



## TERMS AND CONDITIONS

### **Introduction**

These terms and conditions set out the general terms under which we undertake our business. Specific conditions relating to particular assignments will be covered in separate engagement letters.

### **Applicable law**

This engagement letter, the schedule of services and our standard terms and conditions of business are governed by, and should be construed in accordance with, the law and practice of England and Wales. Each party agrees that the Courts of England and Wales will have exclusive jurisdiction in relation to any claim, dispute or difference concerning this engagement letter and any matter arising from it. Each party irrevocably waives any right to object to any action being brought in those Courts, to claim that the action has been brought in an inappropriate forum, or to claim that those courts do not have jurisdiction.

### **Bribery Act 2010**

In accordance with the requirements of the Bribery Act 2010 we have policies and procedures in place to prevent the business and its partners and staff from offering or receiving bribes.

### **Client identification and verification**

As with other professional services firms, we are required to identify and verify our clients for the purposes of the UK anti-money laundering legislation. Save in exceptional circumstances we cannot start work until this requirement has been met. We may request from you, and retain, such information and documentation as we require for these purposes and/or make searches of appropriate databases including ID verification software.

### **Client monies**

We may, from time to time, hold money on your behalf. Such money will be held in trust in a client bank account, which is segregated from the firm's funds. The account will be operated, and all funds dealt with, in accordance with the Clients' Monies Rules of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants. These rules can be found on the ACCA website at <http://www.accaglobal.com/en.html>.

We will return monies held on your behalf promptly as soon as there is no longer any reason to retain those funds. If any funds remain in our client account that are unclaimed and the client to which they relate has remained untraced for five years or we as a firm cease to practise, then we may pay those monies to a registered charity.

Fees paid by you in advance for professional work to be performed and clearly identifiable as such shall not be regarded as clients' monies.

### **Commissions or other benefits**

In some circumstances, commissions or other benefits may become payable to us in respect of transactions which we arrange for you. Where this happens, we will notify you in writing of the amount and terms of payment. The same will apply where the payment is made to or transactions are arranged by a person or business connected with ours. We will not reduce the fees we would otherwise charge by the amount of the commissions or benefits.

**You agree that we can retain any commission or other benefits without being liable to you for any such amounts.**

### **Confidentiality**

Communication between us is confidential and we shall take all reasonable steps to keep confidential your information except where we are required to disclose it by law, by regulatory bodies, by our insurers or as part of an external peer review. Unless we are authorised by you to disclose information on your behalf this undertaking will apply during and after this engagement.

We may, on occasions, subcontract work on your affairs to other tax or accounting professionals. The subcontractors will be bound by our client confidentiality terms.

### **Conflicts of interest**

If there is a conflict of interest in our relationship with you or in our relationship with you and another client that is capable of being addressed successfully by the adoption of suitable safeguards to protect your interests, then we will adopt those safeguards.

Where conflicts are identified that cannot be managed in a way that protects your interests then we regret that we will be unable to provide further services. If this arises, we will inform you promptly. We reserve the right to act for other clients whose interests are not the same as or are adverse to yours, subject, of course, to the obligations of confidentiality referred to above.

### **Consumer credit**

If, during the provision of professional services to you, you need advice or services on areas from us that fall within Consumer Credit activity, we may have to refer you to someone who is authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) as we are not authorised to undertake this activity.

### **Data Protection**

We confirm that we will comply with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) when processing personal data.

Processing means:

- obtaining, recording or holding personal data; or
- carrying out any operation or set of operations on personal data, including collecting and storage, organising, adapting, altering, using, disclosure (by any means) or removing (by any means) from the records manual and digital.

The information we obtain, process, use and disclose will be necessary for:

- the performance of the contract

- to comply with our legal and regulatory compliance and crime prevention
- contacting you with details of other services where you have consented to us doing so
- other legitimate interests relating to protection against potential claims and disciplinary action against us.

This includes, but is not limited to, purposes such as updating and enhancing our client records, analysis for management purposes and statutory returns.

In regard to our professional obligations we are a member firm of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA). Under the ethical and regulatory rules of ACCA I am required to allow access to client files and records for the purpose of maintaining our membership of this body.

Further details on the processing of data are contained in our privacy notice, which should be read alongside these terms and conditions.

