



EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK



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Reviewed by Board of Directors

Uppertunity

Welcome

Hello and welcome to Uppertunity. The aim of this handbook is to create a one-stop information point where you would be able to access all the information you are likely to need in relation to Uppertunity and working with us.

This handbook provides information on expectations, support and policies which are currently in effect in specific relation to employees. These policies may be modified or supplemented, as part of our continuous effort to improve operations and to make Uppertunity a better place.

Thank you for choosing to work with Uppertunity. It is our ambition to make sure anyone who is part of our team feels valued, understood and proud to be part of Uppertunity. We look forward to having you part of our journey.

About Uppertunity

1. What do we do?

We are a registered Community Interest Company (a type of non-profit social enterprise), working with individuals (16+) with learning disabilities, autism and mental health barriers. We focus on an individual's strengths and aspirations, then work with them to realise their potential, leading to self-worth and independence. We do this through: creative workshops, group and community work, mentoring, skill development programs, meaningful volunteering roles and social events.

Our 4 mission aims are:

1. We believe in equality for all. We empower individuals and help create, develop and maintain purpose and self-worth.
2. We champion the development of mindsets which enable people to reach their optimum self. We use a mixture of methods that bring about an inner resilience, challenging people's perceptions of themselves and their own capabilities of shaping their world.
3. We create social change by demonstrating that everyone has strengths and skills to offer their world. We all have a calling and a purpose we can serve that provides self-fulfilment.
4. We create environmentally sustainable communities through community partnership and climate friendly methods.

2. What do we do?

Our current services we offer are:

- Weekly Warriors: Our programme of activities that take place each week, including art, sewing, woodwork, active groups etc.
- Daring for Development: Our skill and capacity building program
- Serendipities: Our social change space in the form of a café in the City Centre, offering unique food, social events, volunteering, job roles and catering.
- Energising the Everyday: An inclusive training programme run at Serendipities, involving life developing skills and gaining knowledge and practical skills in hospitality
- UppMakes: Our creative skills program where individuals upcycle, while developing life skills.
- Growing Places: Our therapeutic garden volunteering programme where volunteers are in charge of creating a beautiful environment within Uppertunity's premises.
- The Upside: Our pluralistic mentoring service to help resolve personal problems, including My Journey.

3. History of Uppertunity

- Uppertunity was set up on the 15th of September 2015 as community interest company by two founders, Danielle and Darryl.
- In October 2015, the first therapeutic art group, scribbles, was set up (with no funding, just the positive attitude of the founders). We were based in various local community centre. We started adding more and more groups, as well as a gardening group in April 2017.
- In June 2017, Uppertunity moved into their very own premises at The Circle, receiving funding support for rent.
- We then received funding to trial a personal development programme, now known as Daring for Development.
- In July 2019, we opened Serendipities. This our café in Dundee City centre that provides a training pace for our members.
- Uppertunity has also won awards for growth, young entrepreneur and for our garden spaces at The Circle.
- We have hosted various events since opening such as craft fairs, camping trips, community lunches and more.

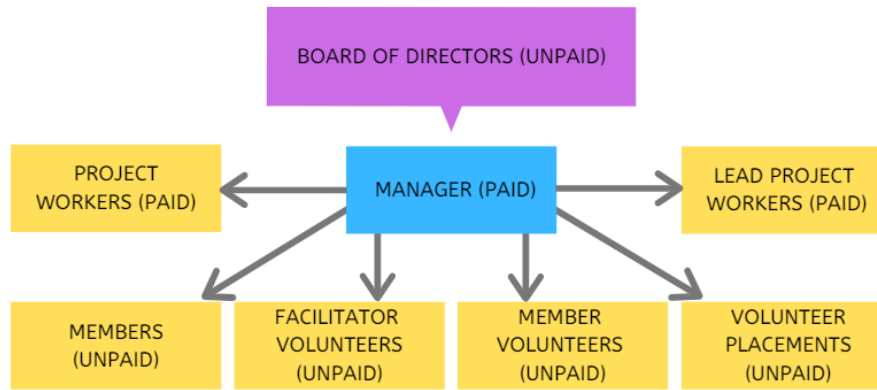
4. Organisational Structure

Uppertunity is a registered Community Interest Company limited by Guarantee. We are a social enterprise that trades for the good of the community and with social aims. We have an asset and profit lock: all assets and profits must be permanently retained within the CIC and used solely for community benefit and aims.

We have a Board of Directors. This board makes all the final decisions of the organisation. None of the board members are paid, it is voluntary. Uppertunity then has a manager and various project workers who all work together to run Uppertunity and Serendipities. We then have volunteer facilitators who help the project workers and volunteer members who help the organisation achieve its aims. We also have placements from different organisations. We then we have all our amazing members who use our facilities.

We are person centred, placing an emphasis on mutual respect and trust. Every single member, staff and volunteer are a part Uppertunity and not merely a recipient of a service. Everyone is part of the big team and everyone's voice matters.

Uppertunity



Code of Conduct

1. Aim

This policy outlines our expectations regarding all employees', volunteers and placements behaviour towards their fellow team, clients, and overall organisation. We promote freedom of expression and open communication, while at the same time expecting the same respect back. We expect all team members to follow this code of conduct and to foster a well-organized, respectful, and collaborative environment. The policy provides guidelines on the required behaviour in a wide range of situations, including usual work hour activities, social events and out of hours activities that directly reflect on Uppertunity.

This Code of Conduct is not a contractual document and Uppertunity reserves the right to amend it at any time. Any breach of the Code will be considered a disciplinary matter, which could result in disciplinary up to and including dismissal.

The main principles are as follows.

- Everyone complies with laws and regulations.
- Everyone rejects bribery and corruption
- Everyone avoids conflicts of interest.
- Everyone respects the confidentiality of all personal and corporate information
- Everyone promotes diversity and equality, treating people fairly and with respect
- Everyone maintains a safe and healthy environment for people to work in and are proactive in managing responsibilities to the environment
- Everyone supports those who have any suspicions of any misconduct, malpractice, illegal or unethical behaviour and report their concerns in confidence to the appropriate channels.

2. Zero Tolerance

While this Code gives guidance in certain situations, there are specific areas where Uppertunity has a policy of zero tolerance. These are:

- Unsafe, illegal, or unethical working practices
- Violence and aggression
- Discrimination, bullying and harassment
- Bribery and corruption
- Retaliation or action against anyone who speaks up and, in good faith, reports a wrongdoing

3. Compliance with law

All employees and volunteers must protect our company's legality. They should comply with all environmental, safety and fair dealing laws. We expect employees

and volunteers to be ethical and responsible when dealing with our company's finances, products, partnerships and public image.

4. Health and safety

Uppertunity places a high priority on providing a safe workplace and minimising the risks. Effective safety management requires the active involvement of every employee and volunteer, and every employee and volunteer have a legal duty to look after their own health, safety and welfare and that of those around them. Employees and volunteers are expected to follow procedures outlines in the health and safety folder.

5. Environment

Uppertunity is committed to preventing, or, at the very least, minimising, any harmful effects it causes to the natural environment. It encourages all employees to conduct their work in accordance with the highest environmental practices and the minimising of waste, aiming to reuse wherever possible.

6. Respect in the workplace

All employees and volunteers should respect their colleagues, fellow team members and clients. We won't allow any kind of discriminatory behaviour, harassment, or victimization. Employees and volunteers should conform with our equal opportunity policy in all aspects of their work, from recruitment and performance evaluation to interpersonal relations.

