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SOIL ENVIRONMENT SERVICES
QUALITY & MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
MANUAL

**Soil Environment Services (Northumberland Office)
Unit 8 Stocksfield Hall Stocksfield NE43 7TN**

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Our mission

(Quality Policy statement)

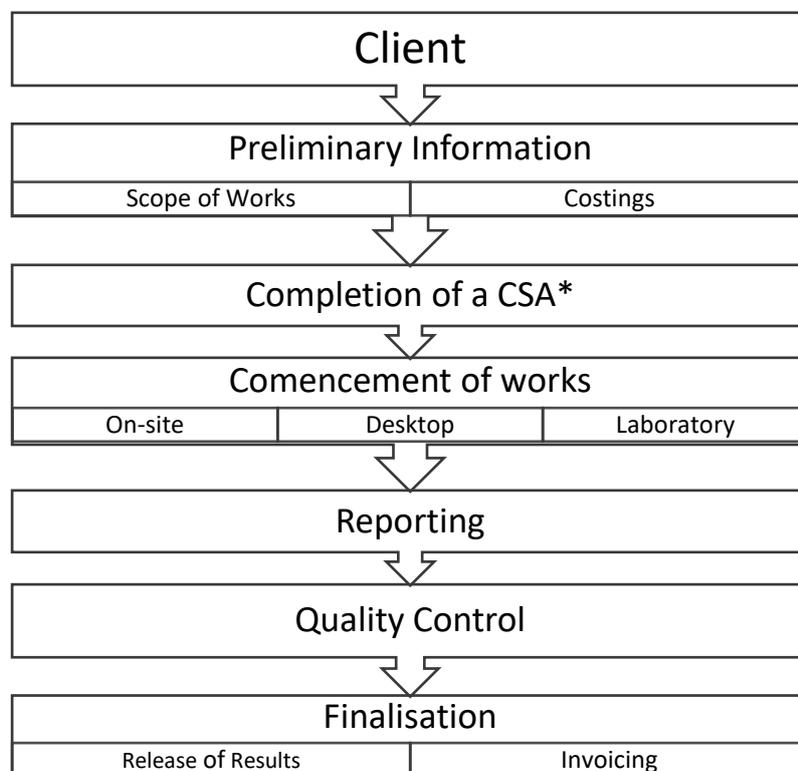
'To provide a high-quality service and to continuously meet the requirements and expectations of our clients'

1. Scope of the Quality Manual

This quality manual, compiled by **Soil Environment Services (SES)**, contains the policies and procedures incorporated within the quality management system. If required, a project or client specific quality manual can supersede the **SES** quality manual.

This quality manual was compiled to provide an overarching quality management system to allow continual improvement and monitoring of the company's core work processes (Figure 1).

Figure 1 SES Core Process



*Consultancy Services Agreement

2. Overview of the Company

2.1. **SES** is a limited company registered at Companies House (Registration number: 04538894) The company was established in 1995 by two directors with science PhDs from Newcastle University. Limited company status was established in 2002 and after many years based within the Nanotechnology Centre at Newcastle University, the company has now progressed to having the main offices, workshop and a laboratory based within a business centre operated by Allendale Estates in Northumberland. A Satellite office which can take enquiries and be used for meetings is located at Reading.

The company currently has five full-time employees comprising two directors and three consultants. The employees are responsible for quality assurance within the five main sections of the business:

1. Contaminated Land Risk Assessment
2. Geotechnical Site Investigation
3. Agricultural Land Classification
4. Soil Thermal Resistivity
5. Landscape Soil Survey

SES is supported by a network of organisations and companies providing on-site drilling services, UKAS accredited laboratories for chemical testing and soil mechanics testing, environmental data providers and specialist geo-environmental consultants. This ensures we can deliver a comprehensive service for our clients.

2.2. **SES** has a laboratory for bespoke thermal testing of substrates and for agricultural soil tests. The laboratory is located at the main Northumberland office. It provides the capability to run multiple testing in a high quality and tailor-made setting to meet the needs of all client requirements to current standards.

Dr Robin Davies (Managing Director) is the senior laboratory technician and has a PhD in soil physics (soil stabilisation) and several years of high quality research laboratory experience for the former British Coal and central government funding agencies. Other experience includes several years of laboratory work focussed on undertaking thermal testing for aggregate supply and cable installation companies.

Other laboratory staff, have relevant science degrees, with experience of working on central government funded science projects, including laboratory work. Other experience includes several years of completing soil/rock thermal testing and laboratory work in associations with universities and NERC (National Environmental Research Council).

