Client engagement principles

These principles define the way we will work with people and businesses. This includes where we act as a regulator to ensure compliance with legislation.

| **Principle** | **We will** | **We won’t** |
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| *Welisten first* | * Show empathy and understand an issue from the customer’s perspective.
* Be open minded.
* Examine the history and background of an issue before making a decision.
 | * Answer the wrong question.
* Have preconceptions.
* Shut down the conversation.
* Breach any regulatory obligations.
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| *We are dependable and collaborative* | * Work in partnership with our customers.
* Be clear about our purpose when we engage.
* Be clear upfront about the level of input our customers can have into our decisions.
* Involve our customers in the policy, program and regulation development process whenever we can.
 | * Create unrealistic expectations or fail to manage them.
* Say we’re consulting when we’re just providing information.
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| *We communicate in a clear and accessible way* | * Use plain English whenever we can.
* Admit when we don’t know something and follow up on it.
* Make sure we get back to customers and explain the reason for our decisions.
* Actively seek and listen to feedback.
 | * Tell people what they want to hear because it’s the easy option.
* Bluff when we don’t know the answer.
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| *We build trust* | * Respect confidential information and deal with it appropriately.
* Avoid and manage conflicts of interest.
* Acknowledge a customer’s input and explain the impact it has had on our decisions.
 | * Ignore what our customer wants.
* Go into important conversations unprepared.
* Waste our customer’s time.
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| *We have an open door* | * Make sure that people who contact us have a positive experience and get answers to their questions.
* Be aware of what the rest of the department does so we can refer customers to the right area straight away.
* Have clear referral tools and pathways.
* Maintain a good website and online presence that’s easy to navigate and up to date.
 | * Say “I can’t help you” and end the conversation there.
* Keep passing a customer around the system.
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| *We work with pace and probity* | * Keep records so our customers information is protected and used appropriately.
* Commit to timeframes and meet them or explain why we won’t meet them if they change.
* Set realistic expectations about timeframes for decisions and communicate throughout the process.
* Be as efficient as we can while still ensuring our processes and practices meet the highest standards.
* Provide certainty of process, not certainty of outcome.
 | * Ask customers to repeatedly tell us the same information.
* Make commitments without having the required authority or delegation.
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