7. Protection of Company Property

All employees and volunteers should treat Uppertunity's property, whether material or intangible, with respect and care. They should not misuse any equipment and should respect all kinds of incorporeal property. This includes trademarks, copyright and other property (information, reports etc.). They should only be used to complete duties. Employees and volunteers should protect company facilities and other material property from damage and vandalism, whenever possible.

8. Conflict of interest

We expect employees to avoid any personal, financial or other interests that might hinder their capability or willingness to perform their job duties. Any potential conflicts of interest must be declared so that individuals are not involved in decisions that could be regarded as biased.

9. Professionalism and Attitude

All employees and volunteers are expected to work in a professional manner including using positive language, avoiding swearing, limit moaning, encourage positive health and wellbeing, avoid shouting, have an overall positive attitude and

display good role model attributes. If employees and volunteers are to have any meals at the workplace, they are asked to bring healthy meals to encourage positive health and wellbeing attitudes.

10. Personal Appearance

All employees and volunteers are expected to dress professionally. This includes: no midriffs on show, no short dresses or skirts, no low tops, show awareness of bodily and smoke odour and respond appropriately, avoid clothing with negative or swear words, and wear clothes comfortable to work in.

11. Job Duties

All employees and volunteers should fulfil their job duties with integrity and respect toward clients, fellow staff and the community. Supervisors and managers mustn't abuse their authority. We expect them to delegate duties to their team members, taking into account their competences and workload. Likewise, we expect team members to follow team leaders' instructions and complete their duties with skill and in a timely manner. All team members should be friendly and collaborative. They should try not to disrupt the workplace or present obstacles to their colleagues' work. We encourage mentoring throughout our company.

12. Confidentiality

Uppertunity is committed to the maintenance of the highest level of integrity in all its dealings with clients, customers and staff. This extends not only to commercial confidentiality but also to the protection of personal information received in the process of providing a service.

13. Tardiness and Absenteeism

Employees must follow their schedules and volunteers are expected to follow their agreed schedules. We can make exceptions for occasions that prevent employees from following standard working hours or days, but generally we expect employees, and volunteers, to be punctual when coming to and leaving from work.

14. Collaboration

Employees and volunteers should be friendly and cooperative when working in collaboration with other companies, groups and organisations. We respect the ethos and regulations of external staff and volunteers, and we expect the same respect and attitude in return. We aim to meet in agreement to what works best for our clients and staff.

15. Equality, diversity and inclusion

An important core value of Uppertunity is the promotion of inclusivity and diversity. It seeks to ensure that the workplace is supportive of all employees and volunteers

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and one where individual respect is shown to all clients, volunteers and employees, regardless of age, (dis)ability, gender, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, ethnic background, culture, sexual orientation, religion or belief, sex or any other factor. All staff will be supported and encouraged to perform to their potential. For further information, employees should refer to the Equal Opportunities policy.

16. Communication

All employees must be open for communication with their colleagues, supervisors or team members. Uppertunity aims to communicate all information that is relevant to all clients, volunteers and employees.

17. Policies

All employees and volunteers should read and follow our company policies. If they have any questions, they should ask their supervisors or the manager.

18. Social media

Employees and volunteers may use social media for work purposes (such as LinkedIn) or for personal use (for example, Facebook). Any use of such social media must be respectful of Uppertunity's reputation and that of all its team members. Employees and volunteers must not disclose confidential information when using personal social media. For further information, employees should refer to the Social Media policy. Failure to comply with this policy is a disciplinary offence. It may amount to gross misconduct and could result in summary dismissal.

19. Relationships with other members of staff and clients

Uppertunity does not concern itself with the private lives of its any staff unless they affect its effective operation or its reputation. Members of staff who are relatives or who have a close personal relationship should not normally have a supervisory, assessing or authorising relationship with each other. Employees and volunteers must inform their line manager if they have a close personal relationship with another employee or a client which could be considered by colleagues or other, as impacting on the way they conduct themselves at work.

20. Criminal offences

For the avoidance of doubt, an employee and volunteer must inform their manager in writing if they are under investigation for a criminal act (including road traffic offences) or have been arrested in connection with a criminal action. They must also inform their manager in writing if they have been found guilty and convicted of any offence or received a police caution. This will not result in dismissal. The need for this information is to ensure that all employees and volunteers are not barred from working with vulnerable individuals. Failure to disclose this information may be treated as a disciplinary offence. Furthermore, if

an employee commits a criminal offence outside employment, Uppertunity will investigate the matter to ascertain whether there is any connection between the offence and the individual's employment. If there is an adverse finding in this respect, this could result in the employee's dismissal under the disciplinary procedure. Any information will be treated fairly in conjunction with equality laws.

21. Conduct outside work

As a general rule, what employees and volunteers do after working hours and away from the premises is a personal matter. However, Uppertunity will become involved in the following circumstances: At office parties, events and other work-related social occasions; At third-party occasions where the individual has been invited in their capacity as a representative of Uppertunity; At work-related conferences and training courses, locally or away. All policies will continue to apply at all these events. An employee should not bring Uppertunity's name into disrepute at any time. Improper behaviour will lead to investigation and possible disciplinary action, including dismissal and in cases of gross misconduct, a summary dismissal.

Being a great employee and volunteer

How to be a great employee or volunteer

An employee or volunteer is someone who is capable of great change! You have the opportunity to make a difference

1. It's all about your attitude! If you have a good energy, you spread it around and lift other people's moods. If you're negative, you lower the mood and push people away

2. **Be creative!** You don't have to be arty to be creative, just explore different ideas and experiment

3. **Be a good role model!** Show positive behaviour including the attitude you have towards life, the food you eat at the work place

4. **Show initiative!** Don't wait to be told what to do. if you're not sure, ask if there's anything to do or if someone needs help

5. **Keep walking around during group workshops,** ask if members are okay. If no one needs help (this is rare), sit next to someone and do some creative work with them

6. **Be non-judgmental and open minded!** You will work with various different people, both with staff and clients...people who have autism, Muslim, lesbian, limited education, depression, transgender etc. No matter a persons characteristics, they have something beautiful to offer the world.

7. **Be sensitive, caring and empathetic!** You will hear sensitive information and difficult stories. Don't brush it off, listen and be there for that person.

8. **Work as a team!** Share ideas with each other, be a friend, help out with the boring stuff like cleaning and paperwork and share smiles!

