

Customer review: 2012

INTRODUCTION

We continue to work hard to earn the trust of the people who buy and use our products and services. Each of our businesses has a precious reputation to defend - Penguin for the quality of its publishing and consistent record of innovation and fearlessness; the FT for its rigorously investigated, unbiased and responsible journalism; and our education businesses for the efficacy and demonstrable positive outcomes of their learning solutions. Some important areas for us are:

- Freedom of expression
- Editorial independence and integrity at the FT
- Appropriateness and accessibility of content
- Product safety

Freedom of expression

The Penguin Group has a long tradition of championing freedom of expression. Penguin continues to champion freedom of expression in a number of other ways, including through continued strong support of both English PEN and PEN's annual World Voices Festival.

Editorial independence and integrity at the FT

The opening paragraph of the FT Code states that *"It is fundamental to the integrity and success of the Financial Times that it upholds the highest possible professional and ethical standards of journalism, and is seen to do so."* The FT makes it very clear about the standards expected of journalists.

The benchmark for the FT is set by the Code of Practice adopted by the UK's Press Complaints Commission. The FT code goes beyond the standards set by the PCC in order to ensure best possible practice. Compliance with the code is an obligation for all FT editorial staff.

Pearson purchased the *Financial Times* as 'a sound, conservative investment' in 1957. As the then owners of Lazard's, a leading merchant bank, Pearson was aware that it would be open to criticism if it appeared to influence the paper's editorial policies. So from the start, Pearson has protected the editorial independence of the *Financial Times*, a principle that continues to this day.

Appropriateness and accessibility of content

As the world's leading educational publisher, a concern for the protection of children is intrinsic to our product design and development. Our processes and procedures ensure all new products are rigorously researched and tested before being published. Processes include: editorial review, internal peer review, editorial review councils, external commissioning and external peer review, testing with teachers, pupils and independent academic experts.

Appropriateness of content to the age or location of students whether this is hard copy or online is reviewed within our SEE Risk process. As our objective is to develop appropriate products to the age and location of students, strict parental controls are unnecessary in our markets. Our company code of conduct lays out our responsibilities to society including the defence of public trust in all that we do.

For Pearson, our company purpose to help people progress through learning is both global and inclusive in aspiration. It sets an internal standard against which we can judge ourselves. This standard extends to the extent to which they are able to provide access to products both physical and online regardless of ability.

Last year, we set out a series of plans for 2012. We can report the following progress:

- We committed to adopt a global accessibility policy and have done so. This codifies the existing work and standards into a single overarching document.
- We helped to bring teams together to better share knowledge, expertise and experiences in order to offer a consistent experience. Most notably, the scope of the Accessibility Steering Group in the United States was extended beyond higher education to cover the school and assessment and testing businesses.
- We set out a goal to engage in the industry forums which help to create international standards on accessibility. In March, Pearson became the first publisher to join the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). The W3C is the predominant international standards organization for the World Wide Web.

For 2014, we aim to:

- Establish an integrated leadership on accessibility matters for Pearson.
- Set out the standards and platforms we will use to share physical and digital content

Product safety

Ensuring that products are safe for customers to use is a basic responsibility shared by all companies. For Pearson, product safety mostly relates to physical product and ensuring that no toxins, dangerous or prohibited chemicals are present in anything we sell. In addition, products for the very youngest children must be age appropriate and eliminate risks such as swallowing.

Our guiding principle is that everything we put on the market should not harm a person or the environment. Our global Product Safety Manual, first developed by Penguin in 2008, records procedural steps, legislative requirements, advice on testing and development and labelling information to help achieve this goal. The manual is regularly updated to reflect changing global requirements and developments to internal processes and due diligence procedures. We have also set up a components database which is accessible through Neo, our online global collaboration tool to provide an up to date source of information and product safety testing status of components. An international product safety council comprising experts from around the business convenes regularly to oversee this important area.

Our aim is to maintain zero incidents of product recalls or enforcement notices by regulatory bodies - something we achieved in 2012.

	2012 Plans		2013 Commitments
Accessibility	To adopt a global accessibility policy	✔ Achieved. See policy in downloads	
	To improve how we bring teams together to better share knowledge, expertise and experiences in order to offer a consistent experience	✔ Achieved. Pearson North America has set up an Accessibility Steering Group. Pearson International is looking to mirror that model	Establish an integrated leadership on accessibility matters for Pearson by 2014.
	To engage in the industry forums which help to create international standards on accessibility	✔ Achieved. Pearson has joined W3C	Set out the standards and platforms we will use to help share physical and digital content
Product safety	To maintain zero incidents of product recalls or enforcement notices by regulatory bodies	✔ Achieved	To maintain zero incidents of product recalls or enforcement notices by regulatory bodies

- ✔ Target achieved
- 🔄 Target ongoing