



Employee Handbook

January 2022

Contents

1. Welcome to A Taxi	5
(a) Introduction	5
(b) Site locations	5
(c) Our values	5
2. Starting work with A Taxi	7
(a) Recruitment	7
(b) Induction	7
(c) Probation	7
3. Employment with A Taxi	8
(a) Hours of work	8
(b) Pay	8
(c) Overtime	8
(d) Pension Scheme	8
(e) Expenses	8
(f) Company Car	9
4. Conduct	10
(a) Introduction	10
(b) Phone answering and customer service	10
(c) Use of Computers	10
(d) Use of Phones	10
(e) Social Media	10
(f) Smoking	11
(g) Dress code	11
(h) Whistleblowing	11
(i) Anti-Bribery	12
(j) Confidentiality	12
(k) Data Protection	12
(l) Work Related Social Events	12
5. Office Rules	13
(a) Timekeeping	13
(b) Eating and meal times	13
(c) General Rules	13
(d) Relationships at work	14
6. Dignity at Work	14
(a) Our commitment	14
(b) Equal Opportunities	14

(c)	What is bullying and harassment?	14
(d)	Examples of bullying or harassment	15
(e)	What is victimisation?	16
(f)	What should I do if I think I am being bullied or harassed?.....	16
(g)	What can I do to help stop bullying and harassment?	17
(h)	What happens if I am accused of bullying or harassment?	17
7.	Discipline	18
(a)	Policy	18
(b)	Procedure	18
(c)	Gross Misconduct.....	19
(d)	Appeals.....	19
8.	Grievance	20
(a)	Policy	20
(b)	Procedure	20
9.	Family Friendly Policies	21
(a)	Maternity Leave	21
(b)	Antenatal appointments	21
(c)	Adoption Leave	22
(d)	Paternity Leave.....	22
(e)	Parental Leave	22
(f)	Shared Parental Leave.....	23
(g)	Urgent Domestic Leave	23
(h)	Time off for Dependants	24
(i)	Flexible Working.....	24
10.	Time off work	25
(a)	Annual leave.....	25
(b)	Holiday pay.....	25
(c)	Bank holidays	25
(d)	Compassionate Leave.....	25
(e)	Jury service	26
(f)	Routine medical and dental appointments	26
(g)	Consultants appointments	27
(h)	Civic or Public Duties	27
(i)	Study Leave	27
(j)	Severe Weather or transport disruption.....	27
11.	Attendance Management	28

12. Health and Safety	31
(a) Risk Assessments	31
(b) Fire procedure	31
(c) First Aid	31
(d) Accidents	31
(e) Stress at Work	31
(f) Alcohol and Drugs	31
(g) Eye tests	32
(h) Right of stop and search	33
(i) Your responsibilities	33
13. Sickness Absence	34
(a) Introduction	34
(b) Procedure	34
(c) Sickness absence of less than 7 days	34
(d) Sickness absence of more than 7 days	34
14. Sick Pay	35
(a) Statutory sick pay	35
(b) Restrictions and rules	35
15. Performance Management	36
(a) Appraisals	36
(b) Performance concerns	36
(c) Performance Improvement Procedure	36
16. Training & Development	37
(a) Our commitment	37
17. Leaving A Taxi	38
(a) Notice Periods	38
(b) Resignation	38
(c) Redundancy	38
(d) Retirement	39
(e) Rights and obligations during notice period	39
(f) Returning A Taxi Property	39

1. Welcome to A Taxi

(a) Introduction

A Taxi is a family owned local taxi firm, founded over 20 years ago.

(b) Site locations

We have one site location Woolacombe, Devon

A Taxi

Tarka Auto Repairs Ltd
Station Road
Woolacombe
EX34 7HH

(c) Our values

Travel has been integral to our family for the last 20 years, Stuart Foreman started the business with one car to drive in the evenings alongside a demanding day job. The business outgrew the time Stuart had to manage it so on their retirement Colin and Marilyn took over the running of the business and from there it grew to the thriving business it is today. Today Colin and Marilyn are trying to retire! and the business is run day to day by myself.

Our business has survived – and thrived – thanks to constant innovation and progression. However, we're still grounded in the traditional customer service values installed by Stuart all those years ago.

To us, good service isn't just politeness and clean cars, it also means treating people with care, respect and always going the extra mile!

That's why we promise to deliver:

Quality vehicles

- Always from reputable manufactures
- Comfortable travel experience throughout journeys

Great service

- Timely collections
- Easy booking procedure
- Flexible ways of working
- Prompt service, always with a smile

Excellent value

- Fair pricing, making quality affordable whilst never underselling the effort, skill and integrity of the service provider

Respect for nature

- Following a green agenda, limiting A Taxi's negative impact on our environment wherever possible

We are really pleased to welcome you to our team at A Taxi.

All employees have a contract detailing terms and conditions relating to their own particular role. This handbook has been designed to give additional, important and useful information about employment with us and particularly around our expectations of you and your colleagues. Unless specifically stated otherwise, the policies in this handbook are not contractual.

We have written this staff handbook to give you a summary of the general information you will need when you are working for us. If you would like a copy of this handbook then please speak to your manager.

If you need guidance on any aspect your employment, please do check this handbook, or have a chat with your manager.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you every success in your career with us.

Simon Rice
General Manager

2. Starting work with A Taxi

(a) Recruitment

We're committed to treating all our employees and job applicants equally and to recruiting the best person for each job. No employee or potential employee shall receive less favourable treatment or consideration during recruitment and selection on the grounds of race, colour, religion or belief, nationality, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender, age, disability, marital status or part-time status or will be disadvantaged by any conditions of employment that cannot be justified as necessary on operational grounds.

(b) Induction

Your induction with A Taxi will be organised by your manager. During your induction period you'll meet the team and be given the opportunity to find out everything you need to know about your job within A Taxi. We'll make sure you receive the following:

- your contract of employment and employee handbook;
- orientation tour of our site;
- details about your new job;
- training in your job and on the equipment you use to do your job;
- health and safety training and information; and
- quality induction and training.

(c) Probation

Your employment with A Taxi is subject to the satisfactory completion of a 3 month probationary period. This time is as much for you as it is for A Taxi to ensure you are in the right role for your skills and abilities.

Your manager will meet with you during your probationary period. If there are any concerns about your performance or ability to do the job you've been recruited for, these will be raised and discussed with you immediately. You should also take this opportunity to share any concerns or feedback you have with your manager. If areas of improvement are discussed with you, please suggest any assistance or training you feel would help you to improve.

Once you've successfully completed your probationary period, this will be confirmed in writing.

Occasionally, an employee may have their probationary period extended to give them time to reach the required performance standard for their job. In exceptional circumstances, where an employee doesn't have the required skills for their role, their employment may be terminated.

3. Employment with A Taxi

(a) Hours of work

Your specific hours of work and working pattern will be set out in your contract of employment.

A Taxi reserves the right to alter working hours as necessary, which may include moving you to a different shift pattern.

(b) Pay

Salaries for permanent and temporary members of staff are paid in line with your contract of employment.