### **Electronic and other communication**

As instructed, we will communicate with you and with any third parties you instruct us to as set out in our covering letter and privacy notice via email or by other electronic means. The recipient is responsible for virus-checking emails and any attachments.

With electronic communication there is a risk of non-receipt, delayed receipt, inadvertent misdirection or interception by third parties. We use virus-scanning software to reduce the risk of viruses and similar damaging items being transmitted through emails or electronic storage devices. However, electronic communication is not totally secure and we cannot be held responsible for damage or loss caused by viruses, nor for communications that are corrupted or altered after despatch. Nor can we accept any liability for problems or accidental errors relating to this means of communication, especially in relation to commercially sensitive material. These are risks you must accept in return for greater efficiency and lower costs. If you do not wish to accept these risks, please let us know and we will communicate by hard copy, other than where electronic submission is mandatory.

Any communication by us with you sent through the post or DX system is deemed to arrive at your postal address two working days after the day that the document was sent.

When accessing information held electronically by HMRC, we may have access to more information than we need and will only access records reasonably required to carry out the contract.

You are required to keep us up to date with accurate contact details at all times. This is important to ensure that communications and papers are not sent to the incorrect address.

### **Fees and payment terms**

Our fees may depend not only upon the time spent on your affairs but also on the level of skill and responsibility and the importance and value of the advice that we provide, as well as the level of risk.

If we provide you with an estimate of our fees for any specific work, then the estimate will not be contractually binding unless we explicitly state that that will be the case.

Where requested we may indicate a fixed fee for the provision of specific services or an indicative range of fees for a particular assignment. It is not our practice to identify fixed fees for more than a year ahead as such fee quotes need to be reviewed in the light of events. If it becomes apparent to us, due to unforeseen circumstances, that a fee quote is inadequate, we reserve the right to notify you of a revised figure or range and to seek your agreement thereto.

In some cases, you may be entitled to assistance with your professional fees, particularly in relation to any investigation into your tax affairs by HMRC. Assistance may be provided through insurance policies you hold or via membership of a professional or trade body. Other than where such assurance was

arranged through us, you will need to advise us of any insurance cover that you have. Please note, you will remain liable for our fees regardless.

Our invoices are due for payment within seven days. Our fees are exclusive of VAT which will be added where it is chargeable. Any disbursements we incur on your behalf and expenses incurred in the course of carrying out our work for you will be added to our invoices where appropriate.

Unless otherwise agreed to the contrary our fees do not include the costs of any third party, counsel or other professional fees.

It is our normal practice to issue "Applications for Payment" when dealing with continuous or recurring work. The payment terms for "Applications for Payment" are the same as for invoiced fees.

You authorise us to settle our agreed fees from any money held on your behalf in the client account.

We reserve the right to suspend our services or to cease to act for you on giving written notice if payment of any fees is unduly delayed. We intend to exercise these rights only where it is fair and reasonable to do so.

If you do not accept that an invoiced fee is fair and reasonable you must notify us within 21 days of receipt, failing which you will be deemed to have accepted that payment is due.

In the case of a dispute over the level of fees charged we reserve the right to require that the matter is dealt with through arbitration. We recommend that arbitration is undertaken by the fee arbitration service provided by ACCA for members. The fee arbitrator will be appointed by the ACCA president; the fee will be as negotiated with the ACCA arbitrator.

### **Implementation**

We will only assist with implementation of our advice if specifically instructed and agreed in writing.

### **Intellectual property rights**

We will retain all copyright in any document prepared by us during the course of carrying out the engagement save where the law specifically provides otherwise.

### **Interpretation**

If any provision of this engagement letter, schedules of services or standard terms and conditions is held to be void, then that provision will be deemed not to form part of this contract and the remainder of this agreement shall be interpreted as if such provision had never been inserted.

In the event of any conflict between these terms of business and the engagement letter or appendices, the relevant provision in the engagement letter or schedules will take precedence.

### **Internal disputes**

If we become aware of a dispute between the parties who own or are in some way involved in the ownership and management of the business, it should be noted that our client is the business and we would not provide information or services to one party without the express knowledge and permission of all parties.

## **Investment services**

Investment business is regulated under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 and the Financial Services Act 2012.

If, during the provision of professional services to you, you need advice on investments, including insurances, we may have to refer you to someone who is authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority or the Prudential Regulation Authority or licensed by a Designated Professional Body as we are not authorised to give such advice.