9. **Make mistakes!** Don't strive for perfection, it's about the journey. Members relate to people who are human. Mistakes are lessons, so let's learn together

10. **Have fun!**



How to be a great facilitator

How to be a great facilitator

A facilitator is a person, volunteer or paid staff, that assists another person to achieve a desired outcome

1. **Enthusiasm!** The individuals you work with will often have low self-esteem and be shy. We are there to be that support so the journey isn't so scary
2. **Lead, don't do!** We are there to guide and assist, we are not there to do everything for the person
3. **Be a good role model!** Speak positively and behave positively, this includes attitude about others and your health
4. **It's about the journey, not the destination!** We are not aiming for perfection, we are aiming for personal development. Perfection often damages this, let the person make mistakes. It may not be what you want, but that doesn't matter
5. **Build confidence!** A lack of confidence often lowers a mood. Give compliments, but also make sure they are unique to the individual..."I love how you used those colours together, great choice!"
6. **Go at the person's pace and build from there.** If we push too hard, it damages confidence, if we don't push enough, the person will never know their true potential
7. **Never underestimate a person!** We don't assume anything about a person's ability, regardless if they are female, in a wheelchair, have low muscle tone, have autism etc. Good facilitators make dreams happen!
8. **Listen and communicate!** The individuals you work with will often not be listened to and will sometimes not have learnt social skills, we are here to help
9. **Be aware of your body language!** Stand or kneel at the height of the individual who are working with. Don't speak in a baby voice, this is patronizing. We treat individuals the way they deserve. This builds their confidence
10. **Empower!** Help individuals claim control of their life and experience the life they desire



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Expenses policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of the policy is to ensure that all employees receive equal treatment when claiming reasonable out-of-pocket expense.
- 1.2. Expense claims should not exceed actual expenses incurred.
- 1.3. Expenses should be discussed and agreed by the manager

2. Definition

2.1. Actual out-of-pocket expenses include:

- Travel to and from work outside of usual work premises, exceeding 10 miles
- Travel in the course of training
- Postage, telephone calls, etc. paid for by the employee on behalf of the company
- Cost of equipment, protective clothing, etc.

3. Reimbursement of Expenditure

3.1. Employees incurring out-of-pocket expenses will be required to supply appropriate evidence of expenses, such as receipts, on the appropriate claim form which will be made available by the manager of the organisation.

3.2. Volunteers will receive tea and coffee at no cost to themselves when at the office/work base.

3.3. Expenses can be claimed in the following circumstances:

- 3.3.1. Public Transport: Where possible, employees should use public transport. Full reimbursement of fares incurred will be paid provided that appropriate tickets and receipts are provided. Where the use of a car is likely to be more cost effective, then a car can be used subject to discussing this with the manager beforehand.
- 3.3.2. Taxis - People with Disabilities: The taxi fare should be claimed using the approved claim form and receipts; copies are available from the manager of the organisation.
- 3.3.3. Car Allowance: Travel/mileage expenses necessarily incurred, within the expenses outlines in 2.1, in the performance of their official or other authorised duties will be reimbursed after authorisation by their line manager.
- 3.3.4. Other reasonable out-of-pocket expenses must be: Approved in advance by the manager, made on the approved claim form, copies are available from manager

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	First 10,000 miles in tax year	> 10,000 miles in tax year
Cars / Vans: regardless of engine size	40p	25p
Motorcycles	24p	24p
Bicycles	20p	20p

4. Use of cars, Vehicle Road Worthiness and insurance

- 4.1. All employees must insure their cars for business use before they can be authorised to use their car on official business. Employees who do not comply with this requirement will not be able to use their vehicle for work purposes with Uppertunity. All employees using their own car will be required to show a valid MOT certificate and complete a form agreeing to the upkeep of their vehicle.
- 4.2. Uppertunity will not permit employees to use their vehicle for business use where the employee has not provided such information. This is especially important where an employee is asked to use a vehicle for work purposes on an irregular basis. Uppertunity will undertake to check to ensure that the necessary insurance is in place.
- 4.3. Business use of a car includes transporting service users to and from group locations and transporting employees to and from work locations

5. Claiming Expenses

- 5.1. All claims must be authorised by manager and forms should be submitted to the manager or line manager.

6. Appeal Rights

- 6.1. Any volunteer who considers that the provision relating to the reimbursement of expenditure has not been properly applied shall be able to pursue the matter through Uppertunity's grievance procedure.

Grievances, Complaints and Disputes Policy

1. Policy Details

- 1.1. Uppertunity aims to create a work environment where all staff, volunteers and clients feel valued. Uppertunity also recognises that there may be occasions when individuals have concerns or grievances. The purpose of this Policy is to outline a set of procedures to respond to complaints and disputes effectively and fairly in a professional and timely manner.
- 1.2. This Policy provides a process for handling and resolution of complaints, grievances and disputes between Uppertunity and its members, employees, volunteers, speakers, members of the public, suppliers and contractors relating to association activities and operations.
- 1.3. Staff, volunteers and managers are encouraged to discuss ordinary, day to day concerns informally. This allows them to be addressed promptly and can stop situations escalating unnecessarily.
- 1.4. The complaint and dispute resolution process at Uppertunity operates in two stages:
 - 1.4.1 An internal dispute resolution process under which the organisation will use its best efforts to resolve a complaint or dispute to the mutual satisfaction of the organisation and the complainant
 - 1.4.2 Failing resolution, an external dispute resolution process under which the complainant, dissatisfied with the organisation's decision, can refer the complaint to another external mediation body/service for resolution.
- 1.5. The Board of Directors are responsible for managing and coordinating the implementation of this Policy
- 1.6. Uppertunity has a separate Dismissal Policy

2. Definitions

- 2.1. Complaint: A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction, made to the association, related to the association's activities, operations, policies, employees, volunteers or the complaints handling and dispute resolution process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected.
- 2.2. Complainant: A party that makes a complaint or files a formal charge, for example, a member of the public, association members, employees, volunteers, suppliers and contractors.
- 2.3. Dispute: Means an unresolved complaint. In other words, it is a matter that has been dealt with as a complaint under this Policy, but where the complainant is still not satisfied with the outcome.
- 2.4. Grievance: an official statement of a complaint over something believed to be wrong or unfair

3. Internal Complaint Procedure

If a complaint is submitted to Uppertunity, the manager must:

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- 3.1. If the complaint is verbal, either resolve it "on the spot", or if that is not done, request the complainant to submit a written complaint to the board of directors
- 3.2. If the complaint is in writing, acknowledge in writing receipt of the complaint as soon as practicable and in any event within 14 days from receipt, and enclose a copy of this Policy for the complainant's information
- 3.3. Ensure that the complaint receives proper consideration resulting in a determination by the Board
- 3.4. Act in good faith in dealing with and resolving the complaint
- 3.5. Investigate the complaint including by: Seeking all relevant information from the complainant; and obtaining all relevant information from the organisation's employees/ volunteers/clients
- 3.6. May in its discretion give any appropriate remedy to the complainant, including any of the following: Information and explanation regarding the circumstances giving rise to the complaint; An apology; and compensation for loss incurred by the complainant.
- 3.7. Must communicate to the complainant in relation to the complaint as soon as practicable and in any event not more than 45 days after receipt by the association of the complaint: The determination in relation to the complaint; The remedies (if any) available to the complainant; and Information regarding any further avenue for complaint.

4. External Complaints Procedure

- 4.1. For each complaint that cannot be resolved to the complainant's satisfaction within the above mentioned 45 days, the Chair must inform the complainant in writing that they have the option to appeal resolution of their complaint with the Board of Directors.
- 4.2. Failing resolution of a complaint through the Board, complainants can refer their complaint to an external mediation body/service for resolution. This will be supported by the organisation.

5. Appeal

- 5.1. If an individual wishes to appeal against any grievance decision, they must appeal, in writing within five working days of the decision being communicated to them by the Board of Directors. The Board will convene an appeals sub-committee to hear the appeal and the individual will be invited to a meeting with the appeals sub-committee.
- 5.2. The individual will have the right to be accompanied to the appeal meeting.
- 5.3. The manager will not form part of the appeals sub. The appeals sub committee's decision will be final.

