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Version	2

Safe Driver Policy

Aim of the Policy

Universal Group has a duty to provide employees with a safe and healthy working environment, to manage and assess any risks to them, and ensure as far as is reasonably practical that employees do not place at risk or harm any members of the public through work related driving activities; and this policy has been created in order to help fulfil these obligations.

Objectives of the Policy

To maintain all company owned and operated vehicles in a safe, clean and roadworthy condition to ensure the maximum safety of the driver, occupants, and other road users at all times.

To ensure that staff driving company vehicles (which includes hire vehicles) and private vehicles on company business demonstrate safe driving and other good road safety habits at all times when driving.

To ensure that the Universal Group and its employees comply with all of the obligations imposed on them by law.

Code of Conduct

All employees must ensure, when driving on business, that they comply with all road traffic legislation, are conscious of road safety, conditions and other drivers, and apply defensive driving techniques at all times.

The following non exhaustive list of actions will constitute gross misconduct:

- Driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Driving whilst disqualified, or not correctly licensed.
- Reckless or dangerous driving causing death or injury.
- Failing to stop after a crash.
- Demerit points or suspension.
- Any actions which warrant suspension of a licence.

Employee's Responsibilities

- Ensure they hold a current driving licence for the class of vehicle they are driving.
- Immediately notify their supervisors or managers if their driving licence has been suspended or cancelled, or has had limitations or endorsement placed upon it.
- Be responsible and accountable for their actions when operating company vehicles.
- Display the highest level of professional conduct when driving motor vehicles.
- Practise anticipatory and defensive driving techniques.
- Drive within the legal speed limits and take into account road conditions.
- Wear a seat belt at all times.
- Not carry any unauthorised passengers when driving company vehicles, and under no circumstances may they pick up any hitchhiker.
- Report vehicle defects to a supervisor or manager before the next vehicle use. In the event that a defect is suspected, staff should not risk attempting to drive the vehicle.
- Have regular eyesight tests and ensure that any glasses or contact lenses required for driving are always worn.
- Comply with all traffic legislation when driving a company vehicle.
- Regularly check the oil, water, brake fluid and tyre pressure of company vehicles they regularly use, particularly before long journeys. If staff are unsure of how to complete these checks they should seek advice from a colleague. Any anomalies found (for example excessively low fluid/ oil levels) should be reported to the line manager and a decision made regarding the road worthiness of the vehicle.
- Report any near misses, crashes and damage to vehicles (however minor) to their manager, including those which do not result in injury.

- Follow the accident procedure outlined in this policy.
- Read any updates that the Company may periodically issue on road safety matters. These will include information on good practice as well as forthcoming legal changes which affect those who drive for work.

In addition, all drivers on Universal Group business must:

- Stop when tired.
- Plan the journey, taking into consideration pre-journey work duties, the length of the trip and post-journey commitments.
- Stay overnight if driving time and non-driving duties exceed 10 hours in one day.

Employees are also responsible for ensuring that they are physically fit to drive. Should this change, their line manager must be informed as soon as possible. Drivers should remember that some prescription drugs can cause drowsiness and affect their ability to drive safely. In the event that medication is necessary, employees should check with their GP or pharmacist before driving, even for short distances. As research suggests that a journey time of more than four hours could carry a risk of Deep Vein Thrombosis (DVT), those who drive regularly for long distances should advise Universal Group of any family history of DVT, or if they have ever experienced blood clotting. Where this is the case, the Universal Group will refer them to their GP in order to ensure that they are able to drive safely and without risk to their health and safety.

Employer's Responsibilities

The employer will not require staff to drive under conditions which are unsafe and/or likely to create an unsafe environment, physical distress, fatigue, etc.

The employer will do this by:

- Ensuring that all vehicles are road worthy; much of this will be dependent on prompt fault reporting, by users, to the fleet management department.
- Following the maintenance schedule in the vehicle's manual
- Checking drivers' driving licences and vehicles' MOT certificates and insurance on an annual basis.
- Requiring a driver not to start or continue a journey if they are tired.

Mobile Phone Use

Mobile phones can cause distractions by:

- Causing drivers to take their hands off the wheel.
- Encouraging drivers to concentrate on communication and not the road.

It is against the law for any driver to use a hand-held mobile phone while driving, which includes when the vehicle is stationary but with the engine still running (except where making a 999 call and it is unsafe to stop). Any contravention of this whilst driving on Company business may be treated as gross misconduct. It is within the law to make and receive calls where a legally compliant hands-free kit is properly installed. Even so the Universal Group believes that the use of a hands-free kit remains a distraction whilst driving.

Employees should take care to adhere to the following rules, even where a hands-free kit is installed:

- Do not make any calls, dial numbers, text message, surf the internet, or take pictures whilst driving.
- Pull over to the side of the road when it is safe and turn off the engine before making or answering a call.

Accident Procedure

Immediately stop your vehicle at the scene or as close to it as possible, making sure you are not obstructing traffic. Ensure your own safety first. Help any injured people and call for assistance if needed. Try to get the following information:

- Details of the other vehicle(s) and registration number(s)
- Name and address of the other vehicle owner(s) and driver(s)
- Name and address of any witness(es)
- Name of insurer(s)
- Pictures of the vehicles involved with any damages and the scene

Give the following information:

- Your name and address and company details
- If you damage another vehicle that is unattended, leave a note on the vehicle with your contact details

Contact the police:

- If there are injuries
- If there is a disagreement over the cause of the crash
- If you damage property other than your own
- If there is damage to the company vehicle Report the crash to your manager as soon as you can.

Enforcement

This policy applies to all staff when driving on company business, either in a company car or their own vehicle, failure to comply with any element of it may constitute gross misconduct.

Signed
Richard Lowe
Managing Director

Dated 01/11/2026