



Your Guide to Growing with Us

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Welcome to Your Guide to Growing with Us, a handy reference containing everything we think you need to know about Scientific Group – but don't be afraid to ask (be 'fearless' – see later) if something isn't clear or you can't find it.

The Guide is supported by several more detailed policies referred to in the text, which can all be found on Knowledge Central.

The legal stuff

This Guide is a supporting document to your employment contract, but it's non-contractual. The policies described within are discretionary but binding on all employees.

If we make any updates to policy, we'll let you know by email or in one of our regular All Agency meetings or Townhalls. So, if you're holding a printed version of the Guide, it might not be the most up-to-date version.

The Guide is confidential, so if you don't work for Scientific Group, close it now.



We are Scientific.

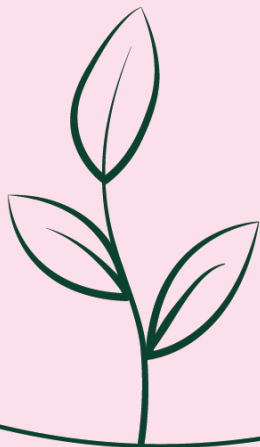
Our vision

To shape the future of medical communications.

Our mission

To drive medical communications towards a sustainable future and provide an environment that nurtures the best talent, encourages creativity, and inspires big thinking.

Grow with us!



Our values reflect how we behave

Curious

Asking what if, why not, could we...?

Creative

Believing that good ideas can come from anywhere.

Smart

Combining clever thinking and experience to solve every challenge.

Precise

In medical communications, accuracy is critical.

Fearless

Not afraid to speak out, to challenge the status quo.

And you're here because we believe you share these values. Let's live them!



We're aiming to be a great place to work

We're trying to create a culture that's a little different from agencies you may have worked for before, built on a desire to be a great place to work for all of us:

1. First and foremost, we are a team - we respect and support each other, we embrace our differences
2. We believe the best work is done by happy people doing interesting things
3. We are recognised and rewarded for the work we do and the value we create
4. Everyone has time to grow and flourish, with training and development to support their ambitions
5. We all have the freedom to experiment and to try out new things - and to be involved in shaping the company
6. Everyone has the flexibility to find their own work-life balance
7. We are making every effort to leave the planet as we found it
8. Ultimately, we choose to work at Scientific Group because we want to help improve the lives of our fellow humans

If you have an idea to improve how we work, let us know via the **Suggestion Box** (anonymously or not, your choice). If you have a concern about something that doesn't seem quite right, contact a *Freedom to Speak Up Guardian*.



Your Guide to everything Scientific

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If you're a new starter, please read the whole Guide. It will only take 30 minutes.



Let's begin



Welcome to Scientific Group, we're really pleased you've decided to join us. We're expecting great things from you, and you should expect great things from us too. This first section of the Guide explains the basics of your role and the plan for your first few months.

So, you've signed on the dotted line

If you're reading this Guide, you will already have signed a contract with us. This sets out the terms and conditions of your employment – in line with the Employment Rights Act 1996 (as amended) – and signing implies that you agree to these. We might occasionally amend the terms and conditions, but we will provide any amendments to you in writing.

If you have clauses in your contract that differ from any of the information in this Guide, then the contract takes precedent.

For various admin reasons, everyone here is technically employed by AS&K Communications Ltd., but your contract will say which of Scientific Group's agencies you'll work for.

Make yourself at home!

This is what you've signed up for

You will have received a Job Title and Job Description outlining the responsibilities of your role. This should give you a good flavour of the kinds of things you'll be doing, but it's not intended to be an exhaustive list. And there may be other things you'll be asked to do, depending on the needs of your team, your department and the Group. We won't routinely ask you to do stuff that's above or below 'your pay grade', we just ask that you try to be helpful and flexible.

You might also be asked to switch to a different team, report to a different line manager, or in rare instances, switch company within the group. If this is the case, we will always consult with you first. Whatever the impetus for the switch, we'll try and ensure that it's a good opportunity for you to enhance your skills and experience.

You will have already met your line manager. This person is your first port-of-call for any questions you have about your job or how things work around here. Other important contacts can be found in the section **Who to ask about stuff**. Your line manager will also be responsible for setting you objectives, monitoring

your work, providing guidance and feedback, and generally making sure that you're able to excel in your new role.

And of course, you might be a line manager yourself, so you'll be doing these things for your team too.

Your place of work can be your place

Your contract specifies your place of work is our office in Camden, London. That said, you have the flexibility to work wherever you want, whether it's in the office, from home, or from a beach hut in Bali. The only things we ask are that you make sure you have strong, fast, reliable internet access, you come to the office when needed (at your own expense – but think how much you will be saving on commuting), and you're considerate of your colleagues and clients (see our *Working and Wellness Policy*).

We may in the future decide to move office to somewhere else within Greater London, but we will let you know in advance.

Get the most out of your first few months

In your first few months (usually 6), you will be on probation. This gives us – and you – an opportunity to assess whether the role is right for you. During this time, either of us can decide to part ways with just 1 week's notice.

When you start, your line manager will set you some objectives to help you learn about the Group and your role – including reading this Guide if you hadn't already. They will help you sign up for some training activities, meet with senior people, familiarise you with your role, and get stuck in.

You will also be assigned a buddy – someone with a similar job to yours – who can help you find your way around and answer questions.

You will have monthly reviews with your line manager to track your progress, and an end-of-probation review to formally confirm that you've passed probation. In some instances, it might be that we decide to extend your probation to give us more time to assess your abilities. After passing probation, your notice period will be 3 months (see the section **Moving on**).

Your start date with us is shown in your contract, and this is the date from which things like holiday entitlement will begin. However, note that you can't use any of your holiday during the first 3 months, unless agreed before you start with us (e.g. for pre-booked holidays, etc.).

A note on keeping confidential records

Your personnel file will contain personal information about you, like your date of birth, home address and salary. We take information security very seriously, and you agree to us storing these data and using it only as strictly necessary. You have access to your personnel file on PeopleHR, so you can see what details we hold on you. Check out our *Employee Privacy Notice* on SharePoint for more information.

The benefits of working with us



We believe this is a great place to work, and that starts with a combination of salary, benefits, perks and working practices that we think is among the best in the industry.

A competitive salary

Your annual salary is specified in your contract – we regularly benchmark our salaries to ensure they're competitive. We will pay you 1/12 of your salary monthly in arrears by direct credit into your bank, on the 25th day of the month or the closest working day. In December, we often pay you a week early to help with Christmas – take care because it can make January a very long month.

