



# **Accreditation questionnaire guide**

**For companies of 51+ employees**

## Overview

We're delighted you've decided to register with the Good Business Charter. We are really excited to have you join with us to promote a better and fairer way to conduct business.

The self-certification process takes the form of a series of questions requiring a Yes or No answer which should take you less than one hour to complete.

Accreditation to the Good Business Charter requires you to meet each of the 10 components if you are a company or 9 if you are a charity.

In the majority of cases you will be asked if you are currently fulfilling a certain criterion for the Good Business Charter. If you answer 'No', you will be asked if you commit to do it going forwards. Our focus is on good intent in this regard. So a commitment going forwards means that within 3 months (or 12 months for tax) you will have started to put any changes required into motion. Some of the detail may take a few months to implement and we are definitely not expecting that to be fully in place within 3 months. Intent and commitment is the key.

For the detail on any component we would ask you to refer to the individual web page for that component (<https://goodbusinesscharter.com/our-10-components/>). Each of these pages explains what you are going to be asked in the questionnaire.

If you are concerned that you will not be able to answer these questions but believe that your business or charity practices follow the spirit of this component, please consult with us so that we can make a judgement on whether we believe you meet the requirements of the component. We are really keen to have organisations of all sizes and from all types of industries and sectors joining the Good Business Charter. These are standard questions and for some organisations there may be questions that are just not relevant or too onerous. We want to hear from you if you feel that is the case and we will take a sympathetic view.

Equally, organisations with a smaller number of employees may feel that the wording of the questions is rather technical for the way they operate. We do not want to exclude anyone behaving responsibly just because they feel this has not been designed with their organisation's size or industry in mind. We encourage you to apply the questions to your own unique setting and if in doubt, do contact us on [info@goodbusinesscharter.com](mailto:info@goodbusinesscharter.com) to explain the way in which you believe in your own way that you meet this component so that together we can consider whether it is sufficient or what else may be necessary to receive GBC accreditation.

## Questions for GBC accreditation

### Company 51+ employees

#### 1 Real Living Wage

- 1.1 Are you an accredited Living Wage Employer? Y [go to section 2]/N
- 1.2 Do you currently pay your directly employed staff the real living wage and commit to contacting the Living Wage Foundation to become a Living Wage Employer and agree a timescale to pay your regularly contracted staff the real living wage where applicable?

#### 2 Fairer hours and contracts

- 2.1 Do you offer or use zero or minimal hours contracts for directly employed or regularly contracted staff\*? N [go to section 3]/ Y  
\* with the exception where flexibility is part of the role and freely accepted by the employee
- 2.2 Do you commit to a fair approach to hours and contracts with respect to zero or minimal hours contracts?
- 2.3 Do you give at least two weeks' notice for scheduling of shifts and ensure there is no penalty for an employee who declines a shift added at short notice?
- 2.4 Do you still pay a shift if cancelled at less than two weeks' notice?
- 2.5 Do you allow an employee to request a contract with more fixed hours at any time without consequences?
- 2.6 Do you commit to review actual hours worked annually and initiate a supportive conversation with the employee with a view to providing a contract at or close to the hours actually being worked as soon as able?

## 3 Employee wellbeing

- 3.1 Do you have clear, fair and transparent policies that support and encourage employee well-being including a sickness policy which clearly outlines both employee and employer responsibilities and bans unreasonable penalties for legitimate sickness?
- 3.2 Do you promote access to impartial support and advice for employees with physical and mental health needs?

## 4 Employee representation

- 4.1 Where trade unions are recognised in your organisation, do you agree to meet with them at least annually to discuss business performance and strategy and to attempt to ensure that issues that have been raised by them have been adequately addressed to the best of your ability? Y/N/ N/A
- 4.2 Where union representatives are present in the workforce, do you commit to regular engagement? Y/N/ N/A
- 4.3 Do you have a forum or similar mechanism where every employee can have input and are issues from this forum escalated to senior management?
- 4.4 Do you have a mechanism to ensure that employees have a voice on strategic decision-making, such as workforce representation on the organisation's board or equivalent top management structure?
- 4.5 Do you commit to circulate an annual or biennial employee satisfaction survey to which the results are reviewed by the board?
- 4.6 Do you have a mechanism for whistle-blowing that provides all employees with an opportunity to report to internal or external sources, anonymously if they prefer, matters of concern about a danger, risk, malpractice or wrongdoing that affects others, and ensure they are protected from reprisals?