6. Recording of Complaints

- 6.1. All information during a complaint's procedure must be recorded
- 6.2. At a minimum, the following information must be included about every complaint that is received:

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- Date complaint is made
 - Nature of complaint / issue
 - Action taken to investigate the complaint
 - Date resolved
 - How resolved
- 6.3. The board must periodically review the register to check that complaints are being handled appropriately

7. Confidentiality

- 7.1. The board will keep the complainant's identity private to guard against inconvenience or discrimination.
- 7.2. The organisation will treat each complaint separately and on its merits.

Disciplinary and Dismissal Policy

1. Purpose and scope

- 1.1. The aim of this policy and procedure is to ensure consistent and fair treatment for all employees.
- 1.2. This policy and procedure for Uppertunity is non contractual and sets out how any issues with employee standards of conduct, attendance and job performance will be dealt with.

2. Primary Principles

- 2.1. Employees are expected to know the standard of conduct or work expected of them.
- 2.2. Depending on the severity of the employee's alleged misconduct, the employer may at its discretion start the procedure at any of the below stages.
- 2.3. A final decision on a disciplinary sanction will not be taken against an employee without the employer carrying out what it reasonably believes in the circumstances to be an appropriate level of investigation.
- 2.4. A formal disciplinary sanction will not be taken against an employee without the employee being advised of the nature of the problem. The employee will also have the opportunity to state their case at a formal disciplinary meeting before a final decision is taken.
- 2.5. Except where an employee has been found to have committed a gross misconduct offence, or is still serving their probationary period, no employee will be dismissed for a first breach of discipline.
- 2.6. An employee can appeal against any disciplinary action taken by the employer.
- 2.7. Disciplinary matters will be dealt with confidentially, so far as is reasonably possible and employees should keep confidential any information they learn in relation to any disciplinary matter (unless they are the subject of the investigation and disclosure is required to prepare for a meeting under this procedure).
- 2.8. The employer may suspend an employee on full pay and benefits
- 2.9. The employee agrees that if the employer requests, they will not contact clients, employees, suppliers, or other business contacts of the employer whilst suspended from work. The period of suspension will be as short as is reasonably practicable in the circumstances and is not a disciplinary penalty, or an indication as to the decision that will be made once the investigations have been completed by the employer.
- 2.10. Uppertunity processes personal data collected during the investigation stage and any subsequent stages of disciplinary action in accordance with its data protection policy. Data collected as part of the investigation stage and any subsequent stages of disciplinary action is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of completing the disciplinary procedure. In appropriate access or disclosure of employee data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with Uppertunity's data

protection policy immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under this disciplinary procedure.

3. Informal discussions

- 3.1. Where possible and appropriate the employer will initially deal with disciplinary matters informally. This will take the form of the employee's line manager speaking with them in confidence about the disciplinary issue(s), making a confidential note for the employee's personal file and monitoring them informally to see if there is an improvement.
- 3.2. A verbal warning may be given. This will only be done within in set meeting with a board member and must be recorded.
- 3.3. Only if this does not resolve the issue(s) or the matter cannot be dealt with adequately informally, will the employer start the formal procedure.

4. Formal procedure

4.1. Stage 1 - Formal Meeting

- 4.1.1. An employee will usually be invited to a formal meeting between the manager and a board director, if the manager and board feel it is needed. This will be done in writing and given at least two (2) working days' notice. If required, there may be an investigatory interview before this meeting. At the meeting, the manager will explain the complaint against the employee and go through the evidence, giving the employee the opportunity to ask questions, present their case and respond to allegations including responding to witness statements (although an employee will not usually question witnesses directly). If the employee wishes to call a witness, they should notify the employer at least 24 hours before the meeting.
- 4.1.2. The employee will be advised that they are able to bring a companion to the meeting with them. The employee's choice of companion will be agreed to if they are either a colleague, a trade union official or a trade union representative (which if not an employed official, must be certified by their union as competent to accompany a worker) and under the circumstances the employee has made a reasonable request to be accompanied. The employee should advise the employer of the identity of the companion (or any change in their choice of companion) and whether they will require any special adjustments to be made for their or their companion's attendance, at least 24 hours before the start of the formal meeting.
- 4.1.3. The employer encourages employees to bring their choice of colleague, trade union representative or trade union official to formal meetings under this procedure, but the employee should bear in mind how practical it is for their choice of companion to attend and consider if there is a suitable and available individual who is geographically close to where the meeting is to be held, rather than first considering an individual geographically based further away.

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- 4.1.4. If an employee or their companion is unable to attend the meeting at the time, date and place specified by the employer, they must notify the chair of the meeting as soon as possible in writing. Except in the case of an emergency, this should be at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting and the employee should advise of a time when they and their choice of companion will be available within five (5) working days of the original proposed meeting and provided this is reasonable, the new meeting time will be agreed.
- 4.1.5. The role of the companion in a formal meeting is to make notes, confer with the employee and if the employee requests it, to address the hearing to state the employee's case and respond to any views expressed at the meeting. The companion does not have the right to answer questions or address the hearing if the employee does not request this and must not prevent the employer from explaining its case.
- 4.1.6. Employees must make every effort to attend any scheduled meeting under this procedure, failure to co-operate under this procedure could be treated as a disciplinary offence in itself and a decision could be made in an employee's absence if they are unable to attend more than two consecutive scheduled meetings.
- 4.1.7. If the employer will be referring to any documentation during the formal meeting, unless this is a document an employee will have already seen (such as an email sent by the employee) this should be sent to the employee at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting, so that they have a reasonable chance to prepare. Likewise, if the employee wishes to refer to any documentation, this should be sent to the person chairing the meeting at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting.
- 4.1.8. If the employer finds because of the first formal meeting that a disciplinary offence was committed by the employee, the sanction will normally be either:
 - 4.1.8.1. an improvement note setting out the performance problem, the improvement required, the timescale in which the employee must make the improvement, any support or training the employee will receive to help with the improvement and the right to appeal the improvement note. The employee will be advised that this constitutes the first stage of the formal procedure. A record of the improvement note will be kept on the employee's file for six months, but will then be disregarded for the purpose of continuing with this procedure, subject to achieving and sustaining satisfactory performance; or
 - 4.1.8.2. a first written warning for misconduct if conduct does not meet acceptable standards. The warning will be in writing and set out the nature of the misconduct, the change in behaviour required and state that there is a right of appeal against the first written warning. The warning will also inform the employee that a final written warning may be considered if there is no sustained satisfactory improvement or change. A record of the warning will be kept, but it will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after six months.

4.2. Stage 2 - Second Formal Meeting

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- 4.2.1. If there is sufficiently serious misconduct, further misconduct or a failure to improve performance during the currency of a prior warning, the employee will be invited to a second formal meeting in writing by the employer, with at least two (2) working days' notice. As in the case of the first formal meeting under Stage 1, all points above will apply.
 - 4.2.2. If the employee is found to have committed a disciplinary offence as a result of a Stage 2 meeting, the sanction will usually be a final written warning. A final written warning will give details of the complaint, the improvement required and the timescale. It will also warn that failure to improve may lead to dismissal (or some other action short of dismissal) and will refer to the right of appeal. A copy of this written warning will be kept on the employee's file but will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after six months, subject to achieving and sustaining satisfactory conduct or performance.
- 4.3. Stage 3 - Final Formal Meeting
- 4.3.1. If there is sufficiently serious misconduct or still further misconduct or failure to improve performance, the employee will be invited to a third and final meeting in writing by a director of the employer, with at least two (2) working days' notice. Again, at this stage of the disciplinary procedure under Stage 1 above will apply.
 - 4.3.2. If the employee has been found to have committed a disciplinary offence as a result of a Stage 3 meeting, the sanction may be dismissal or some other action short of dismissal, such as demotion, disciplinary suspension or transfer to another role.
- 4.4. Decisions taken under Stage 3 of this disciplinary procedure can only be taken by the Managing Director of the employer. If Managing Director takes the decision to dismiss as a result of a Stage 3 meeting, they will advise the employee in writing of the reasons for dismissal, the date on which the employment will terminate, practical arrangements on termination and the employee's right of appeal.
- 4.5. If the Managing Director takes the decision after a Stage 3 meeting to impose some sanction short of dismissal, the employee will receive details of the complaint, will be warned that dismissal could result if there is no satisfactory improvement, and will be advised of the employee's right of appeal. A copy of the written warning will be kept on the employee's file, but will be disregarded for disciplinary purposes after six months subject to achievement and sustenance of satisfactory conduct or performance.

