

POST
OFFICE[®]

Making things clear

Code of Business Standards

For internal use only

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Introducing the Code

Post Office is unique

A commercial business set apart by its public purpose. We believe in the importance of connecting communities and enhancing the powerful role they play in all our lives. We will stay true to this commitment by meeting customer needs through our unrivalled local presence across the UK.

This statement is underpinned by a set of principles and pledges.

To deliver our purpose we will run our organisation by following four principles:

- Keep customers at the heart of everything we do
- Build relationships based on trust
- Treat everybody with fairness and honesty
- Make a positive social and economic contribution to all the communities in which we work

As an organisation we pledge to:

- Maintain ethical attitudes in our behaviours
- Invest in the organisation to secure the business for the future
- Listen with care to the views of customers, colleagues and others with an interest in Post Office, and support their development

Most importantly, our customers are at the heart of everything we do.



This Code is designed to help you understand Post Office vision and to make sure you know what you need to do to support it. The Code of Business Standards captures our key individual responsibilities and how we behave to make Post Office a success.

GRO

Paula Vennells
Chief Executive

Observing the Code

Post Office has high standards and our customers, clients, colleagues and shareholders have an expectation that they will be treated professionally.

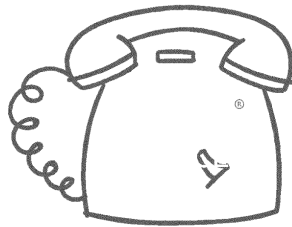
We all have a responsibility to promote the Business Standards and managers should help and encourage their teams to understand and observe the Code. The Code forms part of our company rules which you must adhere to as part of your employment.

The Code is also meant as guidance when difficult situations arise. We all, at some time in our working lives, confront dilemmas about whether an action is right. If you are faced with a dilemma:

- Read the relevant parts of the Code
- Ask yourself whether you could justify your action to your manager, your colleagues and your own conscience
- Think through the likely results of your action for yourself and others

If you are still unsure what is the right thing to do, talk to your manager.

If you discover that the company's standards and reputation are being put at risk by unethical or even criminal behaviour, you should report the facts to a manager. Ignoring bad behaviour is wrong – it can be detrimental to our colleagues, and damage the perception of our brand by our customers, clients and partners. If you feel you can't talk to your own manager, you should talk to a senior manager, or contact the HR helpline. Of course, we realise it isn't always easy reporting unethical or criminal behaviour. If you have any concerns and want to speak to someone confidentially, please contact the Speak Up line on **0800 048 4531**. Please be aware that any breach of this Code may be dealt with under our Conduct Code, and that gross misconduct could result in your dismissal. (Help: Employee Assistance on **0800 6888 777**)



If you have any concerns and want to speak to someone confidentially, please contact the Speak Up line on 0800 048 4531. (Help: Employee Assistance on 0800 6888 777)

Our Brand

For any organisation competing in today's fast-paced world, there's nothing more vital than a powerful brand. And if that brand is clear, relevant, engaging and has a purpose, more and more people will interact with it.

With people like you completely behind it, the Post Office brand will be just that.

- We have a brand that must run through everything we do: our products and services; environments; behaviours; communications; and the way we manage our people
- It builds on our heritage and strengths and helps us stay relevant for our customers in a fast-changing digital world
- We are the brand. We need to live it to deliver consistently for our customers

By brand, we don't just mean a logo, a certain set of colours and a strapline. We mean the services we provide; the way we deliver them; the perceptions of those who use us, and of course the people like you who represent us. We mean the way we do business.

So, what does our brand say to people? What does it promise?

We're here to help make the important things in life happen for our customers. We make it easy, as life is complicated enough. Whether it's sending money for a loved one's birthday, calling them to show you care, travelling to far-flung places, or getting your broadband connected, we remove the stress and complexity of sorting them.



To make our brand strategy succeed we need engaged and high performing people.

Our experience needs to be shaped by our core values of **Care, Challenge and Commit**. We make that happen by having a set of straightforward business behaviours which inform the way we do things.

We use them to improve things like our people processes such as recruitment, learning and development, talent and performance management. In short, it's how we do things in this business so we deliver our brand consistently to customers.

Our behaviours

The behaviour	How we see it day-to-day
I wow the customer	Everyone paying close attention to their customers – both internal and external – earning and growing their loyalty and trust
I deliver results with pace	Everyone taking personal accountability for their performance, delivering results decisively and responsibly
I know the numbers	Using robust and relevant information to inform business decisions
I work with others	Great solutions through great teamworking
I challenge to make us more efficient	Always looking for better ways of doing things and removing barriers to success
I develop myself and others	We all take accountability both for our own development and supporting others to realise their potential

Customer Excellence

Our customers are at the heart of everything we do. We all know what good customer service is and there are hundreds of examples of us all delivering it every day.