Employees will receive a pay statement of their earnings and deductions on the date on which they are paid.

It is your responsibility to ensure that we:

- have details of your bank or building society account number and sort code;
- are advised of any changes to your bank or building society account; and
- are told about any payment anomalies that you discover (e.g. overpayment of wages).

If you have any queries or problems concerning payment of your salary/wages, please contact your manager.

(c) Overtime

Your contract of employment may state that if you work overtime you will be paid for this. If this is the case, you may, as required from time to time according to the needs of the business, be asked to work overtime. Employees are reasonably expected to be available for overtime as and when required. All overtime should be expressly agreed in advance with your manager.

(d) Pension Scheme

If eligible, we will auto-enrol you into a pension scheme, in accordance with our pension's auto-enrolment obligations.

Full details of the scheme will be given to you when you are enrolled, including the minimum level of contributions that you will be required to make during your membership and your right to opt out if you do not want to be a member of the scheme. While participating in the scheme, you agree to worker pension contributions being deducted from your salary.

(e) Expenses

We will reimburse you for actual expenditure that is incurred wholly, necessarily and exclusively in connection with authorised duties that you undertake in the course of your employment.

(g) Company Car

In order to undertake your duties you may be provided with a company car. All employees who are provided the use of a company vehicle are required to adhere to the company policy on Company Cars. Please speak to your manager if you require a copy of this policy.

4. Conduct

(a) Introduction

How we behave at work affects our relationships with our customers, our suppliers and each other. Everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. There are also essential things we can do to ensure things run smoothly for all of us.

(b) Phone answering and customer service

Employees who may be answering the phone on behalf of A Taxi should be polite and helpful at all times.

(c) Use of Computers

Any abuse of the use of computers, email or the internet could result in disciplinary action. Further information on IT use can be obtained from your manager. Please see policy for more information.

(d) Use of Phones

A Taxi provides its employees with access to the telephone for work-related purposes. However, because it is accepted that employees may sometimes need to attend to personal matters during working hours, limited personal use is permitted, provided that this does not interfere with employees' work, nor take up an unreasonable amount of time.

To all employees of A Taxi and also to other staff who may work for A Taxi on a temporary or contract basis. It also applies to employees who have the use of mobile phones belonging to A Taxi while working from home or travelling on A Taxi business.

This policy forms part of the terms and conditions of all employees' contracts of employment and any breach of the policy will be regarded as misconduct, leading to disciplinary action up to and including summary dismissal.

Please see policy for further information.

(e) Social Media

We recognise that many employees make use of social media in a personal capacity. While you are not acting on behalf of A Taxi, you must be aware that you can damage our reputation if you are recognised as being one of our employees.

You are allowed to say that you work for us and we recognise that it is natural for you sometimes to want to discuss your work on social media. However, your online profile (for example, the name of a blog or a Twitter name) must not contain our business name.

You should note that any breaches of this policy may lead to disciplinary action. Serious breaches of this policy, for example incidents of bullying of colleagues or social media activity causing serious damage to our business, may constitute gross misconduct and lead to summary dismissal.

(f) Smoking

Smoking is prohibited within the A Taxi's premises, except in the designated outside area. To accommodate employees who smoke there are external facilities in the form of 'Smoke boxes'. We provide receptacles for smokers to dispose of cigarette butts in these areas.

Employees who go outside to smoke should ensure they do not exceed the maximum break time that they have each day for these purposes. You should also inform your manager if you wish to take a smoking break and ensure that there is sufficient cover before taking a break.

Although they fall outside the scope of smoke-free legislation, we do not allow the use of e-cigarettes in the workplace or vehicles

Employees are also advised that smoking outside of reception or other entrances to the premises is not permitted as such actions will not be in keeping with the A Taxi's image or client representation.

(g) Dress code

Your appearance must be professional and appropriate at all times both within the workplace and when representing A Taxi. Please use your common sense in adhering to the principles underpinning this policy and keep in mind the stance from North Devon Licensing regarding their rules and regulations.

We recognise the diversity of cultures and religions of our employees and will take a sensitive approach when this affects dress and uniform requirements. However, priority will be given to health and safety, security and other similar considerations. Please see our appearance and behaviour policy for further information.

(h) Whistleblowing

Whistleblowing is where an employee raises concerns about underhand or illegal practices within his or her Company or an associated Company. Our policy is to operate within the country's laws and regulations, and all employees are expected to co-operate in this by adhering to all laws, regulations, policies and procedures.

We are committed to maintaining an open culture with the highest standards of honesty and accountability, where employees can report any legitimate concerns in confidence. If you have any concerns about your employment, you should use our Grievance procedure. If you have any concerns about A Taxi being involved in any illegal activity, you should, in the first instance speak to your manager.

If you believe your manager to be involved then you should inform the next level of management.

If you have made a complaint and you reasonably believe that the appropriate action has not been taken, you should report the matter to the proper authority. The legislation sets out a number of bodies to which qualifying disclosures may be made. These include:

- HM Revenue & Customs;
- the Financial Conduct Authority (formerly the Financial Services Authority);
- the Office of Fair Trading;
- the Health and Safety Executive;

- the Environment Agency;
- the Director of Public Prosecutions; and
- the Serious Fraud Office.

(i) Anti-Bribery

We're committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct and integrity in our business activities. We will not tolerate any form of bribery by, or of, our employees, agents or consultants or any person or body acting on our behalf.

You must not offer, promise, give, solicit or accept any bribe. The bribe might be cash, a gift or other inducement to, or from, any person or company, whether a public or government official, official of a state-controlled industry, political party or a private person or company.

(j) Confidentiality

You should not during, or after employment with A Taxi, disclose confidential information belonging to A Taxi. You have a responsibility to protect and maintain the confidentiality of A Taxi, our customers, clients, suppliers and other stakeholders. Any breach of confidentiality will be considered a breach of your employment contract.

(k) Data Protection

In the course of your work you may come into contact with and use confidential personal information about people, such as names and addresses or even information about customers' circumstances, families, health and other private matters. This policy helps you ensure that you do not breach the Data Protection Act 1998, which provides strict rules in this area. If you are in any doubt about what you may or may not do, seek advice from your line manager. If you are in doubt and cannot get in touch with him/her, do not disclose the information concerned.

A Taxi holds personal data about you. In your employment contract you have consented to the data being used as set out in the contract. If this information changes, you should let us know so that our records can be updated.

For further information please refer to the policy.

(l) Work Related Social Events

We offer employees the opportunity to attend social events from time to time. We may also run work-related social events to which customers, as well as staff, are invited. Although such social events usually take place away from the workplace and outside of normal working hours, our standard code of conduct applies to such events. While we don't want to put a dampener on your enjoyment of social events, it is in everyone's interests to impose certain rules of conduct for the protection and comfort of all. Specifically, if you attend work-related social events you must adhere to the rules and principles set out in the policy.

5. Business Rules

(a) Timekeeping

There is an expectation that everyone will be on time for work, allowing for the occasional unexpected circumstance. If you're going to be late for work, please call your manager as soon as possible.