5. Gross misconduct

- 5.1. If an employee is accused of an act of gross misconduct, they may be suspended from work on full pay, normally for no more than five (5) working days, while the alleged offence is investigated by the employer.
- 5.2. If, on completion of the investigation and a formal meeting, the employer is satisfied that gross misconduct has occurred, the result will normally be summary dismissal without notice or payment in lieu of notice.

- 5.3. The following is a non-exhaustive list of the type of offences which are normally regarded as gross misconduct, together with any other behaviours which in the reasonable opinion of the employer constitute gross misconduct:
- a. any form of dishonesty, including theft or fraud
 - b. physical violence or assault
 - c. deliberate damage to employer property
 - d. breaking any law, even outside of work, which could bring the employer into disrepute
 - e. incapacity under the Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003
 - f. repeated or serious failure to follow reasonable instructions given by the employer or repeated or serious failure to comply with the terms of your contract of employment or the employer's policies and procedures, including code of conduct
 - g. discrimination, harassment, victimisation or bullying of staff, customers, suppliers or other third parties
 - h. committing an act of arson
 - i. misusing confidential information acquired during and as a result of your employment
 - j. failing to devote all working time and effort to the employer or being disloyal to the employer whilst employed by it
 - k. a serious or repeated breach of the employer's Health and Safety Policy
 - l. accepting bribes
 - m. being under the influence of drink or drugs at work, so as not to be able to perform contractual duties

6. Appeals

- 6.1. An employee will be advised about their right of appeal whenever a decision is made under this procedure. An employee who wishes to appeal against a disciplinary decision must do so in writing as directed by the employer when they are informed by the employer of the disciplinary decision, within five (5) working days.
- 6.2. A manager who has not been involved with the process until this stage will invite the employee to an appeal hearing, under Stage 1 above will again apply. At the appeal hearing, any disciplinary penalty imposed will be reviewed or the case reheard, at the employer's discretion.
- 6.3. The employee will be informed in writing of the result of their appeal, usually within five (5) working days and the director's decision on the appeal is final
- 6.4. If the employee appeals a dismissal, their employment will not continue whilst the appeal process is taking place. However, if the appeal is successful the employee will be reinstated with no loss of continuity of employment or pay.

Staff Absence and Sickness Policy

1. Policy statement

- 1.1 This policy deals with sick pay, reporting sickness absence and how the employer manage sickness absence. Failing to report absence under this policy or falsely claiming sick pay will be treated as misconduct. This policy does not form part of the employee's contract of employment and the employer may amend it at any time. This policy is only applicable to employees. The employer is committed to improving the health, wellbeing and attendance of all employees. Uppertunity values the contribution our employees make to our success. When any employee is unable to be at work for any reason, the employer misses that contribution.
- 1.2 This policy has been written in line with ACAS guidelines, and the employer welcome contributions from employees in developing and implementing this policy.
- 1.3 Regular and reliable attendance at work is an important commitment that the Company asks all employees to make. Unjustified or excessive absence can put unfair pressure on colleagues and seriously damage the Company's business, to everybody's detriment. Nevertheless, the Company will always try to be supportive when an employee is genuinely too ill to attend work.
- 1.4 This policy sets out the Company's approach and the steps that you need to take if you are off sick.

2. Key principles

The organisation's absence policy is based on the following principles:

- 2.1 As a responsible employer the employer undertake to provide statutory sick payments to employees who are unable to attend work due to sickness.
- 2.2 As responsible employees, all employees must report an illness regardless if this causes absence or not. This is for the safety of vulnerable clients and staff.
- 2.3 Regular, punctual attendance is an important aspect of everyone's employment. The employer asks each employee to take responsibility for achieving and maintaining good attendance.
- 2.4 We will support employees who have genuine grounds for absence for whatever reason. This support includes:
 - a. 'special leave' for necessary absences not caused by sickness
 - b. a flexible approach to taking annual leave
 - c. access to counsellors where necessary
 - d. rehabilitation support in cases of long-term sickness absence.
- 2.5 We will consider any advice given by an employee's GP on the 'Statement of Fitness for Work'. If the GP advises that an employee 'may be fit for work' the employer will discuss with the employee how the employer can help them get back to work - for example, on flexible hours, or altered duties.
- 2.6 Where appropriate the employer will use an occupational health adviser, to help advise the employee and their manager on the best way to improve the employee's health and wellbeing.

- 2.7 The company's disciplinary procedures may be invoked if an explanation for absence is not forthcoming or is not thought to be satisfactory.
- 2.8 We respect the confidentiality of all information relating to an employee's sickness. This policy will be implemented in line with current data protection legislation and the Access to Medical records Act 1988.

3. Notification of absence

- 3.1 If an employee is going to be absent from work, they should telephone their manager or deputy 12 hours before their normal start time. This allows time to arrange cover or rearrange schedules. It is understandable that sometimes this timeframe cannot be met. Each situation will therefore be treated as unique. The sooner a sickness can be notified, the better. They should also:
- Give a clear indication of the nature of the illness
 - A likely return date
- 3.2 The manager will check with other employees if there is any information, they need to cover their work during the period of absence. If the employee does not contact their manager by the required time the manager will attempt to contact the employee.
- 3.3 An employee may not always feel able to discuss their medical problems with their line manager. Managers will be sensitive to individual concerns and make alternative arrangements, where appropriate.

4. Evidence of incapacity

- 4.1 Employees are required to submit a self-certification for absences up to 7 calendar days. If the absence is beyond 7 calendar days, the employee must submit a GP certificate. Uncertified absence may be treated as misconduct.
- 4.2 If the absence is likely to be long-term - more than four weeks consecutive weeks, there is a shared responsibility for the Company and the employee to maintain contact at agreed intervals.
- 4.3 If the GP advises on the Statement of Fitness for Work that an employee 'may be fit for work', the employee should immediately contact the employer to discuss
- 4.4 If it is not possible to provide the support an employee needs to return to work - for example, by making the necessary workplace adjustments - or an employee feels unable to return then the Statement will be used in the same way as if the GP advised that the employee was 'not fit for work'.

5. Return to work discussions

- 5.1 When employees have been absent with illness, the manager will hold a return-to-work interview with the employee. The reason for the meeting is to check that the employee is fit enough to return to work and consider whether there are any steps that could be taken to facilitate this. It is also an opportunity to speak about any issues regarding the employee's absence record.

5.2 Managers will discuss absences with employees when they return to work to establish:

- The reason for absence
- What the manager or the company can do to help
- That the employee is fit to return to work.