Our challenge now is to make sure we deliver great service for every customer, every time. The more we understand our customers and their expectations, and put ourselves in their shoes, the easier it will be to provide consistently great service.

Our Customer Promise is to make the important things in life happen for them. There's nothing that beats the buzz of achieving the important things in life, whether that's getting that dream house, starting a business, or even just relaxing on that well-earned holiday. And yet, accomplishing the important stuff in life can be fraught with complexity, which can cost our customers time, effort and added stress.

The more we understand our customers and their expectations, and put ourselves in their shoes, the easier it will be to provide consistently great service.

You may ask, what does this mean for each one of us? How can we at Post Office make sure we fulfil the Customer Promise?

We can help our customers focus on the important things by removing the stress of sorting them.

- We connect with our customers on an emotional level
- We listen first, and fully understand their needs and expectations
- We talk respectfully, leaving out the jargon to give them the best advice that meets their expectations, to achieve their goals
- We always think about the customer and not the process
- We make it simple, straightforward and quick to reach us, in branch, online, on mobile
- We always focus on the Service before anything else
- We give the best possible experience, each time
- Everyone is responsible for putting the customer first

Service excellence is an attitude engrained in everyone at Post Office. Our customers have to be at the heart of everything we do.

A good example of this approach in action is with Post Office Money and FACE – the Financial Service Customer Experience programme from Post Office. FACE is an acronym that stands for Fair and Transparent, Accessible, Committed and Easy.

Under the new regulatory regime, driven by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), Financial Services is focused much more on understanding and meeting our customers' needs rather than simply working on meeting a range of compliance measures. This increased focus looks at how we deal with our customers and address issues that could potentially harm or disadvantage them. There is also an increased emphasis on the post-sale process. Post Office Money has developed FACE to keep us abreast of the changes we are making to improve the overall customer experience, gain input from across the business and challenge us all to live up to our customer values in all our dealings with our customers.

Our People

Our people are our biggest asset. Post Office is nothing without people. They provide the human touch that forms the central part of our vision.

It's you and your colleagues who make things happen – for customers, for clients, for each other, and for our business. And it's you who can make great things happen.

We should always ensure we are all delivering the best possible customer experience, while at the same time giving everyone within our business the chance to fulfil their potential and enjoy a varied, challenging and rewarding career.

We need you to take ownership of the part you play, but also work as a team and support your colleagues when they need it. Always put yourselves in your customers' shoes and think about what else you can do to improve their experience. Speak up when you think there is a better way of doing something – don't be afraid to challenge convention and inject new ideas.

We have high standards of personal behaviour and respect for everyone at all times. We create a culture where everyone is able to give their best at all times.

We are open, honest and courteous with each other at all times. We challenge any instances we encounter of bullying, intimidation, harassment, unlawful discrimination or abuse of any kind and we report any instance to our line manager or via the confidential Speak Up support line. We show that such behaviour has no place whatsoever in Post Office.

We do not exploit colleagues for loans, private work or favours of any kind nor abuse others in speech, writing, social media or electronic communications. Our behaviour supports our excellent service to customers, it enhances our reputation. Any behaviour that damages our brand is unacceptable, including lateness, poor attendance, dishonesty, drunkenness, use of illegal substances, violent or disorderly behaviour, and abusive language. Gambling is not permitted at work.

Customers are at the heart of our business and therefore have an expectation of the professionalism of the colleagues at Post Office. We should appear professional in our appearance, therefore we expect people to wear business attire at work. Personal appearance includes ensuring that any ribbons, jewellery or ornaments (including items used in body piercing) and tattoos should not be offensive, a health and safety risk or incompatible with being professional.

Our appearance at work reflects our brand. We are professional, we are part of the community, we respect our customers and we are easy to do business with.

Valuing Equality and Diversity

At Post Office Ltd we believe diversity is fundamental to how we work.

It is not only important for the growth of our business, it is also an ethical and social responsibility which we place great importance in as part of our corporate beliefs. We want our people to reflect the diversity of the communities in which we live and work, and the customers we serve.

We expect everyone in the business to play his or her part in bringing this to life. Everyone has a responsibility to make both a personal commitment and set a standard for others to follow.

