

mia

meetings industry association

MEETINGS
INDUSTRY
ASSOCIATION

THE MEETINGS CODE

**A Comprehensive Guide to Ensuring Your Organisation
is Operating In-line with the Meetings CODE; a
requirement of mia membership and/or AIM
accreditation**

INDEX

| | |
|---------|--|
| Page 2 | Section1 - How to Use mia Documentation |
| Page 6 | Section 2 - The Meetings CODE for Venues |
| Page 7 | Section 3 - The Meetings CODE for Suppliers and 3rd Party Agents |
| Page 9 | Section 4 - Commitment to Customers |
| Page 10 | Section 5 – mia Minimum Components of Residential / Non Residential Packages |
| Page 12 | Section 6 - mia Model Contracting Process for Conference & Associated Events |
| Page 16 | Section 7 - mia Model Venues / Production Companies Code of Practice |
| Page 17 | Section 8 - mia Suppliers of Audio Visual Services Code of Practice |
| Page 18 | Section 9 - Code of Conduct for Agents & Venues |
| Page 26 | Appendix A - Recommended Agreement Between the Agent and Venue |
| Page 28 | Appendix B - Letter of Authority |
| Page 29 | Appendix C - Enquiry Best Practise Process |
| Page 33 | Section 10 – Room Layout Guide |

Section1

How to Use this Documentation

MEETINGS CODE (*venue – mia00148, supplier & 3rd party agents –mia00149*)

If a venue, supplier or 3rd party agent it is a condition of membership/ AIM accreditation that you agree to abide by the Meetings CODE.

COMMITMENT TO OUR CUSTOMERS (*mia00150*)

Venues

- Display in all meeting rooms.

All Members / AIM Accredited Venues

- Enclose in all literature to clients.
- Send with all 'offer letters' providing a 'balanced customer guarantee' to your own terms and conditions.
- Include in all appropriate marketing, advertising, exhibitions, etc.
- Mail to your existing client base to demonstrate a competitive edge.

MINIMUM COMPONENTS OF RESIDENTIAL/NON RESIDENTIAL (*mia00151*)

Venues

- Send to clients, as appropriate, to demonstrate that you meet the mia and AIM 'Industry Standard'. Use the document to demonstrate to potential clients how much the components of your packages exceed the 'Industry Standard'.

MODEL CONTRACTING PROCESS

A best practice systemised approach to the preparation and issue of events contracts incorporating the use of the Model Terms and Conditions.

Model Terms & Conditions for Conferences and Associated Events (*mia00152*)

Venues

- Adapt your terms and conditions to include as many of the clauses as are appropriate to your business and / or adopt the "Model" as your Terms and Conditions.
- Use the mia AIM 'Industry Standard' as a means of addressing clients who challenge your terms and conditions. The mia AIM "Model" has been drawn up in consultation with a broad representation of the whole industry, both buyers and venues.
- Send copies of the mia AIM "Model" Terms & Conditions to your clients as confirmation of your organisation's support of the mia 'Industry Standard'.

Model Venue / Production Companies Code of Practice (*mia00153*)

Venues

- Use as a support for your dealings with Clients direct.
- Issue to all Production Companies as a further demonstration of your professionalism.

Production Companies

- Send to all Venues with whom you work.
- Issue to all Clients to demonstrate that you meet the Industry Standard.

Model Audio Visual Services Code of Practice (*mia00154*)

Suppliers of AV Services

- Send to all clients to demonstrate that you meet the mia AIM "Industry Standard".
- Send to all venues with whom you work.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR AGENTS AND VENUES (*mia00155*)

Written by the Hotel Booking Agents Association and endorsed by the Meetings Industry Association, this Code of Conduct sets out:

- Mutual obligations of Agents and Venues
- Agents obligations
- Venues obligations
- Enquiry Process and Options Policies
- Billback and credit
- Whose Client is it?

The Code of Conduct incorporates:

Model Agreement between Agents and Venues (*document mia00155 + appendices A,B,C*)

All members

- Use the Code of Conduct to formulate your own policies and procedures.
- Use this invaluable document to set up “black and white” agreements with your preferred agents or venues in order to ensure clarity of your agreed terms of business and a professional documented relationship.
- Forward the relevant model documents to organisations with whom you wish to do business stating that, as an mia Member and or AIM Accredited venue, these are “Industry Standards” to which you are pledged. Seek their written agreement to comply with the Code of Conduct, with or without incorporating the “Model Agreement between Agents and Venues”.
- Recommend to non-AIM accredited organisations, who do accept the Code, that they should seek mia membership and/or AIM accreditation, to enable them to promote their standards to clients.
- Utilise as appropriate, to resolve any disputes.

Dispute Resolution Process

All Members and AIM Accredited Venues

- Complaints should only be referred to the AIM Complaints Handling Group (AIM CHG) for resolution when all other efforts to mutually agree a solution have failed.

Process

- Written application to AIM CHG for resolution of issue – the issue must be detailed in writing and include prices where relevant, timings and dates where relevant.
- Response from AIM CHG will be made in writing.
- Should a recommended resolution not be accepted by either party the mia will refer the issue to an independent arbitrator – the cost for this action will be equally divided between to two parties involved.

Section 2

The Meetings CODE *(mia 00148)*

Venues

Consistency ● Openness ● Decency ● Ethics

- All venue members and AIM direct venues must agree to abide by the spirit of the Meetings CODE.
- as a member and or AIM accredited venue we are committed to deal professionally with our clients, employees and suppliers in ways which are consistent, open, decent and ethical;
- our booking terms and conditions are simple, clear to understand, and are made publicly available;
- we have written contracts and agreements in place with all our clients which include specific references to the arrangements for charges and payments; the confirmation of bookings; changes and cancellations; arrival and departure;
- the minimum components of all residential and non-residential packages for conferences, meetings and events are published, and meet the criteria set by the mia;
- in all our dealings with venue finding agencies, we communicate clearly our position with regard to contractual arrangements for sole agency agreements; the payment of any commissions; holding provisional bookings; the publication of VAT inclusive or exclusive charges; cancellation charges and communicating any specific constraints;
- in all our dealings with production companies, we detail in writing and convey to our clients the reasonable expectations which they can have of all production companies which we use;
- our relationship with the suppliers of audio visual services are set out in a written agreement which is made known to our clients to avoid potential disputes;
- we have clearly defined the standards of service which our clients can reasonably expect, they are compliant with minimum legal requirements, and our staff are trained to ensure that they are consistently applied;
- the meetings and conference facilities which we provide are “fit for purpose”, provide a safe and healthy environment, and are clearly defined in the contractual agreements which we have in writing with our clients;
- we are committed to uphold and safeguard the good name of AIM accreditation; to play an active part in its work; to uphold and advance the professional standards of conduct to which the AIM accreditation is committed, and to follow the process and procedures set down by the mia for dispute resolution.