If you're persistently late for work, or leaving early without good reason, your manager will talk to you about why this is and disciplinary action may be taken.

(b) Eating and meal times

Vehicles

- No food or drink is allowed in the vehicle
- All meal times and breaks for staff should be taken outside of the vehicle

Office

- Eating and drinking is permitted in the office, providing that no hot food or strong smelling food is consumed in the office or at your desks.

Staff are permitted to leave site during authorised break and meal times.

(c) General Rules

Housekeeping

A Taxi requires good housekeeping standards at all times and it is the responsibility of departmental managers to ensure that these standards are met so far as is reasonably practicable.

To support the above, the premises is cleaned and in turn, supports the health, safety, welfare and controlled waste management responsibilities of A Taxi.

If you wish to make a complaint about the general standards of housekeeping and welfare please discuss this with your Line Manager or Supervisor.

Noise

- Noise should be kept to a level that does not interfere with your colleagues and disturb phone calls.
- Employees should not shout across the room to gain the attention of others. Instead you are expected to walk over to colleagues if you feel you need their attention (unless in an emergency situation). This is particularly important because customers are on the phone at all times and it is essential that we provide a positive image of A Taxi at all times.

(d) Relationships at work

We recognise that employees who work together may form personal friendships and in some cases close personal relationships. While we don't want to interfere with these personal relationships, it's necessary for us to ensure that all employees behave in an appropriate and professional manner at work.

6. Dignity at Work

(a) Our commitment

We're committed to creating a work environment free of harassment and bullying, where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

(b) Equal Opportunities

We will not discriminate directly or indirectly in recruitment or employment because of age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), sexual orientation, religion or belief, or because someone is married or in a civil partnership. These are known as "protected characteristics".

(c) What is bullying and harassment?

We will not tolerate bullying and harassment of any kind. All allegations of bullying and harassment will be investigated and, if appropriate, disciplinary action will be taken. We will also not tolerate victimisation of a person for making allegations of bullying or harassment in good faith or supporting someone to make such a complaint. Victimisation is a disciplinary offence.

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, and/or an abuse or misuse of power that is meant to undermine, humiliate or injure the person on the receiving end.

Harassment is unwanted conduct related to relevant protected characteristics, which are sex, gender reassignment, race (which includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief and age, that:

- has the purpose of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that person; or
- is reasonably considered by that person to have the effect of violating his/her dignity or of creating

an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for him/her, even if this effect was not intended by the person responsible for the conduct.

Conduct may be harassment whether or not the person behaving in that way intends to offend. Something intended as a "joke" may offend another person. Different people find different things acceptable. Everyone has the right to decide what behaviour is acceptable to him/her and to have his/her feelings respected by others. Behaviour which any reasonable person might find offensive will be harassment without the recipient having to make it clear in advance that behaviour of that type is not acceptable to him/her, e.g. sexual touching.

It may not be so clear in advance that some other forms of behaviour would be unwelcome, or could offend, a particular person, e.g. certain "banter". In these cases, first-time conduct which unintentionally causes offence will not be harassment but it will become harassment if the conduct continues after the recipient has made it clear, by words or conduct, that such behaviour is unacceptable to him/her.

Harassment may also occur where a person engages in unwanted conduct towards another because he/she perceives that the recipient has a protected characteristic (for example, a perception that he/she is gay or disabled), when the recipient does not, in fact, have that protected characteristic. For example, it would be harassment for an individual to tease repeatedly an individual because of an incorrect belief that that the recipient is deaf.

Similarly, harassment could take place where an individual is bullied or harassed because of another person that the individual is connected to or associated with, for example if his/her child is disabled, wife is pregnant or friend is a devout Christian.

There may also be circumstances in which an individual is subjected to unwanted conduct from a third party, such as a client or customer. If you feel that you have been bullied or harassed by customers, suppliers, vendors or visitors, you should report any such behaviour to your manager.

A single incident can be harassment if it is sufficiently serious.

All bullying and harassment is misconduct and is a disciplinary offence which will be dealt with under our Disciplinary procedure. Bullying or harassment will often be gross misconduct, which can lead to summary dismissal (dismissal without notice).

(d) Examples of bullying or harassment

Bullying and harassment may be misconduct that is physical, verbal or non-verbal, e.g. by letter or email. Examples of unacceptable behaviour include (but are not limited to):

- physical conduct ranging from unwelcome touching to serious assault;
- unwelcome sexual advances;
- the offer of rewards for going along with sexual advances, e.g. promotion, access to training;
- threats for rejecting sexual advances, e.g. suggestions that refusing advances will adversely affect the employee's employment, evaluation, pay, advancement, assigned work, or any other condition of employment or career development;
- demeaning comments about a person's appearance;
- unwelcome jokes or comments of a sexual or racial nature or about an individual's age, disability, sexual orientation or religion;

- questions about a person's sex life;
- unwanted nicknames related to a person's age, race or disability;
- the use of obscene gestures;
- excluding an individual because he/she is associated or connected with someone with a protected characteristic, e.g. his/her child is gay, spouse is black or parent is disabled;
- ignoring an individual because he/she is perceived to have a protected characteristic when he/she does not, in fact, have the protected characteristic), e.g. an employee is thought to be Jewish, or is perceived to be a transsexual;
- the open display of pictures or objects with sexual or racial overtones, even if not directed at any particular person, e.g. magazines, calendars or pin-ups;
- spreading malicious rumours or insulting someone;
- picking on someone or setting him/her up to fail;
- making threats or comments about someone's job security without good reason;
- ridiculing someone;
- isolation or non-cooperation at work; and
- excluding someone from social activities.

(e) What is victimisation?

Victimisation is subjecting a person to a detriment because he/she has, in good faith, complained (whether formally or otherwise) that someone has been bullying or harassing him/her or someone else, or supporting someone to make a complaint or given evidence in relation to a complaint. This would include isolating someone because he/she has made a complaint or giving him/her a heavier or more difficult workload.

Provided that you act in good faith, i.e. you genuinely believe that what you are saying is true, you have a right not to be victimised for making a complaint or doing anything in relation to a complaint of bullying or harassment.

Making a complaint that you know to be untrue, or giving evidence that you know to be untrue, may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you.

(f) What should I do if I think I am being bullied or harassed?

You may be able to sort out matters informally. The person may not know that his/her behaviour is unwelcome or upsetting. An informal discussion may help him/her to understand the effects of his/her behaviour and agree to change it. You may feel able to approach the person yourself, or with the help of a colleague.

You should tell the person what behaviour you find offensive and unwelcome, and say that you would like it to stop immediately. You may want to add that, if the behaviour continues, you intend to make a formal complaint. You should keep a note of the date and what was said and done. This will be useful evidence if the unacceptable behaviour continues and you wish to make a formal complaint.

If an informal approach doesn't resolve matters, or you think the situation is too serious to be dealt with informally, you can make a formal complaint by using our grievance procedure.

