitled) will be made for absence due to or connected with elective surgery. No payment (except SSP if entitled) will be made if absence is due to an injury sustained while participating in sports or holiday activities (e.g. skiing, playing football) or an injury sustained outside of work.

## **66. Medical information**

If we are concerned about a team member's absence record, we may write to the employee's GP for further information or require the employee to have a medical examination by their GP or our Occupational Health Practitioner. If the team member does not agree to this, we will have to make a decision about their continued employment based on the information available.

Any future decisions regarding a team member's suitability for their role based on their medical conditions and sickness absences will be dealt with under our Capability procedure and further details can be found in the ***Disciplinary and Capability Policy and Procedure***.



## **67. Sickness absence and other work**

If a team member is away from work due to sickness or injury, they must inform us before they carry out any form of paid alternative or additional employment, self-employment or voluntary work.

A breach of this rule may lead to disciplinary action and result in dismissal without notice for gross misconduct



## Section 9 - Termination of employment

### **68. Notice Period**

The details of a team member's notice period are given in their contract of employment.

If a team member is dismissed for gross misconduct they will not be entitled to notice or notice pay.

In the event that we give a team member notice, it will be as set out in the individual contract of employment or the employee will receive one weeks pay for each full year worked up to a maximum of 12 weeks (whichever is the greater).

If employment is terminated due to redundancy, the same rules regarding notice will apply.

### **69. Failure to Work Notice Period**

If the team member terminates their employment without giving or working the required period of notice, (without our agreement), they will not be paid for any period of notice not worked, and a deduction will be made from any final payments due.

Failure to work notice in full (unless otherwise agreed with AELP) will be considered a breach of contract. This will render the team member liable for any costs that we incur in engaging a worker for the notice period not worked. We reserve the right to make a deduction from any payments due to a team member for such costs or to seek reimbursement through legal routes.

Where a team member does not work their notice we also reserve the right to calculate holiday for the holiday year in which the employee leaves at the statutory minimum and to make a deduction for any holiday taken in excess of the statutory minimum, or only to make payments for holiday accrued to the statutory minimum.

### **70. Garden leave**

AELP reserves the right to place an individual who is on notice on "Garden Leave", i.e. during the notice period, we may require the team member not to attend their place of work, nor to contact clients, and may not provide the team member with any work, or may provide alternative work of a broadly similar nature.

This right is exercisable at the absolute discretion of the AELP. Whilst on "Garden Leave" team members will receive basic pay and still be subject to our standards and disciplinary procedures.



## **71. Pay in lieu of notice**

We reserve the right to make a payment in lieu of notice for all or any part of a team member's notice period on the termination of employment. This applies whether notice to terminate the contract is given by the employee or AELP.

Any such payment will be subject to such deductions for Income Tax and National Insurance contributions.

The date of termination will be the team member's last day of work with us, after this the team member will not be entitled to any benefits or the use of any company equipment, or to compensation thereof, beyond the date of termination.

## **72. Redundancy**

A redundancy situation arises where there is a closure of the business, closure of a team member's workplace, or where there is a diminishing need for team members to carry out work of a particular kind. We will endeavour to take all reasonable steps to avoid compulsory redundancies.

Please refer to the full details on redundancy in the ***Redundancy Policy***

## **73. Retirement**

We do not operate a compulsory normal retirement age. Instead, we operate a flexible retirement policy that permits team members to voluntarily choose to retire at any time.

Team members should advise their line manager as early as possible of their wishes in relation to retirement and are required to give the period of notice of termination of their employment as set out in their contract of employment i.e. they should formally tender their resignation.

We reserve the right to amend or change this policy.

## **74. Resignation**

Team members must inform their line manager in writing if they wish to terminate their contract of employment. The period of notice will begin from the date of receipt of this notification and the last day of service should be mutually agreed between team member and line manager and confirmed in writing.

## **75. References to future employers**

Upon a team member's resignation or termination of employment, AELP will give confirmation of a team member's employment to a future employer but this will contain only basic details such as dates of employment and job title.



## Section 10 - Policies & Procedures

A number of AELP policies are referenced throughout this handbook that relate to employment with AELP. These are designed to ensure we meet our commitments in terms of legislation and reflect our desire to drive a positive culture for all employees.

We group our policies into three key categories known as “families” as follows:

### **Statutory**

- These policies set out the ways in which we meet the requirements of legislation.

### **Cultural**

- These policies set out expectations of all employees’ behaviour and are designed to foster and drive our culture.

### **Work/Life Balance**

- These policies set out additional arrangements (not covered by legislation) to support work/life balance for all employees.

Below is a list of all AELP policies that can be found on the shared drive. It is a part of a team member’s responsibility to ensure they read and familiarise themselves with these policies. Policies are reviewed regularly to ensure they are relevant and accurately reflect legislation and best practice.

It is expected that all team members will be held accountable for their actions under these policies and failure to comply or falling short of standards expected may lead to formal action. Should team members have any questions regarding the information or guidance in these policies they should consult their line manager or HR.

### **1. Statutory Policies**

1. Annual Leave Policy
2. Bullying and Harassment Policy
3. Business Expenses Policy
4. Computer, Internet and Social Networking Policy
5. Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy



6. Disciplinary and Capability Policy
7. Equality and Diversity Policy
8. Eyesight and Eyesight Testing Policy
9. Flexible Working Policy
10. Grievance Policy and Procedure
11. Health & Safety Policy
12. Health and Safety Procedures
13. Homeworking Policy and Procedures
14. Lone Working Policy
15. Parental Policy
16. Redundancy Policy
17. Sickness Absence Policy
18. Travel Policy
19. Whistleblowing Policy

## **2. Cultural Policies**

1. Adverse Weather Policy
2. Computer, Internet and Social Networking Policy
3. Death in Service Policy
4. Environmental Policy
5. Learning and Development Policy
6. Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
7. Recruitment Policy
8. Social Events Policy

## **2. Work/Life Balance Policies**

1. Special Leave Policy