

ACME TECHNOLOGIES LTD

Employee Handbook

Your guide to working at Acme

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People & Culture Team

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Welcome to Acme Technologies

Welcome to the team! We're delighted to have you on board. This handbook is your go-to reference for everything you need to know about working at Acme Technologies. It covers our values, your employment terms, the support available to you, and the standards we hold ourselves to.

We've built Acme on the belief that great technology starts with great people. We want you to thrive here — to do meaningful work, grow your career, and feel genuinely supported every step of the way.

Please take the time to read through this handbook carefully. If you have any questions, your line manager or the People & Culture team are always happy to help.

Contents

1. About Acme Technologies

1.1 Our Mission

Acme Technologies exists to build intuitive, reliable software that helps small and mid-sized businesses operate more efficiently. We believe technology should simplify work, not complicate it.

1.2 Our Values

Transparency — We communicate openly, share context generously, and default to honesty even when it's uncomfortable.

Ownership — We take responsibility for our work and its outcomes. If something breaks, we fix it. If something can be better, we improve it.

Collaboration — The best solutions come from diverse perspectives. We listen actively, give credit freely, and support each other's success.

Continuous Improvement — We're never done learning. We experiment, reflect, and iterate — on our products and on ourselves.

Customer Focus — Every decision we make starts with the question: does this serve our customers?

1.3 Company Structure

Acme Technologies is organised into five core teams: Engineering, Product, Design, Commercial, and Operations. Each team is led by a Head of Department who reports to the Chief Executive Officer. The People & Culture function sits within Operations and supports all teams.

2. Employment Essentials

2.1 Your Contract

Your individual contract of employment sets out the specific terms of your role, including your job title, salary, working hours, and reporting line. This handbook supplements your contract. Where there is any conflict between the two documents, your contract takes precedence.

2.2 Probation Period

All new employees are subject to a six-month probationary period. During this time, you and your manager will have regular check-ins to ensure the role is a good fit for both sides.

Milestone	Timing	Led By	Outcome
Week 1 check-in	End of first week	Line manager	Settle-in review
Month 1 review	4 weeks	Line manager	Initial objectives set
Mid-probation review	3 months	Line manager + HR	Progress assessment
Final probation review	6 months	Line manager + HR	Pass / extend / terminate

If your probation is not passed at the six-month mark, it may be extended by up to three months with a clear improvement plan.

2.3 Working Hours

Standard working hours are 37.5 hours per week, typically Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 5:30pm with a one-hour lunch break. We offer flexible working arrangements — see section 2.5 for details.

2.4 Hybrid Working

We operate a hybrid model. Employees are expected to be in the office a minimum of two days per week (typically Tuesday and Thursday). The remaining days may be worked from home or another suitable location, subject to agreement with your line manager. Fully remote arrangements are considered on a case-by-case basis.

2.5 Flexible Working

All employees with 26 weeks' continuous service have the statutory right to request flexible working. However, we welcome informal flexibility discussions from day one. Requests can cover changes to hours, times, or location of work. Formal requests should be submitted in writing to the People & Culture team.

2.6 Notice Periods

Length of Service	Notice Period
During probation	1 week
Up to 2 years	1 month
2–5 years	2 months
5+ years	3 months

3. Pay and Benefits

3.1 Salary

Salaries are paid monthly on the 25th of each month (or the preceding working day if the 25th falls on a weekend or bank holiday) directly into your nominated bank account. Your payslip is available via the payroll portal.

3.2 Pension

Acme operates an auto-enrolment workplace pension scheme with [Provider Name]. The Company contributes 5% of qualifying earnings, and you contribute a minimum of 3%. You may increase your personal contributions at any time via the pension portal.

3.3 Benefits Overview

- Private medical insurance (after probation)
- Life assurance at 4x annual salary
- Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) — 24/7 confidential support
- Cycle to Work scheme
- Tech salary sacrifice scheme
- Annual learning and development budget of £1,000 per person
- Monthly team social budget
- Free snacks, drinks, and barista-quality coffee in the office

3.4 Expenses

Reasonable business expenses incurred in the course of your duties will be reimbursed, subject to the following guidelines:

Category	Limit	Approval Required
Travel (rail / bus)	Standard class only	Pre-approval for over £100
Mileage	45p/mile (first 10,000), 25p/mile after	Line manager
Meals (travel)	£15 lunch / £25 dinner	Receipts required
Accommodation	Up to £150/night (London £200)	Pre-approval required
Client entertainment	Up to £50/head	Director approval

All expense claims must be submitted within 30 days of the expense being incurred, with valid receipts, via the expenses platform.