We will treat complaints of bullying and harassment sensitively and maintain confidentiality as much as is possible. Investigation of allegations will normally require limited disclosure on a "need to know" basis. For example, your identity and the nature of the allegations must be revealed to the person you are complaining

about, so he/she is able to respond to the allegations. Some details may also have to be given to potential witnesses but the importance of confidentiality will be emphasised to them.

You have a right not to be victimised for making a complaint in good faith, even if the complaint is not upheld. However, making a complaint that you know to be untrue may lead to disciplinary action being taken against you.

(g) What can I do to help stop bullying and harassment?

We all have a responsibility to help create and maintain a work environment free of bullying and harassment. You can help to do this by:

- being aware of how your own behaviour may affect others and changing it, if necessary - you can still cause offence even if you are "only joking";
- treating your colleagues with dignity and respect;
- taking a stand if you think inappropriate jokes or comments are being made;
- making it clear to others when you find their behaviour unacceptable, unless it should be obvious in advance that this would be the case;
- intervening, if possible, to stop harassment or bullying and giving support to recipients;
- making it clear that you find harassment and bullying unacceptable;
- reporting harassment or bullying and supporting us in the investigation of complaints; and
- if a complaint of harassment or bullying is made, not prejudging or victimising the complainant or alleged harasser.

(h) What happens if I am accused of bullying or harassment?

If someone approaches you informally about your behaviour, don't dismiss the complaint out of hand because you were only joking or think the complainant is being too sensitive. Remember that different people find different things acceptable and everyone has the right to decide what behaviour is acceptable to him/her and to have his/her feelings respected by others. You may have offended someone without intending to. If that is the case, the person concerned may be content with an explanation and an apology from you and an assurance that you will be careful in future not to behave in a way that you now know may cause offence.

If a formal complaint is made about your behaviour, this will be fully investigated and we may bring disciplinary proceedings, if appropriate. We will follow our Disciplinary procedure and you will have the rights set out in that procedure. The procedure will be implemented at the appropriate stage for the seriousness of the allegation. Complaints of bullying and harassment will often be allegations of gross misconduct that, if proved, could lead to dismissal without notice.

You must not victimise a person who has made a complaint in good faith against you or anyone who has supported him/her in making the complaint or given evidence in relation to such a complaint. Disciplinary action will be taken against you if we have good reason to think that you may have victimised the complainant or someone else.

Some types of bullying or harassment may constitute unlawful discrimination and allegations may give rise to the possibility of other civil claims or criminal proceedings against you, which would proceed independently of our disciplinary proceedings.

7. Discipline

(a) Policy

We want to ensure a fair and consistent approach to the enforcement of standards of conduct. Our disciplinary procedure is designed to help all employees to achieve and maintain standards of conduct, attendance and job performance. A Taxi rules which are summarised in your employment contract, this handbook and in other works notices apply to all employees.

Examples of common disciplinary problems are:

- poor timekeeping, attendance and unauthorised absence;
- misuse of facilities and equipment or minor damage to our property;
- poor attitude/behaviour;
- minor breaches of confidentiality;
- failure to observe our procedures;
- abusive behaviour;
- unreasonable refusal to follow an instruction issued by a manager or supervisor; and
- smoking in non-designated areas of our premises;

Although the Disciplinary procedure may seem somewhat formal, its primary aim is not to punish employees, but to ensure all employees achieve and maintain the standard of conduct expected at A Taxi.

(b) Procedure

Wherever possible, minor conduct issues will be dealt with informally your manager. Where the matter is more serious, the following warnings may be issued. Note that no warnings will be issued without a full and fair investigation and hearing.

- **Stage 1 – Written warning**
Where a first offence has been committed, a written warning will be given to the employee. This will usually remain on the employee's file for six months.
- **Stage 2 – Final written warning**
If an employee has received a written warning and a further offence has been committed whilst that warning that remains "live", the employee will receive a final written warning. Very serious breaches of conduct that fall short of gross misconduct may also result in a final written warning without stage 1 of this procedure being implemented. This will normally stay on the employee's file for 12 months.
- **Stage 3 – Dismissal**
If the employee's conduct is still unsatisfactory, dismissal will normally result. An employee will only be dismissed for a first offence if it is one of gross misconduct.

(c) Gross Misconduct

Matters that we view as amounting to gross misconduct include (but are not limited to):

- stealing from us, members of staff, suppliers or customers;
- other offences of dishonesty;
- falsification of a qualification that is a stated requirement of your employment or results in your financial gain;
- falsification of records, reports, accounts, expense claims or self-certification forms, whether or not for personal gain;
- sexual misconduct at work;
- fighting with or physical assault on other members of staff or the public;
- deliberate damage to or misuse of our property;
- serious damage to our property;
- drunkenness or being under the influence of illegal drugs while at work;
- possession, custody or control of illegal drugs on our premises;
- serious breach of our rules, including, but not restricted to, health and safety rules and rules on computer use;
- gross negligence;
- serious misuse of our machinery, facilities and equipment;
- conviction of a criminal offence that is relevant to your employment;
- conduct that brings our name into disrepute; and
- discrimination or harassment of a fellow worker on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, race, disability, age or religion or belief.

Other acts of misconduct may come within the general definition of gross misconduct.

Where we establish that you have committed an act of gross misconduct, you may be summarily dismissed (dismissed without notice).

(d) Appeals

If an employee wishes to appeal a disciplinary decision they must do so in writing within 5 working days of receipt of the disciplinary warning or dismissal letter.

Please refer to the policy for further information.

8. Grievance

(a) Policy

During your employment with A Taxi, you may have problems or concerns about your work, working environment or working relationships, which you wish to raise and have addressed.

In the first instance you are encouraged to speak to your manager. This way, issues are usually resolved quickly.

However, it is recognised that it may not always be possible to resolve issues informally. On these occasions, the Grievance procedure exists to provide a formal process for a complaint to be raised.

Any member of staff raising a grievance, or work colleague acting as a companion at a grievance hearing shall not have their career prejudiced by taking such action.

(b) Procedure

At all stages in the grievance process you have the right to be accompanied by a colleague or a trade union representative. Your companion may address the hearing, but not answer questions on your behalf.

- Informal stage

Wherever possible, you should aim to resolve your grievance informally at first. Speak to your manager or another manager and we will aim to resolve the issue. If the situation can't be resolved other than by following the Grievance procedure, you should follow the formal process as set out below.

- Stage 1

Put your grievance in writing to your manager. A grievance meeting will be held at which you'll have the right to be accompanied. Any decisions or actions that result from the grievance meeting will be confirmed to you in writing.

- Stage 2

If you feel your grievance is still unresolved, you may appeal the grievance outcome by writing to your manager's manager or another manager. The decision made at this appeal stage is final and you cannot appeal against it.

Please refer to the policy for further information.

9. Family Friendly Policies

(a) Maternity Leave

If you are pregnant, please inform your manager as soon as possible. The maximum amount of leave and pay you are entitled to depends on your start date with A Taxi. Full details of your entitlement to maternity leave are available on the intranet or from your Line Manager.

During the period of additional maternity leave, the employee's contract of employment continues in force and she is entitled to receive all her contractual benefits, except for salary. Any benefits in kind (such as private use of a company car, laptop and mobile phone) will continue and contractual annual leave entitlement will continue to accrue.

