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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| *We listen 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. |
| *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. |
| *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. |
| *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. |
| *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. |
| *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. |