Section 3

The Meetings CODE *(mia 00149)*

Supplier & 3rd Party Agents

Consistency ● Openness ● Decency ● Ethics

- All supplier members/ AIM Direct Suppliers agree to the following conditions of membership:
- as a supplier member of the mia/ AIM Direct Supplier we are committed to deal professionally with our clients, employees and suppliers in ways which are consistent, open, decent and ethical;
- our terms and conditions of business are simple, clear to understand, and are made publicly available;
- we have written agreements in place with all our clients which include specific references to the arrangements for charges and payments; the confirmation of the products and/or the services to be supplied; changes and cancellations; timing of delivery;
- Venue finding agencies in their dealings with venues and clients - we communicate clearly our position with regard to the payment of any commissions; holding provisional bookings; the communication to clients of the venue's cancellation charges and any relevant terms and conditions, including specific constraints;
- Production companies in their dealings with venues and clients - we detail in writing the reasonable expectations of our products and services which venues and clients can have of us, which include, taking an accurate brief of the requirements, ensuring an all-encompassing quotation, risk assessment and appropriate health and safety measures, the performance of our team to meet the client's and venue's objectives and requirements;
- Suppliers of audio visual services in their dealings with venues and clients – we detail in writing the reasonable expectations of our products and services which venues and clients can have of us, which include, a generic agreement with the venue (where relevant) which is made known to our clients to avoid potential disputes, and for specific project requirements, the taking of an accurate brief, a fully inclusive quotation to include delivery and set-up in good working order, delivery in good time to meet the client's notified agenda;
- All other supplier members – we detail in writing the reasonable expectations of our products and service which clients can have of us, which include, taking and detailing our understanding of the client's brief, submitting a fully inclusive quotation;
- we have clearly defined the standards of service which our clients can reasonably expect, and which reflect the mia's Commitment to Our Customers, they are compliant with minimum legal requirements, and our staff are trained to ensure that they are consistently applied;
- the products and/or services which we provide are “fit for purpose”, provide a safe and healthy environment, and are clearly defined in the contractual agreements which we have in writing with our clients;
- we are committed to uphold and safeguard the good name of mia and AIM Accreditation; to play an active part in its work; to uphold and advance the professional standards of conduct to which the mia and AIM Accreditation is committed, and to follow the process and procedures set down by the mia for dispute resolution.

Section 4

Commitment to Our Customers *(mia00150)*

As a member and/or AIM direct organisation we commit ourselves to the following standards in all our dealings with our customers:

Customers

- We take the meetings industry seriously.
- You will be dealing with an organisation totally dedicated to providing you with a service that meets your conference, meeting or event requirements.

Quality

- We are committed to delivering goods and services which meet the highest specified standards.
- Your standards are our standards!

Standards

- We believe in raising industry standards.
- Your conference, meeting or event will be handled by fellow professionals who will translate your requirements into reality on the day.
- The AIM accreditation system, earned assures you of consistency.

Training

- We are committed to developing the potential of all our staff.
- Your conference, meeting or event will be looked after by people with skills to respond to your requirements and to recommend the best solutions.

Social Responsibility

- In all our dealings we aim to behave with openness, trust and integrity.
- You have the right to question and to receive an honest answer.

Booking Conditions

- Our booking terms and conditions are simple and easy to understand.
- All our staff who deal with conferences, meetings or events understand our booking conditions and can discuss them with you.

Problems

- We are committed to understanding and resolving any problems you may have quickly and satisfactorily.
- You will be dealing with an organisation aware of your need for quick and effective solutions.

Section 5

Minimum Components of Residential / Non Residential Packages *(mia00151)*

A schedule of the minimum components which AIM accredited venues are expected to provide in their conference packages

This has been developed in consultation with the Meetings Industry Advisory Board, a panel of experienced corporate and associate buyers. It reflects the needs of 95% of researched buyers.

The AIM Minimum Components of a Residential Conference Package:

1. Accommodation with private bath or shower in rooms for single or twin / double occupancy.
2. Full breakfast.
3. One service of morning coffee or tea with biscuits.
4. Two course, served or buffet, lunch (including vegetarian option) plus coffee / tea.
5. One service of afternoon tea or coffee with biscuits.
6. Use of one main meeting room appropriate in size for the number of delegates to be seated in comfort to be available between 8.00 a.m. and 5.30 p.m. on any one day.
7. Availability of an overhead projector (with a spare bulb facility built in) at an appropriate height with a relevant sized screen or LCD projector (with the relevant cost, if charged, clearly displayed).
8. One flip chart stand, pad and three primary colour felt tip pens.
9. Table accessories including an adequate supply of A4 / A5 writing paper, writing implements, name cards, sweets, water, glasses and cordials are mia recommended.
10. Three-course dinner offering either a choice at the time of service or from a pre-selected menu (including vegetarian option) plus coffee / tea.
11. No additional service charge percentage to be added to packages. Additional gratuities to be at the discretion of the client.
12. VAT at the current rate to be included. An option to exclude VAT from rates is acceptable but the total amount inclusive of VAT must also be shown.

The AIM Standard Non-Residential Conference Package:

1. One service of morning coffee or tea with biscuits.
2. Two course, served or buffet, lunch (including vegetarian option) plus coffee / tea.
3. One service of afternoon tea or coffee with biscuits.
4. Use of one main meeting room appropriate in size for the number of delegates to be seated in comfort to be available between 8.00 a.m. and 5.30 p.m. on any one day.

5. Availability of an overhead projector (with a spare bulb facility built in) at an appropriate height with a relevant sized screen or LCD projector (with the relevant cost, if charged, clearly displayed).
6. One flip chart stand, pad and three primary colour felt tip pens.
7. Table accessories including an adequate supply of A4 / A5 writing paper, writing implements, name cards, sweets, water, glasses and cordials are mia recommended.
8. No additional service charge percentage to be added to packages. Additional gratuities to be at the discretion of the client.
9. VAT at the current rate to be included. An option to exclude VAT from rates is acceptable but the total amount inclusive of VAT must also be shown.

Section 6

Model Terms and Conditions for Conferences and Associated Events *(mia00152)*

The Objectives of Terms & Conditions are:

- To protect all parties through providing a better understanding of their contractual obligations.
- To heighten awareness of the legal obligations of both clients and venues when confirming a booking.
- To recognise that enforcement of a contract and implementation of terms and conditions will always be at the discretion of the aggrieved party, taking account of normal commercial considerations.

Note: Reference to 'Venue' can be amended to a Hotel, University, Residential Management Centre, Conference Centre, etc., as appropriate.

Where blanks are shown these should be completed at the venue's discretion.

Definitions

'The Venue' and 'We' means the property / properties for which a contract is agreed.

The property is owned / managed by: _____ whose registered office is: _____

'The Client' and 'You' means the organising body / company and organiser responsible for commissioning of and payment for the event.

The 'Contract' means the agreement between The Venue and The Client for a specific booking or series of bookings.

These Terms & Conditions will form part of the Contract, together with any other terms stated in the Contract.

Minimum numbers' means the minimum numbers for which the client will be liable to pay.

'Hire periods' means the period of hire for which the client will be liable to pay.