Salary will be replaced by statutory maternity pay (SMP) for the first 13 weeks of additional maternity leave if the employee is eligible to receive it. The remaining 13 weeks of additional maternity leave are unpaid.

Pension contributions will continue to be made during the period when the employee is receiving SMP but not during any period of unpaid additional maternity leave.

Please refer to the policy for further information.

(b) Antenatal appointments

Once an employee has advised A Taxi that she is pregnant, she will be entitled not to be unreasonably refused paid time off work to attend antenatal appointments as advised by her doctor, registered midwife or registered health visitor.

In order to be entitled to take time off for antenatal care, the employee is required to produce a certificate from her doctor, registered midwife or registered health visitor, stating that she is pregnant. Except in the case of the first appointment, the employee should also produce evidence of the appointment, such as a medical certificate or appointment card, if requested to do so.

Antenatal care may include relaxation and parent craft classes that the employee's doctor, midwife or health visitor has advised her to attend, in addition to medical examinations.

The employee should endeavour to give her line manager as much notice as possible of antenatal appointments and, wherever possible, try to arrange them as near to the start or end of the working day as possible.

(c) Adoption Leave

Adoption Leave allows all eligible employees to take up to 52 weeks leave when they are newly matched with a child for adoption. You may also qualify for Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP).

Adoption Leave applies to all employees, both male and female, with 26 weeks' employment with us at the week they are matched with a child for adoption. The child must be aged 18 or less at the time of adoption to qualify. Adoption Leave does not apply to the adoption of step children following remarriage, nor when foster children are being adopted. When you are notified that you have been matched with a child for adoption, you and your spouse or partner should jointly decide who will take adoption leave. If it's decided that you will take the leave, your spouse or partner may be eligible for paternity leave and pay.

(d) Paternity Leave

The right to take paternity leave applies to employees who:

- is the biological father of a new baby; or
- is the husband or partner of a woman who has a baby but who is not the father; or
- Is the husband or partner of a person who has adopted a child; and
- has worked for A Taxi for a minimum of 26 weeks by the 'notification week' (i.e. the end of the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth (EWC)) or, for adoption paternity leave, by the end of the week in which the child's adopter is notified of matching

Paternity leave is also available to the partner of an adopter, whether male or female.

The maximum amount of Paternity Leave is two weeks, regardless of how many children are born at the same time. This can be taken as one week's leave or as two consecutive weeks' leave. It can't be taken as odd days or as two separate weeks.

For further details, please speak to your manager.

(e) Parental Leave

If you have been in our employment continuously for one year you are entitled to a maximum of 18 weeks' parental leave provided you expect to have responsibility (i.e. parental responsibility) for a child. From April 2015, the age limit of the child increased to under 18 years in all cases. Both natural and adoptive parents may exercise these rights.

- Parental leave must be taken in blocks of one week. However, if the child qualifies for a disability living allowance, the leave can be taken as single days or multiples of a day.
- Notice must be given 21 days before the date on which the leave is to begin. You may not take more than four weeks' leave in respect of an individual child during a particular year.
- If the operation of the business will be unduly disrupted by the parental leave, it may be postponed if absolutely necessary.

(f) Shared Parental Leave

Shared Parental Leave enables eligible mothers, fathers, partners and adopters to choose how to share time off work after their child is born or placed for adoption. This could mean that the mother or adopter shares some of the leave with her partner, perhaps returning to work for part of the time and then resuming leave at a later date.

It is designed to give parents more flexibility in how to share the care of their child in the first year following birth or adoption. Parents will be able to share a pot of leave, and can decide to be off work at the same time and/or take it in turns to have periods of leave to look after the child.

(g) Urgent Domestic Leave

You may take a reasonable period of unpaid time off work to deal with certain unexpected emergencies involving people who depend on you. The time off is granted so that you may make long-term care arrangements if required but not to carry out prolonged care yourself.

In the legal definition, an 'emergency' arises when someone who depends on you:

- is ill and needs your help;
- is involved in an accident or is assaulted;
- needs you to arrange longer-term care in relation to illness/injury;
- needs you to deal with an unexpected disruption or breakdown in care, such as a child minder or nurse falling ill or failing to turn up;
- goes into labour;
- dies; and/or
- has an unexpected incident at school (children only).

Time off for urgent domestic leave is unpaid.

The following examples would NOT constitute urgent domestic leave:

- your usual childminder is on holiday;

- your child or children's school is closed for the holidays;
- you are expecting a delivery at home;
- you need to take your child for an appointment at the doctor's/dentist/hospital; or
- your child, or dependant, has an illness such as flu, chicken pox or measles. On these occasions you should only need time off to make arrangements for the care of your child or dependant.

In the situations listed above other leave provisions, such as annual leave, should be considered.

(h) Time off for Dependants

All employees may take a reasonable amount of time off during working hours to take necessary action:

- to provide assistance when a dependant falls ill, gives birth or is injured or assaulted;
- to make arrangements for the provision of care for an ill or injured dependant;
- in consequence of the death of a dependant;
- because of the unexpected disruption or termination of arrangements for the care of a dependant;
- to deal with an incident that involves your child and occurs unexpectedly while the child is at school/other educational establishment.

A dependant is:

- a spouse;
- a civil partner;
- a child;
- a parent;
- a person who lives with you other than as your employee, tenant, lodger or boarder;
- any other person who would reasonably rely on you for assistance if you fell ill or were injured or assaulted, or who would rely on you to make arrangements for the provision of care in the event of illness or injury; or
- in relation to the disruption or termination of care for a dependant, any other person who reasonably relies on you to make arrangements for the provision of care.

(i) Flexible Working

All employees may make a request for flexible working.

We will take all reasonable steps to accommodate an employee's request for flexible working. Each request will be dealt with individually, taking into account the likely effects that the proposed changes to working hours or place of work are likely to have on A Taxi, your team and colleagues.

10. Time off work

(a) Annual leave

Our leave year runs from 1 September to 31 August each year. Your holiday entitlement is set out in your contract of employment. To book annual leave, please speak to your manager. Part time employees are entitled to annual leave on a pro rata basis.

All holiday must be taken during the holiday year in which it is accrued unless a period of sickness, statutory maternity, paternity or adoption leave has prevented you from taking it in the relevant year.

All holiday dates must be approved in advance by your manager. As much notice as possible of proposed holiday dates must be given to your manager to ensure adequate staffing coverage at all times. Such notice must be at least twice the number of days' leave that you wish to take as annual leave.

There will be no payment in lieu of any holiday not taken (except on termination of employment).

(b) Holiday pay

Holiday pay is paid at basic rate.

(c) Bank holidays

A Taxi operates on statutory bank holidays. If you wish to take paid leave on statutory bank holidays you must follow the holiday booking procedure as outlined in this procedure. One day of your holiday entitlement will be taken on Christmas Day in each holiday year. Holiday pay will be paid at the basic rate.

