

Introduction

Leeds Beckett University has 26,000 students studying at our Leeds campuses and just over 2,400 full-time-equivalent members of staff offering a range of undergraduate, postgraduate and professional provision across 13 schools. Our role is to make a decisive difference to individuals and organisations through education, training and the application of knowledge, skills and expertise. We work closely with employers and partners to enrich our portfolio and ensure that our graduates are ready to seize the opportunities that lie ahead.

We have an Ethics Policy Framework, which sets out the context, values and associated policy framework through which we seek to apply the highest standards of ethical conduct and behaviour in all aspects of our business. We have recently signed up to the Leeds Social Value Charter, which includes being sustainable, fair and ethical in all that we do as one of its guiding principles, including paying suppliers on time, paying a fair share of taxes and being open transparent and fair in all of our working relationships.

We are working to identify slavery and human trafficking risks in our existing supply chains and deliver an action plan to support the aims of the Modern Slavery Act and are liaising with other universities to share best practice and resources.

Supply chains

We promote ethical business practices and policies to protect workers from being abused and exploited in their own organisation and supply chains.

Our University's supply chains, which are at greatest risk of non-compliance with these policies are consumables, Estates Services, Facilities Management and IT.

Consumables

Our consumables spend includes laboratory equipment, stationery and clothing, all of which are predominantly produced in countries where modern slavery is common. We buy many of our consumables from HE Purchasing Consortia framework agreements (we are a member of the North Eastern Universities Purchasing Consortium (NEUPC)). HE Purchasing consortia have a shared Sustainability Policy, committing to socially and ethically responsible purchasing to minimise environmental, social and economic impact through the supply chain.

Estates Services

A significant amount of our Estates Services spend is on construction, a sector where modern slavery is prevalent, including the exploitation of vulnerable migrants, bonded labour, delayed wages, poor working and living conditions and withholding of passports. The complex supply chains allow blame to be attributed to sub-contractors or local legislation. This problem is worldwide including UK construction sites.

Facilities Management

Facilities Management spend includes cleaning services and security services, both of which are recognised as low paid work and susceptible to modern slavery.

IT

Our IT category spend includes PCs, Applemacs, monitors and notebooks. These items are procured through the HE Consortia framework agreements led by the London Universities Purchasing Consortium who became a founding member of Electronics Watch, an independent monitoring organisation, working to achieve respect for labour rights in the global electronics industry through socially responsible public purchasing.

In November 2016, we amended the documentation that we use for procurement exercises so that we can ensure that all future University suppliers are actively working to prevent modern slavery in their organisation and in their supply chains.

Future plans

We have produced an Action Plan to support the aims of the Modern Slavery Act, which includes:

- working with our supply chains to satisfy ourselves that all our existing suppliers share our objective to prevent modern slavery in their organisations and in their supply chains;
- ensuring that all procurement activity will encourage awareness of and adherence with the Modern Slavery Act 2015;
- working in collaboration with other universities and purchasing consortia to pool resources and share best practice;
- investigating the use of sustainability tools to support and develop sustainability and compliance with modern slavery in supply chains; and
- developing best practice in our procurement processes.

This statement was approved by our University's Governance and Nominations Committee on 13 January 2017, will be reviewed at least once annually in the future and is available from our public information pages.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Peter Slee', is positioned above the signature line.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Governors by Professor Peter Slee, Vice Chancellor
13 January 2017