Promotion

Your career development will be monitored by your line manager. If the opportunity arises and you meet the requirements you may be considered for promotion to a more senior role. Your new job title and salary will be confirmed in writing by People & Culture and your line manager will share a new job description and set new developmental objectives with you.

Salary review

At the start of each financial year in July, we may adjust everyone's salary to account for an increase in the cost of living. This is discretionary and considers the rate of inflation in conjunction with whether our rate cards have been increased and how we're performing overall. New starters in their first 3 months will have already had this rise built into their starting salary. Those who've handed in their notice will not be entitled to this rise.

National Living Wage

We're required by law to pay people over 21 at least the National Living Wage – but don't worry, we do. In fact, we pay everyone at least the London Living Wage, which is calculated independently by the Living Wage Foundation and reflects the higher cost of living and working in London.

Bonus scheme

On top of your salary, we hope to pay you a bonus each financial year, based on the Group's and your individual performance. Your performance will be

assessed in an annual review early in the new financial year. Bonuses are paid out in December after the Group's accounts have been audited.

You're eligible for a full or pro-rated bonus, based on a percentage of your salary, depending on whether you've worked all or some of the relevant financial year. The bonus can be seen as a reward for your hard work during the year and an incentive to stay with us, so if you quit in the time between it being awarded and it being paid then you won't get it.

Note the bonus is discretionary.

Working hours

Your working week is 37.5 hours – 7.5 hours per day. We have no set office hours or core hours: our *Working and Wellness Policy* provides you the flexibility to 'fit work around life', though with some caveats. Check out the policy on Knowledge Central for more information. Your line manager will also monitor your hours to make sure you're reaching your billability targets but not working lots more than you should be. We don't pay overtime, but we do have a strong time off in lieu policy (see section **Time off in lieu**).

Sick pay

If you're ill and unable to work, you should let your line manager know as soon as possible – ideally before 9 am. We'll normally pay you for short absences, but note that sick pay is discretionary.

If you're sick for more than 7 consecutive days, you'll need to get a 'fit note' from your healthcare provider. We also reserve the right to move you to Statutory Sick Pay. This can be paid for up to 28 weeks. We monitor absence and People & Culture may be in touch if they are concerned or believe there to be an issue.

If you're off for a long period, or regular short periods, we may ask for a second opinion.

Maternity and paternity pay

We have a great *Family Friendly Policy* (see Knowledge Central) to support new parents. In terms of pay during maternity leave, your first 26 weeks are at full salary, followed by 13 weeks at Statutory Maternity Pay. Do also check out our neonatal leave and pay section in the *Family Friendly Policy* for more details.

For paternity leave, you will be paid in full for up to 6 weeks. There is also an option for Shared Parental Leave, where you can take additional time off on

Statutory Paternity Pay if your partner has returned to work. You can find all the details in our *Family Friendly Policy*.

Pension

We have a salary exchange pension scheme with Aviva that invests your pension in ESG ('environmental, social, governance') funds. Salary exchange is a mechanism where you agree to take a reduction in salary equal to your pension contribution - 5% - and then we pay this amount plus our contribution - another 4% - into your pension. This means you save on tax and national insurance. If you'd like to increase your personal contribution, speak to People & Culture.

Healthcare and insurance

After you have been with us for three months, we will sign you up for our private health insurance scheme, also with Aviva. You will receive the policy documents in the post. And we also provide two types of insurance: life insurance in the unfortunate event of your 'death in service', and, for senior staff, critical illness cover, which continues to pay some of your salary if you become too ill to work. More details of these benefits are available from People & Culture.

Eye tests and glasses

We're all 'display screen equipment' users so we are required by law - and happy - to pay for an eye test if you need one. We can also cover the cost of a basic pair of specs for using said displays. Speak to People & Culture for further information.

Flu vaccinations

We provide flu vaccination vouchers in the Autumn for anyone interested. Again, speak to People & Culture.

Perks

One of our objectives is to give our people the best package of benefits and perks we can think of. So, in addition to the benefits above, you also have:

Perkbox - an employee rewards, perks and discounts platform

Employee Assistance Programme - a confidential counselling service accessed via Perkbox

HeadSpace - science-backed meditation and mindfulness tools

Climate Perks – paid ‘journey days’ to empower staff to choose low-carbon holiday travel

‘Salary exchange’ bikes and cars – get a brand new bike or electric car tax free

Travel card loan - repay us over 10 months to save on annual travel

Volunteer day – a paid day to support a cause close to you

Plus monthly social activities, two parties a year, entertaining All Agency meetings, and more. Great, right?

Great Place to Work™

We are officially a **Great Place to Work™**! This is a scheme that assesses companies based on things like trust, pride and camaraderie via a comprehensive employee survey in order to identify those that are great places to work. Being certified not only underlines our commitment to fostering a positive, inclusive, and empowering environment, but it also sets us a benchmark for our efforts to become even better. And we recognise that each of you plays a part in making Scientific Group the place it is!

Recommend a friend

We think the benefits of joining us are clear, and that’s without mentioning all the interesting work we do, our great client roster, and the awesome bunch of people who work here. If you think one of your friends might be tempted too, we offer a bonus for recommending them, paid when they hit 6 months of service. Obviously, we have to have a vacancy they can fill, and they’ll go through the standard interview process to get the job.

**Growing
with us**



We want you to develop your capabilities and your career with us, and we will endeavour to support you and keep you motivated as you progress.

Your development

Your line manager is responsible for monitoring your performance and progress via regular check-ins, goal setting, performance reviews, and soliciting 360 feedback from your teammates and colleagues.

Regular check-ins

You'll have regular 1-on-1 meetings with your line manager to discuss your work and your progress, and your manager will keep a record of what you discussed in PeopleHR.

Goal setting

We're keen to help everyone progress their career with us. We have a list of required knowledge, skills, and experiences for each role, which you can use with your manager to set and track your personal development goals in PeopleHR. All goals should be SMART - they need to be useful and achievable in a reasonable timeframe - and will align with the requirements of your role and the company's objectives. You and your manager should discuss progress towards your goals in your 1-on-1 meetings.

Performance reviews

At the end of our financial year, everyone has a formal performance review, managed in PeopleHR. You will be asked to summarise and provide examples of your performance for a range of competencies, and in line with our Values. Your manager will complete the same questionnaire about you. You'll both also choose a performance score (e.g. 'meeting expectations', 'exceeding expectations', etc.) that will be used to calculate your annual bonus.