If the employee joins A Taxi part way through a holiday year, he/she will be entitled to a proportion of his/her holiday entitlement based on the period of his/her employment in that holiday year.

During the employee's first year of service, he/she will not normally be allowed, unless otherwise agreed by the Line Manager, to take more holiday than he/she has actually accrued at the time holiday is taken. Entitlement during the employee's first year is calculated monthly in advance at the rate of one-twelfth of the full year's entitlement.

(d) Compassionate Leave

In the sad circumstances where you lose a family member or loved one, we will use our discretion to allow you time off to attend the funeral and make arrangements as required. The allocation of an agreement to compassionate leave is not an automatic entitlement, but is at the discretion of management. Each individual case will be examined, and the need for sensitivity and flexibility in individual circumstances borne in mind.

Factors that will be taken into consideration will include:

- your personal circumstances;
- your relationship with the deceased;
- the extent of your involvement in making funeral or other arrangements; and
- the need to travel beyond your local region.

How to Apply

Employees should apply as soon as possible to their Line Manager.

Your line manager will confirm the decision made, and whether the leave is to be paid or unpaid.

Your line manager will advise payroll where appropriate, and keep a record of all compassionate leave granted on both an individual and a Business basis.

Guidelines

Paid leave, usually within a maximum of 3 to 5 days, may be granted for the death or serious illness of close family relatives, for example:

- Spouse/Partner;
- Mother/Father and Mother-in-Law/Father-in-Law;
- Brother/Sister and Brother-in-Law/Sister-in-Law;
- Children;
- Grandparents or Grandchildren.

Additional Leave

If the period of compassionate leave has expired, and the employee still needs to be absent, the individual should consult their line manager. Under the circumstances, further leave may be granted by extension of compassionate leave, annual leave, or as unpaid leave. Should the employee at any stage be signed off sick through self-certification or by their Doctor, this will be treated as sickness absence, and not as part of compassionate leave.

(e) Jury service

If you are required to undertake jury service, leave will be granted. Under exceptional circumstances, your manager may need to request a postponement of your service which will be agreed.

(f) Routine medical and dental appointments

These should normally be arranged outside your normal working hours. If this isn't possible, you should seek approval from your manager to attend the appointment in your normal working hours. Time off to attend routine medical appointments can either be taken as annual leave or as unpaid leave.

(g) Consultants appointments

If you have a hospital appointment during working hours you should get approval from your manager. Time off for hospital appointments can either be taken as annual leave or as unpaid leave.

(h) Civic or Public Duties

A Taxi's policy is to respect reasonable requests for unpaid leave for voluntary public duties if you are a member of a Local Authority Council or Health Authority, Justice of the Peace or School Governor. You should discuss any requirement with your manager at the earliest opportunity.

(i) Study Leave

We will consider requests for study leave. This will normally be unpaid but may, at A Taxi's discretion be paid leave. Requests should be made in writing to your manager.

(j) Severe Weather or transport disruption

We recognise that you may face difficulties getting to and from work during periods of severe weather or when there are disruptions to public transport. While we are committed to protecting the health and safety of all of our employees, we must ensure that disruption caused to our services remains minimal.

You should use your best endeavours to attend work in all circumstances. However, it is not our intention that you put yourself at unnecessary risk when trying to attend work. You should use your own judgment and, if unable to attend work, contact your manager as soon as possible or, if he/she is not available, the most senior individual in your department as soon as possible.

Please refer to the policy for further information.

11. Attendance Management

A Taxi aims to encourage all its employees to maximise their attendance at work. It is recognised, however, that a certain level of absence from work is inevitable for a variety of reasons, including sickness. For guidelines on sickness absence, see the A Taxi's separate policies as follows:

Long Term Sickness

Short Term Sickness

While the A Taxi understands that there will inevitably be some absence among employees, it must also pay due regard to its business needs. If an employee is frequently absent from work or is absent for a lengthy period (for whatever reasons), this can damage efficiency and productivity, and place an additional burden of work on the employee's colleagues. By implementing this policy/procedure, A Taxi aims to strike a reasonable balance between the pursuit of its business needs and the genuine needs of employees to be absent from work because of sickness or for family, domestic or other reasons. The key aim of the policy/procedure is to encourage reliable attendance among all employees, so that a dependable staffing base can be established to meet the A Taxi's needs.

All employee absences will be counted for the purpose of this policy/procedure except approved holidays, family leave periods (e.g. maternity leave), approved compassionate leave, pregnancy-related absences, absences resulting from a workplace accident, and (unless it is justifiable to include them) absences that are related to an employee's disability.

The application of this attendance policy/procedure does not imply that an employee is doing, or has done, anything wrong. The procedure is a means of managing attendance, and should not be confused with the disciplinary procedure.

Overall responsibility for the implementation of this procedure lies with the Departmental Manager.

Bradford Factor

The **Bradford Factor** is a system used to calculate a score for each employee's sickness absence in any given period. The higher the score, the more disruptive the employee's absence is to A Taxi.

The Bradford Factor is a simple calculation that can be used to highlight frequent, short-term employee sick leave. The score returned by the Bradford Factor calculation can help to identify those individuals within your organisation who may have sickness records worthy of further investigation

What is the formula?

$E \times E \times D = \text{Bradford Factor Score}$

Where E is the number of episodes of absence and D is the total number of days absent in a given period.

So, for employees with a total of 10 days absence in one year, the Bradford Factor score can vary enormously, depending on the number of episodes of absence involved.

For example:

One absence episode of 10 days is 10 points (i.e. $1 \times 1 \times 10$)

Five absence episodes of two days each is 250 points (i.e. $5 \times 5 \times 10$)

Ten absence episodes of one day each is 1,000 points (i.e. $10 \times 10 \times 10$)

Procedure

Managers responsible for staff are expected to manage and control their employees' attendance.

This procedure has four stages and involves the application of absence "trigger points". It also involves the allocation of responsibility to individual line managers to interview any employee whose level of absence has reached a defined trigger point and, depending on the circumstances, issue a warning about unsatisfactory attendance.

We have identified the following trigger points, over a rolling 12-month period, for consideration of different levels of formal action.

- 0-49 points there is no action required
- 50-124 points is a trigger for consideration of a verbal warning (Stage 1)
- 125-399 points is a trigger for consideration of a first written warning (Stage 2)
- 400-649 points is a trigger for consideration of a final written warning (Stage 3)
- 650+ points is a trigger for consideration of dismissal on the grounds of unsatisfactory attendance (Stage 4)

All warnings will remain live on an employee's file for 12 months.

Managers may, in appropriate circumstances, use their discretion to discount certain absences (for example on compassionate grounds), and not issue a first or second written warning where stage 1 or 2 of the procedure has been triggered. An attendance review meeting should, however, still take place in these circumstances. If an exception is to be made, the reason for it should be discussed and clearly recorded. Similarly, the employer may decide not to dismiss an employee who has reached stage 4 of the procedure if there are special circumstances justifying this course of action. Again a record should be made of the reasons for the decision.