5.3 A more formal review may be triggered by:

- Absences that are disruptive to the company's operations e.g. frequent short-term absences or long-term absence.
- This review will look at any further action required to improve the employee's attendance and wellbeing.

6. Dealing with long-term sickness absence or frequent short-term absences

6.1 In circumstances where the employee has been absent for a long period or the employee has had frequent short-term absences, the employer will follow the process outlined below.

6.2 It is important for us to understand the reasons for the employee's absence. The employer wants to know whether there are things the employer can do to help the employee improve the employee's attendance and the employee's health. In some circumstances the employer may need to get medical information about the employee's illness before deciding on a course of action.

6.3 We may need to meet with the employee to discuss the employee's absence, the medical information or other related issues. The employer will give the employee reasonable notice of the meeting and location.

6.4 Where the employee is unable to attend the meeting, at the time specified, it is very important that the employee let the employer know as soon as possible. The employer will then seek to arrange another time where the employee is able to attend.

6.5 Where it is relevant, the employer will consider whether reasonable adjustments may need to be made to the sickness absence procedure, or to the employee's role or working arrangements

7. If the sickness absence does not improve

7.1 We will monitor the employee's progress following the first sickness absence meeting. Where the employee has not been able to return to work from long term sickness or if the employee is unable to meet any targets set for short term absences, the employer will invite the employee to another meeting.

7.2 The point of the second meeting is to assess whether the absence situation is likely to improve. Where it is appropriate, the employer will consider redeployment opportunities as well as seeking a medical report. Where the employer believes that it is unlikely that the employee will return to work from long term absence in line with medical advice or where the employee has not been able to meet the targets for improving short-term absences, the employee may be given a written warning that they are at risk of dismissal. Where the circumstances require, the employer will agree a further review period and a meeting to follow.

8. Final sickness absence meeting

- 8.1 Where there is no improvement in reaching any targets set for reduction of short-term absences or the employee has been unable to return to work from long-term sickness the employer will invite the employee to another meeting.
- 8.2 This meeting will include an assessment of whether or not to terminate the employee's contract of employment in line with medical advice.
- 8.3 We will consider any points that the employee wants to raise in relation to the employee's sickness absence and the likely prognosis.

9. Alternative Work

- 9.1 The Company may consider agreeing changes to an employee's duties or other working arrangements when it becomes clear that due to sickness or injury they will not be able to return to normal working. Any such changes will be subject to the needs of the business and there is no guarantee that permanent arrangements of this sort will be possible.
- 9.2 Where duties or working hours are varied in this way then the job being done by the employee will need to be reassessed to determine the appropriate level of remuneration. This will then need to be agreed with the employee. If an agreement is not reached then the Company may proceed to dismiss the employee in accordance with the procedure for long-term sickness absence.

10. Disability and Reasonable Adjustments

- 10.1 The Company is committed to making reasonable adjustments to an employee's duties or working arrangements where they would otherwise suffer a disadvantage arising from any disability.
- 10.2 In order to make appropriate adjustments the Company needs to know about any disability the employee may have. Employees who feel that they may require an adjustment should discuss their situation with their line manager. Any such discussions will be in the strictest confidence although when an adjustment is made it may be necessary to inform other employees of the reason for this. The extent to which details of any disability will be discussed with other employees will be agreed as part of the process of making the adjustment itself.
- 10.3 The purpose of any adjustment will be to ensure that the employee can work effectively in an appropriate role and on appropriate terms and conditions. The Company is not obliged to maintain an employee's level of pay if hours are reduced or the employee is moved to a less senior role as a result of any adjustment. Nor will the Company agree to an adjustment which will not result in a commercially practicable working arrangement.

11. Appeal against decisions under this policy

- 11.1 Where the employee wants to appeal against decisions taken under this procedure, the employee must set out their grounds of appeal in writing. The

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employee will be required to submit their appeal [within one week] of the date on which the decision was sent to the employee.

11.2. We will seek to hold an appeal meeting within [three weeks] of receiving the appeal being received

11.3. We will seek to deal with the employee appeal fairly and reasonably. The decision will be provided to the employee in writing, usually within [two weeks] of the appeal hearing.

11.4. The employee will have no further right of appeal under this policy.

11.5. Where the employee lodge an appeal against dismissal, the date of dismissal does not change. If the employees appeal is successful, the dismissal will be revoked, and the employee will receive any relevant back pay and the employee r continuity of service is restored.

11.6. The Company reserves the right not to follow these procedures in full for employees who are within their first two years of employment with the Company.

Recruitment and Selection Procedure for Paid Staff

1. Policy statement

- 1.1. The purpose of this recruitment and selection policy is to ensure:
 - a professional and consistent approach to recruitment and selection
 - adherence to Uppertunity's Equality and Diversity Policy and relevant employment legislation
 - that members of staff are recruited on the basis of their ability
- 1.2. Effective recruitment and selection are central and crucial to the successful functioning of Uppertunity. It depends on finding people with the necessary skills, expertise and qualifications to deliver Uppertunity's strategic objectives and the ability to make a positive contribution to the values and aims of the organisation.
- 1.3. Uppertunity aims to attract and recruit people with diverse backgrounds, skills and abilities, who will enhance the quality of service and contribute to Uppertunity's success.
- 1.4. Uppertunity is committed to providing opportunities for development and career progression to current employees. This means that Uppertunity will normally advertise vacancies both internally and externally. However, in exceptional circumstances and on rare occasions, there may be a strong business case for making appointments without advertising the opportunity.
- 1.5. In order to achieve these objectives Uppertunity will:
 - 1.5.1. ensure that every director regularly reviews the organisation of their directorate and the job responsibilities and roles of individuals within it. This will be completed through the individual performance review process, when a vacancy arises, and at regular resource planning meetings
 - 1.5.2. ensure that managers consider the extent to which vacant posts could lend themselves to flexible working (e.g. job sharing) to attract a wider range of candidates
 - 1.5.3. endeavour to reach traditionally under-represented groups and ensure that discrimination does not take place at either the attraction or selection stage
 - 1.5.4. ensure that recruitment procedures are regularly updated in line with changes in legislation and best practice
 - 1.5.5. ensure that the administration of the selection process is user friendly and carried out to the highest professional standard.

2. Identification of a Recruitment Need

- 2.1 If an established post becomes vacant or a new position of any nature is proposed, the line manager/hiring manager, should advise the Board of Directors. Approval for recruitment will be sought from the board and, if applicable, other governance controls will be observed before recruitment commences.

2.2 When approval has been granted, consideration should be given to whether the main accountabilities of the role could be satisfactorily met on a part-time or job-sharing basis

3. Advertisements and Selection Methods

3.1 Internal methods:

3.1.1 Uppertunity may use a number of internal advertising methods such by email or letter.

3.1.2 Where exceptional circumstances apply, the board may take a decision not to advertise a role internally. Every effort will be made to explain the reason for the decision to the relevant team as soon as possible after the appointment is confirmed.

3.2 External methods:

3.2.1 Uppertunity may use a number of options to generate interest from individuals outside the organisation, including placing advertisements via recruitment agencies, in newspapers, specialist journals, on online job boards, and LinkedIn page.

3.2.2 Irrespective of the medium used, all advertisements need to be designed and presented effectively to ensure that the widest ranges of high-calibre candidates are attracted. Advertisements must be non-discriminatory and include Uppertunity's diversity statement.

