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SUB-OFFICE POLICY PAPER

Definition: A sub-Office involves the extension of the premises of an Assay Office in relation to some or all of its operations to other premises probably within or adjacent to one manufacturer's or importer's premises, or an operation which serves more than one customer, or an operation which is carried out in a mobile facility. A sub-Office is for all intents and purposes an extension of a main Office.

The British Hallmarking Council policy on sub-Offices is based on the following principles:

1. The Council has statutory powers under the Hallmarking Act 1973 (Section 13(2)(e)) to authorise sub-Offices.
2. The Council believes that the establishment of a sub-Office, while preserving the principle of independent hallmarking, may produce benefits: to the manufacturer through improved competitiveness; and also possibly to the main office and to the consumer.
3. In coming to a decision in any case, the Council will take account of all relevant factors, including particularly the need to ensure the maintenance of adequate facilities for hallmarking (Section 13(1)(a)), and retains the power to exercise its discretion.
4. The Council will be open in giving reasons for its decisions.
5. An application to the Council for a sub-Office may only be made by a main Office, but a main Office shall be under no obligation to make such an application.
6. As a sub-Office is part of a main Office the Council must be satisfied that similar standards, procedures and practices to those of the main Office will be observed, including independence and separation from the customer, the protection of staff from influence and the carrying out of adequate supervision. The sub-Office will be expected to be covered by the same Certification and Accreditation as the corresponding activity in the main Office.
7. The charging/pricing arrangements as between the main Office and the sub-Office customer will be regarded as a commercial matter between the two and no concern of the Council. The Council will continue to set price maxima in accordance with the Act (Section 13(2)(b)).
8. The cost of drawing up the policy shall fall to the Council. Any costs associated with an application shall be passed on to the applying office.



9. The Council reserves the right to revoke Authorisations if the terms of issue are not met or are broken, or if material circumstances change.
10. A main Office shall submit to Council annually a report on each sub-Office which it operates.