Charges and Payment

1. The Venue requires at least 14 days' notice prior to arrival date to arrange any credit facilities. Credit accounts must not exceed their credit limit at any time.
2. Payment must be made in pounds sterling (UKL). We reserve the right to pass on any bank charges resulting from exchange of foreign currency payments.
3. Payment is due for credit accounts _____ days following the date of invoice.
4. In the event of payment becoming overdue, interest at x% above the current payable Bank base rate, as at the date when payment became due, will be added to your account for each month or part of month that the account remains unpaid.
5. We reserve the right to carry out credit checks on you and to withdraw or refuse credit facilities as we feel appropriate. Should a deposit or pre-payment be required for any event, this will be specified on the Contract.

Confirmation by the Client

6. All bookings are considered as provisional until the contract is signed by both the Client and the Venue. Once the contract is signed by both parties, all such facilities and services reserved on your behalf will be subject to the terms and conditions of the Contract.
7. The Contract must be returned by the Clients and received by the Venue within five/ or a practical number of working days of the date of issue or, if such time is not available prior to the date of arrival, within a maximum of 48 hours. If the Contract is not received by the Venue within this period, the Venue reserves the right to release the provisional booking and re-let the facilities.
8. Numbers must be advised to the Venue at the time of verbal confirmation and will be identified on the Contract. Final timings, menus and any special requests must be confirmed to the Venue at least () days prior to arrival.

Amendments by the Client

9. Amendments to guest numbers and / or arrangements must be confirmed to the Venue in writing. As the specific details of the booking are established, the value of the booking will inevitably increase. From time to time we will issue you with updated quotations, setting out the then current value of your booking. You hereby acknowledge and agree that in the event of cancellation of your booking any supplementary quotations issued to you shall be incorporated into the contract for the purposes of these terms and conditions.
10. Reduction in the duration or contracted value of the booking should be subject to The Venue's Cancellation Policy.
11. No charges will be made for any reductions in numbers of less than 10% from those stated on the Contract, providing they are received in writing by the Venue at least (x) days prior to arrival.
12. Should a reduction in numbers of 10% or more be made at any time prior to the event, the Venue will first endeavour to resell any facilities and services released to a similar value. In the event that the released facilities and services cannot be re-sold, then any reductions of 10% or more shall be subject to the Cancellation Policy, as detailed in clauses 13 - 15 below.
13. Final numbers, within the terms stated in clauses 10 and 11, must be notified to the Venue at least () hours prior to arrival. These will be the minimum number for which the Client will be charged.
14. Should you make significant changes in the programme or the expected numbers, this may result in amendments in the applicable rates and/or facilities offered by us.

Cancellation by the Client

15. In the unfortunate circumstances that you have to cancel or postpone your confirmed booking at any time prior to the event, the Venue will endeavour to re-sell the facilities on your behalf. The Venue's Cancellation Policy is to charge for our loss of profit as follows:
 - a. The event is cancelled over two years before the event start date, 60% of the booking value on contracted accommodation, room hire and ancillary revenue and 35% of the booking value on contracted catering and bar/wine/beverage revenue.
 - b. The event is cancelled between two years and 18 months before the event start date, 70% of the booking value on contracted accommodation, room hire and ancillary revenue and 45% of the booking value on contracted catering and bar/wine/ beverage revenue.
 - c. The event is cancelled between 18 months and 12 months before the event start date, 80% of the booking value on contracted accommodation, room hire and ancillary revenue and 55% of the booking value on contracted catering and bar/wine/beverage revenue.
 - d. The event is cancelled less than 12 months before the event start date, 90% of the booking value on contracted accommodation and room hire revenue and 65% of the booking value on contracted food and beverage revenue.
16. Any cancellation, postponement or partial cancellation should be advised to the management of the Venue in the first instance verbally. You will be advised at that stage of a cancellation reference number. We also request that cancellations are put in writing by the Client.
17. Definitive cancellation charges due can only be confirmed to you after the intended date of your event, when we shall reduce the charge by the profit on any alternative business we have been able to secure on your behalf. If a deposit and/or other pre-payments have been made by you in respect of a cancelled

booking, and such amounts are less than or equal to the amount of any cancellation charges due, they shall be non-refundable.

Amendments or Cancellation by the Venue

17. Should the Venue for reasons beyond our control need to make any amendments to the Client's booking, we reserve the right to offer an alternative choice of facilities which will be of an equal or higher standard to those facilities booked. Where named facilities have been booked, the venue will cover any costs that may result from such changes.
18. Our acceptance of your booking is on the understanding that circumstances beyond our control may prevent us from meeting our obligations at the relevant time in which case we will not be liable for any loss suffered by you or any third party.
19. The Venue may cancel the booking
 - a. If the booking might, in the opinion of the Venue, prejudice the reputation of the Venue.
 - b. If the Client is more than 30 days in arrears of previous payments to _____ (The Venue).
 - c. If the Venue becomes aware of any alteration in the Client's financial situation.

Arrival / Departure

20. The bedroom accommodation is available from _____ on the day of arrival, and must be vacated by _____ on the day of departure, unless specific alternative arrangements have been agreed.
21. The meeting rooms are available for the time shown on your Contract. Any extension may incur additional charges. The following are considered as supplementary clauses, which venues may or may not deem relevant / necessary for inclusion:

General

22. Neither party shall be liable to the other for any failure to perform its obligations under this Contract where its failure to do so is the result of events beyond its reasonable control, provided that (i) where a deposit has been paid we reserve the right to deduct the reasonable costs arising from cancellation of a Booking pursuant this clause 22; and (ii) in the event that no deposit has been paid in respect of a Booking cancelled pursuant to this clause then we reserve the right to invoice in respect of unavoidable and/or committed costs incurred in servicing the Booking.
23. The Venue reserves the right to approve any externally arranged entertainment, services, Equipment or activities that you have arranged in line with Health and Safety and cannot accept liability for any resultant cost.
24. Should any of your delegates be unable to correct any aspect of poor behaviour or activities unacceptable to the Venue, the Venue reserves the right to terminate your stay. Should this occur, no monies will be refunded to you. The Manager's decision is final.
25. The costs of repairing any damage caused to the property, contents or grounds by any of your guests must be reimbursed to the Venue by the Client.
26. No wines, spirits or foods brought into the Venue may be consumed.
27. The Venue will not be liable for any failure to provide or delay in providing facilities, services, food or beverages as a result of events or matters outside its control.
28. The Venue's name / logo may be used in publicity, once a proof of the promotional material has been agreed with the Venue.
29. The Client is responsible for ensuring that any band or musician employed by them complies with statutory requirements and the requirements of the management.
30. The Venue must comply with certain licensing and statutory regulations and requires the Client to fulfil their obligations in this respect.
31. We are concerned for your health and safety and that of our Venue. You are required to obtain prior written approval if you wish to fix items to the walls, floors or ceilings.

