

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ASCB & PERSONNEL OF ACCREDITED BODIES

FORWARD

The rights and standards set out in this document are designed as a central part of the Accreditation Service for Certifying Bodies LLC (ASCB), programme to improve its own service and that of its accredited bodies to the business community.

ASCB and its accredited bodies are firmly committed to improving their service. This means a service that:

- always puts the client first, providing services that meet clearly defined standards or contract conditions, in ways responsive to business views and needs.
- produces clear, measurable benefits to business, with emphasis on the promotion of good practice rather than the avoidance of poor.
- is highly efficient, representing good value for money, achieved through good management.
- respects and values the skills and knowledge of clients.

HOW THIS AFFECTS CLIENTS

This document sets out clearly client rights to service in the discharge of contracts.

THE CLIENT'S RIGHTS

1. To receive a professional level of care on the basis of business needs and desires.
2. To be given detailed information on quality services, including quality standards, project timescales and costs.
3. To receive advice at any time through the ASCB or body staff if contracted to supply it.
4. To be assigned a prime point of contact, acceptable to the client, and to be assigned a second person if the client and the initial contact agree this is of benefit to the client.
5. To be guaranteed appointments for visits on a specific date and time.
6. To be given a clear explanation of any proposed service, including foreseeable risks and realistic alternatives, before the client decides to implement recommendations.
7. To have any complaint about our services - whoever provides them - investigated and to receive a full and prompt written reply from the Managing Director/CEO initially of the body and finally from ASCB.
8. To have access to their records, and to know that those working for them are under a duty of care to keep the records confidential.
9. To choose whether or not they wish to take part in technical research or training.
10. To be served by a person who shall observe fully the requirements of the Code of Conduct.

CLIENT STANDARDS

There are eight standards for the service ASCB and its accredited bodies provide.

1. *Recommendations shall be achievable.* Client businesses should not be recommended actions or solutions beyond capability to implement.
2. *Completion of Projects.* Before the project terminates a decision will be made about any continuing relationship or other needs the client may have. The relevant contact will agree arrangements for meeting these.
3. *A named qualified person responsible for each client.* ASCB and its accredited bodies should provide a named, qualified person who will be responsible for the client business project.
4. *Appointment times.* Accredited bodies and ASCB will agree a specific appointment time and meet at that time.
5. *Cancellation of meetings.* The accredited body or ASCB contact will not cancel on the day of the meeting.
6. *Waiting time for service.* When clients call accredited bodies or ASCB offices, technical assistance should be provided within a specified time.
7. *Arrangements to ensure clients, including those employing people with special needs, can use services.* Accredited Bodies and ASCB contacts will ensure that the services they arrange can be used by the employees of the client.
8. *Respect for privacy, dignity and religious and cultural beliefs.* All accredited bodies and ASCB services will make provision so that proper personal consideration is shown, for example by ensuring that privacy, dignity and religious and cultural beliefs are respected.

CODE OF CONDUCT

1. Accredited bodies and ASCB personnel shall act in a trustworthy and unbiased manner in relation to clients, and any companies involved in service by them.
2. Accredited bodies and ASCB personnel shall not accept payment, gift, commission, discount nor shall they profit in any way from companies serviced, from their representatives, or other interested person.
3. Accredited bodies and ASCB shall disclose to their clients any relevant relationships they may have with other organisations before undertaking any work.
4. Accredited bodies and ASCB shall not disclose the findings, or any part of them or any other information gained in the course of service to any third party, unless authorised in writing by the client.
5. Accredited bodies and ASCB shall not act in any way prejudicial to the reputation or the interest of clients or of companies serviced on their behalf.
6. Accredited bodies and ASCB shall, in the event of any alleged breach of this code, co-operate fully in any formal enquiry procedure operated by ASCB the client, or by a mutually nominated professional body.
7. Accredited bodies and ASCB shall comply with their procedural documentation.

PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS

Assessment and Certification and Consultancy will not on its own achieve anything for client businesses.

Clients meet their goals themselves but with accredited body and ASCB assistance.

Professional services will:

- Help clarify the mission.
- Help set objectives.
- Assist in defining strategy.
- Make available skills, knowledge and specialist advice.
- Discharge some tasks.

Allocating a sum of money to a project is not enough, Clients have to allocate time as well. Often what they want is not always what they need. Clients should therefore look for a change as the most tangible result of professional services

Clients should expect:

- Firm direction.
- Positive statements.
- Prompt response.
- Some form of guarantee.
- Civility.
- Empathy, not sympathy.
- Effective project management.

With accredited bodies and ASCB, clients will also receive the commitment and action of all their joint employees, i.e. their whole teams. Client goals are our joint goals. Client objectives are our joint objectives. Client satisfaction is essential to our joint mission.

FEEDBACK

Clients should be encouraged to pass on their views to enable us to develop our standards.

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