

Sustainable Procurement Strategy, Policy and Overview

This document outlines the strategic approach for implementing sustainability within the University's Procurement processes. It sets the overarching sustainable procurement objectives and the actions the University will take to deliver them. This links to the University 'Sustainability and Environmental Policy (SEP) Framework'.

1. What is sustainable procurement?

"Sustainable procurement is a process whereby organisations meet their needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money on a whole life basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the organisation, but also to society and the economy, while minimising damage to the environment" (Sustainable Procurement Task Force)

2. Sustainability at University of Wolverhampton

Sustainability is a core value; it is an organisational objective to embed environmental and social consciousness throughout our corporate and academic business operations. As such, sustainable procurement is being pursued by the University as part of achieving efficiency, effectiveness and value for money and sits within its strategic aims. Sustainable procurement is pivotal to assisting the University in delivering its vision via the 3 Pillars of:

1. Students first
2. Skill and Knowledge for Economic and Social Transformation
3. Significant Influence and Impact

All public sector procurement in the UK is required to achieve value for money and is governed by the Public Contracts Regulations (2015) to ensure fairness and openness. In order to achieve value for money University of Wolverhampton considers environmental, social and economic (ESE) impacts/risks within our Procurement processes throughout the entire procurement cycle i.e. from identifying the requirement, tendering the opportunity through to contract management, student/graduate benefits and, where appropriate, end of life review (refer to Appendix 1 – Sustainability Touchpoints).

The 'Flexible Framework', the Sustainable Procurement Programme for the Public Sector, is a widely used self-assessment mechanism developed by the business-led Sustainable Procurement Taskforce, which allows organisations to measure and monitor their progress on sustainable procurement over time. Procurement is actively working towards level 3 of the Flexible Framework.

3. Sustainable Procurement Objectives

The Procurement Strategy, held on the Procurement webpages, highlights the importance of sustainable procurement.

"The University will:

- *Ensure that its procurements comply with the University's Sustainability Strategy and promote awareness of this within tender activities and ongoing contract management.*
- *Consider long term sustainable cost implications i.e. financial, environmental, social and environmental during the Procurement process and assessment of value for money.*
- *Utilise ethical goods wherever there are demonstrable benefits to using them in accordance with legislation and the Procurement process.*
- *Develop a range of work based opportunities both within the University and with its suppliers to enhance the employability of the University's Students and Graduates.*
- *Ensure that Equality & Diversity is considered at all stages of the procurement process. "*

The overarching Sustainability Policy is also linked to all aspects of University Sustainability and cross references back to Procurement activities. We also promote the Wolverhampton Charter as a medium to fulfil our objectives.

3.1 Wolverhampton Charter

The University is committed to its obligations under the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 and strongly believes that embedding social value in our procurement process ensures value for money. Sustainability is a central part of social value.

We consider social value right throughout the procurement process. In relation to award criteria we are specifically interested in Contractor's impacts on the environmental, economic and social well-being of the West Midlands, as well as their proposals (and previous experience) to actively contribute to related social value improvements. We will often place importance on relevant student and graduate benefits here.

As part of our commitment to social value, the University is championing [The City of Wolverhampton Charter](#) which establishes 5 core principles which underpin the commissioning and procurement activities of key partners in the city, including Wolverhampton City Council and Royal Wolverhampton NHS Trust.

The core principles are:

- develop and grow a skilled workforce
- encourage healthy lifestyles and independence
- support more people to be active within their communities
- support business to develop and grow
- support the reduction to the carbon footprint and eliminate unnecessary waste

During the tender process we may ask our Contractors to sign up to the principles of the Charter and also request information concerning their inputs to the environments they already operate in, and the activities of their organisation.

4. Risk Awareness

Sustainability risks are assessed during the Category Strategy formation through the positive and negative impacts assessment. Where a Category Strategy is not developed, the Procurement representatives discuss any risks with the stakeholder and ensure these are included in the tender documentation for suppliers to address.

Common key risks of not procuring sustainably include:

- Inadequate contract management policies and procedures causing adverse environmental impact
- Catering implications i.e. food that isn't Fair Trade, red tractor etc.
- Inappropriate paper specification i.e. FSC accredited paper
- Lack of suitability consideration with construction projects
- Inappropriate disposal of waste in accordance with policies i.e. reduced land fill, hazardous and clinical waste complying with national strategies and legislation
- High carbon emissions released as a consequence of the University's activity
- Contractor supply chain management and policies such as compliance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015.
- Health and safety risks to staff and students e.g. water pollution, handling hazardous materials without training

5. Communication and Engagement

To successfully implement the Sustainable Strategy and Policy and for its objectives to be achievable, strong communication and engagement is required.

Alongside working with stakeholders to address sustainability throughout the procurement process, internally Procurement present to all staff during their Inductions as well as ensuring information is readily available to all staff. There is link on the Procurement web pages to 'Procuring the Future' which addresses sustainability, the Flexible Framework and Social Value. In addition, sustainable procurement activities are included in the quarterly Procurement News which is circulated across the University.

Externally all incumbent and prospective suppliers are made aware of our policies, with progress addressed during a Contract Review Meetings. Here we seek to identify any new innovations which promote sustainability that can be incorporated by the University in its operations.

Sustainable procurement is also a key feature of our Meet the Buyer events which are held independently, as well as jointly with the Council and NHS Trust, and other Universities across the West Midlands.

6. Monitoring and Reporting

Progression with Sustainable Procurement is measured via:

- Regular Flexible Framework Progress review meetings
- Reviews at Sustainability and Environmental Committee Group
- The Purchasing Maturity Assessment specific actions
- Quarterly 'Procurement News' identifies the number of contracts awarded with sustainable benefits
- Feedback from Contractors and internal customers
- Scope 3 data submissions
- Monitoring and assessing supplier performance via Key Performance Indicators (where appropriate)

In addition, Procurement assesses the various 'touch points' throughout the Procurement process (Appendix 1) this ensures focus on key interactions and potential areas for improvement, maintaining Procurement professionalism in all aspects of the process.

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