

A handbook is not a document. It is a decision system.

A 24-point governance scorecard for testing whether employees and managers can use the handbook consistently.

THE DECISION

Do not approve a handbook because the pages are complete. Test the employing entity, source hierarchy, decision owner, manager discretion, escalation route, record and change control. Score the twelve controls before issue.

USE THIS WITH

the chief executive, legal adviser, business leaders, managers and people owner.

Score the controls the business can prove.

0 = absent / 1 = partial / 2 = current, owned and consistently used

01	Entity + scope			
	The employing entity, workforce coverage, exclusions and jurisdiction are explicit.	0	1	2
02	Source hierarchy			
	Law, contract, policy, handbook and local procedure cannot contradict one another.	0	1	2
03	Decision owner			
	Every material rule names the role authorised to decide and approve an exception.	0	1	2
04	Manager boundary			
	Manager discretion is visible, limited and supported by a workable escalation route.	0	1	2
05	Employee action			
	Employees can see what to do, what evidence is needed and when to expect a response.	0	1	2
06	Operating process			
	Leave, conduct, performance, concerns and data rules work in real cases and shifts.	0	1	2
07	Record control			
	The record, retention owner and system of record are defined for each critical process.	0	1	2
08	Legal quality gate			
	The controlled draft has been reviewed for the applicable entity and jurisdiction.	0	1	2
09	Manager enablement			
	Managers have been challenged with cases and have practical decision guides.	0	1	2
10	Employee launch			
	The current version is accessible, explained and acknowledged through a controlled route.	0	1	2
11	Version governance			
	Owner, approval date, effective date, review cycle and change log are maintained.	0	1	2
12	Feedback loop			
	Recurring questions and exceptions are reviewed and used to repair language or process.	0	1	2

TOTAL

___ / 24

Use the score on page 3 to choose the next management decision.

Choose the smallest responsible intervention.

A signature does not compensate for conflicting rules or absent ownership.

0-8

POLICY PILE

DIAGNOSIS

The organisation has pages and templates, but the rule hierarchy and decision controls are unreliable.

NEXT ACTION

Confirm entity and jurisdiction. Reconcile source documents and map the ten recurring decisions that create inconsistency.

9-17

PARTIAL CONTROL

DIAGNOSIS

Most rules exist, but manager discretion, escalation, records or change control still depend on individuals.

NEXT ACTION

Challenge difficult cases, assign owners, repair contradictions, complete legal review and brief managers before issue.

18-24

OPERATING AGREEMENT

DIAGNOSIS

Employees and managers can make consistent decisions and the organisation can evidence the current rule set.

NEXT ACTION

Protect the governance cadence. Review questions, exceptions, legal change and operating-model change at least annually.

THE SIX-WEEK INSTALLATION

WEEK 1 Confirm entity, jurisdiction, workforce scope and recurring decision failures.

WEEKS 2-3 Design decision rights and challenge real manager scenarios.

WEEK 4 Complete jurisdiction-specific legal and leadership review.

WEEKS 5-6 Enable managers, launch to employees and capture evidence.

READ THE FULL OPERATING GUIDE

elementmea.com/post/employee-handbook-uae-company-template-guide-2026