The **SES** laboratory is currently working toward UKAS accreditation, with the aim of conforming to ISO 17025 and ISO 9001 international standards, with some components already in place.

2.3. The full scope of SES services can be seen on the SES website:

<http://www.soilenvironmentservices.co.uk/>

2.4. **SES** strives to provide high quality services. We aim to provide:

- Quality
- Reliability
- Uniformity
- Consistency
- Reproducibility
- Integrity

2.5. Ethics Policy

SES core values of Energy, Responsibility and Results are the foundation of all our work.

2.6. Environmental Policy

SES will strive towards continuous improvement in its environmental performance.

2.7. Confidentiality

We respect our clients wishes for full confidentiality of information shared with the company. No information shared will be sold or shared with third parties, including those affiliated with the client, without explicit written permission from the client. This confidentiality policy applies to all documentation and information shared by the client prior to work and test results, procedures and reports completed by **SES**.

2.8. Quality Control (QC) refers to procedures which ensure and monitor precision and accuracy of the reports and test results collected by **SES**. These procedures include:

- Ongoing compliance with SES core work process (Figure 1) ensures that client contractual needs are identified, understood, and that the services are subsequently delivered in a professional and independent manner in accordance with agreed contractual specifications designed to fully satisfy client expectations.
- On-going following of standard methods (**SES** report template and laboratory testing methods.)
- Signing-off of all reports by a director.
- Continuing professional development (CPD) of all staff.

2.9. Quality Assurance (QA) is the process of monitoring the reports and laboratory methods by providing an internal annual audit and review of procedures and services.

3. Management Policies and Procedures

3.1. Organisational Structure

SES has an organisational structure which allows the management and consultants to have the authority and access to the resources needed to carry out their duties.

The organisational structure also includes policies and procedures which ensure:

- Protection of clients' confidential information.
- Avoidance of involvement in any activities that would diminish confidence in the company's competence, impartiality, judgement or operational integrity.
- Weekly staff meetings to ensure shared information regarding quality and management issues.

The management allocates adequate supervision of staff, including trainees, by persons familiar with the methods and procedures, with a technical manager who has the overall responsibility for the technical operations and the provisions of the resources needed to ensure the required quality of **SES** site, office and laboratory operations.

3.2. Quality Management System

SES has implemented a quality management system which compliments the company's commitment to good professional practice, high quality testing and client satisfaction. To ensure the aims of the company are met, assessment of quality occurs via;

- regular reviews of the quality management system (QC)
- analysis of deviations from the core process (Figure 1)
- review of actions leading to non-conformities (client complaints, misplaced samples, etc.)
- annual internal audits completed by the company's directors (QA).

3.3. Additional Documents within the Quality Management System

To ensure the Quality Management System is fit-for-purpose, all documents which form part of the system, including this Quality Manual and the SES Lab Methods are regularly reviewed by Dr Tamara Davies (Director). Other documentation used by the office and laboratory, including published manuals and documents, published and/or standard test methods, current regulations and current standards are referenced when appropriate.

3.4. Meeting the Clients Expectations

To provide a bespoke service for the client at a high quality, the Directors monitor the work produced and review available information for clients. Further information is available at:

<http://www.soilenvironmentservices.co.uk/links-and-information/>

3.5. Complaints Procedure

SES have procedures to resolve complaints received from clients. Records of complaints, the investigation and the outcome are kept.

3.6. Office and Laboratory Records

The SES office and laboratory has procedures in place to control the identification, collection, accessing, storage, maintenance and disposal of reports and testing records. All records are stored within locked areas, with hard copies kept for a minimum of 1 year and electronic records for a

minimum of 5 years. Further procedures are in place to prevent unauthorised access or modification of these records.

3.7. Health and Safety

For **SES** health and safety policy see:

<http://www.soilenviromentservices.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/SES-HS-Policy-2016.pdf>

3.8. Staff Training

- All SES staff have science degrees and keep up to date with the latest guidelines (CPD) and attend specific industry relevant training courses, forums and conferences. Some have higher degrees with research experience.
- All SES staff have CSCS cards and *Emergency first aid at work* training. Other on-site safety courses include *HSG47 Avoiding Danger from Underground Services* training.

3.9. Reviews and Improvements

The management team continually review (QC) the quality system to ensure suitability and effectiveness and improve the management system when and where required.

An annual internal audit (QA) is conducted by **SES** directors to monitor the compliance of the office, site and laboratory activities with the quality system.