

MODERN SLAVERY ACT (THE ACT) TRANSPARENCY STATEMENT

Blake Morgan LLP provides legal services to clients in the UK and overseas, operating from 5 offices across London, South East England and Wales. As a law firm, we always work to the highest professional standards and comply with all laws, regulations and rules relevant to our business. We strive to be the firm of choice for our clients and for our employees. We aim to provide excellent conditions of employment, pay and benefits to every employee and to treat all clients, employees, workers and suppliers with respect.

This statement sets out the steps that Blake Morgan LLP has taken to ensure that slavery and human trafficking do not occur in our business or in our supply chains.

Assessment of Risk

The nature of our business is such that our Board continues to believe there is a low risk, either within the firm or in the supply chains which support our business activities, of potential for involvement in, support for, or complicity in, modern slavery and human trafficking. The majority of our suppliers are UK based, established organisations who take a responsible approach to Modern Slavery.

Nevertheless, we continue to insist upon a high level of ethical conduct from all our colleagues, suppliers or other organisation with which we do business.

We carry out pre-employment checks for all our new employees and partners through an independent identification and employment verification service. Our process protects the firm from identity fraud while accommodating the expansion of remote and virtual hiring and helps to ensure that employees who join us are not subject to modern slavery. We also conduct further checks on employees on an ongoing basis.

Although we believe the risk is low, we are not complacent.

Policies and Due Diligence

The SRA Code of Conduct for Firms 2019 requires us to comply with all regulatory and statutory obligations. Our Corporate Social Responsibility Policy, Ethics Policy and Slavery and Human Trafficking Policy each make clear that we are committed to take all reasonable and practical steps to ensure that high standards are implemented throughout the business and with all our suppliers and business partners. These policies are published on our intranet alongside our Whistleblowing Policy.

Blake Morgan LLP adopts a robust approach to procurement, and our Procurement Policy and processes require us to comply with the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 as well as all of our regulatory, information security and data protection requirements.

Our supplier due diligence process includes:

- Risk assessing our suppliers
- Enhanced due diligence for our tier 1 suppliers
- Audit of key tier 1 suppliers
- A requirement on all tier 1 and tier 2 suppliers to provide confirmation of compliance to the requirements of the Act, and other regulatory and statutory requirements
- A requirement of all suppliers to confirm that they will comply with our Ethics Policy, which includes reference to the Act
- Annual review of tier 1 suppliers

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We will not accept human trafficking in our business or supply chain and our choice of suppliers will be affected by the responses given within the supplier due diligence process

We expect our suppliers to conform to International Labour Organisation Standards.

We continue to review and improve our Procurement processes in line with the requirement for continual improvement in our ISO certifications.

Communication and Training

We continue to communicate this statement to all our staff to ensure a high level of understanding of the risks of slavery and human trafficking in our supply chains and our business. The statement is published both on our intranet (to ensure it is readily available to our employees) and on our website each year.

We make reference to the Act in face to face induction training for all new employees and provide other training to maintain awareness and appropriate due diligence.

Those directly involved in procurement across the firm are required to confirm that they have read and understand our Slavery and Human Trafficking policy and statement so that these professionals understand and are able to address any potential modern slavery risks. The whole firm are trained at induction and every 2 years thereafter in relation to Anti-Bribery and Corruption.

Since 2021 we have complied with the requirement to register our organisation on the Modern Slavery Statement registry, so that the steps we take to eliminate modern slavery from our operations and supply chain are apparent. We will continue to comply with this requirement.

Effectiveness Review

This statement has been approved by our Board, on behalf of the Members of the firm, and it relates to the financial year ending 30 April 2024. The Board review and update this statement on an annual basis and approve all future plans aimed at compliance with the Act.

This statement is published on behalf of Blake Morgan LLP and Blake Morgan Group LLP and Blake Laphorn.

Signed: 

Helen Bunker, Chair

Dated: 28 July 2024

Approved by the Board: 29 August 2024