

# OASIS

## MODERN SLAVERY ACT STATEMENT 2016/17

### Our Commitment

As a boutique brand, which sources globally with long-standing partners, Oasis is fully committed to supporting the Modern Slavery Act. We place high value on the human rights of everyone working either for us directly or indirectly through our agents and factory base.

Fundamental to our overall approach, Oasis recognises that businesses can positively influence human rights.

In relation to the Act, we have considered how we can take the most effective action to meet both our legal and moral responsibilities. We have decided to place most focus on education and transparency. Oasis commits to use our leverage, where it may be needed, to prevent infringements of human rights.

### What is the Act?

In 2015 the government introduced the Modern Slavery Act. The Act requires companies to ensure there are no forms of modern slavery within their own operations or supply chains. This is a complex subject, not least because of the magnitude of the problem: the International Labour Organisation (ILO) estimates there to be around 21 million people in forced labour, of which, 14.2 million are believed to work in the manufacturing, agriculture, construction and domestic sectors<sup>1</sup>. These violations often take place through deception and are hidden from view, making them difficult to identify and redress.

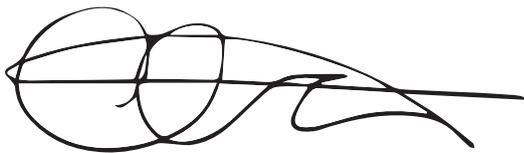
The following statement sets out what Oasis is currently doing and what plans we have in place to help tackle this issue both within our own business and our supply chains.

We recognise that our customers expect Oasis to be aware of and proactive about this issue so they can continue to confidently shop with us. We will strive to continuously review and improve the work we do in this area with a long-term approach.

We commit to sharing our progress with you on this journey next year.

I confirm that this Modern Slavery Act statement has been approved by the Board.

Signed by



Liz Evans  
CEO, Oasis Fashions

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<sup>1</sup> ILO, Profits and Poverty: The Economics of Forced Labour

## Our Core Supply Chain

Founded in 1991, Oasis has grown to employ 2,000 people across our retail portfolio and head office. We operate in more than 50 territories through standalone stores, concessions, franchise partners and online.

As a business, Oasis has long recognised the mutual benefits of maintaining partnerships with our suppliers. To illustrate this, over half of our products come from our top 10 suppliers, the majority of which have worked with us for at least 10 years. Indeed, a number of these partners have been working with us since the brand was established.

Our supply base comprises approximately 140 international manufacturing and other partners. Key sourcing routes for us are China, Turkey and Vietnam; other locations include India, Romania, Bulgaria, Pakistan, Cambodia and Myanmar.

## Defining Modern Slavery

We have derived our definition of Modern Slavery from the UN guiding principles on human rights: 'Modern Slavery involves one person depriving another of their liberty in order to exploit them for personal or commercial gain'.

## Our Policies in Relation to Modern Slavery

As a responsible retailer we continuously review our processes. To create sustainable change we have a robust framework of policy development. Most recently we evaluated the effectiveness of our policies in relation to the Modern Slavery Act.

We recognise that transnational and agency workers, in particular, may be vulnerable to abuse. It is our duty to address these issues and so have strengthened our efforts by adopting a specific policy on the prevention of forced labour and human trafficking.

Awareness training which references the policy has also been delivered to key employees in the business to help identify signs of modern slavery and human trafficking. The policy was developed with the expertise of human rights NGO, **VERITÉ**.  
Fair Labor. Worldwide

The advantages of the policy are that it can generate awareness of unfair and unreasonable employment practices with direct partners and help spread respect for human rights more widely within society.

Further complementary policies include:

- **Oasis's code of conduct** - adopted over 10 years ago, is based on laws defined by the ILO and prohibits forced and bonded labour. It remains the cornerstone of our ethical trading strategy. Building on this, in 2010 we banned Uzbek cotton owing to ongoing reports of forced and child labour in Uzbekistan.
- **Oasis's anti-bribery policy** - applies to all employees, and in particular, managers and directors, as well as contractors, agents, suppliers and other third-parties. Oasis is committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct and integrity in its business activities in the UK and overseas.
- **Oasis's equal opportunities policy** - this underpins respect for diversity within our organisation. Our employment policies and practices are intended to be fair and equitable in order that we build a culture that values openness, fairness and transparency.
- **Whistle blowing policy** - There is a formal whistle blowing procedure in place to report incidents where employees have reason to believe there is an apparent or possible violation of law or company policy including instances of modern slavery or human trafficking.

## Understanding our Risks

Although we have long-standing relationships with our global supply chain we have identified this is the most at risk from exposure to human rights abuse. We have taken the step to continue mapping our first tier supply chain, which forms part of our ethical trading efforts. Mapping is an ongoing process as the nature of fashion means a percentage of suppliers are likely to change each year. In addition, this year we have begun to map the cotton supply chain beyond first tier of production with the aim to achieve greater transparency.

We will report on this step in future years.

Our audit programme, which has been in place for a number of years, is a key measure of supplier compliance. The audit examines contract terms and personnel files, as well as wider procedures related to recruitment and termination of employment. In doing so, assessments can determine if there are practices that could constitute or lead to forced labour. We use a range of different tools, including internal audits in China performed by our ethical trading team, third-party assessments commissioned from a limited number of labour specialists and independent audits that are shared through the **Sedex** platform.

All first tier manufacturing sites have been audited with the vast majority audited every year. Local offices and regular visits from our head office teams ensure that communication is honest and transparent.

Additionally, in 2017 we conducted a further due diligence exercise to gain an understanding of how business partners manage the potential for forced labour and human trafficking within their businesses. This looks at their policies, implementation, outsourcing and overall effectiveness.

## How is Modern Slavery Reported?

We have considered what the optimum indicators are to manage the risk of modern slavery. We plan to use indicators related to education and transparency such as the mapping of the supply chain and training and awareness-raising within our business. Quarterly meetings are held with the board of directors and actions taken accordingly.

## Training and Capacity Building

At Oasis we have an internal ethical team who work continuously with our suppliers and head office teams to equip them with the skills and knowledge to achieve ongoing progress.

We routinely run ethical trading courses, including the subject of forced labour, for our commercial teams, and, in particular, our buying teams. We plan to repeat and enhance the training going forward.

In preparation for the Act, we attended industry training courses and seminars on how modern slavery can occur and what businesses can do to avoid these abuses. We plan to build on this in order to make further progress into the future.