Everyone working for Post Office has a responsibility to:

- Promote a professional and positive work environment and role model these at all times
- Inform their line manager of any instances of apparent discrimination or any perceived problem in relation to employment or to the provision of products and services
- Comply with, and promote Post Office Ltd policy and procedures with regard to valuing diversity

Additionally, managers have a responsibility to:

- Raise awareness of managing diversity and the principles of dignity at work, acting as a role model for others and developing personal skills in order to handle issues relating to bullying and harassment or discrimination
- Take appropriate action for the resolution of bullying and harassment and discrimination in their work area, in accordance with HR policies and procedures

We are committed to promoting equal opportunities and valuing diversity in all our roles.

We believe that value is created and maximised when we meet the needs of our customers, employees, and the communities where we live and operate.

Our suppliers

We ensure that suppliers are aware of our standards and expectations of their practices in diversity. We seek to use agencies or companies who have clear values on equality of opportunity and diversity. And we establish procedures to encourage businesses from diverse communities to compete for contracts.

We value the diversity of our customers and employees and are committed to being inclusive at all times. When it comes to language, the common language of business should be English (English or Welsh in Wales). However, as long as it doesn't jeopardise the job or health and safety and it doesn't deliberately exclude people, then workers should be able to speak their own language within reason.

Health, Safety and Environment

Everybody has the right to work in a safe and healthy way. We will fulfil our promises without compromising the safety of our customers, employees, suppliers and all those affected by our activities.

We will make healthy and safe working a way of life.

Pursuing this aim reflects the high value we place on our employees and all those touched by our business activities.

- We comply fully with relevant legislation
- We ensure that the health and safety responsibilities of our employees, including managers, are clearly defined, allocated and understood
- We encourage and help all managers and employees to carry out their responsibilities through effective health and safety management systems, with safe premises, equipment and processes
- We improve our employees' capability to manage and work safely, through coaching and training
- We support and encourage our people and unions to get involved in the health and safety performance of our business
- We support and encourage our people and unions to get involved in pursuing a healthy and safe way of living and working
- We monitor and review how well we put our health and safety policies into practice

We are all responsible for health and safety. Every manager is accountable for the health and safety of their people.

A full copy of the Health and Safety policy can be found on the Health and Safety intranet site.

Environment

We recognise that our business activities and policies have impacts on the environment. We shall take full account of the environmental effects of our policies in our planning, decision making and day-to-day activities. In particular we aim to reduce our environmental impact through:

- Reduction in the use of water
- Efficient use of energy and a reduction in our CO₂ emissions
- Reduction in waste to landfill by recycling where possible
- The use of sustainable materials

Everyone has a part to play in reducing our environmental impact.

Trust and Security

Millions of transactions are entrusted to us by our customers every day. We handle large volumes of cash and valuable items, and we gain information in the course of our business that is confidential to our customers and clients every day, therefore, honesty and trust are qualities that are part of our core.

Of course, we must keep the absolute trust of our customers, clients and others we come into contact with. The strength of our company rests on the integrity of our people.

Maintaining our standards means:

- Honesty in handling all items, cash and valuables entrusted to us
- Correct accounting in all financial transactions and claims, and observance of established business control procedures
- Safeguarding company property and assets, ensuring that they are not stolen, abused, damaged, or appropriated for personal use
- Making economic use of resources, avoiding waste and extravagance
- Ensuring that company funds and property are never used for private purposes
- Ensuring that company premises and facilities are not abused for unauthorised commercial transactions
- Safeguarding confidential information against abuse or unauthorised disclosure, and complying with laws protecting personal data, in particular the Data Protection Act 1998
- Protecting Cardholder Data against unauthorised disclosure in accordance with Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards
- Ensuring we are compliant with legislation including, but not limited to, the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000, Road Transport Act 2013, Equality Act 2010 and Private Security Industry Act 2001

Use of Company Property and Expenses

We each have a duty to ensure that reasonable and professional standards are maintained in our work. This includes being watchful against abuse in matters such as claiming expenses and proper use of official stationery and telephones.

Remember that:

- To claim money from the company for hours you did not work, a journey you did not make, or an expense you did not legitimately incur is a criminal offence
- Using prepaid envelopes or other official stationery for private purposes is a disciplinary and criminal offence

- Making personal phone calls in work time is sometimes unavoidable, but unnecessary, frequent or prolonged personal calls are unacceptable

All these are unacceptable and may be treated as gross misconduct, which could result in your dismissal. If theft or fraud is involved, it may well result in prosecution.