## **Lien**

In so far as permitted to do so by law or professional guidelines, we reserve the right to exercise a lien over all funds, documents and records in our possession relating to all engagements for you until all outstanding fees and disbursements are paid in full.

## **Limitation of liability**

We will provide our services with reasonable care and skill. Our liability to you is limited to losses, damages, costs and expenses directly caused by our negligence or wilful default.

### Exclusion of liability for loss caused by others

We will not be liable if such losses, penalties, interest or additional tax liabilities are caused by the acts or omissions of any other person or due to the provision to us of incomplete, misleading or false information, or if they are caused by a failure to act on our advice or a failure to provide us with relevant information.

In particular, where we refer you to another firm whom you engage with directly, we accept no responsibility in relation to their work and will not be liable for any loss caused by them.

### Exclusion of liability in relation to circumstances beyond our control

We will not be liable to you for any delay or failure to perform our obligations under this engagement letter if the delay or failure is caused by circumstances outside our reasonable control.

### Exclusion of liability relating to non-disclosure or misrepresentation

We will not be responsible or liable for any loss, damage or expense incurred or sustained if information material to the service we are providing is withheld or concealed from us or misrepresented to us.

This exclusion shall not apply where such misrepresentation, withholding or concealment is or should (in carrying out the procedures that we have agreed to perform with reasonable care and skill) have been evident to us without further enquiry beyond that which it would have been reasonable for us to have carried out in the circumstances.

### Indemnity for unauthorised disclosure

You agree to indemnify us and our agents in respect of any claim (including any claim for negligence) arising out of any unauthorised disclosure by you or by any person for whom you are responsible of our advice and opinions, whether in writing or otherwise. This indemnity will extend to the cost of defending any such claim, including payment at our usual rates for the time that we spend in defending it.

### Limitation of aggregate liability

Where the engagement letter specifies an aggregate limit of liability, then that sum shall be the maximum aggregate liability of this company, its directors and employees to all persons to whom the engagement letter is addressed and also any other person that we have agreed with you may rely on our work. By signing the engagement letter, you agree that you have given proper consideration to this limit and accept that it is reasonable in all the circumstances. If you do not wish to accept it you should contact us to discuss it before signing the engagement letter.

You have agreed that you will not bring any claim of a kind that is included within the subject of the limit against any of our directors or employees; on a personal basis.

### **Limitation of Third Party Rights**

The advice and information we provide to you as part of our service is for your sole use and not for any third party to whom you may communicate it unless we have expressly agreed in the engagement letter that a specified third party may rely on our work. We accept no responsibility to third parties, including any group company to whom the engagement letter is not addressed, for any advice, information or material produced as part of our work for you which you make available to them. It may not be used or relied upon for any other purpose or by any other person other than you without our prior written consent. A party to this agreement is the only person who has the right under the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999 to enforce any of its terms.

If our advice is disclosed to any third party (with or without our consent), then we accept no responsibility or liability to that third party for any consequences that may arise to them, should they rely on the advice.

If it is proposed that any documents or statement which refer to our name are to be circulated to third parties, please consult us before they are issued.

### **Money Laundering Regulations 2017**

In accordance with the Proceeds of Crime Act, The Terrorism Act, Money Laundering Regulations 2017 and The Money Laundering, Terrorist Financing and Transfer of Funds (Information on the Payer) Regulations 2017 you agree to waive your right to confidentiality to the extent of any report made, document provided or information disclosed to the National Crime Agency (NCA).

You also acknowledge that we are required to report directly to the NCA without prior reference to you or your representatives if, during the course of undertaking any assignment, the person undertaking the role of Money Laundering Reporting Officer becomes suspicious of money laundering.

As with other professional services firms, we are required to have appropriate risk based policies and procedures for assessing and managing money laundering risks: this applies at the start of any business relationship and through the lifetime of the relationship. This includes undertaking appropriate customer due diligence. We may request from you, and retain, such information and documentation as we require for these purposes and/or make searches of appropriate databases. If we are not able to obtain satisfactory evidence of your identity, we will not be able to proceed with the engagement.

Copies of such records created as part of the client due diligence process, including any non-engagement documents relating to the client relationship and ongoing monitoring of it, will be retained by us for a period of five years after we cease to act for the business unless we are required to retain them under statutory obligation, or to retain them for legal proceedings, or you consented to the retention in which case the records will be retained for not more than 10 years.

