



## **STANDARD TERMS OF BUSINESS**

### **1 Applicable law**

- 1.1 This engagement letter shall be governed by, and construed in accordance with English law. The Courts of England shall have exclusive jurisdiction in relation to any claim, dispute or difference concerning the engagement letter (including the firm's terms of business) and any matter arising from it. Each party irrevocably waives any right it may have to object to an action being brought in those Courts, to claim that the action has been brought in an inconvenient forum, or to claim that those Courts do not have jurisdiction.
- 1.2 Persons who are not party to this agreement shall have no rights under the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999 to enforce any term of this agreement. This clause does not affect any right or remedy of any person which exists or is available otherwise than pursuant to that Act.
- 1.3 The advice we give you is for your sole use and is confidential to you and will not constitute advice for any third party to whom you may communicate it. We will accept no responsibility to third parties for any aspect of our professional services or work that is made available to them.
- 1.4 We will not accept responsibility if you act on advice previously given by us without first confirming with us that the advice is still valid in the light of any change in the law or your circumstances. We will accept no liability for losses arising from changes in the law or the interpretation thereof that occur after the date on which the advice is given.

### **2 Client identification**

- 2.1 In common with all accountancy and legal practices, the firm is required by law to:

- Maintain identification procedures for clients and beneficial owners of clients;
- Maintain records of identification evidence and the work undertaken for the client; and
- Report, in accordance with the relevant legislation and regulations.

2.2 We may use electronic checks as part of our identification procedures. We confirm that these electronic checks are not credit checks.

### **3 Quality of service**

3.1 We aim to provide you with a fully satisfactory service. If at any time you would like to discuss with us how our service to you could be improved, or if you are dissatisfied with the service you are receiving, please let us know by contacting Helen Williams. We undertake to look into any complaint carefully and promptly and to do all we can to explain the position to you. We will acknowledge your letter within five business days of its receipt and endeavour to deal with your complaint within eight weeks. If we do not answer your complaint to your satisfaction you may of course take up the matter with the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW).

3.2 For consumer agreements, should we be unable to resolve your complaint you may also be able to refer your complaint to an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) provider to try and reach a resolution. We will provide details of an ADR provider if we cannot resolve your complaint using our internal procedures. This is in addition to your ability to complain to ICAEW.

3.3 We are not licensed or authorised for the reserved legal activity of non-contentious probate. Consequently, any work we do for you on closely aligned activities, such as estate administration or inheritance tax advice, will not be covered by the ICAEW Probate Compensation Scheme, this service will not be covered by legal personal privilege and you will not have access to the Legal Ombudsman.

### **4 Client monies**

4.1 We are not authorised to hold money on your behalf. Therefore, any monies sent to us in error will be returned promptly.

### **5 Commissions or other benefits**

- 5.1 In some circumstances, commissions or other benefits may become payable to us or one of our associates in respect of transactions we or such associates arrange for you. If this happens we will notify you in writing of the amount and terms of payment. The nature of the engagement and professional judgement would determine the frequency and detail required to ensure compliance with our Code of Ethics. The fees that would be otherwise payable by you will not be abated by such amounts. You consent to such commission or other benefits being retained by us or, as the case may be, by our associates, without our, or their, being liable to account to you for any such amounts.
- 5.2 If in the future, abnormally large commissions are received which were not envisaged when the engagement letter was signed, we will obtain specific consent to the retention of those commissions.

## **6 Investment advice**

- 6.1 We are not authorised to conduct Investment Business. If you require investment business services we will refer you to a firm authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority or licensed by a Designated Professional Body'.

## **7 Fees and payment terms**

- 7.1 Our fees may depend not only on the time spent on your affairs by the directors and our staff and on the levels of skill and responsibility involved, but also the level of risk identified and any advice provided. Unless otherwise agreed, our fees will be billed at appropriate intervals during the course of the year and will be due on presentation.
- 7.2 We normally indicate a fixed fee for the provision of specific services. We will not usually identify fixed fees for more than a year in advance as these may need to be revised in light of subsequent events. Otherwise, our fees will be based on the hours worked by each member of staff necessarily engaged on your affairs, multiplied by their charge-out rate per hour, VAT being charged thereon.
- 7.3 If it is necessary to carry out work outside the responsibilities outlined in this letter it will involve additional fees. Accordingly, we would like to point out that it is in your interests to ensure that your records etc., are completed to the agreed stage.