Whenever a trigger point is activated, the manager should take the following actions:

1. Check the employee's absence record to gain an accurate assessment of the number of days' absence that he/she has had and the number of separate occasions on which he/she has been absent.
2. Write to the employee inviting him/her to a formal attendance review meeting, enclosing a statement summarising the employee's periods of absence and their Bradford Factor Score during the relevant defined time period and advising him/her of the right to be accompanied by a fellow worker or trade union official at the meeting.
3. Notify HR that an attendance review meeting is being set up with the employee.
4. At the meeting, invite the employee to explain the reasons for his/her absences, and give him/her the opportunity to put forward any mitigating factors.
5. Ensure that the employee understands the requirements of the attendance procedure, the reasons why the procedure is in place, the stage that he/she has reached in the procedure, and the possible consequences of a continuing unsatisfactory level of attendance.
6. Enquire whether there is anything that the manager can do to facilitate an improvement in the employee's level of attendance.
7. Keep a record of the key points discussed at the meeting and the outcome.
8. After a stage 1 or stage 2 meeting, issue a written warning for unsatisfactory attendance, unless the circumstances merit a different approach.
9. If the meeting was a stage 3 meeting, the matter should be referred to a senior manager who will, in conjunction with the line manager, consider whether or not the employee should be dismissed.

12. Health and Safety

We regard the management of health and safety as an integral part of our business and as a management priority. It's our policy that all activities and work will be carried out in a safe manner and we will ensure the health, safety and welfare of our employees and others who may be affected by our activities.

(a) Risk Assessments

Risk assessments are undertaken to identify any hazards and the steps that can be taken to reduce or remove them. Specific risk assessments will be undertaken for new or expectant mothers, young persons, lone workers, safe handling and use of substances, noise, manual handling, display screen equipment and fire where appropriate.

If you would like a risk assessment carried out for any part of your job, please speak to your manager.

Please refer to the full policy for further information, available on the intranet or from your manager.

(b) Fire procedure

In the North Devon Licencing testing, you will receive information about what to do if there's a fire at work.

(c) First Aid

We will provide first-aid personnel with sufficient training, information and support to undertake their responsibilities.

Please refer to the full policy for further information, available on the intranet or from your manager.

(d) Accidents

If you are involved in an accident or sustain an injury, no matter how slight, on A Taxi's premises, during working hours, you must report it as soon as possible to your Manager and seek medical attention from the business' first aiders. All accidents must be recorded in the A Taxi Accident Book.

Please refer to the full policy for further information, available on the intranet or from your manager.

(e) Stress at Work

Stress is a natural reaction to pressure, but, in extreme circumstances it can lead to mental or physical illness. If you believe that you may be suffering from stress and think that A taxi may be able to help or can do something to reduce the amount of stress you are suffering from please speak to your manager.

(f) Alcohol and Drugs

A Taxi has a responsibility towards employees to provide a safe and healthy working environment and recognises that this may be jeopardised by those who misuse alcohol, drugs or solvents within the working environment.

Employees must comply with the following:

- Do not bring alcohol or illegal drugs onto A Taxi premises.
- Do not report for work under the influence of substance abuse (alcohol, drugs or solvent inhalation).
- Request advice from your GP for possible side-effects of prescribed drugs e.g. drowsiness or impaired reflexes.
- You **must not** drive an A Taxi vehicle or operate machinery if under the influence of a substance.
- Seek assistance if you believe you have or are developing a substance dependency problem.
- Be alert to substance abuse symptoms and offer support and advice to colleagues if you suspect that they have a problem - it is a misapprehension that "turning a blind eye" will protect them. Your silence may cause more harm.

Adhere to the obligations placed upon you under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 which requires you to take reasonable care of yourself and others who may be affected by your acts or omissions at work

- **Definition of substance misuse**

The consumption of drugs or alcohol, or other substances, to the extent that it repeatedly or continuously adversely affects an employee's work performance, conduct, attendance, or normal social behaviour at work.

- **If you're having problems**

It's always best to be open if you are having difficulties with drugs and/or alcohol so we can give you the help and sort you need. If you hide the problem, it may just get worse. Speak to your manager as soon as possible.

- **Illegal drugs and alcohol**

Employees may not buy, sell or use, or be under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol whilst at work. Any breach of this will result in the Disciplinary procedure being invoked.

- **Unfit for work**

If your manager feels you are unfit for work, you may be sent home on unpaid leave for your own good and the safety of others. Following this, your manager will consider what action to take which could include invoking the Disciplinary procedure.

(g) Eye tests

We will contribute towards an eye test for all regular Visual Display Unit (VDU) users.

Please make your own arrangements with a registered ophthalmic optician or registered medical practitioner with suitable qualifications, and we will reimburse you on receipt of written confirmation from the examining optician that the eye and eyesight test has been carried out.

You should make a request for an eye and eyesight test to your manager.

(h) Right of stop and search

We reserve the right under this policy to:

- stop and search all employees;
- carry out a search of personal belongings and vehicles on our property; and
- carry out a search of all workplace areas, including lockers and any A Taxi vehicles.

Please refer to the full policy for further information, available on the intranet or from your manager.

(i) Your responsibilities

Every employee is required to assist A Taxi to meet its commitment to provide equal opportunities in employment and avoid unlawful discrimination.

Employees can be held personally liable as well as, or instead of, A Taxi for any act of unlawful discrimination. Employees who commit serious acts of harassment may be guilty of a criminal offence.

Acts of discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation against employees or customers are disciplinary offences and will be dealt with under A Taxi's disciplinary procedure. Discrimination, harassment, bullying or victimisation may constitute gross misconduct and could lead to dismissal without notice.

13. Sickness Absence

(a) Introduction

We do not wish to adopt a harsh attitude to those who are genuinely off work for a recognised reason. Nevertheless, your manager will monitor the absence records of employees in order to identify any underlying problems. Your manager will seek to offer guidance and support and may take further advice where necessary. In instances where frequent short term absences are occurring, the Attendance Management procedure may be invoked.

(b) Procedure

If you are off sick, you should inform your manager or in their absence, the office, as soon as possible and no later than your regular start time. You will need to give the following information:

- What your illness is
- When your illness started
- If you intend going to the doctor
- When you expect to return to work
- You should let us know of the status of any important work you are involved in that will be impacted by your absence.

You should always phone into work yourself, unless you are physically incapable of doing so.

(c) Sickness absence of less than 7 days

If you are absent for a period of seven days or less, you must complete a sickness self-certification on your return to work.

(d) Sickness absence of more than 7 days

From day 8 of your absence, a medical certificate/fit note from your GP must be provided.

(e) Occupational Health

If your manager has any concerns about your health, you may be referred to Occupational Health for an assessment. This may be while you are at work, on sick leave, or returning to work from sick leave. This is so that we can obtain advice on any adjustments we should make to help you in your role. It may not always be possible to make all of the adjustments, but we'll always sort an employee to continue working in the same or similar role wherever possible.

(f) Return to work interviews

Upon your return to work following sickness you may be required to undergo a return to work interview to help to reduce unacceptable short-term absence. They send a clear message that absence is actively managed at your workplace. And by asking employees to explain their absence face-to-face, they also deter dishonesty.