4. Leave and Time Off

4.1 Leave Entitlements

The following table summarises your leave entitlements. Full details of eligibility criteria and the application process are available on the People & Culture intranet pages.

Leave Type	Entitlement	Notes
Annual Leave	25 days + bank holidays	Pro-rata for part-time staff
Sick Leave	SSP + company sick pay (up to 10 days)	Self-certification up to 7 days; GP note after
Maternity Leave	52 weeks (39 paid)	Enhanced: 16 weeks full pay after 1 year
Paternity Leave	2 weeks statutory + 2 weeks enhanced	Available after 26 weeks' service
Shared Parental Leave	Up to 50 weeks	Subject to eligibility and notice requirements
Compassionate Leave	Up to 5 days paid	At manager's discretion
Jury Service	As required by law	Normal pay maintained

4.2 Requesting Leave

Annual leave should be requested through the HR system with as much notice as possible — at least twice the length of the leave requested. Your line manager will approve requests taking into account team capacity. No more than two consecutive weeks may normally be taken without prior agreement from your Head of Department.

4.3 Bank Holidays

The Company observes all standard England and Wales bank holidays. If you are required to work on a bank holiday, you will receive a day in lieu.

4.4 Sickness Absence

If you are unwell and unable to work, you must notify your line manager as early as possible on the first day of absence, ideally before your normal start time. You should keep your manager informed throughout your absence. For absences exceeding seven calendar days, a fit note from your GP is required.

The Company monitors sickness absence levels and may initiate a welfare meeting or absence review where patterns give cause for concern. Our aim is always to support your return to work.

5. Learning and Development

5.1 Our Commitment

We want every person at Acme to grow. Whether that means deepening technical expertise, developing leadership skills, or exploring a new discipline entirely, we'll support you. Every employee has access to a £1,000 annual learning budget which can be used for courses, conferences, books, subscriptions, and certifications.

5.2 Performance Reviews

We run formal performance reviews twice a year (mid-year and end-of-year), supplemented by regular 1:1 meetings with your line manager. Reviews focus on progress against objectives, demonstration of company values, and career development aspirations.

5.3 Career Progression

We maintain transparent career frameworks for each department that set out the skills, behaviours, and experience expected at each level. Your manager will work with you to identify development goals and create a personalised growth plan.

6. Conduct and Behaviour

6.1 Standards of Conduct

We expect all employees to conduct themselves professionally, treat colleagues and clients with respect, and uphold the company's values. This applies in the office, when working remotely, at company events, and in any context where you are representing Acme Technologies.

6.2 Disciplinary Procedure

Where conduct falls below the expected standard, the Company will follow a fair and transparent disciplinary process in line with the ACAS Code of Practice:

Stage	Description	Duration on File
Informal Discussion	Verbal conversation with manager to address concerns early	Not formally recorded
Stage 1: Written Warning	Formal written warning issued following investigation	6 months
Stage 2: Final Written Warning	Issued for repeated or more serious misconduct	12 months
Stage 3: Dismissal	Termination of employment for continued or gross misconduct	Permanent record

6.2.1 Gross Misconduct

The following are examples of behaviour that may be treated as gross misconduct and may result in summary dismissal (dismissal without notice):

- Theft, fraud, or deliberate falsification of records
- Physical violence, bullying, or harassment
- Serious breach of health and safety rules
- Deliberate damage to company property
- Serious breach of confidentiality or data protection obligations
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs at work
- Bringing the Company into serious disrepute

This list is illustrative, not exhaustive.