32. Prices quoted include/exclude VAT at the rate prevailing when the Contract was prepared and are subject to alterations should the rate change.
33. (a) Insurance - if Venues wish to offer the client the option of insurance. Insurance can be arranged to protect you and your event against cancellation or abandonment with a minimum sum insured based on the anticipated income to the Venue. Insurance can also cover non-appearance of speakers or delegates, property damage at or to the venue or its contents, third party bodily injury and third party damage. The Venue does not accept liability for these.
(b) Insurance - if Venues wish to require the client to take out compulsory insurance. We require insurance to be arranged to protect you and your event against cancellation, or abandonment with a minimum sum insured based on the anticipated income to the Venue. You are also required to insure against damage at or to the venue and its contents and public liability to a minimum of £1,000,000 (any one occurrence). The Venue does not accept liability for these unless required by statute.

Section 7

Model Venues / Production Companies Code of Practice *(document mia00153)*

This Model Code of Practice serves to demonstrate the commitment and professionalism that a client can expect of an AIM Accredited production company - to clarify the relationship, to avoid disputes and to build mutual loyalty leading to additional business.

1. When taking / making an enquiry, try to ascertain the total requirements from the Client e.g. type of event, minimum space needed.

The objectives of the event should be clear to all, particularly those of a sensitive nature. This should ensure that everyone works as a team.

2. When checking availability for date of event, allow for set up and breakdown and whether 24-hour use is required. Allow for extra costs for any special arrangements that require extra staff e.g. breakdown arrangements and clearing of site.
3. The facilities to be used should always be visited by organiser to check suitability e.g. location, access, accurate dimensions and floor plans to scale.
4. Confirmation of booking should specify exact requirements and costs. Check terms and conditions, in particular the cancellation policy.
5. Responsibility for security arrangements, if required, should be clearly defined, the costs for which should be agreed at the outset.
6. If necessary, a Risk Assessment should be carried out on the property.

Areas of responsibility in respect of Indemnity Insurance and Health and Safety should be agreed with due care being taken towards fixtures and fittings and the fabric of the building.

7. Finalise set-up requirements in detail e.g. portage, toilet facilities, storage, crew meals, changing rooms, uniform (if applicable) and identity badges.
8. Particularly with outside events, confirm details regarding flags, signage etc, supply of power and water, plus the responsibility for clearing the area.
9. Plans and layout should, be returned at least two weeks before the event and should comply with the venue's Fire and Health and Safety Regulations.
10. Establish a contact in authority for both parties to effect change of arrangements, timings, and sign-off for extras or charging to the main account particularly out of hours.

Section 8

Suppliers of Audio Visual Services Code of Practice *(document mia00154)*

This Model Code of Practice serves to demonstrate the commitment and professionalism that a client can expect of an AIM Accredited supplier of AV services and / or the venue concerned - to clarify the relationship, to avoid disputes and to build mutual loyalty leading to additional business.

The AIM Accredited Supplier of AV Services undertakes to:

1. Ensure consistency of available contact between AV Company and client and to advise on equipment most suited to fulfil requirements.
2. Communicate effectively and quickly in response to client's demands, representatives being competent, responsible and holding authority to act.
3. Supply a written quotation with specific costs for agreed client requirements within eight working hours.
4. Notify the client as soon as possible of any changes and for any substitution to be of similar or higher specification at no extra cost.
5. Demonstrate that equipment has been maintained to correct standards (e.g. portable appliance testing certificates etc.) and is set up and arranged in a professional manner.
6. Deliver equipment on time in working order with training and instructions given in method of working - whilst recommending qualified technician to be in attendance.
7. Provide basic training or an instruction check list for each piece of equipment and a phone help line and / or site back-up equipment (included in the price or at discounted rate) and to agree a course of action in case of equipment failure.
8. Supply a clear and concise account within three working days of the end of event based on final written requirements.

The Client undertakes to:

1. Act in good faith with regard to appropriate authority to initiate order, changes to specification and accepts that, where a cancellation takes place less than seven days prior to an event, a charge may be incurred.
2. Co-operate with the supplier of AV Services to enable them to fulfil their obligations under this Audio Visual Code of Practice.

Section 9

Code of Conduct For Agents and Venues *(document mia00155 + appendices)*

Developed by the Hotel Booking Agents Association Endorsed by the Meetings Industry Association

Mutual Obligations of Agents & Venues

- 1.1. Agent & Venues must conduct themselves in such a way that their conduct would not be reasonably regarded by their professional colleagues within the field of accommodation, meetings and/or events reservations, as professional misconduct. It is by this overall test that the conduct will be judged.
- 1.2. Agents & Venues must not engage in conduct which may seriously prejudice the standing and reputation of the accommodation, meetings and/or events profession.
- 1.3. Agents & Venues agree to maintain as confidential and not to use or disclose to any third party any confidential information derived from the other party without the consent of the disclosing party except where such use or disclosure is reasonably necessary for the proper performance of the Code of Conduct or their respective relationship.
- 1.4. Agents & Venues are obliged to distribute throughout their organisations and to train all appropriate staff on the information/obligations contained in this Code of Conduct.
- 1.5.1 The rate of commission between a Venue and an Agent is a matter of commercial negotiation, but in a situation where commission is due and no rate of commission has expressly been agreed, it is recommended that the minimum rate of commission shall be either;
 - 8% + VAT on a rate inclusive of VAT; or
 - 10% inc VAT on a rate inclusive of VAT
 - 10% + VAT on a rate exclusive of VAT
- 1.5.2 It is recommended that unless otherwise agreed commission, shall be paid on accommodation, room hire, delegate rates (whether day or 24 hour rates), pre-booked (i.e. prior to arrival) food and beverage whether booked by the Agent or the Client.

Agents Obligations

- 2.1. Be fully aware of the Code of Conduct and be able to adhere to the Code of Conduct throughout their business.
- 2.2. Identify themselves, at the outset of negotiations, as booking agents and state clearly their requirement for commission, if any required, if no existing arrangement is in place.
- 2.3. Be honest in dealings with Venues and either identify their Client by name, or issue a form of reference and industry sector, should the Agent be unable to identify their Client for confidentiality reasons.
- 2.4. Not mark up a rate quoted by a venue/hotel, unless consent is received from the venue/hotel; such consent not to be unreasonably withheld.
- 2.5. Seek clarification on venue's cancellation policies and terms and be responsible for informing their Client of same.
- 2.6. Issue written or electronic confirmation of all booking details to Venue and Clients within an agreed time frame, generally accepted as 8 business hours. Such confirmations to be in a clear format with reference to the venue's cancellation policy and any booking reference issued.
- 2.7. Not to prejudice a Venue's commercial position by demanding that net rates are made commissionable when a Client with a pre-existing contracted 'net rate agreement' is secured part way through the term of that agreement.

- 2.8. Honour any booking guarantees they commit to, with reference to non-arrival/cancellation charges and will assist with the collection of any non arrival and cancellation charges from their clients.
- 2.9. Not claim bookings as their own and subsequently claim commission from a Venue when the initial enquiry and provisional booking was made by the Client unless otherwise agreed, such consent not to be unreasonably withheld.

