CONCEPT

Social Compliance Audit and Supplier Labour Standards: Ethical Sourcing and Remediation

3 – 7 May 2027
London - Central London four-star



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Introduction:

A social compliance audit is often the only view a buyer has of how workers at a supplier are hired, paid and treated, yet many audits are announced, rushed and repeated by several customers without fixing anything. Forced overtime, recruitment fees charged to migrant workers, withheld passports and unsafe dormitories then surface through the media or a customer complaint. This Core Concept course equips staff to set supplier labour standards, plan and run social audits, interview workers, read payroll and time records, and drive corrective action. Participants finish with a Supplier Social Compliance Programme and Audit Plan for a case sourcing category.

Course Objectives:

- Interpret the ILO Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and translate them into measurable supplier labour requirements
- Draft or revise a supplier code of conduct with clear expectations on working hours, wages, recruitment and freedom of association
- Rank suppliers by labour risk using sourcing category, workforce profile and sourcing location indicators
- Plan and conduct a social compliance audit, including worker interviews, payroll and time-record review and site walk-through
- Grade audit findings, agree corrective action plans and verify closure through follow-up visits and worker feedback channels
- Build a Supplier Social Compliance Programme and Audit Plan with contract clauses, grievance routes and reporting

Target Audience:

- Procurement and category staff who onboard suppliers and include labour requirements in sourcing decisions
- Supplier quality and audit staff who visit factories, farms, warehouses and service contractors
- Sustainability and responsible sourcing staff who answer customer questionnaires on supplier working conditions
- Compliance and ethics staff who handle supplier grievances, whistleblowing reports and human rights due diligence
- Contract and vendor management staff who administer supplier agreements and remediation obligations

Course Outline:

Day 1: Labour Rights in Supply Chains and Buyer Accountability

- ILO Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work: Five Categories Explained
- Forced Labour Indicators: Debt Bondage, Restricted Movement and Retained Identity Documents
- Child Labour, Young Worker Protections and Age Verification Records
- Buyer Leverage and Purchasing Practices That Drive Excessive Overtime
- Current-State Review of Supplier Onboarding and Labour Due Diligence Steps

Day 2: Labour Standards, Codes of Conduct and Due Diligence Frameworks

- UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Respect, Due Diligence and Remedy
- Supplier Code of Conduct Structure: Wages, Hours, Discrimination and Freedom of Association
- Living Wage Versus Minimum Wage Benchmarks and Overtime Premium Rules
- Occupational Health and Safety, Dormitory and Fire Egress Requirements in Supplier Codes
- Labour Risk Heat Map by Sourcing Category, Workforce Profile and Sourcing Location

Day 3: Planning and Conducting Social Compliance Audits

- Social Audit Scope, Announced Versus Unannounced Visits and Auditor Competence
- Worker Interview Techniques: Sampling, Private Settings and Interpreter Use
- Payroll, Time-Card and Personnel File Review Checklist
- Site Walk-Through Observation Protocol for Production Floors and Worker Housing
- Audit Finding Classification: Zero-Tolerance, Major and Minor Non-Compliance

Day 4: Hidden Risks, Remediation and Worker Voice

- Recruitment Fee Tracing and Employer-Pays Responsible Recruitment Model
- Double Books, Falsified Time Records and Coached Worker Red Flags
- Audit Fatigue, Shared Audit Reports and Audit Recognition Between Buyers
- Corrective Action Plan Root Cause, Deadlines and Verification Follow-Up
- Operational Grievance Mechanism Design and Effectiveness Criteria

Day 5: Case Work and the Supplier Social Compliance Programme

- Garment Subcontractor Case Study: Undeclared Homeworkers and Excessive Hours
- Facilities Services Case Study: Migrant Cleaners Paying Agency Fees
- Supplier Contract Clauses: Audit Rights, Remediation Duties and Responsible Exit
- Supplier Labour Performance Reporting and Management Dashboard Design
- Supplier Social Compliance Programme and Audit Plan Drafting and Peer Defence

Skills You Will Gain:

- Labour Rights Risk Screening
- Supplier Code Drafting
- Worker Interviewing
- Payroll and Working-Hours Verification
- Social Audit Finding Grading
- Remediation Follow-Up
- Grievance Channel Design
- Responsible Recruitment Checks

Why Attend This Course:

- Return with a Supplier Social Compliance Programme and Audit Plan for a real sourcing category, challenged by peers
- Spot recruitment fees, retained passports and falsified hours that routine checklists miss
- Cut duplicated audits by using shared reports while still verifying what matters
- Compare supplier labour practice with buyers from manufacturing, retail, construction and services

Conclusion:

Supplier labour conditions are judged on evidence, not on a signed code. The week moves from the international labour principles and the buyer's own role in creating pressure, through codes of conduct, wage and hours benchmarks and labour risk mapping, to planning audits, interviewing workers and checking payroll. It then tackles recruitment fees, falsified records, audit fatigue, corrective action and grievance channels. The final day turns this into a Supplier Social Compliance Programme and Audit Plan with contract clauses and reporting.