Please remember that, as an employee, you also have a duty to declare any criminal conviction, and you must inform your manager if you are arrested and charged with any criminal offence.

Use of Computers, Internet, Mobile Phones and Business IT Systems

The work tools we provide to many of our people include computers, mobile phones and a range of mobile equipment such as laptops and tablets. These devices must not be left unattended in public areas, screens must always be locked when not in use and in the office environment, and laptops must be secured using appropriate locking devices when away from the immediate vicinity. The use of privacy screens should be adopted to protect our information from being overseen by unauthorised people. When importing or disseminating documents and/or emails, we must only use our corporate email account or a Post Office approved data transfer system. Ensure it is processed using the appropriate method of protection and be satisfied the recipient is authorised to receive our information.

While company policy allows some reasonable personal use of business IT equipment and systems in an employee's own time, it does not permit:

- Use of unauthorised software
- Unauthorised modification of computer components or other mobile equipment
- Access to gambling, pornography or other indecent, illegal or offensive material, to include storing and transmission of such content
- Sending indecent, illegal, offensive, threatening or insulting material, chain or 'spam' emails
- An unreasonable amount of work time spent on the internet for personal use or sending personal emails
- Removal of hardware from Post Office premises without permission

All the above are unacceptable and may result in investigation and disciplinary action under the Conduct Code, up to and including dismissal for gross misconduct.

For further advice and guidance, please refer to our Policy Set on the intranet or contact Post Office Information Security and Assurance Group – [isag@GRO](#)

Social Media

Post Office recognises that many of our people enjoy using social networking sites in their own time. Comments we publish on these sites may reach a surprisingly wide audience, and therefore we must all protect our brand and avoid doing anything that might bring our reputation into disrepute.

Everyone must be aware that information gained about Post Office as a result of your work for the business should never be discussed or shared on social media sites.

Employees must carefully consider any reference to Post Office in their messages and ensure that:

- No information relating to clients, partners or suppliers is published in a personal context
- Technical, confidential or sensitive information of any nature is not disclosed
- Copyright and fair usage laws and restrictions are respected
- Social media is not used to offend or harass people
- Post Office brands or logos are not used or altered in any way

Where an employee is asked to make any comment about Post Office in a published form external to the business, such as newspaper, radio, television or a website, they must direct the request to the Communications team on **0207 012 3456**.

Political and Pressure Group Activity

The interests of the company, and those of its customers, must not be compromised by your interest or activity with a political party.

If you are involved in political activities in your own time, you must ensure that they are kept completely separate from your work. There are a few simple rules to remember and keep to:

- Political activity by employees is not permitted at work. This includes any active support of parties, pressure groups, religious sects or other causes

- Badges, slogans or notices advertising parties or causes must not be displayed while on duty or in uniform, or on company premises, noticeboards or vehicles
- You must not distribute or deliver unauthorised material while you are on duty or in uniform, or allow anyone else to use business services free of charge
- Take care not to make any statement or comment to the media on behalf of the company unless you are authorised to do so and have cleared the statement first with the Communications team. This applies whether or not party political issues are involved

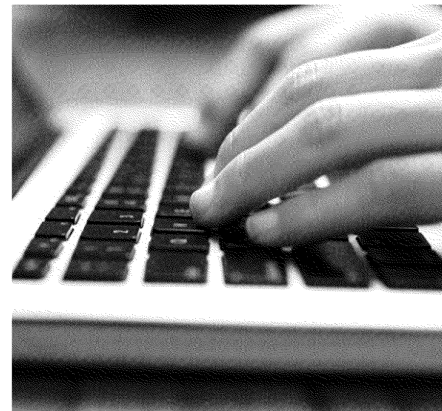
Conflicts of Interest

A conflict of interest occurs when your position within the business means you can make a personal gain or benefit over and above your terms and conditions of employment.

We should all make sure that our personal interests do not conflict with the interests of the business, our clients or our customers.

If you feel that you might have a potential conflict of interest, please inform your line manager and seek their advice if you are unsure.