Venues Obligations

- 3.1. Be fully aware of the Code of Conduct and be able to adhere to the Code of Conduct throughout their business.
- 3.2. Alert the Agent, at the outset, if a specific enquiry has already been received from another agent, or direct from the client.
- 3.3. Use discretion and be confidential about the Client's identity on any enquiry.
- 3.4. Honour commission agreements in place.
- 3.5. Not undercut prices given to an Agent for the same business/enquiry already made on the same or similar date subsequently received directly from a Client.
- 3.6. Honour verbal or written agreements for all rates issued for an agreed period.
- 3.7. Agree to pay commission, at the rate agreed between the parties on all commissionable business. Commission will be due and payable to the Agent in accordance with the following;
 - 3.8.1 Where the Client is settling the invoice directly with the Venue, or on departure, commission will be due to the Agent within 30 days of the date of the Agent's commission invoice.
 - 3.8.2 Venues are to provide, if requested, copy invoices to the Agent within 5 days of the guest's departure from a venue or 5 days of the Agents request for the same.
 - 3.8.3 Where the Agent is operating a 'billback' process for the Client, as an agent; commission will be due to the Agent as soon as possible and no more than within 30 days of the Agent transferring 'billback' funds' to the venue/hotel.
 - 3.8.4 Where the Agent is operating a 'billback' process for the Client, as the principal; commission will be due to the Agent within 30 days of receipt of 'billback' funds' from the Agent or may be taken at source by the agent.
 - 3.8.5 For the avoidance of doubt, commission will also be due to Agents on any monies collected as a result of cancellation charges, 'no shows' and 'short stays'.
- 3.9. Be honest in any deductions of commission due to No Shows or Short Stays.
- 3.10. In the absence of prior agreed terms and conditions, charge only valid amounts for 'No Shows' and late cancellations – e.g. loss of profit and such charges associated with Venues obligations as to re-letting the space/accommodation, exclude VAT, etc.
- 3.11. Not book out an Agents' Client unless in extreme circumstances. In such cases the Venue would:
 - 3.11.1 Advise the Agent during working hours.
 - 3.11.2 Accept full responsibility for the out-booking to the customer and absolve the Agent of such responsibility.
 - 3.11.3 Book the customer in an alternative venue in close proximity to the out-booked venue of at least the same standard or better.
 - 3.11.4 Pay any difference in cost of the room if relevant.
 - 3.11.5 Arrange and pay the cost of a taxi to and from the new venue to the venue from which they are being checked out.
 - 3.11.6 Advise the Agent by 9.00am the following day of the occurrence of the out-booking.
 - 3.11.7 Write to the client, if required, the contents of such letter to be mutually agreed.

- 3.11.8 In the instance where the out-booking venue is the payee for the transaction, ensure that the Agent's commission is paid.
- 3.12. Direct all incentive offers - financial or otherwise, to induce additional business - to the directors of the Agency in the first instance and not directly to the agency staff. Each Agent will choose whether they wish to participate in any such scheme, and if so whether they wish to "pool" such benefits or allow individual incentivisation. Venues will also advise Agents, at the time of offering such incentives, whether the Venue offering the incentive is also assuming responsibility for all/any national insurance and tax liabilities.
- 3.13. Not offer credit facilities, to Agents or other booking agents who cannot conform to the requirements set out in Section 7, unless a commercial agreement exists between the parties.
- 3.14. Only with prior agreement, allow Agents to deduct undisputed commission from the payment to the venue prior to making the said payment, such agreement not to be unreasonably withheld.
- 3.15. Use best endeavours to implement procedures for central commission payments and will not impose a central commission collection charge.
- 3.16. Not inform the Agents' Clients of the percentage commission receivable by the Agents, either by express or implied methods. Such information should not be contained in contracts to be signed by the Clients. However, for the avoidance of doubt the contracts may state that rates are commissionable but not the value or percentage of the commission.
- 3.17. In the event of a disputed commission invoice, pay all undisputed amounts within the stipulated time, as herein referred, leaving the disputed amounts outstanding. The Venue shall have a period of 30 days from the date of the Agent's invoice to dispute any amount on the invoice. Once disputed amounts have been resolved such agreed amounts shall be payable within 30 days of the agreement. For the avoidance of doubt the amount to be disputed shall not be the total amount of the invoice but shall be the individual amounts, unless the total amount is made up of one entry.
- 3.18. Pay commission on the full commissionable value as booked if a Venue reduced a client's invoice by an amount representing a discount or credit, the reason for the discount or credit being without doubt due to the Venues failure to provide a service, unsatisfactory service or similar circumstances. However, it is understood that this may be subject to negotiation between the parties.

Recommended Agreement Between the Agent and Venue - See Appendix A

Enquiry Process and Options Policies

Agents and Venues are committed towards providing space at venues, which is booked and used efficiently for the mutual benefits of Agents/Venues and Clients.

In order for the space to be used efficiently, both Agents and Venues commit towards establishing a detailed client brief and the provision and holding of venue space which is subsequently not diluted by vague or unlikely commitment.

This policy serves to:

- Create clearer identification of client requirements, through improved enquiry qualification and understanding of client brief;
- To provide clients with the best and most suitable match to their requirements;
- To increase conversion rate of provisional booking to confirmed status;
- To eradicate the false demand that exist within the market as a result of multiple option holding, whereby inaccurate demands can inflate rates above the "true" market conditions.

Please refer to the "**Enquiry Best Practise Process**" – Appendix C to support the below.

- 4.1 When holding space – always hold as per initial enquiry – this should not be amended or cancelled unless discussed with the Agent who must agree any changes with the Client.
- 4.2 Agent and Venue enquiry/option holding protocol.**
- 4.2.1 Upon receiving an enquiry, where space is available and subsequently offered by the Venue to the Agent on behalf of the Agents client, the venue will provide the Agent requesting the space first with an exclusive provisional booking on a 1st option basis.
- 4.2.2 During the agreed exclusive provisional 1st option period the Venue cannot release the said space without consultation with the Agent.
- 4.2.3 Venues will not operate “joint 1st option” or “race for space” policies.
- 4.2.4 On receiving a brief, where the Venue subsequently “denies” or “turns down” that business, a Venue will communicate the reason, including but not limited to, a lack of availability, tactical decision making, historical low client conversion, strategic sale decision, such reasons to be no different than those that a Venue would communicate to a Client direct. Such a practise will positively influence opportunities for Venues to maximise business potential through educating the market and guiding business into non peak days and/or periods.
- 4.2.5 When requesting to hold space at venues Agents will support the options policy by proposing 2nd and subsequent options to clients and not restrict to only offering 1st options to Clients. Agents and Venues will liaise in order to track the progress of the option.
- 4.2.6 The Agent commits to working with their clients towards reducing the number of options held per enquiry with the aim of increasing venue conversion, reducing Agent operational costs, and reducing the existence of inaccurate demand and providing a more realistic price within the market at any given time.
- 4.2.7 Venues recognise that there will be situations where it is in the interest of all parties for Agents to promote to their clients “wild card options” that do not entirely meet the client’s brief. These may be Venues that are new and need great exposure, new destinations, venues under new ownership/management, venues offering particularly attractive deals owing to cancellations or low season dates, or any reasons. Agents should be neither penalised nor discouraged from proposing wild card options to Clients but should be transparent with Venues when this is the case.
- 4.2.8 Agents agree to transparency in regards to the number of options held per enquiry, but Agents must be mindful of the implications of multiple option holding. Venues are encouraged to discuss consistently low conversion with relevant Agents prior to restricting said Agents from holding space.
- 4.3 At the outset of the enquiry always advise the Agent if there are any limitations on public access to the venue/hotel e.g. whether areas are open to the public, lack of disability access etc and/or if there are any planned or current building/refurbishment works being undertaken at the hotel/venue or its immediate neighbours where there will be any actual or possible noise, vibration or other disturbance at the time of the proposed reservation. Unusual access points, specific to the venue/hotel, must always be advised to the Agent. This point will be covered by best endeavour.

