

## Generating Social Value through Supplier engagement

### Self-Certification response 2022

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| Supplier name: | Computer Application Services Ltd (CAS) |
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| Completed by: | Ken Naismith               |
| Date:         | 7 <sup>th</sup> April 2022 |

Please answer the questions below as comprehensively as possible. Please return your response to me by email by 29 April 2022

### Environmental concerns

| Question  | Comments  |
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| How do you control your energy consumption within your office premises without compromising on staff health and safety?                       | Our office energy supply is part of a landlord arrangement on the campus where we are based so we have limited control. However, we take responsibility for controlling our own heating levels at “workable” rates, especially minimizing or programming for “off” when the office is unoccupied. Similarly, lights are motion activated for safety and security in non-core areas (corridors, toilets, kitchen) while at the same time “sleeping” when the affected areas are not in use. Low energy equipment is chosen where available to minimize energy consumption by computers etc.  |
| Do you know the extent of your carbon emissions footprint that you can control as an organization? What plans have you in place to reduce it? | <p>We have asked the recently appointed managing agents (and the University’s campus management) where they stand in this regard and await their feedback. We do not have these statistics available to us as an individual organization but we understand that we are part of a wider initiative, which we are sounding out for details.</p> <p><i>Of potentially much greater impact, we are championing a proposal relating to a niche service we provide for RAF. This would drastically reduce the use of aircraft fuel which has a huge environmental impact, as well as offering large cash savings, by making a portable version of a training exercise programme we support. Take the exercise to where the aircraft are based rather than the aircraft having to travel to the range.</i></p> |

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| <p>Do you operate a paperless environment? If not do you have plans to enable that?</p> | <p>Paper use is minimal. E-documents are used as routine including contracts and user manuals, as well as business documents.</p> <p><i>It should be noted that electronic storage is not free either in terms of cost or to the environment – vast data centres use electricity 24/7 serving the “paperless office” cause. Therefore we are pleased to promote file management in our office and in our products to remove in a timely fashion, or at least reduce the accumulation of electronical storage.</i></p> |
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### Tackling economic inequality

| Question   | Comments   |
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| <p>What % of your workforce is paid the minimum wage?</p>  | <p>All employees are paid in excess of the minimum and living wage. We are a long-standing member of the Living Wage Foundation.</p>   |
| <p>Do you recognize a union and do you facilitate staff joining it?</p>  | <p>No union. We have not been asked about joining a union by any staff member.</p> <p><i>As an employee owned business, we have an Employee Director on the board and every team member can be a shareholder, with the rights that accompany that status.</i></p>  |
| <p>What % of the jobs or roles you have created over the past 12 months have been provided to school leavers or graduates?</p> | <p>12.5% We have no jobs suitable for school leavers (though we do offer work experience to pupils in later years of education). We have actively recruited graduates in the past 12 months.</p> <p><i>We have engaged with local universities to share understanding of the skills required by employers in our sector – this is a long-term project with payback expected to take several years.</i></p> |

### Workforce Well being

| Question  | Comments   |
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| <p>Are you working towards or are you accredited as one of the top UK 100 best/great places to work? Or a member of an alternative recognized scheme?</p> | <p>We have a 5 star rating on <a href="https://www.glassdoor.co.uk/">https://www.glassdoor.co.uk/</a> and regularly feature as an example of Employee Ownership.</p> <p>A submission is currently being assessed in the <b>Best Workplace</b> category in the Digital Tech</p> |