Please be open and frank about any outside activity or business you are involved in which may conflict with Post Office or your duties as an employee. The essential principles of conduct are:



- You must not do anything which conflicts with your duty as an employee or agent of the company, or use your official position for private advantage
- You must declare any outside employment, directorship or material shareholding and these must not be contrary to the company's commercial interests or bring it into disrepute
- Your actions as an employee or agent must not be improperly influenced by any relationship (e.g. by blood, marriage, partnership or membership of any social, religious or political association) or by any personal or financial consideration. For clarity, no one should exploit their personal or family relationship with any colleague for any gain or differential treatment whatsoever, including gain for personal or any other family member's benefit
- You must not make any statement to the media that brings the company into disrepute
- If you receive a fee from an outside source for performing a service which forms part of your official duties or takes place in business time, e.g. giving an interview or lecture you must report it to your manager. You will normally be expected to pay the money to the company or to a charity connected with it. If the service arises from your work but is not directly connected with it and is given in your own time, you must still report it to your manager
- You must declare to your line manager and HR Services, any outside employment, directorship or material shareholding, and these must not be contrary to the company's commercial interest or bring it into disrepute

Gifts and Sponsorship

You must not accept any gift, payment, bribe, favour or inducement that might influence (or appear to influence) your action as an employee. Equally, you must not offer any bribe or inducement to anyone else. If any such offer is made to you, you must report it to your manager.

In general, the giving and receiving of gifts is not permitted with the exception of low value promotional items costing under £10 each, such as pens, calendars, diaries, notepads and paperweights.

- In a situation where refusal to give or accept a gift would cause embarrassment or offence, such as when giving or receiving a gift from an overseas' postal administration in an official capacity as a representative of Post Office, the gift must not appear lavish or extravagant and should not cost more than £200
- Before giving any gift costing more than £10, written approval must be obtained from your line manager and forwarded to the Risk & Compliance team at riskandcompliance@GRO
- If you receive a gift worth more than £10 you must notify your line manager in writing, and forward the details to the Risk & Compliance team at riskandcompliance@GRO
- The Risk & Compliance team will maintain a Register of all gifts given and received

Private arrangements for gifts, discounts or concessions must not be solicited or accepted in connection with any contract for goods or services to which the company is a party.

If in doubt about whether it is proper to accept a gift, please discuss the matter with your manager.

You must not ask for or accept sporting or charitable sponsorship from an organisation that has (or is seeking) a contract to supply the company, or is in competition with it. You must declare to your manager any plan to accept sponsorship and ask if there is any conflict with company interests.

Hospitality and Entertainment

Hospitality may only be given and accepted where it has a clear and demonstrable link with a legitimate business purpose, e.g. an organised event or a meal at which business is to be discussed. In relation to offers of hospitality, numbers on both sides should be limited to those whose presence is necessary to progress the business in hand. The giving and receiving of hospitality and entertainment is subject to the following rules:

- You must obtain prior permission from your line manager before accepting or giving hospitality
- The hospitality must be reasonable (not lavish or extravagant), proportionate to its purpose and must ordinarily be below £100 per person in value
- You must send details of all hospitality offered and accepted, including details of the host business (if not Post Office), the number of people attending and the businesses they represent (if Post Office is the host), with details of the location of the hospitality and the cost per person, along with written approval from your line manager, to the Risk and Compliance team at **riskandcompliance@GRO**
- The Risk and Compliance team will maintain a Register of all Hospitality given and received

You must beware of accepting any hospitality and entertainment which might compromise your performance of official business, or which might reasonably appear to have improperly influenced a business decision. Any attempt at entrapment, blackmail, or any suggestion that preferential treatment or divulgence of confidential information is expected in return for hospitality and entertainment, must be reported to your line manager and the Risk and Compliance team.

Do not provide or accept hospitality or entertainment which, because of its expense or nature, may cause the company embarrassment or bring it into disrepute.

Modest hospitality to other company employees on business occasions is sometimes justifiable, but extravagance must be avoided.

Alcoholic drinks are not permitted at business meetings or on company premises except for authorised social functions out of the working hours of those present.

Use judgement and restraint, and consult your manager if in doubt.

Risk Management

We have made a commitment to risk management as an integral part of running Post Office.

Our risk management practices are intended to help you make better informed decisions and to increase the likelihood of meeting our strategic objectives, to achieve customer excellence and to safeguard business interests.

Effective risk management is demonstrated in how we behave and consider risk in everything we do, from decision making to operational management. We encourage people to consider risks, manage them and be transparent throughout. This pragmatic approach is set out in the Risk Management Policy. Please contact the Central Risk team for more information.

Useful Contacts and Links

- Grapevine
www.grapevine.co.uk
- HR Help Desk
<https://portal.royalmailgroup.com/sites/PostOffice/HR/SitePages/HRAdviceGuidance.aspx>
- Post Office Policies
<https://portal.royalmailgroup.com/sites/PostOffice/inside/Pages/Policies-and-guidelines.aspx>
- Speak Up Helpline
0800 048 4531





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Any more?

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