3.3. Candidates for all posts will, except on some occasions when a vacancy is restricted to internal recruitment, be asked to complete a standard application form, in order that they can be judged on the basis of comparable information. In some cases, a CV may also be requested.

3.4. In applying for posts, all candidates will be provided with a job description, details of the appropriate conditions of service and details about Uppertunity. A brief statement about the appointment procedure will also be provided and, if possible, an indication of the date (or week) when interviews will be held. The job description will include a list of the main duties and responsibilities of the post, together with an outline of the qualifications and experience which candidates are expected to possess.

3.5. In drawing up the job description and conditions of service Uppertunity will ensure that no job applicant receives less favorable treatment than another

3.6. Applicants will be asked to specify whether they wish to declare any disabilities, and whether there are any reasonable adjustments needed for them to attend an interview. All applicants with a disability who meet the essential criteria for a job will be interviewed, and considered on their merits

3.7. Applicants will be required to supply the names and addresses of two people from whom references can be obtained, one of which should normally be the applicant's current or most recent employer. Only references for short listed candidates for interview will be obtained. References will normally be sought prior to interview, unless the candidate indicates otherwise.

3.8. For regulated posts that involve working with children and vulnerable adults, applicants will be asked to reveal details of 'unspent convictions and any convictions that may bar them from working with vulnerable adults. Successful candidates for such posts will be required to provide the necessary

documentation in order to complete a disclosure check. Posts which require such a disclosure will be clearly indicated on the conditions of service and appointment procedure.

- 3.9. Applicants will also be required to declare if they are related to any member of staff within Uppertunity. No manager should be put into a position where he or she is asked to interview a person to whom they are related.
- 3.10 It is Uppertunity's policy to communicate further with applicants who have not been shortlisted by ensuring they receive an email stating they have been unsuccessful and, if requested by the candidate, offering feedback as to the reasons they have not been shortlisted.
- 3.11 All completed applications forms are private and confidential and should only be made available to those directly involved in the recruitment and selection process.
- 3.12A shortlist of candidates will be drawn up for interview, based entirely on merit and suitability for the post but taking account of Uppertunity's responsibilities in relation to Equality legislation. Other than in exceptional circumstances, reasonable notice will be given to ensure that candidates have sufficient time to prepare for and make the necessary arrangements to attend the interview.

4. Interviews

- 4.1. Interviews will be held by a panel comprising of a minimum of 2 people. The interviewers will encourage candidates to be at ease during the interview, in order that they can give a fair and accurate impression of themselves.
- 4.2. A set of questions will be agreed by the interview panel in advance and will be developed from the current job description for the post. The panel will seek to develop questions which ask the candidates to give examples of their previous relevant experience.
- 4.3. All candidates will be asked the same questions in the same order, and their responses rated between 1-10. The panel will each have a copy of the questions and will score independently of each other during the interview. Time is allocated between interviews for the panel to discuss each candidate and to award a total point score. Additional notes may be made by the panel during the interview.
- 4.4. It should be remembered that an interview is a two-way process, and candidates will be given every opportunity to view the premises where they will work and ask questions about Uppertunity, to ensure that they have a full understanding of the post for which they are applying and the way Uppertunity operates.
- 4.5. In addition to interviews, a range of other selection techniques may be used. In such circumstances reasonable notice and relevant information will be given to ensure that candidates have sufficient time and information to prepare.
- 4.6. All appointments will be made strictly on merit and related to the requirements of the job.
- 4.7. All interviewed candidates will be notified of the outcome of the selection process as soon as possible, either by telephone or email.

4.8. All unsuccessful candidates' application forms and interview notes will be retained for one year from the date of interviews taking place. After this date they will be destroyed.

5. Relevant Checks and Appointment of New Employees

- 5.1 The manager will normally make the offer of appointment to the preferred candidate(s) either directly or via the recruitment agency. Upon acceptance, the manager will liaise with candidates and confirm the appointment once the formalities have been completed (i.e. satisfactory references from last two employers, confirmation of educational and/or qualification, and confirmation of right to work in UK). These requirements should be completed before the new employee takes up post. The manager must approve any exceptions in advance of formal appointment.
- 5.2 All offers of employment will be made conditional upon satisfactory results from the following:
- 5.11. two satisfactory references.
 - 5.12. confirmation of the right to work in this country
 - 5.13. Disclosure Check if appropriate.
- 5.3. The Manager will prepare a written letter of offer for the successful candidate. The letter of offer and or contract of employment will confirm the start date, salary, position and the terms and conditions of employment pertaining to the employee.
- 5.4. All new staff will take part in an induction which includes fire safety, training, shadowing, job description and overview of policies and procedures
- 5.5. Throughout the induction period, all new staff members will receive regular meetings with the manager to discuss how it's going and identify any further training and development needs

6. Probationary Period

- 6.3. All appointments into Uppertunity will be made subject to a probationary period of 3 calendar months. After 6 weeks, a review meeting will take place between the post holder and their line manager to discuss progress.
- 6.4. At the end of the probationary period, and subject to a satisfactory report by the appropriate head of section or line manager, employees will be notified in writing that they have successfully completed their probationary period. The probationary period can be extended by a further 3 months should the individuals line manager consider this appropriate.

7. Equal opportunities

- 7.3. Uppertunity seeks to recruit employees on the basis of their ability and the requirements of the post.
- 7.2 Uppertunity will not discriminate either directly or indirectly, on the grounds of age, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy, caring responsibilities, marital status or civil partnership, race, colour, Issue date: 21/06/2013 5 ethnic or national origin, nationality, citizenship, disability, sexual orientation, religion, belief or

previous convictions (except for posts that are barred from working with protected adults and children).

7.3 To meet this commitment, all candidates are asked to complete a recruitment monitoring form enclosed with the application form. All completed monitoring forms will be treated as confidential.

8. Complaints

8.1. The board will review any complaints made on the grounds of discrimination. Complaints from external candidates will be investigated by the board or, if more appropriate, a Legal Director and responded to within 14 days.

8.2. Complaints from internal candidates will normally be processed in the same way.

8.3. Any acts of discrimination and/or abuse of the recruitment process by Uppertunity's employees may be treated as a disciplinary offence, which will be considered under the Disciplinary Procedure and could result in dismissal.

9. Exit Interviews

9.1. All employees who leave the employment of Uppertunity will have an exit interview with their manager before their last day of employment.

9.2. Exit interviews provide the opportunity for departing employees to discuss their reasons for leaving. The information provided is useful in identifying trends, learning and development and evaluating the effectiveness of Uppertunity policies and practices.

9.3. Exit interviews also provide an opportunity to feedback to the employee on their work practices. This will be done in a respectful manner and will never be used to bully, blame or belittle an employee regardless of dismissal or voluntary leave.

9.4. The appropriate line manager should record all appropriate information, such as recommendations made for change, or significant issues raised in the interview, whilst bearing in mind confidentiality issues.

Redundancy Policy

1. Purpose

1.1. Uppertunity recognises the importance of maintaining a stable and valued workforce. However, it is recognised that reorganisations and redundancies may become necessary at times in line with the business' needs. The purpose of this policy is to outline how we will approach these situations to ensure affected employees are treated in a fair, consistent and non-discriminatory manner.