## **Notification**

We shall not be treated as having notice, for the purposes of our accounts and tax responsibilities, of information provided to members of our firm other than those engaged on the specific assignment (for example, information provided in connection with accounting, taxation and other services).

## **Professional rules and statutory obligations**

We will observe and act in accordance with the by-laws, regulations and ethical guidelines of the [Association of Chartered Certified Accountants \(ACCA\)](#) and will accept instructions to act for you on this basis.

You are responsible for bringing to our attention any errors, omissions or inaccuracies in your returns that you become aware of after the returns have been submitted in order that we may assist you to make a voluntary disclosure.

In particular, you give us the authority to correct errors made by HMRC where we become aware of them. In addition, we will not undertake tax planning which breaches professional conduct in relation to taxation. We will therefore comply with the general anti-abuse rule and the targeted anti-avoidance rule. We will not be liable for any loss, damage or cost arising from our compliance with statutory or regulatory obligations. You can see copies of these requirements at our offices.

The requirements are also available online at [www.accaglobal.com/en.html](http://www.accaglobal.com/en.html).

The implications of professional body membership as it relates to GDPR are set out in the privacy notice, which should be read alongside these standard terms and conditions of business.

## **Provision of Services Regulations 2009**

In accordance with our professional body rules we are required to hold professional indemnity insurance. Details about the insurer and coverage can be found at our office.

## **Quality control**

As part of our ongoing commitment to providing a quality service, our files are periodically reviewed by an independent regulatory or quality control body. These reviewers are highly experienced and professional people and, of course, are bound by the same rules for confidentiality as our principles.

## **Quality of service**

We aim to provide a high quality of service at all times. If you would like to discuss with us how our service could be improved or if you are dissatisfied with the service that you are receiving please let us know by contacting Nicholas Stark.

We undertake to investigate any complaint carefully and promptly and to do all we can to explain the position to you. If we do not answer your complaint to your satisfaction you may take up the matter with the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants. This should be done promptly and in any event no later than 6 months after exhausting our procedures.

Should ACCA consider a complaint appropriate for conciliation, it is competent to offer alternative dispute resolution through its Conciliation Service. ACCA's website address is [www.accaglobal.com](http://www.accaglobal.com). Please note that, under the Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes (Competent Authorities and Information) conciliation process we are not obliged to submit to ACCA's conciliation process.

## **Reliance on advice**

We will endeavour to record all advice on important matters in writing. Advice given orally is not intended to be relied upon unless confirmed in writing. Therefore, if we provide oral advice (for example during the course of a meeting or a telephone conversation) and you wish to be able to rely on that advice, you must ask for the advice to be confirmed by us in writing. However, bear in mind that advice is only valid at the date it is given.

## **Retention of papers**

You have a legal responsibility to retain documents and records relevant to your tax affairs. During the course of our work we may collect information from you and others relevant to your affairs. We will return any original documents to you if requested.

When we cease to act for you we will seek to agree the position on access to cloud-accounting records to ensure continuity of service. This may require you to enter direct engagements with the software providers and pay for that service separately. Documents and records relevant to your affairs are required by law to be retained as follows:

### Individuals, trustees and partnerships

- with trading or rental income: 5 years and 10 months after the end of the tax year;
- otherwise: 22 months after the end of the tax year;

### Companies, LLPs and other corporate entities

- 6 years from the end of the accounting period;

While certain documents may legally belong to you, we may destroy correspondence and other papers that we store, electronically or otherwise, which are more than seven years old. This includes your documents if they have not been reclaimed by you within the seven-year period. You must tell us if you require the return of any specific document or their retention for a longer period.

You should retain documents that are sent to you by us as set out in the privacy notice, which should be read alongside these terms and conditions.

## **Timetable**

The services we undertake to perform for you will be carried out on a timescale to be determined by us on an ongoing basis.

The timing of our work will in any event be dependent on the prompt supply of all information and documentation as and when required by us.

## **Agreement of Terms**

Once it has been agreed, this letter will remain effective, from the date of the signature, until it is replaced or terminated. Either party may vary or terminate our authority to act on your behalf at any time without penalty. Notice of termination must be given in writing.

Would you confirm your agreement to the terms and conditions set out by this letter by signing and returning the enclosed copy. If anything is unclear to you or you require further information, please let us know.