360 feedback

For your performance reviews, your line manager will collect feedback about you from your colleagues. Everyone is requested to provide their feedback in the form of E2C2 - *Evidence, Effect, Change, Continue*.

You may also be asked to complete 360 feedback on someone else - again in the form of E2C2. Please do it and do it promptly.

A culture of feedback

Giving, receiving and acting on feedback is an important part of working together as a team. We encourage – in fact we expect – everyone to provide feedback when requested and to take on board feedback when given. E2C2 is a really useful format as it makes feedback actionable – you will receive training on how it works. And remember that you don't need to wait to be asked to provide feedback. If you have E2C2 feedback for someone then please share it. Talk to your manager if you're not sure about how to go about giving unsolicited feedback.

Training needs

During your discussions with your line manager, you may identify the need for training to improve your knowledge or skills in line with your development goals. We're happy to support this. We have a number of regular training courses, run via on-demand e-learning or virtual/face-to-face sessions by our own experts or external providers. You may be automatically enrolled for some of these – for example, our annual ABPI training. But you or your line manager can also identify and request training specific to your needs.

Mentor programme

We offer a fantastic mentor programme, which is open to everyone, regardless of your role or experience. This gives you the opportunity to explore personal development outside our line management structure, and is a great way to learn from someone, or provide advice to someone, you may not usually collaborate with. Both mentors and mentees receive training first to make sure you get the most out of the arrangement.

Vacancies

Where possible, we will advertise vacancies internally at the same time as we post them externally, and you are welcome to apply.

Inclusivity

We want everyone to excel here, regardless of background, gender, religion, disability or age. We're an equal opportunities employer, and all we ask is that you're curious, creative, smart, precise and fearless. Our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee was set up to make sure we're as inclusive as we can be.

We're a Disability Confident employer. *Disability Confident* is a government scheme designed to encourage employers to think differently about disability and take action to improve how we recruit, retain and develop disabled people. It was created by employers and disabled people's representatives to make it rigorous but easily accessible, particularly for smaller businesses like ours.

We have also implemented the *Mindful Employer charter* to highlight our commitment to supporting mental health and wellbeing at work. We've also signed the *Menopause Workplace Pledge* from the *Charity Wellbeing of Women*, and we're taking positive action to make sure anyone going through the menopause feels supported.

We're happy to make reasonable adjustments for your particular needs or situation, whether it be a physical disability, health condition or neurodiversity. Speak to People & Culture for further info.

We will not tolerate discrimination of any sort.

Health and safety

We take your health and safety very seriously. And while your home or the office is not the most dangerous working environment (those paper cuts can be nasty though!), we conduct risk assessments of both to identify and mitigate any risks.

Health and Safety Policy

We're required by law to have a *Health and Safety Policy*, and you can find it on Knowledge Central. In short, we aim to minimise the risk to your health and your safety while working for us, by eliminating potential hazards, training you or providing instructions on how to do things, and having emergency plans in place.

Living our values



You've read about our values and culture at the start of this Guide, and we're also very proud of our excellent reputation with our clients – we want to keep it that way. This section covers everything from dress code to social media use, all designed to help you understand the standards of conduct we expect from you in order to keep our collective reputations intact.

Conduct

First and foremost, we are a team – we respect and support each other, we embrace our differences. This is the first line of our culture statement, and this is how we expect everyone to behave.

Reputation

We have a reputation with our clients for delivering great work, and – we hope – in the industry for being a great place to work. It's taken time and effort from all of us here to create this reputation. And we expect everyone to uphold it, through the work we do and the interactions we have internally and externally.

Social media use

In terms of your social media use, your interactions on LinkedIn, X, Facebook, Instagram, et al. are in the public domain, so everything you post, repost and like can be seen by others. We ask you to be thoughtful about what you do, respectful of other users, and not to engage with anything that could reflect badly on us (or yourself!). Posting objectionable things on social media can be considered misconduct. And we're more sensitive to postings on LinkedIn because it is considered to be a 'professional' network linked to your employment with us.

On the subject of LinkedIn, it would be great if you could update your profile to show you work here, follow us, connect with your colleagues, and like or repost the things we post. This doesn't just make us feel warm and fuzzy, it also increases awareness of potential clients and potential recruits of the great things we're doing, which in turn benefits all of us. Thanks!

However, there are also strict pharmaceutical industry compliance rules about (not) interacting with our clients' social media posts. Please ensure you've taken the training on the latest PMCPA social media guidance, but in

summary: don't like, repost, or reply to any social media posts made by our clients or healthcare professionals we work with. Simple!

Dress code

You can wear whatever you like in the comfort of your own home office, but if you're going to be on video calls with colleagues or clients, please make an effort – at least from the waist up. For client video calls, 'smart casual' is the look you're going for (so no hoodies, sportswear, etc.!). This also applies – above and below the waist – when you're in the office.

On-site, for client meetings and events, you should dress to impress, with your personal equivalent of a suit with an ironed shirt and polished shoes.

Information security

We come into contact with a vast amount of confidential information about our clients' products and business plans. And much of our own company information is confidential – including this Guide, for example.

Our clients are rightly very hot on information security, and we sign confidentiality agreements, non-disclosure agreements, and service agreements with confidentiality clauses with all of our clients. The terms of these agreements apply to all of our employees and contractors, including short-term freelancers and suppliers.

The requirements of these agreements have been combined into our *Information Security Policy*, and it's super important that you follow its rules, instructions and guidance at all times. If you haven't read this policy, or if you need your memory refreshing, go give it a read now.

Firewalls

Although we all work for Scientific Group, each company and sometimes teams within a company have firewalls in place to ensure that client confidential information is kept secure. Please follow the *Firewall Policy* and *Information Security Policy* at all times and don't, for example, share files with colleagues in other teams. If you can't access a folder or file on SharePoint it may mean that you're not supposed to – ask your manager if you're in doubt.

Data protection

We don't handle a vast amount of personally identifiable information (PII), and even less of it is sensitive PII. But there is some – healthcare professionals' bank

details for paying honoraria, for example. And we're bound by the *Data Protection Act* and GDPR regulations (even though we've left the EU). You are required to handle all PII appropriately. More information about what that means can be found in our GDPR training and data processing documentation on SharePoint.

Internet acceptable use

When you're in the office, you'll connect to our wi-fi network and internet. We have an *Internet Acceptable Use Policy* on Knowledge Central that sets out what you can and can't do while on the network. Please look!