2. Definitions

2.1 'Dismissal by reason of redundancy' - where the dismissal is attributable wholly or mainly to:

2.1.1 The fact that the employer has ceased, or intends to cease to carry on the business for the purpose for which the employee was employed

2.1.2 The fact that the employer ceased, or intends to cease to carry on the business in the place where the employee was employed

2.1.3 The fact that the requirements of the business for employees to carry out work of a particular kind has ceased or diminished or is expected to cease or diminish. This includes a need to reduce the workforce regardless of whether a remaining employee moves into that employee's job

2.1.4 The fact that the requirements of the business for employees to carry out work of a particular kind in the place where they were employed has ceased or diminished or is expected to cease or diminish. This includes a need to reduce the workforce in that location regardless of whether a remaining employee moves into the employee's job.

3. Qualifying Period

3.1. The period of continuous employment that an employee must have in order to qualify for statutory redundancy payment is a period of 2 years with the employer

4. Measures to Avoid or Minimise Redundancy

4.1. Uppertunity will seek to avoid or minimise redundancies wherever practicable and appropriate. Measures could include:

4.1.1. Restricting the use of overtime

4.1.2. Redeployment as an alternative to redundancy

4.1.3. Restricting recruitment in areas where affected employees could be redeployed

4.1.4. Investigating the possibility of alternative working arrangements such as job sharing or flexible working

4.1.5. Reviewing the use of agency workers and self-employed contractors

4.1.6. Inviting applications for voluntary redundancy or early retirement

4.2. This is not an exhaustive list and, further, not all measures will be appropriate in each case. Measures will need to be assessed in line with business needs.

5 Consultation and Process

- 5.2. Uppertunity will keep affected employees informed as fully as possible about proposals for redundancies and will consult with those affected by any proposal and, where appropriate, appropriate representatives (such as a recognised trade union or employee representatives)
- 5.3. Consultations should take place in good time. Uppertunity aims to hold consultations 30 days before first dismissal is to be made. If the nature of redundancy is more immediate, such as liquidation, the organisation will aim to hold consultations as soon as possible.
- 5.4. Uppertunity will consider any alternative proposals with a view to avoiding redundancy and reducing the number of employees to be made redundant.
- 5.5. The redundancy process will be objective, transparent and fair. Uppertunity will not discriminate against employees on the grounds of any protected characteristic (gender, sexual orientation, marital or civil partner status, gender reassignment, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, disability or age).
- 5.6. Those working under part-time or fixed-term contracts will be treated in the same way as full-time employees
- 5.7. Once affected employees are informed, and alternative employment is unavailable or not preferred by employees, employees will be paid Statutory Redundancy Pay and given Statutory time off to find alternative work.

6. Suitable Alternative Employment and Trial Period

- 6.1. Uppertunity will assist where possible, employees in finding alternative employment within the organisation
- 6.2. As part of the individual consultation process, any suitable vacancies will be discussed with the employee. Where an alternative job has been identified, offered and accepted, the employee will be subject to a minimum four-week trial period. The purpose of this period is to allow the employee and the organisation to assess whether the new role is suited to the individual and whether they are capable of doing it
- 6.3. If after this trial period has been completed and both parties agree that the new position is unsuitable, the employee will be entitled to claim redundancy pay. Such pay will be calculated up to the date the original job was declared redundant

7. Selection Criteria: Voluntary Redundancy

- 7.1. As far as possible, objective criteria, precisely defined and capable of being applied in an independent way, should be used when determining which employees are to be selected for redundancy.
- 7.2. Where there is a need to make a selection for redundancy, the following selections will be followed:

- 7.3. Voluntary redundancy: the process by which the employer invites volunteers to nominate themselves for redundancy and makes a discretionary payment to such volunteers in excess of the statutory redundancy payment.
- 7.4. Compulsory selection: Where voluntary redundancy or early retirement have not produced suitable volunteers, employers, in consultation with trade union, or employee representatives, should consider the following criteria to be used when enforcing redundancies:
 - 7.4.1. Skills or experience
 - 7.4.2. Standard of work performance or aptitude for work
 - 7.4.3. Attendance or disciplinary record
 - 7.4.4. This list is not exhaustive and other criteria may be added if needed

8. Statutory Time Off to Find Other Work

- 8.1. Employees who are under notice of redundancy and who qualify for a statutory redundancy payment also have a statutory entitlement to a reasonable amount of time off to look for another job or to arrange training. Such time off must be arranged in advance.

9. Statutory Redundancy Pay

- 9.1. Provided that an employee has at least two years' service, any employee who is dismissed by reason of redundancy will be entitled to a statutory redundancy payment. The statutory redundancy payment is calculated using a formula laid down by the Government. Uppertunity shall notify the employee of any Statutory Redundancy Pay to which he/she is entitled.
- 9.2. The statutory redundancy payment is calculated as follows:
 - 9.2.1. Half a week's pay for each complete year of continuous service up to the age of 21
 - 9.2.2. One week's pay for each complete year of continuous service between the ages of 22 and 40
 - 9.2.3. One and a half week's pay for each complete year of continuous service from the age of 41 onwards
 - 9.2.4. The maximum number of year's continuous service that can be counted for statutory redundancy payment purposes is 20, from the relevant date (the date on which the redundancy notice ends)

10. ENHANCED REDUNDANCY PAY

- 10.1. Uppertunity may, in its absolute discretion, offer an enhanced redundancy payment. Any such payment will be additional to the statutory entitlement above
- 10.2. Any payment of enhanced redundancy pay is at the sole and absolute discretion of the organisation. Employees have no contractual right to receive an enhanced redundancy payment.

Employees Training and Development Policy

1. Induction

- 1.1. It is the policy of Uppertunity that all staff and volunteers will receive a general induction on:
 - 1.1.1. the aims and objectives of the organisation
 - 1.1.2. the nature and operation of the programme or activity for which they are recruited
 - 1.1.3. a specific orientation on the purposes and requirements of the position which they are to fill
 - 1.1.4. the organisations handbook and all the relevant policies
 - 1.1.5. training relevant to their post

2. On-The-Job Training

- 2.1. Uppertunity requires that all staff and volunteers receive specific on-the-job training to provide them with the information and skills necessary to perform their task including first aid and/or REHIS
- 2.2. The timing and methods for delivery of such training should be appropriate to the complexity and demands of the position and the capabilities of the volunteer. Uppertunity requires, dependant on individual situations, that all staff and volunteers complete the necessary training within a year of starting their post.

3. Mentoring and Supervision

- 3.1. Each staff member will be assigned a supervisor or line manager who will provide support and mentoring during the individual's connection with the organisation. Uppertunity requires that the supervisor and staff member have official supervision sessions every 3 months, where they discuss current and future progress, and share any concerns. Uppertunity would like to make staff and volunteers aware that mentoring and support is readily available to them at all times.

4. Staff Involvement in Orientation and Training

- 4.1. Uppertunity requires that staff members with responsibility for delivery of services should have an active role in the design and delivery of both orientation and training of volunteers and new staff.

5. Continuing Education

- 5.1. Staff and volunteers should attempt to improve their levels of skill during their terms of service. Uppertunity requires that additional training and educational opportunities should be made available to staff and volunteers during their connection with the organisation. This continuing education may include both additional information on performance of their current assignment as well as more general information and might be provided either by the organisation or by

assisting the volunteer to participate in educational programmes provided by other groups.

6. Conference Attendance

6.1. Uppertunity encourages staff and volunteers to attend conferences and meetings which are relevant to their assignment and roles, including both those of the group and of other organisations. Uppertunity requires that prior approval from the staff or volunteer's supervisor should be obtained before attending any conference or meeting if attendance will interfere with their work schedule or if reimbursement of expenses is required.