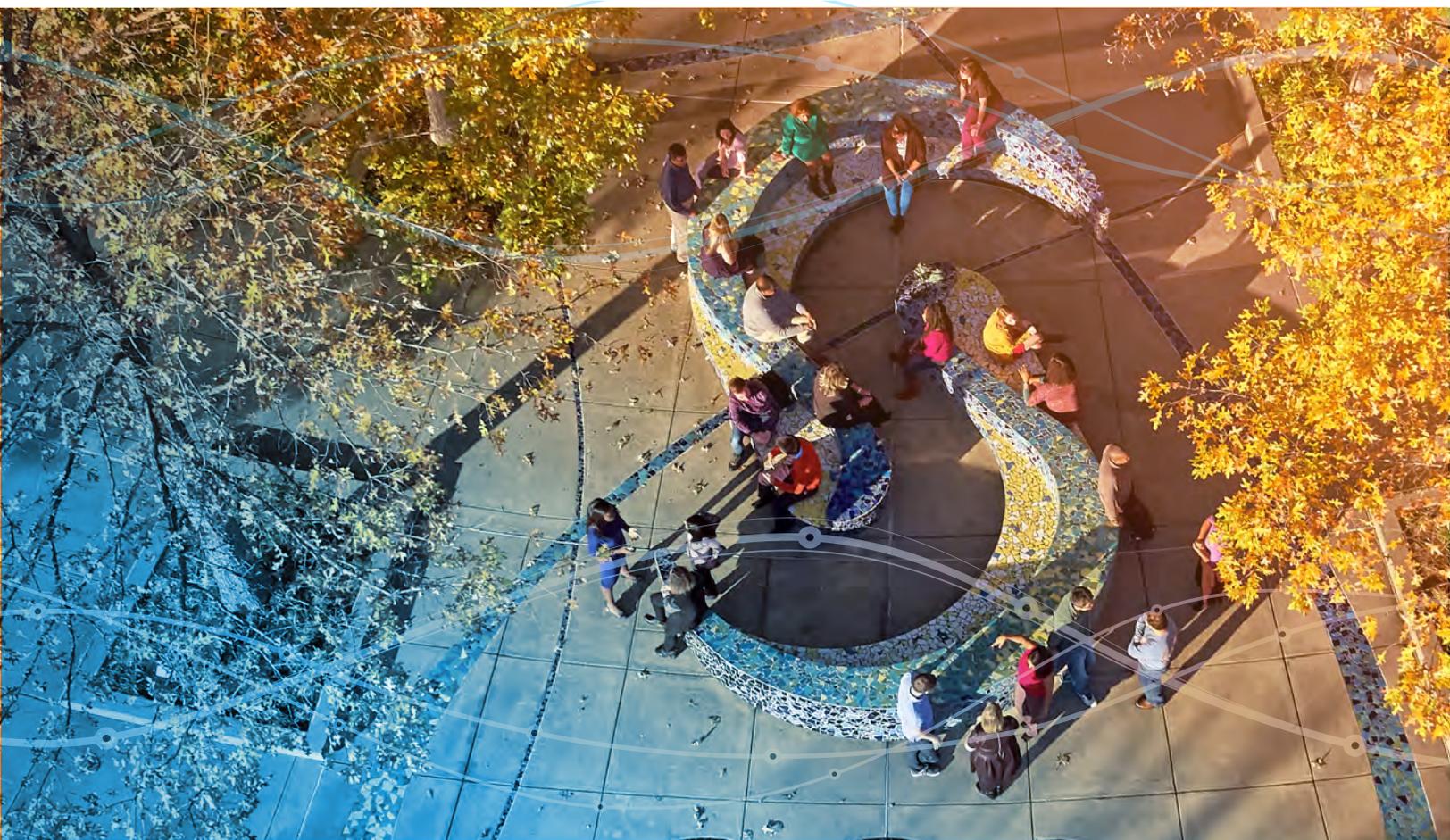# The Quality Imperative:
SAS Institute's Commitment to Quality

A corporate statement of SAS' commitment to product quality, service quality, and customer satisfaction

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Our Employees

Our Employees

Quality Culture

> *Our culture is based on three simple things: trust, flexibility and values. SAS is a company built on relationships, and our relationships with customers are only going to be as good as our employees' experience at SAS. That experience is based on meaningful work, empowering leadership, and a world-class work environment.*
>
> – **Jim Goodnight,** CEO of SAS

Focusing on people and relationships—making employees a top priority—leads to more productive, satisfied, and dedicated employees. To achieve that ideal, employees must be trusted, valued, and believe that they can make a difference. To support the creative process and balance work and family, SAS provides a flexible work environment that enables them to be the most productive.