Gifts and hospitality

Giving or accepting gifts – even buying a drink for a client at a meeting – is harder than you might think. Most of our clients have to abide by anti-bribery rules that mean they can't accept any type of gift from us, or give us anything either. So, best to avoid it altogether. If you're unsure, ask your line manager.

Conflicts of interest

You should be free from, and appear to be free from, any hint of a conflict of interest when representing the company, negotiating contracts or making recommendations about third parties. So, for example, if you're married to a printing professional, please make this known to us and recuse yourself from any discussions about using that printing company, even if you think they would do a fantastic job.

Other employment

Working here is generally an exclusive arrangement – you're not allowed to work for any other company without getting permission from us first. And moonlighting for a competitor or offering competing services to similar clients is gross misconduct.

Insider trading

As the name implies, insider trading is using inside knowledge of a company to buy or sell its shares – either you, or someone you've told – before 'the market' finds out. For us, we occasionally get to see clinical trial data that have not been made public – and these need to be kept in the strictest confidence. Not only is insider trading gross misconduct here, it's also illegal and will land you in prison.

Modern slavery

While we're not big enough to be required by law to publish a report on efforts to combat modern slavery and people trafficking, we obviously support the aims of the *Modern Slavery Act 2015*. And this means we should be on the lookout for things that don't look right within the company (unlikely!) and also in our clients and suppliers (still unlikely, but not impossible). Modern slavery is where people are forced to work illegally against their will, can happen in many different industries, and affects millions of people around the world. If you have any concerns, speak to your line manager, senior managers, People & Culture or a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian.

Sexual harassment

The law has recently changed regarding sexual harassment, to include third parties like speakers or clients. Find out more in our *Sexual Harassment Policy*, found on Knowledge Central. If you witness or experience sexual harassment let us know immediately and we will address it appropriately.

Buying things and logging expenses

If you need to buy something or order from a supplier, you'll need to generate a purchase order on CMap.

The only exception to this rule is if you're on-site. If you've been given a company credit card, you can use this to buy things when you're travelling. Make sure you get receipts for everything, including any VAT or tax added where possible.

If you don't have a company card, you can use your own card and we will pay you back when you return. If you're not sure you have enough funds to cover on-site expenses on your card, you can request a float from Finance – they will pay some money into your account in advance.

You must submit personal expense claims on CMap as soon as possible after the event, and definitely within 1 month. If you're late submitting a claim, we may miss the chance to add it to a client invoice. And if we're not able to recoup the money, we may not pay you back either.

For company credit cards, your expenses will be loaded into CMap from your monthly statement, and you'll need to add receipts and job numbers. Again, do this quickly so that we can invoice it back to the client.

Trivial benefits

'Trivial benefits' are things like team lunches, drinks in the office, and small gifts like birthday cards. There's a budget for these kinds of things, and if you're a manager you can find more information about how much you can spend and what on in the *Manager's Guide*.

Use of your image

We take headshots of everyone and action photos around the office every year or so. When we do this, we'll ask you to sign a model release form giving us permission to use your photo internally in your Active Directory profile, on proposals and team sheets sent to clients, and occasionally on our website and social media accounts. We also take photos at company events, social gatherings and on-site at conferences which we sometimes share internally and on social media. If you don't want to consent to this, opt out of the photo sessions or let us know.

A note on 'property'

While you're working for us, we'll give you company items like your laptop, which we expect you to take good care of (if it has any problems that are affecting you working, don't hesitate to contact **Granular IT Support**). Similarly, when you're working in the office, please treat equipment like the photocopier and coffee machine with care. Deliberate damage to our property, equipment or material is gross misconduct, as you might have guessed.

Your company devices – laptops, iPads, phones – are enrolled in our Mobile Device Management system, which means we can monitor, track, and remote-wipe them if, for instance, they're stolen. You consent to this monitoring as part of your employment with us. For more information, see our *Information Security Policy* on Knowledge Central.

We can't take responsibility for loss or damage to any of your own property that you bring to, or leave in, the office. And given we're in Camden, we do get burgled from time to time. You've been warned.

Stress

Stress can be a natural part of work, especially during busy or challenging times. It's important to acknowledge when you feel stressed and seek support if you need. To help you manage stress, we have a variety of support mechanisms in place including our Mental Health Champions, Headspace and the Employee Assistance Programme on Perkbox.

**People,
planet,
purpose**



The three 'P's define our approach to business and to 'corporate social responsibility': trying to prioritise the wellbeing of people and the health of the planet, while also having a strong idea of what we're aiming to achieve, and making some money along the way.

Let's start with Purpose

Our Purpose is summed up neatly in our Vision - *'to shape the future of medical communications'* - and our Mission - *'to drive medical communications towards a sustainable future and provide an environment that nurtures the best talent, encourages creativity, and inspires big thinking.'*

By embracing a sense of purpose that goes beyond financial gain, we want to create a deeper connection with our people, clients and suppliers, and inspire positive change in the world.

That's not to say we don't also need to think about the other P, Profit. Making a profit allows us to do all of our other cool P things, and ultimately to achieve our mission. But making a profit is not something that just happens. It requires everyone to contribute, and to **remember that our business is based on selling your expertise - as time!** All our projects are costed in hours at hourly rates. And it's critical that you bear this in mind when working on your part of a project. Find out and stick to the time you've been given to do a task. Log your time quickly and diligently on CMap. Speak up if things are taking longer than expected so we can figure out the best way to move forwards.

People

We hope you'll notice, as you read through this Guide, that the *People* part of *People, Planet, Purpose* refers to **you**, and is infused in everything we're doing - from our great benefits package to our *Working and Wellness* policy, from career development opportunities to embracing equity, diversity and inclusion.

People also includes the impact we have on the local community, and while this is a little hard to define for an organization like ours that has people working all over the place, we do aim to keep it local where possible through things like our charity donations. We also give you a paid day a year to volunteer in the community - be sure to use it and make a difference!

Planet

It is critical that everyone – companies and individuals – reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and impact on the environment as much as possible, as quickly as possible, if we are to avert the worst consequences of climate change. Here's what we're doing...

Science-based targets

To set ourselves some concrete – and public – targets for reducing our carbon emissions, we joined the *Science Based Targets Initiative*. Through them, we've committed to a 50% reduction in emissions in 10 years, by 2029 – which is their standard target for small businesses. But it's not especially challenging, so we are aiming for more and faster.

Measuring and tracking

We have an external agency conduct an annual audit to see how our greenhouse gas emissions are tracking against our targets, and we report on the results in one of the Townhalls each year.