6.3 Grievance Procedure

If you have a concern or complaint about your working conditions, treatment, or any other aspect of your employment, we encourage you to raise it. In the first instance, try to resolve the matter informally with your line manager. If this is not possible or appropriate, you may submit a formal grievance in writing to the People & Culture team. Grievances will be investigated promptly and impartially in accordance with the ACAS Code of Practice.

6.4 Anti-Harassment and Bullying

Acme Technologies has a zero-tolerance approach to harassment, bullying, and victimisation of any kind. This includes harassment related to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. Any employee found to have engaged in harassment or bullying will face disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

7. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We are committed to creating a workplace where everyone feels valued, respected, and able to contribute fully. We actively promote equality of opportunity and do not discriminate on the basis of any protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010.

Our commitment to inclusion extends to recruitment, promotion, training, pay, and every other aspect of the employment relationship. We regularly review our practices to identify and address barriers to equality.

8. Health, Safety and Wellbeing

8.1 Health and Safety

The Company takes its health and safety obligations seriously and will provide a safe working environment in compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and associated regulations. All employees have a responsibility to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others, follow safety procedures, and report hazards promptly.

8.2 Mental Health and Wellbeing

We recognise that mental health is just as important as physical health. Support is available through our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), which provides free, confidential counselling and advice 24 hours a day. We also have trained Mental Health First Aiders in the office. If you are struggling, please reach out — there is no stigma in asking for help.

8.3 Display Screen Equipment

If you regularly use a computer or other display screen equipment, you are entitled to a workstation assessment. The Company will provide appropriate equipment (including for your home workstation if applicable) and cover the cost of eye tests and corrective lenses required specifically for DSE work.

9. IT, Security and Data Protection

9.1 Acceptable Use

Company IT systems, including laptops, email, messaging platforms, and cloud services, are provided for business use. Limited personal use is permitted provided it does not interfere with your work, breach any company policy, or create a security risk. The Company reserves the right to monitor usage in accordance with applicable legislation.

9.2 Information Security

All employees are responsible for protecting company data and systems. You must:

- Use strong, unique passwords and enable multi-factor authentication on all company accounts
- Lock your screen when leaving your workstation
- Never share your login credentials with anyone
- Report suspected security incidents to the IT team immediately
- Follow the Company's data classification and handling procedures
- Use only approved software and services for work purposes

9.3 Data Protection

The Company processes personal data in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. All employees have a responsibility to handle personal data lawfully, fairly, and securely. Full details of our data protection practices are set out in the Company's Privacy Notice and Data Protection Policy, available on the intranet.

9.4 Confidentiality

During and after your employment, you must not disclose any confidential information relating to the Company, its clients, suppliers, or employees to any unauthorised person. This obligation is set out in your contract of employment and survives termination.

10. Social Media

You are free to use social media in your personal time. However, you must not post content that could reasonably be associated with Acme Technologies and which is defamatory, discriminatory, confidential, or otherwise damaging to the Company's reputation. If in doubt, think before you post — or ask the Communications team for guidance.

Official company social media accounts should only be managed by authorised personnel.

11. Whistleblowing

If you become aware of any wrongdoing, malpractice, or danger within the Company, we encourage you to report it. The Company's whistleblowing procedure provides a safe and confidential channel for raising concerns without fear of retaliation. Disclosures may be made to your line manager, the People & Culture team, or through the anonymous reporting line. All reports will be taken seriously and investigated promptly.

Protected disclosures made in good faith are protected under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. The Company will not tolerate any form of retaliation against a whistleblower.

12. Leaving the Company

12.1 Resignation

If you wish to resign, please submit your resignation in writing to your line manager, copying the People & Culture team. Your contractual notice period will apply (see section 2.6).

12.2 Exit Process

During your notice period, you will be asked to complete a handover of your work, return all company property (including laptop, access cards, and any documents), and attend an exit interview. The exit interview is an opportunity for you to share honest feedback about your experience — your input helps us improve.

12.3 References

The Company provides factual employment references confirming job title, dates of employment, and salary. Personal references are not provided on behalf of the Company.

13. Acknowledgement

By signing below, I confirm that I have received, read, and understood the Acme Technologies Employee Handbook. I agree to comply with the policies, procedures, and standards of conduct set out herein.

Employee	Details
Full Name	
Signature	
Date	