## 5 Diversity and inclusion

- 5.1 Do you assign time and money as is reasonably required to making your business an inclusive place to work and take steps to increase participation from underrepresented groups at all levels?
- 5.2 Will you ask employees in an annual or biennial employee satisfaction survey about whether they feel safe, included and a sense of belonging in their workplace?
- 5.3 Will you commit to collect at least every two years, voluntarily from your employees, EDI data, explaining clearly how it will be used and analyse this data against a baseline, using it to address disadvantage, discrimination and improve workforce wellbeing and performance?
- 5.4 Will you report to board level at least every two years on EDI data, including pay gap data, with an evidence-based plan to close any gaps that are published? This includes analysing representation, hiring and leaving figures at least annually and reporting to board level on plans to address any issues that are revealed.
- 5.5 Do you put measures in place to encourage EDI data at key stages of recruitment, selection and retention of employees?
- 5.6 Do you have in place measures to prevent harassment, victimisation or bullying in the workplace?
- 5.7 Do you communicate both externally and internally your commitment to progress, outcomes and impact of EDI?
- 5.8 Will you commit to report your CEO pay ratio to your median employee annually with an explanation as to whether the ratio is consistent with the charity's wider policies on employee pay, reward and progression? If the ratio between CEO and media worker is above the sector average (where this data is available) do you commit to devising and implementing a plan for narrowing the gap?
- 5.9 Have you conducted a review to ensure that your organisation's activities and assets (eg website, building, events) are accessible to all and have plans in place to address any areas requiring improvement?

## 6 Environmental responsibility

- 6.1 Are you committed to identifying your organisation's main direct and indirect environmental issues and minimising any potential negative impact by continually striving to improve environmental performance?
- 6.2 Do you comply with, and where possible exceed, all environmental legislation that relates to the organisation?
- 6.3 Do you set clear environmental objectives relevant to your organisation, including your organisation's approach to meeting the target of achieving net zero by 2050, and identify performance targets, which you monitor and review?
- 6.4 Do you encourage the development of good environmental practice by your employees, suppliers and customers?

## 7 Pay fair tax

- 7.1 Do you commit to pay your taxes where applicable and not engage in tax avoidance? We define tax avoidance as a deliberate attempt to get out of an obligation to pay tax by entering into a set of artificial arrangements which have little or no commercial purpose other than the reduction of a tax bill. For the avoidance of doubt, this does not include the use of tax reliefs or allowances that governments make available to companies, as long as the relief is claimed in a way which aligns with government policy intention.
- 7.2 Will you commit to provide information on your website or in your company accounts about your company's approach to paying corporation tax?
- 7.3 Do you commit to be transparent in your relationship with HMRC, providing all relevant information and to cooperate in resolving any disputes?

## **8 Commitment to customers**

- 8.1 Do you clearly publish your commitment to customers on your website?
- 8.2 Will you commit to gather and monitor customer feedback, report the results to the board and look at ways to address concerns?

## **9 Ethical sourcing**

- 9.1 Do you commit to the standards set out in the Ethical Trading Initiative Base Code where relevant to your organisation?

## **10 Prompt payment**

- 10.1 Have you signed the government's Prompt Payment Code and commit to do your best to work towards paying all suppliers within 30 days?

The Good Business Charter measures behaviour over ten important components but we believe decent behaviour by businesses shouldn't be limited to these. Accredited organisations are expected to adhere to the spirit of the Good Business Charter in their dealings with workers, customers and suppliers, in their approach to the environment and in their legal and financial compliance. In the event of an issue occurring regarding any of these then the Trustees' decision is final in deciding whether membership should be rescinded.

## Additional Information

Before you commence the questions you will be asked to complete your organisation profile with basic information including company number, registered address, contact details and number of employees.

If you are a sole trader, you are welcome to apply for accreditation. We ask that you answer the employee questions as a commitment if you were to recruit employees in the future.

- 1** Give examples of how you actively support and encourage employee wellbeing.
- 2** How do your employees make suggestions and raise concerns?
- 3** What measures do you have in place to encourage equality, diversity and inclusion (including Board level if applicable)?
- 4** Give examples of how you measure and minimise your environmental impact and any relevant links to published information on your website.
- 5** Please share a link to your customer commitment on your website and explain how your customers are encouraged to give feedback.
- 6** What processes do you have in place when sourcing supplies?

## Requirements

When submitting your application, you will be required to agree to the terms of the licence to use our logo, should you be successful in achieving accreditation.

Your accreditation is only finalised once you have passed our background checks and displayed your logo in a permanent, prominent position on your website (or alternative if you do not have a website). This is an important part of our process, which promotes internally and externally your commitment to the components of the Good Business Charter.