Offsetting

We've offset our greenhouse gas emissions from 2019 onwards by supporting several *Verified Carbon Standard* reduction and carbon sequestration projects in the UK – like peat bog restoration! Technically, this means we can claim to be 'net zero', but there's some controversy around the real benefits of offsetting, so our focus is on reducing our actual emissions as far as we can, as fast as we can.

Climate friendlier travel

The vast majority of our emissions come from travel – to client meetings, events, and conferences. This is an integral part of our work so it's going to be tough to eliminate it completely, but we've set targets for reducing the number of flights we take. See the *Travel Guide* for more information when organizing your trips.

The office

Some of our emissions come from running the office, and we've tried to reduce them and also to be environmentally conscious. Our 'Super Green' energy account with Octopus gives us 100% renewable electricity and gas that they've bought carbon offset credits for – so as eco-friendly as gas is going to get. Be mindful of the energy you use in the office: don't turn the heating right up when it's cold or the AC right down when it's hot, keep the windows closed when

you're using either, turn the screen off when you leave a meeting room and the lights off when you leave the building, and so on.

We also recycle, so please put your waste in the correct bins. And we try to buy eco-friendly supplies where possible, like recyclable coffee pods and recycled toilet paper. If you have any suggestions for how we can do better, drop a note in the Suggestion Box or speak to the Climate Committee.

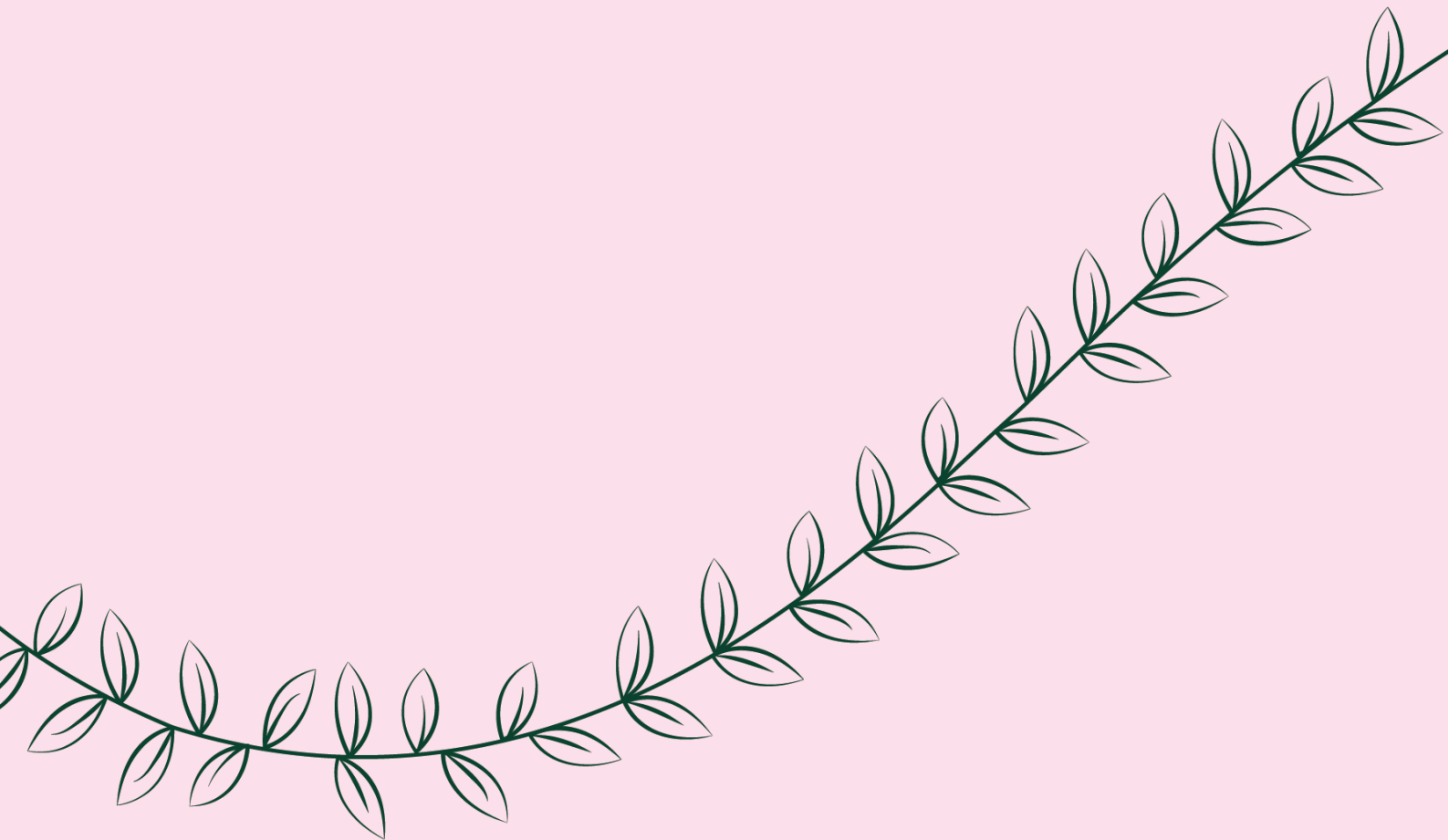
Encouraging our clients

Of course, even if we reduce our own climate impact, this is only a small part of the total impact of the activities we're running for clients – particularly events. So, it's important that we keep emissions top of mind when planning new projects, and provide clients with ideas and options to reduce the emissions from their activities.

And you can help too

We hope our efforts to reduce our climate impact will inspire you to take action too. If you're working from home, your emissions from home energy count towards our footprint, so we encourage you to investigate renewable energy suppliers. And if you want to look at things outside of work, we have a salary exchange scheme for electric cars and bikes and the Climate Committee provides regular ideas and information on a wide variety of topics.

Using the office



The office in Camden is there if you want it, for working alone or meeting colleagues or clients.

Keys and fobs, locking and unlocking

If you're planning to come in during normal office hours you'll need your key fob, which opens the internal doors (you will receive this on your first day in the office) and the code for the front door, which you can find out from Chanté. You're all set.

But wait! If you're planning to arrive early, or stay late, you will also need a shutter key and a key fob that's authorised to set/unset the alarm (and given that the office is not always busy, you could arrive at 9.15 and still be first).

You can find further instructions about opening and closing the office on SharePoint. If you're first in, you'll need to open the shutter and deactivate the alarm with your fob. If you're last to leave and the cleaner has already left, then you'll need to close all the windows, turn off the AC (tut tut, who left it on?), TVs, and lights, set the alarm with your fob, and put the shutter down.