Billback & Credit

For the avoidance of doubt, Billback is a service which may be offered by the Agent and/or the Venue to their respective Clients, whereby invoices for the services provided by the Venue are not settled on departure, but are sent to the Agent or retained by the Venue, and subsequently sent to the Client for payment or settled directly by the Agent. There are numerous variations to the operation of a Billback service, but the common definition which exists within the industry should be applied.

Agents can act in either of two legal capacities, principal or agent and have a right to elect which capacity they wish to operate under. Under the former the Agent assumes financial liability for the venues invoiced charges whilst under the latter the Agent acts as an agent (either by implication or expressly) and thus the financial liability rests with the Client.

The billing instructions of the Agent should be clearly established with the Venue at the outset of every transaction, either periodically or on a transaction by transaction basis. Furthermore, the Agent can elect to hold different capacities dependent upon the Client.

The Agents hereby agree to operate under one of the following capacities;

5.1. Agent acts as a Principal

This means that the financial liability for the transaction rests with the Agent and any debt collection issues or obligation is between the Venue and the Agent.

5.1.1. Standard Credit Agreement

A credit agreement exists between the Agent and the Venue. The credit limit is set at a level advised by the credit checking agencies of the Venues. The Agent must abide by the terms of the agreement.

5.1.2. Extended Credit Agreement

Where the Agent requires a credit limit beyond the limits recommended by the credit checking agencies of the Venues, the Agent will be required, if requested by the Venue, to provide evidence of “credit guarantee insurance”, enough to cover the additional amount of credit required for all the Venues with which the Agent places business.

5.1.3. Separate commercial agreements exist between the parties.

The Parties establish a separate and legal commercial agreement, wherein the Agent acts as Principal, which overrides the provisions of 8.1.1 and 8.1.2 above and thus agree with each other on the terms and conditions particular to their circumstances.

5.2. The Agent acts as an Agent

This means that the financial liability for the transaction rests with the Client and any debt collection issues or obligations are between the Venue and the Client.

5.2.1. Standard Credit Agreement

There is a credit agreement between the Venue and the Client. The Client empowers the Agent in writing to access the Client’s credit facility for the fulfilment of the services provided by the Agent. The Venue is provided, if requested, with a copy of a letter/contract, such as the letter contained in Appendix B, prior to any business being placed.

5.2.2. Deferred Liability Agreement

The Agent forwards to the Venue, details of any Clients to whom it wishes to offer a billback facility. This can be done by transaction or for a medium term facility. The Venue takes out the necessary credit checks on the Client. The Venue confirms back to the Agent the acceptable credit limit they would offer the corporate Client/s in question. The Venue may provide a standard credit agreement for signature by the Client. The Agent then provides the Venue with a copy of the signed letter/contract from the Client, which shall be on the Client’s letter headed paper. This unambiguously confirms:

- the Client's liability for any debts which may arise in connection with the services provided by the Agent, in the fulfilment of the Client's hotel and conference booking requirements.
- the Venue's right to bring a direct claim against the Client in the event of default.
- the Venue's right to take any necessary steps to recover the debt from the Client in the event of default.

A copy of a sample letter is attached at Appendix B

5.2.3. **Separate commercial agreements exist between the parties.**

The Parties establish a separate commercial agreement, wherein the Agent acts as Agent, which overrides the provisions of 5.2.1 and 5.2.2 above and thus agree with each other on the terms and conditions particular to their circumstances.

Whose Client Is It?

There are four areas to consider when the issue of 'whose client is it?' might arise and more particularly who is entitled to receive any commission due from the Venues and who can make approaches to the Client for business. These areas can be categorised as follows;

- A. Agent & Agent** – Where two agents disagree as to who owns the Client and therefore who is entitled to receive the commission
- B. Agent & Venue** – Examples such as when the Venues are entitled to approach the Client, introduced by a Agent, directly for business
- C. Agent & Client** – Examples of whether the Agent has been properly instructed to act on behalf of the Client
- D. Venue and Client** – Examples such as concerns as to whether the Venue has been properly instructed to act on behalf of the Client

The following provisions of this section are to be considered as best practice and it is the intention of this section, as it is throughout this document that Venues and Agents operate in a fair and ethical manner. Furthermore, the provisions of this section are not to be used to protect Agents/Venues who do not invest in developing strong Client relationships.

This section establishes that there is a desire between Agents and Venues to have a level playing field in terms of price and product, so that Venues do not make direct bookings more attractive to Agent's Clients.

- 6.1. It is accepted by the Agents and Venues that the Agent who has been instructed by the Client to enter into a contractual relationship to place business ("Confirmation of Business") is the Agent who is entitled to receive any commission due from the business.
- 6.2. If a Client has in place a policy which mandates, although not wholly exclusively, the use of a particular Agent ("the Mandated Agent") and the Client chooses to use a Agent who is not the Mandated Agent (the "Non-Mandated Agent"), the Non-Mandated Agent shall be entitled to receive any commission properly incurred, provided the Non-Mandated Agent confirms the piece of business.
- 6.3. Where there are two agents handling an event on behalf of a Client, commission is paid to the agent that confirms the business with the authority of the Client, not necessarily the one that makes the first enquiry.
- 6.4. When there is one Agent involved in an enquiry and prior to confirmation the Client appoints an event management company, another Agent or a non Agent, it is considered best practice that commission is paid to the party that confirms the booking with the Client's instructions.

However, if the Client chooses an event management company, another Agent or non Agent after confirmation, then commission is paid to the agent that confirms the event on behalf of the Client, with the Clients' instructions regardless of the subsequent appoint of another event management company, Agent or non Agent.

- 6.5 It is not acceptable practice for a Venue to provide an incentive to a Client, introduced by a Agent, to place subsequent bookings direct by using price, added value items or other beneficial factors. This does not restrict Venues from maintaining existing and building new relationships with any bookers within any corporate companies.

This does not restrict the Venues signing up Clients to loyalty programmes or reward schemes where these are not used specifically to act as an incentive to a Client to book a hotel/venue directly.

APPENDIX A

Recommended Agreement Between the Agent and Venue

Model Agreement between Agents and Venues

This Agreement is made between the parties and on the date set out below.

