

Open & honest. Our pledges.

We believe we have a duty to conduct ourselves in an ethical and responsible manner with all those we interact with. Our business is highly dependent on our infrastructure in terms of our staff, clients and suppliers. So clearly it's essential we treat everyone fairly, equally and with respect.

Our people

As a service-based business our people are our most valuable asset. We have a great team here and by treating them well we get the very best out of them. In our experience, happy employees work productively and are prepared to go that bit further for our clients. This effort beyond the call of duty, we find is often rewarded with loyalty that transcends typical business-to-business relationships.

All three founding directors of Studio North have young families and understand the importance of a suitable work-life balance geared to individual and family commitments. As a consequence, though we never encourage it, we happily pay overtime for hours worked beyond the norm, safe in the knowledge that employees are happy to do so. This approach puts us in a very small minority of agencies according to latest research from the Design Business Association (DBA).

However, with a strong pool of freelancers at our disposal, we're able to restrict overtime to sensible levels. This helps to keep our creative minds as fresh as they need to be in order to produce the highest standards of work.

We've created a deliberately informal and open plan office environment in order to foster a real team spirit and to encourage inter-disciplinary project collaboration. With management and junior staff sharing workspaces, skills are rapidly developed and this delivers huge visibility across the business.

We're proud to say we have an exceptionally low turnover of staff, which we feel is evidence of our successful formula when it comes to our people.

In our basic pledges regarding our people, we commit to ensure that:-

- Where appropriate we're flexible on working hours to suit personal lifestyle and/or issues
- Staff are appropriately rewarded for working outside normal hours

- Training and development opportunities are offered to all employees
- Staff are consulted and informed at all levels on key business decisions
- Our first choice is always to promote from within if possible
- We'll offer a limited number of work experience opportunities each year to suitable candidates

Please feel free to ask your Account Manager for a copy of our Equal Opportunities Policy.

Our clients

We believe in treating all clients openly and fairly. We aim to provide equal and high levels of service to all, irrespective of the size of business, or fees associated with a particular project. We also conduct our processes in a transparent manner so that costs, timescales and deliverables are clear and manageable throughout the life cycle of a project.

Simply put, there's no hidden costs and so no nasty surprises!

In our basic pledges regarding our clients, we commit to ensure that:-

- We'll be open and honest about our service offering, including our areas of expertise and other services that we sub-contract to specialist providers
- Nothing is hidden in the small print and that anything of relevance that should be brought to your attention is done so at the earliest opportunity by your Account Manager
- Even if it means losing an order, we'll always offer the best quality advice influenced only by what is right for our clients' interests, and not what is most profitable for us
- We provide you with an appropriate mechanism to deliver feedback be it positive or negative and respect opinions expressed
- We treat our interaction in the strictest confidence and only disclose any information of a potentially sensitive nature to a third party with prior written permission

Please feel free to ask your Account Manager for a copy of our Service Charter.

Our suppliers

We conduct a comprehensive annual audit of our limited number of suppliers to ensure that our supply chain follows the responsible working practices we are fully committed to.

As a result we've now included the findings of our latest report as key criteria for selecting an appropriate provider of services or goods. For example, in recent months we switched our energy supply to a 100% renewable source and have given preference to those printers who are not only meeting but also exceeding environmental standards through their own investment in sector leading green technology.

Where possible, we aim to source basic supplies such as office stationery through local suppliers to reduce the obvious delivery mileage and excess packaging associated with overnight deliveries.

We also commit to the following principles when dealing with suppliers, particularly with smaller businesses who depend upon prompt payments and fair dealings to thrive in crowded competitive marketplaces.

In our basic pledges regarding our suppliers, we commit to ensure that:-

- Our suppliers get fair value for goods or services provided and that we'll never attempt to abuse any potential spending power through excessive negotiation tactics which we accept may have a detrimental effect on the quality of supply
- We pay promptly, either within agreed credit terms or by return when requested
- All instructions are provided in writing to minimize risk of confusion and potential areas of dispute
- We act honestly when we believe a product or service has been under quoted or undercharged mistakenly

Some of the smaller, local businesses we deal with are amongst our most reliable. We feel therefore that it's our duty to protect both their interests, as well as the future of the independent creative community here in Manchester and further a field.