If you haven't got an alarm capable fob and you notice the lights are still off when you get to our office door, don't open it. Wait for someone with an alarm fob (or see '**If you've set off the alarm**' further down).

Booking a desk

If you're planning to use the office, please book yourself a desk on the Joan app (search for 'Joan workplace management' on the App Store and log in with your work credentials). And then, if you're planning to use a meeting room, you can book that through the app too.

Dogs in the office

We're happy for people to bring their dogs into the office, as long as they're well-behaved. But we also recognise not everyone likes dogs and some people have allergies, so there is a 'kennel' booking option on Joan. If you're planning to come to the office with your dog, book on the Joan app a week or more in advance, and claim a desk for yourself and the kennel for your dog. If you're coming to the office and you don't like dogs, check to see whether the kennel is booked for the day you're planning to come.

Smoking or not?

This is a non-smoking office and that includes vapes.

First aid

If you have an accident or feel unwell in the office, we have trained first aiders – find one on Knowledge Central or on the poster in the kitchen. There's also a first aid box in the cupboard nearest the kitchen window. If you use something, please make a note in the book so we can keep it stocked up. We also have an Accident Reporting Book that first aiders will need to complete if their skills are needed.

If someone is seriously unwell or injured, call an ambulance.

There's a defibrillator in the office (also called a 'defib', AED, or PAD). If someone has a cardiac arrest, call 999 and start CPR, then send someone else to grab the defib – it's on the wall by the server room. It works automatically, you just need to follow the instructions on the case.

If there's a fire – or better, before there's a fire

When you're in the office, take some time to check out the locations of the fire exits and the assembly point (in Marks & Spencer's car park).

If the fire alarm goes off, exit the building via the closest fire exit taking nothing with you. Our fire wardens will make sure everyone is out and gathered at the assembly point.

We run drills from time to time, but you should always treat the alarm as real – even if it's just burnt toast.

If you discover a fire, immediately hit the nearest alarm and exit the building quickly. Once you're outside, call 999. There are fire extinguishers dotted around, but don't try to tackle the flames yourself unless you've been trained or had experience of how to use one, and always sound the alarm and call 999 first.

If you're locked in the office

Don't panic, you're not. If you're late in the office and the shutter is down, it might seem like you're stranded. But there's a shutter release button on the opposite wall to the door release button (logical, right?). You will have read the instructions above so once you've exited, you'll be able to put the shutter down again with your shutter key.

If you've set the alarm off

Why, oh why? But let's reflect on that later. The first thing to do is to get hold of someone at Granular IT and have them tell you the security code to type into the

alarm panel. Or, if there are colleagues around, find someone with a key fob that's been set up to turn off the alarm.

Taking time off



We all need time away from work! This section covers everything you need to know about the different types of leave.

Taking time off in lieu

We want everyone to be working as close to their standard hours as possible, while recognizing that our work is not always '9-to-5' (5.30 for us!). Your line manager will monitor your timesheets and award time off in lieu (TOIL) if you've been working lots of extra hours. You should aim to use this time off within a month and log it as TOIL on your timesheet – it won't be added to your holiday allowance.

We also have a TOIL policy for working on-site, including when it falls over weekends or bank holidays. When you get back, your manager will work out whether you're due any.

Your annual leave

Everyone needs a day off from time to time! You get 25 days per year, plus an extra day for every year you've been here from 3 years onwards, up to a maximum of 30. Use them!

The holiday year runs January to December and leave is pro-rated if you're part time. To book, first check the Time Off calendars on CMap to see if anyone else in your team, clash group or on your projects is off at the same time before requesting the time off from your line manager – try for at least 1 month in advance if you want more than the odd day – and then add a Time Off request to CMap, which will start the formal approval process. Holidays should be booked in blocks of half or full days.

It's often the case that there's an important deadline next week, every week. So, it can feel like there's never a good time to take time off. Try to plan in advance, OK it with your manager, book it in, and let everyone know. We work as a team, so by giving enough notice your manager can ensure there will be someone else who can deal with the deadlines while you're off. We also use clash groups to limit the number of people from a team or function who can be off at the same time. So, book early to avoid disappointment!

You can take up to 10 consecutive working days' leave at one time with agreement from your line manager. If you want longer for something special, you'll need to get permission from your department head too, and we'll need to consider how this might impact your work and your team.

Carry-overs

You can carry over up to 5 days of annual leave into the next year. But these must be used by the end of March. Any other unused days may be lost, so make sure you book a holiday!

Bank holidays

You also get the usual eight UK bank holidays as time off – as well as any special ones the UK government might decide to create (pro-rata for part-timers). And if Christianity is not your thing then you can use the two Easter bank holidays to mark a different religious festival at some other time (Christmas coincides with the end of our clients' financial and planning years, so it makes sense that we all take off the associated bank holidays).

For part-timers, your holiday and bank holiday allowance is shown in CMap – it is then up to you to book these days off. If your usual working day falls on a bank holiday, book that day off. But if you don't work on a bank holiday day then book the closest day off possible.

Christmas to New Year

We often 'close the office' and give you the 2 or 3 days between Christmas and New Year off too (discretionary!). We'll let you know the plan around October time.

Volunteering days

We all get an extra leave day a year to volunteer. You can go do anything that's close to your heart, whether it's planting trees for a charity, helping at the local school, or litter picking in a park. And our committees occasionally organise group volunteering days that you can join.

Holiday travel days

We're a founder member of *Climate Perks*, a scheme that gives you up to 2 extra leave days a year for travelling if you avoid flying on holiday. See the information on Knowledge Central.

Other types of time off

If you need time off for other things, like taking a course or becoming a magistrate or school governor, speak to your line manager and loop in People & Culture. We will try to accommodate your needs.

Sabbaticals

If you want to take time out for an extended period, you can discuss a sabbatical with your department head. This would be unpaid, but if you want to take 6 months to travel the world, we'll be happy to consider it, and to have you back afterwards.

Appointments

With our super flexible working arrangements, it's quite straightforward to organise an appointment and fit your working hours around it. Make sure you tell your line manager what your plans are.

Giving blood

If you want to give blood, great! You can take up to 2 hours off and log it on CMap up to once a quarter.

Illness

If you're sick, take some time off to get better. Don't come into the office. Let your line manager know as soon as possible on the morning of the day you're ill and keep them posted on when you're likely to be back. And please try to reject all the meetings you've been invited to and switch your out-of-office on. Don't forget to enter your absence on CMap.