> *SAS' strength comes from its culture, which is rich in diverse people, talent, and ideas. Our collective strength and passion for what we do drive innovative solutions that solve the most complex customer problems.*
>
> – **Jennifer Mann,** Vice President, SAS Human Resources

The company's work-life programs and unique corporate culture continue to receive accolades—at global, regional, and local levels—for being a great workplace. In 2020, SAS celebrated its 24th year as one of Fortune magazine's best US workplaces. Many of our country offices have also been recognized for their workplace culture by the Great Place to Work Institute or by Top Employer. A full list of corporate awards can be found here: **sas.com/awards**.

The recognition speaks to the employee-focused philosophy behind SAS' corporate culture since the company's founding in 1976: if you treat employees as if they make a difference to the company, then they will make a difference to the company. At the heart of this unique business model is a simple idea: satisfied employees lead to satisfied customers. One metric that illustrates the degree of employee satisfaction is SAS' annual turnover rate of 8% as compared to the US software industry average of 13%.

SAS' work teams thrive on a diverse interplay of experience, backgrounds, and perspectives. Employees' collective strength and passion for what they do ignites big ideas and powerful bonds. SAS continues to provide equal employment opportunities for all employees regardless of age, race, color, gender identity, religion, creed, ancestry, nation origin, citizenship, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, medical condition, veteran status, pregnancy or any other protected class as defined by federal, state, or local law.

Quality Workforce

Designing and implementing SAS software requires a development staff with highly developed programming skills and significant subject-matter expertise. As part of SAS' effort to attract and retain the best available employees, the Human Resources Division has implemented several recruitment guidelines, as shown in the following examples:

- To be considered for an open position, all applicants must meet the specific education, training, and experience qualifications for the open position.

- For each position at the company, there is a written job description that specifies the necessary education or experience and job functions.

- Competency-based interviewing is used to identify the ability, experience, and knowledge that is required for a particular position. In addition, numerous interviews are conducted with an applicant. This practice enables SAS to be as inclusive as possible, while also enabling the interviewee to experience the culture and the people who create the culture.

- SAS' approach to performance management is aligned to business needs, employee skills, and career development. We promote ongoing conversations between managers and employees around expectations, skills, and development. Performance management occurs continually.

- SAS performs post-offer and pre-employment drug, alcohol, and criminal background screening on every final applicant for employment in accordance with SAS' Human Resources policy. In addition, we conduct background checks on contractors and other third parties per the SAS Human Resources policy for contingent workers.

- All SAS staff nominated and assigned to any agreed project role must have the skills, experience, and knowledge required to meet assigned duties or deliver expected work products. Recognition as a best place to work enables SAS to hire and retain the best employees in the industry.

At SAS, analytical and statistical software is designed, written, and tested by highly specialized and educated engineers. For example, more than two-thirds of the engineers working on analytics products have advanced degrees, and more than two-thirds of those have PhDs in fields such as data science, statistics, mathematics, computer science, econometrics, and operations research. Within the JMP Division, over 85% of the analytics engineers have advanced degrees, and most of those have PhDs. Product developers, including product management and engineers, also have domain expertise in operations research, time series analysis, finance, pharmaceuticals, and other fields through previous work experience and education.

Our organization is built on the high quality of our employees and the executives who lead them. See the executive biographical information (**https://www.sas.com/en_us/ company-information/leadership.html**) to learn more about SAS executives. We consider our organizational chart to be confidential and do not disclose it.

Diversity in the Workplace

> *We believe a diverse workforce brings unique talents and inspires teams to create software that can change the world. Great minds don't always think alike, so we make it a priority to promote an environment where varied perspectives are encouraged. Big ideas ignite when everyone is treated with fairness and respect.*
>
> – **Jim Goodnight**, CEO of SAS

Quality benefits from all forms of diversity. SAS has a multidimensional culture that blends different backgrounds, experiences and perspectives from employees in 59 countries around the world. SAS' culture encourages everyone to feel confident in expressing their ideas, and to know that they will be respected for their unique contributions and abilities.