1. DURATION

This Agreement shall remain in force (option - for a period of X years from the date of signing), unless and until terminated by one party giving the other not less than one month prior written notice to expire on any annual anniversary of this Agreement.

2. COMMISSION

2.1 Commission shall be payable on the rates charged for the following facilities and/or services:

- Residential delegate packages (24 hr)
- Non residential delegate packages (DDR)
- Accommodation
- Room hire
- Food and beverage pre-booked (i.e. prior to arrival) whether by Agent or Client

2.2 Commission is payable at the following rate. Please tick appropriate option.

- 8% plus VAT on venue rates inclusive of VAT
- 10% including VAT on venue rates inclusive of VAT
- 10% plus VAT on venue rates exclusive of VAT
- Other – (please specify).....

3. COPY INVOICES

Commission will be calculated by the Agent from copy invoices and/or a summary of accommodation provided to the Agent by the Venue within 5 days of completion of the conference or within 5 days of the guests departure from the venue.

4. CLIENT CANCELLATIONS/NO SHOWS/SHORT STAYS

Commission will be due from Venues to Agents on any monies collected as a result of cancellation charges, no shows and short stays. In these circumstances the Agent will do what they reasonably can to assist the Venue to collect any charges due from the client.

5. TIME FOR PAYMENT

- Where the Client is settling the invoice directly with the venue/hotel, or on departure, commission will be due to the Agent within 30 days of the date of the Agent's commission invoice.
- Where the Agent is operating a 'billback' process for the Client, as an agent; commission will be due to the Agent as soon as possible and no more than within 30 days of the Agent transferring 'billback funds' to the venue/hotel.
- Where the Agent is operating a 'billback' process for the Client, as the principal; commission will be due to the Agent within 30 days of receipt of 'billback funds' from the Agent or may be taken at source by the agent.

6. DEDUCTIONS OF COMMISSION AT SOURCE

Where Agents are providing a bill-back service for their clients, Venues shall allow Agents, by agreement, to deduct undisputed commission from the payment to the Venue prior to making the said payment. Agents are obliged to advise the Venues of the amounts deducted and follow correct invoicing procedures for reconciliation purposes as set out by HM Revenue and Customers.

7. EXCLUSION OF OTHER TERMS

The terms set out in this Agreement will apply to the exclusion of all others, whether express or implied by law, and shall supersede all conditions previously issued by the agency or the host venue. No variation or additions shall be effective unless agreed by the Agent and the Venue in writing.

8. GOVERNING LAW

This Agreement shall be construed in accordance with and be governed by the laws of England.

9. DISPUTES

Any dispute may at the option of either party be referred to the HBAA Dispute Resolution Process and if necessary to the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators Scheme available through the HBAA. Their award including any direction as to payment of fees and costs in the arbitration and/or the award shall be binding on both parties.

PARTIES AND SIGNATURE

Signed by: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____

(for and on behalf of) "Agent": _____

Signed by: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____

(for and on behalf of) "Venue": _____

APPENDIX B

Letter of Authority

To be typed on **[Client's]** official letterhead.

To: [insert list of hotel/venue companies to which this letter will be circulated]

Date: []

Dear Sirs,

Re: Authority for **[insert name of agent]** to manage a “billback” service on behalf of **[XXXXX [insert details of the client]]**

This is to confirm that **[XXXXX [insert details of the Client]]** have appointed **[insert the name of the Agent]**, to act as hotel-booking agent.

[insert the name of the Agent] will be placing hotel, conference and banqueting reservations on our behalf. All reservations will be subject to the Hotel's/Venue's standard terms and conditions, a copy of which has been provided to us by **[Insert the name of the Agent]**. We acknowledge that no reservation shall be binding on the Hotel/Venue unless and until confirmed. **[Insert the name of the Agent]** will also be handling, processing and paying hotel/venue invoices on behalf of **[XXXXX]**.

Please note all invoices must be addressed to **[XXXX]**, and sent to:

[[XXXX]], [c/o [insert the name and address of the Agent]]

[Insert the name of the Agent] will collate the billing information on our behalf and will issue [weekly] statements for our attention. We have agreed to pay **[Insert the name of the Agent]** within [] days of receiving their statement, so that you may receive payment within [] days of the date you invoice **[Insert the name of the Agent]**. **[XXXX]** agrees and confirms that it is liable for all expenditure and indebtedness incurred by **[Insert the name of the Agent]** on its behalf.

Yours faithfully

For and on behalf of
[XXXXX]

APPENDIX C

Enquiry Best Practise Process

for Agents and Hotels on dealing with: Enquiry Handling and Options

Objective

To produce clear “Guidelines” and recommendations highlighting best practise around “Enquiry Handling” and the holding of venue options.

Whilst this is “best practice” only – one must respect that there will be different procedures and guiding principles across the industry.

To clearly identify the terminology used across the industry and provide an understanding of such terminology and key words, which have typically held different meaning between one business and another. Clear interpretation of the meaning of such terminology will eradicate any confusion and misunderstanding providing complete transparency and clarity.

Terminology

- **D = Definite or contracted:** *Contract and deposit schedule returned and signed by client.*
- **C = Confirmed (Some hotels refer to this as Tentative):** *A provisional booking that the client has instructed the agent to confirm with the venue on the understanding that a contract then needs to be issued, signed and returned by the client (and/or agent, if responsible for signing contracts on behalf of the client)*
- **P = Provisional Space being held on 1st, 2nd and further options:** *Hotel to indicate option and decision time frames on higher options.*
- **Option date =** *This is the date that the venue is prepared to hold the space: It should be clearly communicated if option dates are being used.*
- **1st option =** *Provisional space being held for one client at any one time.*
- **2nd and subsequent options:** *Holding space behind the customer who has first option, and so on.*
- **It is essential that option status is clearly clarified for customer / agent.**
- **E = Enquiry or Prospect:** *Enquiry only, no space being held from agent perspective*
- **TD = Turned down:** *The hotel is not able to take or deal with the booking and has declined the enquiry.*
- **Cx = Cancelled:** *The client has cancelled a contracted/definite booking being held.*
- **R = Released:** *Business that the agent and hotel were holding on a provisional option basis (no matter whether on 1st, 2nd or subsequent option basis), which was subsequently released by the hotel, agent, or client direct.*
- **Wait List:** *In the case of a piece of business in the diary being provisional, confirmed, definite, a wait list could be operated in case of release or cancellation.*
- **Deadline =** *Reasonable time scale for decision to be made i.e. 24 hours/48 if client overseas.*
- **Chasing =** *It is an expectation that dialogue should be entered into.*
- **Multiple Agents =** *Client giving the brief to more than one agent.*
- **Cost of process =** *Prices being increased artificially due to excessive space being held (thereby giving an false picture of true availability, demand and market price).*
- **Natural daylight =** *Windows looking outside the building emitting natural daylight.*
- **24 hour hold =** *The meeting rooms are blocked over night and not sold to another client for a dinner or other function.*
- **Exclusive use of meeting space =** *No one to be making site visits into the space, which is contracted or definite.*
- **Total Exclusive use =** *Relates to the areas requested, and could mean TOTAL building. No other clients or guests would be allowed in the building even for afternoon tea, drinks at the bar etc. This may exclude the leisure club if the hotel has a private membership.*

