

Corporate, Social and Environmental Policy

The University recognises that it has a responsibility to further social, environmental and economic sustainable practices through its own operations and the curriculum. Furthermore the University acknowledges its important role in shaping society and enriching the quality of all lives. With this in mind a great deal of work has been put into place to encourage the University and its staff to take lead roles in the areas it operates offering an exemplar of best practice in social, environmental and economic welfare.

Policy Statement

“Corporate, Social and Environmental responsibility is all about embedding economic, environmental and social factors into the procurement cycle. The University of Huddersfield will positively influence its supply chain, ensuring their operations have a positive impact upon the economic and social well-being of the University, society and the wider environment.”

Background

The University of Huddersfield currently spends over £40 million per annum on goods, works and services from approximately 2,300 suppliers. As an organisation we should be an exemplar in the way we conduct ourselves and influence our suppliers to maximise the positive economic, social and environmental benefits and minimise all negative impacts.

Aims

With this in mind the University of Huddersfield’s Corporate, Social and Environmental Policy includes the following goal:

“Seek to influence our suppliers and contractors through the Corporate, Social and Environmental Purchasing Policy, requiring that sustainability, social, environmental and economic issues are considered in the procurement of all goods and services supplied to the University”.

Method

This is achieved through the following activities:

- Guidelines for Corporate Social Responsibility are published in our purchasing manual and all procedures and policies to be followed by all staff involved in the procurement process.
- Maintain, update and communicate the University sustainable procurement policy and embed into a broader procurement strategy.
- Embed sustainable procurement into the consciousness and capabilities of all key staff members involved in procurement through effective training and developing champions within Schools and Services.

- Cultivate and support effective internal and external networks to facilitate the communication of emerging developments in sustainable procurement practise.
- Embed sustainability in the risk management methodology for routine, high value and high risk procurement projects
- Recognition of capability around sustainable procurement, celebrating and rewarding good practice in sustainable procurement.
- Contracts with a high sustainability impact are identified and targeted for specific, tailored support and input from Procurement Services.
- Sustainability key performance indicators (KPI's) are embedded into all contracts and management information is routinely monitored to maximise sustainability performance.
- Embed a more outward-focused supplier engagement strategy to spread the message about the University's approach to procurement and to promote sustainability.
- All procurement activity takes account of "Whole Life Costing" and where appropriate environmental and social factors will be part of this consideration.

The following themes and good practice activity examples are a priority if the University's corporate social, environmental and economic aims are to be achieved:

Conduct

The University will not tolerate, permit or engage in bribery, corruption, or unethical practices of any kind whether in the public or private sector and whenever in the world it may take place. All procurement policies and procedures have been reviewed to ensure that the university don't fall foul of United Kingdom and international bribery laws. With this in mind we intend that:

- University employees will endeavour to behave in the spirit of the principles of the Treaty of Rome which called for fairness, transparency and equality of treatment for all organisations seeking business opportunities across the European Union.
- The University expects all suppliers to comply with the principals of the Bribery Act 2011 when working with the University.
- All suppliers will have to adhere to the university's "Supplier Code of Conduct.
- Any attempt to distort competition or influence the outcome of a procurement process will be rejected and reported to the appropriate authority.
- Our officers will conduct all procurement processes in a fair and transparent manner following the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply Code of Ethics.
- All communication will be clear, succinct and dispatched to all interested parties in a timely manner.
- Reveal and report information truthfully without manipulation or misrepresentation.
- We will communicate the object and scope of a contract clearly and explain what will be evaluated and how the evaluation will be carried out.

- Ensure University staff maintain professional relationships with third-parties and avoid any conflict of interest.
- The details of University contract awards will be publicly available to promote transparency, future competition and supply chain opportunities
- Cooperate with and maintain the confidential nature of any investigation of a possible ethics issue.

Social Value

The University is an organisation which recognises the contribution of all staff and students. Therefore the University aims are to be supportive, fair, just and free from discrimination. In line with these objectives the University will challenge discrimination on the grounds of gender, race, marital status, age, disability, sexuality and faith, and actively promote Equality and Diversity, and ensure that the legislation and policy requirements within the six strands of Equality and Diversity are implemented into all working practices. It is therefore imperative to ensure that through our procurement activity we maximise the positive social benefits resulting from our contracts:

- A risk assessment will be undertaken at the outset of relevant projects to identify risks around social value.
- Identified risks will be managed through the allocation of responsibility, avoidance, treatment and mitigation
- Where relevant, a consultation exercise will be carried out prior to the advertisement of the contract to ensure that staff and students have the opportunity to shape the object and scope of a contract.
- The human resource management practices of our supply-chain will be investigated as part of the assessment process in any formal procurement
- Only work with suppliers who share our values on equality of opportunity and diversity
- Establish procedures to ensure that businesses from diverse communities have an equal opportunity of competing for procurement contracts to supply goods, services and facilities to the University
- Where possible, social value will be built into the specification, evaluation criteria and contract objectives of a project.
- Contract management key performance indicators (KPI's) will incorporate social benefit-related objectives which will be monitored throughout the life of the contract.
- Our suppliers will be encouraged to adopt positive human resource management practices such as adopting the living wage.
- Suppliers will be asked to explain how they audit their own supply chain to promote and ensure sound human resource management policy and practice.

Environmental Management

As a University we are acutely aware of the impact of our operations on the environment. As an organisation with a supply chain that spans the globe we have a duty to consider our environmental responsibilities accordingly:

- University goods contracts are tendered with consideration for the source of raw materials and components.

- Award contracts to organisations that aspire to equivalent environmental principles to those of the University of Huddersfield.
- Where relevant, the environmental impact of manufacturing, operation, ownership and disposal should be built into the tender process.
- Consideration should be given to the impact of the contract on transportation and infrastructure by minimising the impact of deliveries and similar activities.
- Reducing the volume of packaging, ensuring the majority of packaging is recyclable and suppliers remove packaging from site to minimise waste disposal costs
- Careful thought should be given to the evaluation of tenders to ensure the true environmental impact of a product or service is understood before contract award. Many products may bear positive tags such as 'recycled' or 'sustainable' but in truth may still require significant re-processing which constitutes a significant environmental impact.
- The impact of University procurement activity should be reported in line with statutory requirements and best practice standards to facilitate benchmarking with similar organisations.

Economic stimulation

With a non-pay expenditure of over £40 million per annum, it is the duty of the University to ensure that we stimulate the local and regional economy as much as possible within the confines of procurement legislation:

- Ensure local and regional suppliers have a good awareness of potential business opportunities with the University.
- Promote capability and capacity building development opportunities amongst local and regional suppliers wherever possible.
- Provide timely and accurate feedback to all suppliers that have unsuccessfully bid for University contracts to facilitate improvement and learning.
- Promote sub-contracting opportunities amongst local and regional suppliers where the University is awarding a large-scale contract.
- Wherever possible monitor the impact of local expenditure arising from sub-contracting opportunities.
- Promote swift payment terms through our supply chains to ensure smaller sub-contracted suppliers are paid in a timely manner to maintain good cash flows.