14. Sick Pay

(a) Statutory sick pay

It is our policy to pay statutory sick pay (SSP) during periods of sickness absence. SSP is paid for 28 weeks of sickness absence starting on the fourth day of your sickness absence.

Level of staff responsibility	Entitlement
All Employees	Up to four days full pay. The first three days of absence, in any period of sickness are called 'waiting days'. You will not receive any A Taxi Sick Pay on these days.

(b) Restrictions and rules

- SSP will only be paid providing you comply with the absence reporting procedures as set out in Section 12 of this handbook (Sickness Absence).
- We reserve the right to amend this policy at any time.

15. Performance Management

(a) Appraisals

The appraisal scheme is designed to be a formal channel for you and your manager to discuss your performance. It's a two way process which means that the one to one meeting with your manager is not just for you to hear how you are doing, but also for you to say how you think you are doing. It is a chance for you to discuss what problems there are (if any) and what training and development you think you need.

Each year, each member of staff will take part in a One-to-One meeting with his/her immediate manager to discuss aspects of his/her work performance. The objective of the meeting will be to review the previous year's achievements and to discuss any future training, development and career planning relevant to the individual and to the organisation.

(b) Performance concerns

We will at all times aim to ensure that employees maintain and achieve a high standard of performance in their work. This means we will monitor performance, and provide employees with appropriate training and sort to meet our standards.

There will be times when employees do not perform to the levels required by A Taxi. In dealing with cases of poor performance, we distinguish between those where the reason is within the employee's control (e.g. negligence, lack of application or attitude problems) and those where the reason is outside the employee's control (e.g. lack of ability, a lack of training, or the changing nature of the job). In the former case, our Disciplinary procedure will be used, and in the latter case, the Performance Improvement procedure will be applied.

(c) Performance Improvement Procedure

This runs parallel with, but is not part of, the Disciplinary procedure as we recognise that poor job performance and incapability should not be treated as 'disciplinary offences'. If you have been with A Taxi for less than two years, we may not follow all of the stages outlined in this procedure when addressing a performance issue with you.

Where we have been unable to resolve any performance issues through informal discussions and measures, we may have to instigate formal procedures. This will involve inviting you to a formal performance review meeting, at which you will have the right to a companion, and we will discuss our concerns with you. You will be given the opportunity to prepare for this meeting and to put your case at the performance review meeting.

Where, despite support, you have been unable to reach the required standard of performance, the consequences of any failure to meet this standard will be explained to you in writing which will take the form of the following.

Stage one – first written warning

You will be fully informed of the precise nature of the poor performance, the level of improvement required and the time limit for achieving that improvement, review periods during the currency of the warning, the consequences of failure to achieve or maintain the improvement and the length of time the warning will remain 'live' on the your file.

Stage two - final written warning

If there is no improvement or insufficient improvement after a stage one warning, or if improvement is not maintained for the period stated in the stage one warning, you will be given a final written warning setting out the details as outlined above in the first written warning. The stage two warning will include a statement that a failure to improve to the required standard is likely to result in dismissal.

Length of time the warning will remain 'live'

First written warnings will normally have a time limit of six months, while the time limit for a final written warning will normally be 12 months. However, there may be times when the period of time the warning is on file may be longer or shorter than this depending on the nature of the performance issues and the impact on the business.

Stage three - dismissal

If there is still no improvement or insufficient improvement after a stage three warning, or if improvement has not been maintained for the period stated above, you will normally be dismissed with notice or pay in lieu. Alternatively, you may be offered an alternative, suitable position if this exists.

Stage four - appeals

The same appeals procedure as set out in the Disciplinary procedure will be used.

Right to be accompanied at formal meetings

You may be accompanied by a fellow worker or trade union official at any formal meetings that are held to discuss a failure to meet the required standard of performance.

16. Training & Development

(a) Our commitment

A Taxi's policy is to invest in training and development for all staff in order to help them develop and perform their individual jobs more effectively.

The day to day management of training and education activity is the responsibility of your manager. If you feel that you have a particular training need, please discuss it with your manager.

Training and development initiatives

A Taxi provides a range of training and development opportunities to staff. These fall into four broad categories:

- **Programmes relating to the enhancement of skills for an employee's current position.** These include internal and external courses providing technical training, for example on the use of software packages, and specialist training relating to the skills that employees require for their job.
- **Programmes leading to a professional or academic qualification.** A Taxi encourages employees who wish to do so to pursue continuous professional development and where appropriate to gain further qualifications. A Taxi may also contribute to the fees of an approved training programme.
- **Programmes that have a specific management or supervisory focus.** These include internal and external courses on management development, supervisory skills for line managers, and leadership development programmes.
- **Health and safety training.** This includes courses in manual handling, risk assessment, fire safety, first aid, and food and hygiene regulations.

Decisions on the suitability and applicability of programmes will be determined through the One-to-One review process, during which individual training and development needs are identified within a personal development plan. Progress on the acquisition of new skills and knowledge will be monitored throughout this process.

17. Leaving A Taxi

(a) Notice Periods

Your contract of employment sets out the notice you are required to give us and the notice that we are required to give you to terminate your employment.

(b) Resignation

To resign from your position, please write to your manager giving the relevant notice period. If you are not sure what your notice period is, please check your contract of employment. The A Taxi will not accept notice of resignation as effective unless it is in writing. Upon resignation, the employee will be required to work his/her full contractual notice period, unless otherwise agreed.

(c) Redundancy

Although our aim is to avoid redundancies wherever possible, the needs of the business may from time to time require a reduction in the overall number of staff employed or organisational changes that result in some employees being made redundant.

Where this is necessary, we will ensure that consultation is carried out with individual staff as appropriate.

If we dismiss you by reason of redundancy, we will give you your full contractual notice and, unless otherwise agreed, will require you to work the full period of notice.

During your notice period, you will be given a reasonable amount of paid time off work to look for alternative employment. The arrangements for time off must be agreed in advance by your manager.

Please refer to the policy for further information.

(d) Retirement

If you are retiring, notice should be given in accordance with the notice period set out in your contract of employment.

Please refer to the full policy for further information, available on the intranet or from your manager.

(e) Rights and obligations during notice period

During your notice period, your contract of employment will continue to remain in force. You remain bound by all the obligations and restrictions expressly set out or implied in your contract of employment, including the confidentiality agreement and any restrictive covenants stipulated in your contract. We expect that you will conduct yourself in an entirely appropriate manner during the full period of notice, and uphold the high standards of performance required of all employees. This applies no matter who gave notice to terminate the contract of employment and for whatever reason.

(f) Returning A Taxi Property

On leaving A Taxi, please hand over to your manager all property that belongs to us on or before your final working day.

This may include (but is not limited to):

- uniform(s);
- keys and key cards;
- security and building passes;
- mobile phone and blackberry device;
- laptop;
- removable data storage device;
- credit or charge cards;
- hardcopies of A Taxi material (including copies or summaries and whether in eye readable or machine readable form);
- company car; and
- any other property belonging to A Taxi.