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|  | <p>2022 Scotland IS Awards. The winner has not been announced – we know we didn't win and will await with interest to learn what we can from the eventual winner.</p>   |
| <p>Does your organization keep records of exit interviews? If yes, how do you apply any learning?</p>                      | <p>Yes. As a result we have increased flexibility in working hours and locations, we have formalized a career development path for developers in particular and have extended support activities, directly and indirectly connected to workplace development. (Some are personal development)</p>   |
| <p>What is your organisation's staff retention rate for grades most likely to be employed in our service?</p>              | <p>In a small company of 26 employees, just 1 or two joiners or leavers represents a large percentage. Pre-Covid, retention rates were 90%+ (for many years it was seldom that anyone left) however we have had our share of Brexit-related and retirement related leavers in recent years, plus 4 of 26 younger people staying only for around 2 years (conversely, a well known colleague, <u>Simon Laxton has 34 years of service!</u>)</p>  |
| <p>How do you balance providing a service and making a profit with establishing good working practices for your staff?</p> | <p>For the sake of sustainability, we seek to have each customer account profitable. Team members individually, and as a business we recognize collectively that this must be viewed over a <i>longer-than-immediate</i> period of time as there can be periods of need or demand from customers when no budget is available.</p> <p>If a problem of our making arises, it is our problem, and the message is that the quickest and most cost-effective way to fix an issue ... usually, is to fix the issue! We do not seek to shirk responsibility and team members "get that."</p> <p>Response times, budget versus actual, longer term strategic investments are all discussed regularly and openly.</p> <p>Despite being founded 50 years ago, CAS is back in an investment phase following its move to employee ownership in 2014, and the ongoing "productization" of Workpro. All team members share in discussions around, for example, further enhancing security in our hosting environment at an investment of (say) £100,000 and this taking a year to recover from customers as their renewals come around and reflect such an upgrade.</p> <p>At the time of this assessment, Spring 2022, rising costs in general and in the IT industry in particular will continue to put pressure on</p> |

profitability. However, CAS is steadily adding new customers with recurring future licence fees. Achieving and maintaining critical mass is intended to allow us to address profitability overall, absorbing the ups and downs of specific customer stages of investment, issues and profitability. To achieve this, we seek continuous improvement and smarter working in order to contain the balance between support costs and income.

**Tackling workplace inequality**

| <b>Question</b>  | <b>Comments</b>   |
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| What is your pay gap between genders? Why do you have a gap and what are you doing to close it out?  | We have no gender-related pay gap. Work done in recent years addressed this.  |
| Do you provide scholarships or advanced learning opportunities for your staff? If yes, how are they selected for this?   | <p>Yes, advanced training is offered to individuals as required. The needs of the business are taken into consideration as a selection criteria. For example, we sponsored our UX Designer through the Professional Diploma in UX from the UX Design Institute, supporting her to change career from graphic designer. When one of our team became a full board director she attended appropriate training on directors’ responsibilities – it was the promotion that triggered selection. We have also sponsored Graduate Apprenticeships.</p> <p>Otherwise, training is job-specific skill related. Currently we have also “dialed up” an emphasis on team integration and promoting wellbeing.</p> |
| Have you used positive discrimination techniques in your recruitment campaigns? Why have you needed to do this and what has been the results? Are you maintaining this practice? | <p>In the past year we made a headcount position exclusively available to a recruitment agency specializing in the placement of candidates who are higher on the Autism Spectrum. While such individuals can be less comfortable socially, this is something we could accommodate. Sadly, there have been no applicants to date.</p> <p>However, our balancing of male/female ratios are better than industry averages, especially in management positions.</p> <p>Between 2014 and 2020 we were active supporters of the CareerWISE scheme run by</p>  |

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| Equate Scotland which supported women-only internships (see <a href="https://equatescotland.org.uk/closing-digital-skills-gap-careerwise/">https://equatescotland.org.uk/closing-digital-skills-gap-careerwise/</a> ). The scheme no longer continues in the same format, but we continue to look for opportunities to support diversity and inclusion. |
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**See Footnote on final page:**

### **Social Good Connect**

In previous assessment returns we have cited support for charities in cash donations and or the provision of equipment to schools. In the past year we have added structure via participation in a scheme called **Social Good Connect (SGC)**.

SGC maintains a portal via which charities and individuals can log requests for assistance and these entries are matched with skills, interests and the resources on offer from participating organisations and individuals in them.

Paid time off is permitted to support these causes; typically, employees will add more of their own time in addition to the paid time off allocation.

Still in its infancy with Team CAS, the scheme has attracted support by several “CASTodians” (CAS employee owners) and several charities have taken advantage of the support on offer.

A support organization for Sepsis sufferers, provision of Dignity Boxes – making available personal hygiene products for girls and women in deprived areas, and preparing the ground at a gardening project to be used by youths with social, mental and physical challenges.

It has been encouraging to receive appreciation from those who benefit from the work done but **particularly humbling is feedback from our own colleagues** who say how much they have learned or gained – some to their advantage at work as well as in their personal lives.

See more at <https://www.workpro.com/blog/blog-post/why-work-for-workpro>