You'll need a 'Fit Note' from your medical practitioner if you're off for more than 7 days consecutively (including non-working days).

Caring for dependants

We recognise that you may need time off to support a dependant, whether it's a child, elderly parent, or someone else who's dependent on you. There are options for different situations.

Maternity, paternity and shared parental leave

So, you're having a child – congratulations! Our *Family Friendly Policy*, which you can find on Knowledge Central, goes into great detail about the variety of options for taking leave after the birth or adoption of a child.

Your standard annual leave entitlement accrues in the usual way while you are on maternity, paternity or shared parental leave.

Time off for dependants

You may need time off now and again to look after a dependant, for example if they're sick, if they have a doctor's appointment, if your childcare arrangements unexpectedly fall through, and many other reasons. As with appointments for yourself, you can use our flexible working policy to fit these in around your working hours, in agreement with your line manager.

For longer periods of leave to support dependants, for example if you can't get childcare during a school holiday, you can use annual leave or we can let you take unpaid leave. This is now a legal requirement: Parental Leave allows you to take up to 18 weeks unpaid leave for each child up until they reach the age of 18. And Carer's Leave gives you one unpaid week per year to care for or assist someone who has a long-term care need who is dependent on you (not just a relative).

Compassionate leave

The death of someone close is obviously a difficult time, and we will try to support you through it. You can take up to 5 days' compassionate leave at one time but speak to us if you need other options.

Jury service

It's everyone's civic duty to do jury service if called, and we're happy to support you. It is possible to ask for a delay if it will seriously impact your work, for example if you're managing an event that runs at the same time. Discuss with your line manager if this might be the case. And you can also say you're only available for the standard 2 weeks if you don't want to get stuck on a long case.

It's possible to claim for payment of part of your salary during jury service, and we will then make up the difference to the normal amount. Speak to People & Culture about this.

Unauthorised absence

We make it super easy to organise time off for every eventuality, you just need to keep your line manager in the loop. So, just disappearing or being offline for long periods when you're meant to be working is not acceptable and may result in disciplinary proceedings. If you're struggling, please speak to someone so we can help.

Calendars and Out-of-Office

Whenever you're away from work, whether it's through illness, for holiday or some other reason, make sure your Outlook out-of-office is on and your calendar is up-to-date - mark your time as out-of-office and decline your meeting requests.

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Dealing with problems



Things do not always go as planned, and we take very seriously our responsibility to foster a supportive, inclusive and happy place to work for everyone. Here are the processes for when things go wrong.

Whistleblowing

If you see or suspect one of your colleagues is not following our rules, or is even breaking the law, be fearless – speak up, to your line manager, someone else senior, People & Culture or one of our *Freedom To Speak Up Guardians*. You can do this alone or involve a colleague for backup.

We will treat your information in the strictest confidence. You don't have to be 100% sure of things, we will quickly and discreetly investigate and take action if needed. You won't need to be involved in this process.

You will be told of the outcome of the investigation where possible, but we may need to keep some or all of the information confidential.

You will never be blamed or punished for speaking out, it will not affect your job with us in any way, and we will not tolerate victimisation of anyone who comes forward. For whistleblowing on some types of wrongdoing, such as criminal offences, you are also protected by law from being treated unfairly or losing your job.

Raising grievances and complaints

A grievance is something you believe to be unfair or wrong. If you have a grievance, or any other type of complaint about your work, conditions, or colleagues, you should start by speaking to your line manager or department head. They will try to resolve things for you as quickly as possible. Many issues can be dealt with effectively by providing E2C2 feedback. See our training on this if you're not sure.

If the problem is not or cannot be resolved by the managers, you can contact People & Culture and they will escalate the process to find a satisfactory outcome.

Any grievance will be dealt with fairly and consistently. If an informal approach has not been satisfactory, the grievance can be raised formally. All grievances will be investigated thoroughly. You will always be invited to bring a colleague to a grievance hearing, giving everyone the chance to be heard. Scientific Group will take action and make decisions based upon the information shared

during the meeting and investigation. If the individual does not agree with the outcome of the grievance meeting, they have the opportunity to appeal to a Director who has not been involved in the proceedings thus far.

For further information do contact People & Culture.

Disciplinary procedure

Our disciplinary procedure is used in cases of complaints about poor performance or misconduct.

Informal warning

As a first step, we will try to resolve the issue informally with the employee, and this may include issuing an informal warning. Most of the time, this solves things, and no further action is required.

Written warning

When there is an inadequate improvement in performance or conduct, the employee will get a formal written warning, and this will be noted in their personnel file (a written warning may be the first step in situations deemed more serious). This warning will specify the failing in conduct or performance, the improvement required, the timescale for that improvement, and what further disciplinary action will be taken if this improvement doesn't happen – in this case, a final written warning.

Final written warning

Continued poor performance or conduct will result in the employee getting a final written warning. This will also detail the corrective actions, timescale and consequences of failure, and be noted in the employee's file.

Dismissal

Further poor performance or conduct will result in the employee's dismissal.

Being accompanied

For all disciplinary meetings with line managers, department heads or People & Culture, the employee can have a colleague present if they wish. We will also bring a colleague to act as a witness and to record the results of the discussion.

For a disciplinary meeting that could result in a formal warning being issued or some other disciplinary action, or an appeal against this, the employee can be

accompanied by a colleague or a trade union representative. The name of this person must be provided in advance.

Right of appeal

If the employee is dissatisfied with the decision of a disciplinary meeting, they may appeal. This must be done in writing within 4 working days and must state the grounds for the appeal.

An appeal will be heard by a Director who has not been involved in the proceedings thus far. The decision of the appeal hearing is final. There is no further right of internal appeal.

Suspension

It may be necessary to suspend an employee during investigation of a disciplinary matter. The suspension will be on full pay and the employee will be informed in writing of this at the time.

