

Ethical Trading Policy

As a design-led visual merchandising services company specialising in the design and manufacture of mannequins, bust forms and visual merchandising related equipment, sourced globally, we take responsibility for improving the working conditions of the people involved in creating our products.

We have a commitment to ethical trade that we adopt in our code of practice, which is based on the standard of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), that we expect ourselves and all our suppliers to work towards.

Code of Practice

1. Employment is freely chosen



Slavery and bonded labour are totally unacceptable, with some 12.3 million people globally being forced to work for their employers.

At Proportion London our workers voluntarily work, with no requirements to lodge “deposits” or identity papers and are free to leave after reasonable notice being given.

2. Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining are respected



Tens of thousands of workers lose their jobs every year for attempting to join a trade union or improve working conditions, some may even lose their lives.

Our workers have the right to join or form any trade union of their choice, and to bargain collectively. Internally we practice and promote monthly works council meetings with worker representatives communicating the workers voice.

Our worker representatives are not discriminated against and have the freedom to carry out their representative duties in the workplace.

We do not hinder the development of means for independent and free association and bargaining.

3. Working conditions are safe and hygienic



Every day 6,000 people around the world die from work-related accidents or diseases. Most of these tragedies could be prevented.

Proportion London has knowledge about our industry and specific hazards. As such we recognise the importance of a safe and hygienic working environment. To ensure accidents and injuries are prevented, so far as reasonably practicable, we;

- Provide regular training
- Provide risk assessments for each area, ensuring that if there are any changes these are re-evaluated

- Provide annual health screening for factory workers
- Provide annual (or recommend frequency) maintenance on all machinery
- Provide training courses for first aid at work and fire wardens
- Carry out reasonable investigations if there is an accident at work

To ensure the working conditions remain to a high standard, the responsibility has been appointed to Melissa Cawston and Debbie Chehab.

We recognise that sometimes workers may face certain challenges in work or home life that are difficult to deal with. As such we subscribe to a confidential and professional life management service which provides workers with a qualified counsellor who can offer personal support for any practical or emotional challenges our workers may face. This service is totally confidential.

4. Child labour shall not be used



218 million children work to support their families, missing out on an education and often damaging their health. This reinforces the cycle of poverty.

We do not, or will never recruit or hire any persons under the age of the UK minimum school leaving age (in the UK you can leave school on the last Friday in June if you will be 16 by the end of the summer holidays)

Children and young persons under the age of 18 will not be employed at night or in hazardous conditions.

See our Child Labour Policy for further information.

5. Living wages are paid



3 billion of the world's poor live on less than 2 dollars a day. If people can not feed their families on an adult's wage, they may send their children to work.

Our worker's wages are paid on either a weekly or monthly basis, dependant on their contract of employment. Every worker will be paid no less than the UK national living wage, ensuring they have enough to meet their basic need and to provide some discretionary income.

All workers are provided with a provisional offer of employment, before commencement of employment stating their main terms and conditions, which will include their salary and pay frequency. On their first day of employment or within 2 months of commencement they will receive a full contract of employment. These documents aim to be clear, concise and informative.

Deductions from wages will not be used as a disciplinary measure, nor shall any deduction from wages not provided for by national law be permitted without the expressed permission of the worker concerned. All disciplinary measures are recorded in writing.

6. Working hours are not excessive



Long working hours are the norm for most of the world's workers. This damages people's health and undermines family life.

At Proportion London, we try to promote a work life balance for our workers, giving them the opportunity to request flexible working if required.

Our workers working hours, excluding overtime, are specified in their contracts of employment, and shall comply with the Working Time Regulations 1998.

All overtime is voluntary and is offered fairly and is not/will not be used to replace regular employment. Overtime will be paid at the premium rate of time and a half, excluding workers who earn per piece.

7. No discrimination is practiced



Women and certain minorities are often confined to the lowest paid jobs with no access to training or promotion.

Discrimination at the workplace is strongly forbidden in hiring, compensation, access to training, promotion, termination or retirement based on race, caste, national origin, religion, age, disability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, union membership or political affiliation.

This is enforced by our Equal Opportunities Policy.

8. Regular employment is provided



Most workers can be laid off when it suits the employer. This fuels poverty and insecurity and drives down wages.

All workers are provided with regular employment according to their contracts of employment and are protected by the Employment Rights Act 1996. We promote best practice across the board to ensure a happy and reliable workforce.

Obligations to provide regular employment will not be avoided through the use of labour-only contracting, homeworking arrangements or apprenticeship schemes, nor shall any such obligations be avoided through the excessive use of fixed-term contracts of employment.

9.No harsh or inhumane treatment is allowed



Few workers have protection against physical, verbal or sexual abuse in the workplace.

We strongly condemn any physical abuse or discipline, the threat of physical abuse, sexual or other harassment and verbal abuse or other forms of intimidation. Any form of hard or inhumane treatment will be taken seriously. This is practiced by our disciplinary and personal harassment procedure and policies. Our personal harassment and grievance procedures give any worker the opportunity to raise their concerns, if they feel they have been treated harshly or inhumanly.