- 7.4 Our fees will normally include out of pocket expenses. If they are not this will be clearly communicated with you and out of pocket expenses (plus VAT (if applicable)) will be billed as incurred for reimbursement by you.
- 7.5 Invoices are payable in full before the report is signed and the accounts are made available for filing.
- 7.6 Our terms relating to payment of amounts invoiced and not covered by standing orders, where appropriate, are strictly 30 days net. Interest will be charged on all overdue debts at the rate for the time being applicable under the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998, whichever is the higher.
- 7.7 In the event that we cease to act for you then you agree to meet all reasonable costs of providing information to your new advisers. In particular to meet these costs where we are required by law to provide information to a successor firm.

## **8 Retention of and access to records**

- 8.1 During the course of our work we will collect information from you and others acting on your behalf and will return any original documents to you following the preparation of your accounts and returns.
- 8.2 Whilst certain documents may legally belong to you, we intend to destroy correspondence and other papers that we store which are more than seven years old, other than documents which we consider to be of continuing significance. If you require retention of any document you must notify us of that fact in writing.

## **9 Lien**

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

## **10 Electronic communication**

- 10.1 Internet communications are capable of data corruption and therefore we do not accept any responsibility for changes made to such communications after their despatch. It

may therefore be inappropriate to rely on advice contained in an e-mail without obtaining written confirmation of it. We do not accept responsibility for any errors or problems that may arise through the use of internet communication and all risks connected with sending commercially sensitive information relating to your business are borne by you. If you do not agree to accept this risk, you should notify us in writing that e-mail is not an acceptable means of communication.

10.2 It is the responsibility of the recipient to carry out a virus check on any attachments received.

## **11 Data Protection**

11.1 To enable us to discharge the services agreed in this engagement letter, comply with related legal and regulatory obligations and for other related purposes including updating and enhancing client records and analysis for management purposes, as a data controller, we may obtain, use, process and disclose personal data about you / your business / company / partnership / its shareholders / members / officers and employees as described in our privacy notice. We confirm when processing data on your behalf that we will comply with the provisions of all relevant data protection legislation and regulation<sup>1</sup>.

11.2 You are also an independent controller responsible for complying with data protection legislation and regulation in respect of the personal data you process and, accordingly where you disclose personal data to us you confirm that such disclosure is fair and lawful and otherwise does not contravene relevant requirements. Nothing within this engagement letter relieves you as a data controller of your own direct responsibilities and liabilities under data protection legislation and regulation.

11.3 Our privacy notice, which can be found on our website at [www.derwenaccountancy.co.uk](http://www.derwenaccountancy.co.uk) explains how we process personal data in respect of the various services that we provide.

11.4 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 us.

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<sup>1</sup> Including the Data Protection Act 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and any related regulations.

*Processing of customer personal data (if applicable)*

- 11.5 Data protection legislation and regulation places obligations on you as a data controller where we act as a data processor to undertake the processing of personal data on your behalf, for instance where we operate a payroll service for you. We therefore confirm that we will at all times take appropriate measures to comply with relevant requirements when processing data on your behalf. In particular we confirm that we have adequate security measures in place and that we will comply with any obligations equivalent to those placed on you as a data controller. Terms relating to our responsibilities as a data processor are set out in paragraphs 11.6 to 11.9 below.
- 11.6 In respect of the client personal data, unless otherwise required by applicable laws or other regulatory requirements, we shall:
- 11.6.1 Process the client personal data only in accordance with your lawful written instructions, in order to provide you with the services pursuant to our engagement with you and in accordance with applicable data protection legislation;
  - 11.6.2 Disclose and transfer the client personal data to our regulatory bodies or other third parties (for example, our professional advisors or service providers) as and to the extent necessary in order to provide you with the services pursuant to our engagement with you in relation to those services;
  - 11.6.3 Disclose the client personal data to courts, government agencies and other third parties as and to the extent required by law;
  - 11.6.4 Maintain written records of our processing activities performed on your behalf which shall include: (i) the categories of processing activities performed; (ii) details of any cross-border data transfers outside of the European Economic Area (EEA); and (iii) a general description of security measures implemented in respect of the client personal data;
  - 11.6.5 Maintain commercially reasonable and appropriate security measures, including administrative, physical and technical safeguards, to protect against unauthorised or unlawful processing of any client personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, such client personal data.

