



Meet the CCO – Helen Charnley, Code Compliance Officer, J Sainsbury plc

Question: Tell us something about yourself and your path to becoming a Code Compliance Officer.

I recently joined Sainsbury's from professional practice, where I delivered governance, internal audit and risk services for a range of companies over a number of years. Confidentiality and independence were critical to these roles and stand me in good stead now. I joined Sainsbury's as Director of Internal Audit and Risk, as well as becoming the Code Compliance Officer (CCO). This joint role places me in a great place in terms of my independence as CCO because I report directly into the Audit Committee Chair. This means I do not report into the Finance, Legal or Trading divisions to ensure that all the work I deliver, including COO reviews, is independent.

Question: What are the most challenging aspects of your CCO role?

Although I am relatively new in the role, one of the more challenging aspects for me personally is in terms of reassuring suppliers that I am independent but also, in reassuring them that, where requested, our conversations are confidential. In terms of the business, a challenge is to ensure the culture of compliance keeps pace with the fast and ever changing retail environment.

Question: If you could change one thing about the groceries market, what would it be?

Being new to the CCO role, I was surprised to learn that not all grocery retailers are subject to GSCOP. The lack consistency with the application of GSCOP to all retailers must make the trading environment more complex and confusing for suppliers in terms of when and why GSCOP does or does not apply. After all, GSCOP is all about "doing the right thing" something that should apply to all retailers, regardless of whether they are covered by GSCOP. I am pleased to say that Sainsbury's has supported the Code since its introduction and the voluntary code that preceded it.

Question: What achievement as CCO are you most proud of?

It's early days for me as CCO so I'm sure the best is yet to come. From a business perspective, I am proud that Sainsbury's came 2nd in the YouGov 2017 survey for the GCA which I think reflects positively on our culture of "doing the right thing".

Question: What 3 things do you want to achieve in the next 12 months?

Key areas of focus for Sainsbury's include:

- Reporting to the GCA on the successful implementation of our new GSCOP training
- The continued roll-out of our Good Faith Receiving programme to more suppliers
- Working to maintain or improve our results in the annual GCA survey

Question: Is there anything else you would like to share with readers of News from the Adjudicator?

Businesses are complex and it's inevitable that sometimes disagreements arise. I would like to reassure our suppliers that I am always available to listen to their concerns and to work with them to resolve specific issues effectively and quickly. I would also like to reassure suppliers that our conversations will be in confidence where they request them to be.