

MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT

FINANCIAL YEAR 2020/2021



This statement is made pursuant to s.54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and sets out the steps that Merit has taken and is continuing to take to ensure that modern slavery or human trafficking is not taking place within our business or supply chain.

Modern slavery encompasses slavery, servitude, human trafficking and forced labour. Merit has a zero tolerance approach to any form of modern slavery. We are committed to acting ethically and with integrity and transparency in all business dealings and to putting effective systems and controls in place to safeguard against any form of modern slavery taking place within the business or our supply chain.

Our business

Merit is a specialist Tier 1 engineering, construction and Installation Company providing a solution based service from concept design to build, handover and validation. Merit has over 15 years' experience of;

- ✔ Turnkey design and build of new construction and refurbishment GMP cleanroom projects;
- ✔ Turnkey design and build of laboratory facilities, clean technology warehousing; offices and staff facilities;
- ✔ Design, fabrication, installation and validation of process systems;
- ✔ Design and installation of MEP projects Turnkey Energy Centre Solutions;
- ✔ Modular and pre-fabricated solutions; and
- ✔ GMP Validation including VMP, DQ, IQ, OQ.

Merit operate in the following sectors: pharmaceutical and biotechnology, life sciences and research, semiconductor & nanotechnology, aerospace, physics research, heritage building refurbishment, healthcare, waste to energy, retail and complex industrial and nuclear.

Our high risk areas

We carry out projects throughout the UK and we recruit some local labour. We utilise preferred agencies who are vetted through our supplier appraisal process and carry out a Modern Slavery Risk Assessment to identify and mitigate risk areas before staff are employed.

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Our policies

We operate a number of internal policies to ensure that we are conducting business in an ethical and transparent manner. These include:

- ✔ Anti-slavery policy. This policy sets out the organisation's stance on modern slavery and explains how employees can identify any instances of this and where they can go for help.
- ✔ Recruitment policy. We operate a robust recruitment policy, including conducting eligibility to work in the UK checks for all employees to safeguard against human trafficking or individuals being forced to work against their will.
- ✔ Whistle blowing policy. We operate a whistle blowing policy so that all employees know that they can raise concerns about how colleagues are being treated, or practices within our business or supply chain, without fear of reprisals.
- ✔ Code of business conduct. This code explains the manner in which we behave as an organisation and how we expect our employees and suppliers to act.
- ✔ Supply Chain Code of Conduct. This policy sets out our expectations that our suppliers uphold the same business principles as Merit.

Our suppliers

Merit operates a supplier policy and maintains a preferred supplier list. We conduct due diligence on all suppliers before allowing them to become a preferred supplier. This due diligence includes an online search to ensure that particular organisation has never been convicted of offenses relating to modern slavery. Our policies forms part of our contract with all suppliers and they are required to confirm that no part of their business operations contradicts these policy.

In addition to the above, as part of our contract with suppliers, we require that they confirm to us that:

1. They have taken steps to eradicate modern slavery within their business
2. They hold their own suppliers to account over modern slavery
3. They pay their employees at least the national minimum wage / national living wage (as appropriate)
4. We may terminate the contract at any time should any instances of modern slavery come to light

Training

We conduct training for our procurement/buying teams so that they understand the signs of modern slavery and what to do if they suspect that it is taking place within our supply chain.

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Our performance indicators

We will know the effectiveness of the steps that we are taking to ensure that slavery and/or human trafficking is not taking place within our business or supply chain if:

- ✔ No reports are received from employees, the public, or law enforcement agencies to indicate that modern slavery practices have been identified.

For and on behalf of Merit

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Matthew McGrady'.

Matthew McGrady
Finance Director
Date: 5th August 2020

Document Review			
Version	Reviewed By	Authorised By	Date
00	Bryony Johnson	Matthew McGrady	05/08/2019
01	Johnathan Dodgeon	Matthew McGrady	05/08/2020