11.6.6 Return or delete all the client personal data upon the termination of the engagement with you pursuant to which we agreed to provide the services;

11.6.7 Ensure that only those personnel who need to have access to the client personal data are granted access to it and that all of the personnel authorised to process the client personal data are bound by a duty of confidentiality;

11.6.8 Notify you if we appoint a sub-processor (but only if you have given us your prior written consent, such consent not to be reasonably withheld or delayed) and ensure any agreement entered into with the relevant sub-processor includes similar terms as the terms set out in this section;

11.6.9 Where we transfer the client personal data to a country or territory outside the EEA to do so in accordance with data protection legislation;

11.6.10 Notify you promptly if:

- We receive a request, complaint or any adverse correspondence from or on behalf of a relevant data subject, to exercise their data subject rights under the data protection legislation or in respect of the client personal data; or
- We are served with an information or assessment notice, or receive any other material communication in respect of our processing of the client personal data from a supervisory body (for example, the Information Commissioner's Office);

11.6.11 Notify you, without undue delay, in the event that we reasonably believe that there has been a personal data breach in respect of the client personal data; and

11.6.12 At your cost and upon receipt of your prior written notice, allow you, on an annual basis and/or in the event that we notify you of personal data breach in respect of the client personal data, reasonable access to the relevant records, files, computer or other communication systems, for the purposes of reviewing our compliance with the data protection laws.

11.7 Without prejudice to the generality of clause 11.1, you will ensure that you have all necessary appropriate consents and notices in place to enable the lawful transfer of the client personal data to us.

11.8 Should you require any further details regarding our treatment of personal data, please contact our data controller.

11.9 The following details are also required by Article 28(3) of the GDPR:

**11.9.1 Subject matter and duration of the processing of client personal data**

The subject matter and duration of the processing of the client personal data are set out in an engagement letter between us and relate to provision of payroll services.

**11.9.2 The nature and purpose of the processing of client personal data**

The processing of client personal data is in order to calculate payroll and deductions and arrange payments to HMRC and the employees of your company.

**11.9.3 The types of client personal data to be processed**

Personal Data:

- Full name
- Date of birth
- Home address
- National Insurance number
- Tax code
- Salary

**11.9.4 The categories of data subject to whom the client personal data relates**

The client personal data relates to employees of your company.

**12 Professional rules and practice guidelines**

12.1 We will observe and act in accordance with the bye-laws, regulations and Code of Ethics of the ICAEW and accept instructions to act for you on this basis. In particular

you give us the authority to correct errors made by HMRC where we become aware of them. 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 in our offices. The requirements are also available on the internet at [www.icaew.com/regulations](http://www.icaew.com/regulations).

### **13 Conflicts of interest**

13.1 We reserve the right during our engagement with you to deliver services to other clients whose interests might compete with yours or are or may be adverse to yours. Subject to our confidentiality clause, we confirm that we will notify you immediately should we become aware of any conflict of interest involving us and affecting the company.

13.2 If a conflict of interest should arise, either between two or more of our clients, or in the provision of multiple services to a single client, we will take such steps as are necessary to deal with the conflict. In resolving the conflict, we would be guided by our Code of Ethics which can be viewed on the internet at the address above, in part B, sub-section 220.

13.3 Communication between us is confidential and we shall take all reasonable steps to keep your information confidential except where we are required to disclose it by law, by regulatory bodies, by our insurers or as part of an external peer review. We may, on occasions, subcontract work on your affairs to other tax or accounting professionals. Any subcontractors we use will be bound by the same confidentiality requirements

### **14 The Provision of Services Regulations 2009**

14.1 Our professional indemnity insurer is Direct Line for Business, of the Wharf, Neville Street, Leeds LS1 4AZ. The territorial coverage is worldwide excluding professional business carried out from an office in the United States of America or Canada and excludes any action for a claim brought in any court in the United States or Canada. If for any reason circumstances arise that may result in a claim to our professional indemnity insurers, you give us your permission to notify them.