Read more about SAS' commitment to diversity and inclusion by visiting **sas.com/diversity**.

Employee Training

Employee technical training and professional development is critical to the SAS quality process. Employee training at SAS is an ongoing endeavor that begins during new employee orientation and continues throughout employment. SAS offers several formal and informal mentoring programs to grow and nurture internal talent. Training content can be delivered through a variety of channels to provide staff with options that are most appropriate for their learning style. Many training courses are accessible through the SAS Learning Management System and are available for viewing at any time. Furthermore, an extensive corporate library contains bound volumes, periodical subscriptions, complete SAS documentation, and audio and video training materials. For more information, see **Appendix 4: Employee Training**.

Employee Certifications

SAS employees take great pride in achieving professional certifications that enhance their ability to deliver a quality product to customers. These certifications include the following:

- Security certifications, such as Certified Information Systems Security Professional (CISSP®), GSEC – GIAC Security Essentials, and CompTIA Security+
- Project management certifications, such as Project Management Professional (PMP)
- Quality and compliance certifications, such as Certified Software Quality Engineer (CSQE), Certified Quality Improvement Associate (CQIA), Certified Information Systems Auditor (CISA), and Certified Quality Auditor (CQA)
- Process improvement certifications, such as Six Sigma
- IT certifications, such as Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL)
- Various hardware and software certifications, such as Microsoft Certified Professional (MCP), as well as SAS and JMP certifications

Quality Starts with Communication

Employees are influential at SAS because the company's leadership understands that employees contribute valuable feedback and serve as the main drivers of change, momentum, and innovation.

At a company with nearly 14,000 employees in 58 countries around the world, connecting with employees is essential. The SAS Internal Communications team embraces the challenge by using a broad range of communication tools. SAS' most recent Employee Communications Survey, conducted in 2017, found that the majority of employees believe that communication from executives is consistent, aligned, and authentic. To further amplify executive voices and encourage transparency, SAS expanded its corporate intranet to include dynamic content from leadership about our corporate strategy and company goals.

In addition to the intranet–the primary internal communications vehicle–SAS facilitates webcasts, podcasts, and town hall events. Lunch-and-Learn sessions provide opportunities for peer-to-peer learning and networking. Other internal forums enable subject-matter experts to instruct, share knowledge, and spark creativity. Innovative BetaLabs invite SAS employees across the company to interact with software before it is released, promoting internal knowledge of SAS products, and generating invaluable feedback for product teams. BetaLabs promote communication on product quality and features within SAS so that potential issues are found and resolved before the products are released to the market. Unified instant messaging and real-time file sharing tools enable SAS employees to communicate, collaborate, and coordinate with each other across the globe.

Social media use within SAS continues to grow–from blogs to the internal social media platform–to create a tight-knit virtual community. In addition, most major divisions sponsor regular internal webcasts that enable employees to obtain updates on divisional priorities and to ask questions of upper-level management. Several divisions also deliver periodic newsletters, support dedicated divisional websites or collaborative forums or both, and produce podcasts. These media are updated regularly with information about divisional priorities, goals, news, and changes.

Whether executives are hosting a webcast for a global audience, holding a town hall event at a regional office, or meeting informally over coffee with a handful of employees, SAS nurtures an atmosphere of sharing and openness. Employees in the audience or those watching online are encouraged to ask whatever is on their minds. Besides seeking employee comments in face-to-face meetings with executives, almost every event is followed by a survey, which enables employees to offer feedback anonymously.

SAS also receives feedback from employees via the annual Great Place to Work survey. In 2016, SAS also conducted a Global Employee Survey. Human Resource Business Partners worked with division heads and country managers to address the most notable concerns and propose recommended courses of action. The company used this feedback to implement new programs. Many divisions conducted their own feedback surveys to follow up on areas of specific concern to them. To the overall survey question of "Taking everything into account, I would say this is a great place to work," 94% responded positively.

Release Information
The version of this paper is January 2022.

Unless otherwise indicated, this document relates only to SAS 9.4, SAS Viya, and the products that are available with SAS 9.4 and SAS Viya. It also relates to services from the date of this paper forward. Quality processes are continually evolving. Therefore, SAS reserves the right to modify the processes described in this document at any time. If you are using SAS 9.4 and SAS Viya and have questions about processes in those releases, send email to **qualitypaper@sas.com.**

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