- **Call for contracts** = *When down to final short list, contracts can be called for so that client can review terms and conditions prior to confirmation.*
- **Site inspections / Showround** = *Client going to view venue space relevant to their enquiries.*
 - Staff to be fully trained on site inspections ensuring all relevant space is available to view and that the inspection is preferably carried out by the person dealing with the enquiry. Client to be advised in advance if full space is not available.
 - Take floor plans, menus and brochures as necessary to the meeting to give to the client before the site visits commences.
 - If there is no access to the relevant meeting rooms or bedrooms advise the agent/client well in advance

ENQUIRY PROCESS: From the Agent's perspective

- Fully qualify the brief to ensure correct venue selections are made. This ensures that the agent does not waste time and money contacting venues that are not suitable, and also ensures that venues time is not wasted dealing with enquiries that they are not suitable for.
- At the appropriate time, provisional bookings to be made.
- Client reference to be given, preferably the company name – in order for the venue to inform the agent if conflicting business is within the venue or to inform if the enquiry has already been received from another source. In the case of total secrecy, the type of business should be discussed. Must have industry as minimum.
- A note of any option date should be made, if given by the venue. It is also useful to note the name of the person spoken to at the venue and the date the provisional made.
- While space is being held, the agent should keep the venue abreast of any change of circumstance on the booking.
- The practice of offering 2nd and subsequent options should be in use and openly communicated.
- Site inspections to be made within a reasonable time frame, check the venue space is available to view and the relevant venue person available to meet. Specify timeframe limits, although sometimes difficult as client led.
- Venue/Hotel to give honest and full information on space available for the enquiry and its suitability.
- The Agent should inform the venue with as much detail about where it stands in the order of preference as this can give them a better idea of the likelihood of the booking coming to them and therefore diary prospective.
- Agent to provide relevant feedback to venues post site inspections / showrounds.
 - Negotiate and narrow down options with venues
 - Finalise list and call for contracts
 - Agree terms & conditions
- Confirm relevant space and send accurate confirmation within a reasonable time frame.
- Release other space immediately, explaining why the venue did not win the business, and also where business / booking went.
- Check with the client to ensure contract been sent back to venue signed, with relevant deposits.

ENQUIRY PROCESS: From the Venue's perspective.

- Hold provisional space on first option, 2nd or subsequent options if possible.
- Hold in client name and agent name, with any relevant reference advised.
- Check for competing business within the venue/hotel.
- Inform agent if conflicting business does come to the venue after provisional/confirmation.
- Inform all parties immediately if the same piece of business has been received from another source already.
- Offer 1st, 2nd and subsequent options to the agent.
- Joint Options and Race for Space policies are not appropriate.
- Nothing should block the diary out unless the contract has been signed off and deposits are received by the venue.
- Put in the diary STRAIGHT AWAY.

- If offering an option date, advise the agent verbally or via email.
- Inform agent if the hotel will be undergoing any renovation or refurbishment at the time of the event enquiry relevant to the date of arrival.
- Management of options– There should always be open dialogue at all times during the enquiry process between hotel, agent and client.
- Deadlines should be adhered to.
- Chases should be made as the business dictates/demands.
- Be flexible wherever possible.
- If contracts are requested, they need to be adequately followed up for signature and return.
- Be prepared to discuss your terms & conditions and also be aware of their meaning, in particular payment policies.
- Issue contract in timely fashion, and subsequently chase deposit and signed contract.
- Should contract and deposit not come back by the agreed timescale, speak with the Agent urgently.
- Should the event cancel, cancellation charges may be applied.

GUIDELINE QUESTIONS DURING ENQUIRY PROCESS

Questions and answers must be made/given honestly

| |
|---|
| The name of the client and Company or Organisation, if top secret then reference and industry |
| Are you/your clients in a position to make a decision? What's the timescale and decision making process Note – Hotels should be able to take as an enquiry/prospect only if clients are not ready to progress. Rebecca not quite sure what this means? My understanding is that if the venue feels the enquiry lacks depth or is vague, venues are not compelled to hold space – comments? |
| Is there flexibility in the spec & dates provided? |
| What is the budget & Preferred Brand/style of hotel? How flexible is this? |
| What is the level of attendees/reasons for the event? |
| Are there other destinations/locations being considered? |
| Who are we up against & Rates? (if possible!) – Client budget |
| Are there any/other agents involved? |
| Have they won the business or are they in a pitch? |
| Decision Date & Decision Maker |
| When are you anticipating you will be doing your site inspections? |
| How many options will be proposed to the client? |
| Where will they NOT go/consider? |
| Where are delegates travelling from? |
| What is important to them for this event (deal breakers etc...)? |

What are the timings of the event?

I.e. Does early access need to be granted for set-up / preparation, or late access for similar or break down?

Frequency of the meeting?

Commitment level – Strength of relationship

Have you got all of the information you require?

What can we do to help you to win this business for us?

Be prepared to give further information:

Bedrooms - Will they contract or are they looking for an allocation?

Date flexibility?

Payment method and contract should be discussed up front.

Where has the client been before?

Give venues/hotels a clear idea of budgets rather than best possible rate.

Access and set up needs should be discussed at enquiry stage.

Purpose of event – audience?

Agenda programme details and timings – F&B, equipment, set up, overnight hold etc.

Section 10

Room Layout Guide

Maximising the effectiveness of your meeting

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Boardroom Style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best for smaller groups • Effective if everyone needs to be able see each other • Good communication facilities for individuals (modem lines, speaker hone etc). • Attractive environment & very comfortable seating • Generous space for each delegate | <p>Banquet Style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good for team discussions. • Appropriate for team work, group study & training • Works well for formal events, celebrations, dining but not for viewing entertainment or presentations. • A sensible choice for large groups of 30+ |
| <p>Cabaret Style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good for team discussions. • Appropriate for team work, group study & training. • Good for viewing presentations by medium sized groups • Works well for formal events, celebrations, dining & particularly for viewing entertainment Less formal than classroom. | <p>Theatre Style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate for large numbers of delegates 30+ • Good for audience questions but not for audience discussion • Suitable where audience watches & listens, but does not need to write. • Good for receiving presentations. |
| <p>Reception Style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great if you are having drink reception only. • Can also precede a meal • Short speech or presentation can be done – but not possible to take notes. • Can be accompanied by canapés or finger food • Can be formal or informal. • Works well if people need to mix/network. | <p>U Shape Style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good for training meetings where presentations, study writing & discussions required • Helps promote discussion • Appropriate for presenting to groups max 30 • Lay out facilities good trainer interaction with delegates. |
| <p>Classroom Style</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective where delegates need to watch, listen, study & write. • Appropriate for groups of 30 or less. • Ideal where delegates listen but do not need to discuss together – as you are not facing one another. • Good where clear visibility of the screen/presenter is needed. | |