14.2 We confirm we are registered with the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales as Chartered Accountants and can be found on the register at <http://find.icaew.com/> using our firm name and location.

## **15 Timing of our services**

15.1 If you provide us with all information and explanations on a timely basis in accordance with our requirements, we will plan to undertake the work within a reasonable period of time in order to meet any regulatory deadlines. However, failure to complete our services prior to any such regulatory deadline would not, of itself, mean that we are liable for any penalty or additional costs arising.

## **16 Use of our name in statements or documents issued by you**

16.1 You are not permitted to use our name in any statement or document that you may issue unless our prior written consent has been obtained. The only exception to this restriction would be statements or documents that in accordance with applicable law are to be made public.

16.2 The copyright in any document prepared by us belongs to us in entirety unless the law specifically provides otherwise.

## **17 Interpretation**

17.1 If there is a conflict between an engagement letter schedule and these terms of business then the engagement letter takes precedence.

17.2 We will provide services as outlined in this letter with reasonable care and skill. However, to the fullest extent permitted by law, we will not be responsible for any losses, penalties, surcharges, interest or additional tax liabilities where you or others supply incorrect or incomplete information, or fail to supply any appropriate information or where you fail to act on our advice or respond promptly to communications from us or the tax authorities.

17.3 You will not hold us, the owners of this firm and any staff employed by the firm, responsible, to the fullest extent permitted by law, for any loss suffered by you arising from any misrepresentation (intentional or unintentional) supplied to us orally or in writing in connection with this agreement. You have agreed that you will not bring any claim in connection with services we provide to you against any of the principals or employees personally.

- 17.4 Our work is not, unless there is a legal or regulatory requirement, to be made available to third parties without our written permission and we will accept no responsibility to third parties for any aspect of our professional services or work that is made available to them.
- 17.5 If any provision of this engagement letter or terms of business or its application is held to be invalid, illegal or unenforceable in any respect, the validity, legality or enforceability of any other provision and its application shall not in any way be affected or impaired.
- 17.6 Advice we give you orally should not be relied upon unless we confirm it in writing. We endeavour to record all advice on important matters in writing. However, if you particularly wish to rely upon oral advice we give you during a telephone conversation or a meeting, you must ask for the advice to be confirmed in writing.
- 17.7 We will not accept responsibility if you act on advice previously given by us without first confirming with us that the advice is still valid in the light of any change in the law or your circumstances. We will accept no liability for losses arising from changes in the law or the interpretation thereof that occur after the date on which the advice is given.
- 17.8 Unless specifically instructed and agreed in advance we will not assist with the implementation of our advice.

## **18 Provision of cloud-based services**

- 18.1 Where the firm provides accounting software in the Cloud, this will be provided by a third party (the 'Cloud Supplier'). The third party has signed a confidentiality agreement with the firm to ensure compliance with the relevant clauses in the firm's standard terms of business above, in particular. fees and payment terms (7), Electronic Communication (10), and Data Protection (11).
- 18.2 The service provided by the Cloud Supplier will be a discrete web based hosted facility, and you agree that access will also be provided to the firm and the third party.
- 18.3 The firm cannot be held liable for any interruption of service provided by the Cloud Supplier. However, we will liaise with them regarding the resumption of a normal service as soon as possible.

## **19 Termination of our agreement**

19.1 Either party to these terms of engagement may terminate the agreement by giving not less than 21 days notice in writing to the other party. We may, however, terminate our agreement immediately where you fail to cooperate with us, or we have reason to believe that you have provided us or HMRC with misleading information. Termination will be without prejudice to any rights that may have accrued to either of us prior to termination.

19.2 Should our contract be terminated, we will endeavour to agree with you the arrangements for the completion of work in progress at that time. We may, however, be required for legal or regulatory reasons to cease work immediately. In that event, we shall not be required to carry out further work and shall not be responsible or liable for any consequences arising from termination.

February 2020