Misconduct

Some issues are serious enough to move straight to a final written warning, including but not limited to:

- Substandard work or attitude
- Practical joking, horseplay, personal misconduct or other activities that could bring our name into disrepute or affect the safety of colleagues (in real life or on social media)
- Lateness, absence or periods of inactivity without authorization or reasonable excuse on three or more occasions in one calendar month

Gross misconduct

In cases of gross misconduct, the employee will be dismissed immediately without notice or pay in lieu of notice. Gross misconduct includes, for example:

- Dishonesty
- Discrimination
- Bullying or any form of abusive behaviour, including but not limited to repeated verbal or physical abuse, threats, intimidation, or exclusion (in real life or on social media)
- Sexual or racial harassment (in real life or on social media)
- Falsification of records
- Unauthorised use or disclosure of confidentiality

- Attending work under the influence of alcohol or non-medically prescribed drugs
- Unauthorised acceptance of a financial or other inducement from a third party
- Insider trading
- Serious insubordination
- Deliberate damage to our property
- Breach of Health and Safety rules that endangers the health and safety of others
- Undertaking any kind of work for a competitor or of a competitive nature

In exceptional circumstances, or if there are genuine mitigating circumstances, alternative disciplinary action may be taken.

Termination

Our ability to terminate your employment by serving you notice at any time is not limited by our disciplinary procedure, which is included in this handbook as a description of policy and does not have contractual effect.

Pay in lieu of notice

We may decide, at our discretion, to terminate the employee's employment without notice, on payment of an amount equal to their basic salary for the notice period. The employee is not entitled to this if we do not elect to make a payment in lieu of notice. Dismissal without notice does not constitute a decision to make payment in lieu of notice.

Immediate termination

We are entitled to terminate an employee's employment with immediate effect and without serving notice for issues including but not limited to:

- Gross misconduct
- Being convicted of a criminal offence and sentenced to prison, whether immediate or suspended
- Serious or persistent breaches of the terms of employment

If you have any questions about this section, please speak to People & Culture.

Moving on



There might come a time when you decide you want to do something different. Here's how the leaving process works.

Giving notice

Your notice period, once you've passed probation, is 3 months. To tell us you're leaving, write to your line manager – email is fine if you're working from home.

In exceptional circumstances, we can also terminate your employment by giving you notice. After probation, our notice to you is 1 month in your first year, 2 months in years 2 and 3, and 3 months after this.

Telling people

We require you to keep your resignation confidential, both to clients and to your colleagues, until we're ready to share the news. Your line manager will work with you to plan who to tell, how and when.

Outstanding leave

When you've given notice, we'll calculate how much annual leave you're due pro-rated to your leaving date. If you have any days of annual leave left, you will need to take them during your notice period. In some circumstances, we may pay you for some of your leave days instead (e.g. because we prefer you to complete some work). If you owe us leave days (e.g. because you've taken more than you're due pro-rata), we'll deduct the amount in salary from your final pay.

Exit interviews

People & Culture will conduct a couple of exit interviews with you – the first just after you've resigned to discuss your reasons for leaving, your leaving date, logistics and any outstanding holiday; the second closer to your final day with us to discuss things in more detail. We will share the completed exit interview notes with you for your final comments.

Bonus

If you've given notice, you won't be eligible for the discretionary annual performance bonus, even if you worked some or all of the year it relates to.

Intellectual property

Anything you've created, invented, designed or improved during your time working for us remains our absolute property – including for example literary works, music and software programs. You agree to assign us copyright to all eligible works created during your employment.

Showreels and portfolios

Much of our work is for pharma and there are compliance implications with putting materials – particularly branded ones – in the public domain. We're happy for you to create a showreel or portfolio of work to include with your CV, but you are not permitted to publish this online without our permission.

Gardening leave

We might ask you to take 'gardening leave' for all or some of your notice period. This means that you don't have to work unless we specifically ask (i.e. you can do some gardening), but it also means:

- You can't come into the office or access our systems (email, Teams, SharePoint, etc.) without permission
- You'll need to hand back all your devices and any documents, materials or equipment you may have
- You can't contact any clients, suppliers, advisors, brokers, bankers and the like without permission
- You can't contact any colleagues without permission
- You may be asked to resign immediately from any offices you hold, such as a Directorship

Permission can be granted by People & Culture or a Director. You will continue to get paid in full during gardening leave.

Redundancy

Very occasionally, we might need to take the difficult decision to make some positions redundant. If this happens, we will:

- Enter into meaningful discussions with the employees who may be affected
- Consider whether alternative jobs are available with us
- Conduct a consultation meeting with affected employees before a final decision is taken
- Inform employees as soon as possible of their impending redundancies

If you have been continuously employed for 2 years and are made redundant, you will be entitled to a redundancy payment. The amount of the redundancy payment is calculated according to statutory regulations.

References

We can provide you with a reference for your new employer, but it is company policy only to give details of how long you've been with us and your position.

You're welcome to ask your manager or another colleague for a personal reference too, as long as this is made clear on the reference.

Handover

As part of your leaving process, we expect you to prepare handover notes so that your line manager and colleagues can pick up where you leave off. If you have relationships with clients, align with your line manager on how these can be transitioned to someone else. If you're responsible for any software accounts or other password-protected things, please make sure your line manager has the details.

The end

So, it's your last day. Please spend some time making sure you've briefed the relevant people, filed things in the right place, cleared out your locker if you have one, completed your timesheet and put all your affairs in order. At the end of your final day, your access to our systems will be cut off.

You'll be required to send back, at your expense, or bring into the office, any equipment you have – like a laptop, phone or office chair.

Final salary

Your last pay day from us will be on the 25th of the month in which you leave. Your final salary may include deductions if you've taken more annual leave than you've accrued.

Benefits

All your benefits, including healthcare, will also cease to be available. Make sure your contact details are up to date with our providers, as they may need to contact you. If you have a healthcare claim in progress, you'll need to liaise directly with the provider for advice on what to do. Your pension contributions will cease, but you will obviously keep your pension account and the pot it

contains. Make a note of the details somewhere, as you will need them when you eventually retire or if you decide to consolidate your different pensions.

And that's it. We could add that there might be a card, present or speech, but that would spoil the surprise.

Who to ask about stuff



We're ready to help with any questions or problems you have, and we're also happy to hear feedback and suggestions. For contact details, view the person's profile in Outlook, Teams, or SharePoint.

TL;DR - [HR Harry](#), our AI Company Handbook chatbot

Questions during your probation - and afterwards! - your Buddy

Speaking up - a Freedom to Speak Up Guardian

Mental health - a Mental Health Champion, Mental Health First Aider, or the Employee Assistance Programme on Perkbox

Financial things - JamesS

Personnel matters - Roberta

IT issues - Granular IT: start a ticket by emailing support@granularit.com

PeopleHR - Summer

Using the office - Chanté

Operational and sustainability topics - Bo

Social activities - the Social Committee

Equity, diversity and inclusion - the EDI Committee

Green things - the Climate Committee

Ideas and suggestions - the Suggestion Box on Knowledge Central

Anything else - Simon or Andrew

