

# ASCENTIAL

## **ASCENTIAL PLC – Modern Slavery Statement**

The Modern Slavery Act came into force in October 2015 to combat illegal trade in human trafficking, child labour and modern slavery. We consider human rights to be a growing global issue and know our customers share our concern. All companies have the capacity as well as an obligation to improve the working conditions of those exploited in the workplace, this extends to those who are subject to slavery and humans trafficking.

We are committed to underpinning our operations with the highest standards of ethical principles and standards - this includes treating people with respect and dignity and extends to taking active steps to maintain an ethical supply chain and supporting the eradication human trafficking and modern slavery.

In line with UK and international law, Ascential respects human rights, does not tolerate any form of modern slavery or human trafficking in any part of our business and has taken steps to ensure it is not present in its internal operations or supply chain.

Ascential publishes an annual standalone slavery and human trafficking statement within six months of the end of the financial year. We include in this statement “the steps the organisation has taken during the financial year to ensure that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in any of its supply chains”.

## **Identifying and managing the risk of modern slavery**

### **Our supply chain**

Ascential has a large and diverse supply chain based around the world and we work with thousands of companies across our supply chain and aim to select suppliers who meet high standards in areas such as human rights and the environment.

We actively require our supply chain to operate in accordance with our ethical and compliance standards, including with regard to slavery and human trafficking.

Our procurement policy and strategy ensure we actively consider modern slavery and sustainability risks, and we use criteria to determine whether suppliers maintain or exceed our expected standards. We reserve the right to terminate the business supplier relationship without consequence or liability, should a supplier fail to maintain or meet our standards.

Our risk based approach to managing our supply chain, extends to undertaking additional due diligence and onsite monitoring to actively identify possible areas of exposure.

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## **Our policies**

Our commitment to preventing any form of modern slavery or human trafficking, is also cemented in our expectation for ethical conduct, business practices and compliance - these principles are reflected in and supported by our compliance policies and codes. Key compliance policies are available to existing and potential suppliers.

Our Third Party Code of Conduct sets out the standards we require of our suppliers in particular with regard to: involuntary and child labour, freedom of association, diversity and equality, anti-corruption, intellectual property and privacy, health and safety and the environment. Our Third Party Code of Conduct can be found on our website here:

<https://www.ascential.com/~media/Files/A/Ascential-V2/documents/ascential-third-party-code-of-conduct.pdf>

## **Risk assessment**

Ascential has in place a compliance framework to manage and determine compliance risk in our internal operations and our external supply chain, this includes the risk of modern slavery. The framework operates on a cycle of continuous improvement and uses risk assessment criteria to regularly and consistently categorise the risk level of our operations and suppliers and to focus our efforts accordingly.

We also regularly review and refine our policies and procedures to ensure they continue to reflect our commitment to ethical conduct, business practices and compliance, this includes a respect for human rights and modern slavery compliance.

We continue to expand and extend our focus in this area, and the development of our sustainability programme extends our attention in this area. We work closely with our clients, suppliers and industry partnerships to create and maintain opportunities to raise awareness of human rights and modern slavery.

## **Monitoring and reporting**

We regularly monitor, review and refine our policies and procedures for ensuring ethics, compliance and respect for human rights.

Our Whistleblowing policy reinforces our commitment to ensuring and enabling the reporting of any wrongdoing, this extends to human rights violations, including modern slavery. We have in place an independent reporting service where concerns can be reported not only by our employees, but also external third parties. Reports may be made anonymously. All reports are investigated and appropriate action taken.

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## **Training, awareness and communications**

Our compliance programme manages and ensures ongoing training and awareness with regard to our regulatory obligations, this includes within our global operations or supply chain. Our compliance programme regularly measures, assesses and reviews the effectiveness of our training and awareness programmes this assists to ensure we maintain a culture of ethics, compliance and a respect for human rights.

## **Board approval**

This statement is made pursuant to section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes our slavery and human trafficking statement for the financial year ending 31 December 2021.

For and on behalf of the Board,

Duncan Painter  
Chief Executive