



Sustainable Procurement Strategy 2023 - 2025

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1 Introduction

The University spends around £140 million a year on a diverse range of goods, works and services. As a major procurer of supplies such as, food, paper, furniture, energy, cleaning equipment, IT equipment and with ambitious investment plans involving construction and renovation across campus, the University's Procurement team is well placed to make a positive contribution to sustainable development through its procurement decisions. Everything procured from stationery to waste management services has a supply chain which can impact on the environment and society; sustainability is a key consideration in the development of contract strategies.

This Sustainable Procurement Strategy has been prepared to support the aims of sustainable procurement to make the best use of public money. This Strategy will contribute towards the Scottish government's goals aligned to the National Outcomes and the University of Strathclyde's Procurement mission statement: "The University of Strathclyde is committed to maximising value for money in all of its transactions, and, in conducting its daily business, staff will consider the University's wider responsibilities in terms of legal, moral, social, economic and environmental impact. Effective procurement will support the University's Strategic Plan 2020-2025."

The University, as a public contracting authority, recognises the need to spend its financial resources ethically and responsibly. Therefore, the procurement team are committed to working with suppliers and other key stakeholders to ensure that the procurement process and activities meet the requirements of the sustainable procurement duty to improve the social, environmental and economic wellbeing within the University and its surrounding area, as well as facilitate the involvement of SMEs, third sector bodies and supported businesses.

As part of the commitment to continuous improvement the University will actively incorporate the need to promote innovation and utilise the tools currently available to facilitate effective sustainable procurement. In order to identify and optimise economic, social and environmental outcomes from procurement activities the Scottish Government's [Sustainability Test](#) will be utilised for all above the threshold (Public Contracts Regulations) procurement activities to support compliance with the Sustainable Procurement Duty. The procurement team are additionally rolling out the use of [EcoVadis](#) platform to identify and monitor the sustainability efforts of suppliers within the University's supply chain.

This strategy aims to address the University's commitment to sustainable procurement and the variety of methods that will be utilised to achieve and uphold the commitment to the sustainability duty.

2 Statutory Requirements

The University as a contracting authority must have regard to the Statutory Guidance to ensure compliance with the sustainable procurement duty under section 8 (2) of the Act relevant to regulated procurements which commence on or after 1 June 2016. The application of the sustainable procurement duty to all regulated procurement is to be proportionate.

Compliance with the sustainable procurement duty may support compliance with other legislation that places specific requirements on the University as a contracting authority relevant to procurement activities. In particular, the Equality Act 2010, The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2012, the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009, Climate Change Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019 and The Climate Change (Duties of Public Bodies: Reporting Requirements) (Scotland) Order 2015.

Statutory Definition of Sustainable Procurement

The sustainable procurement duty is defined in section 9 of the Act as follows;

- (1) For the purposes of this Act, the sustainable procurement duty is the duty of a contracting authority;
 - (a) Before carrying out a regulated procurement, to consider how in conducting the procurement process it can;
 - (i) Improve the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the authority's area,
 - (ii) Facilitate the involvement of small and medium enterprises, third sector bodies and supported businesses in the process, and
 - (iii) Promote innovation and
 - (b) In carrying out the procurement, to act with a view to securing such improvements identified as a result of paragraph (a)(i).
- (2) The contracting authority must consider under subsection (1) only matters that are relevant to what is proposed to be procured and, in doing so, consider the extent to which it is proportionate in all the circumstances to take those matters into account."

3 The University's Commitment

The University remains committed to making every effort to minimise its reliance on non-renewable resources and make resource efficiency a core requirement of all its operations. In particular, and where practicable, the University will promote and facilitate re-use of goods; reduction and recycling of waste; responsible energy management; practice energy efficiency and support the development and use of renewable energy resources whose long-term security is assured.

As a major procurer of goods and services the University has a significant impact on both the local and wider environment. It is the University's responsibility to implement appropriate controls and policies to ensure that negative impacts on the environment are kept to a minimum, and opportunities for positive environmental and social impact are maximised.

The University expects suppliers to support the University's values and objectives set out in the University's [Strategic Plan 2020 - 2025](#). In particular, KPI 16 of the Strategic Plan sets out an ambitious target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 70% by 2025, 80% by 2030 and net zero by 2040 at the latest. This target is evolving over the strategy period to include indirect emissions (scope 3) associated with our procurement and supply chain.

Additionally, the University requires suppliers to reflect and support the commitments set out in the University's [Climate Change and Social Responsibility Policy](#) and to support the University's overarching Procurement Strategy.

The University aims to embed sustainable procurement within its culture by committing to:

- Reducing resource use and to source materials, equipment and services responsibly.
- Manage the procurement of commodities and services in order to minimise or reduce negative impacts on the environment e.g. waste, carbon emissions, transport miles and consumption of natural resources.
- Engage with the supply chain community to encourage positive participation and address barriers to entry to encourage local, regional, SME and ethnic minority suppliers to work with University contracts.
- Consider procurement sustainability factors and assessments at contract strategy stage for all procurements.
- Ensure that environmental, social and whole-life cost impacts are taken into consideration in the assessment of value for money, including the impact of procurement decisions on poverty and the consideration of fairly traded goods.
- Encourage the University's new and existing suppliers to consider the social and environmental impacts of their services and activities and address how to reduce them by adopting policies similar to the University's, with sustainability performance being added to the current requirements of quality, delivery and value for money.
- Support Fairtrade products and relevant national and international ethical supply chain codes and standards.

This Sustainable Procurement Policy applies to everyone who buys and specifies goods and services on behalf of the University.

4 Achieving Sustainable Procurement

Sustainable procurement is an integral part of the procurement process and is embedded at the commencement of a contract strategy through to the award and reporting stage. Consideration is given to include Fair Work First policy, Modern slavery and anti-human trafficking requirements and Environmental considerations into the Contract. This approach has been adopted to ensure that spending decisions are based on sustainable choices by actively considering social, economic and environmental impacts.

To ensure compliance with the Scottish Government's Sustainable procurement duty [Public Sector Procurement: Sustainable Procurement Duty - gov.scot](#)) the University's procurement activities include utilising the standard tools detailed below. These tools are utilised at the Strategy, Evaluation and Award stage to ensure sustainability is considered and achieved in our tender processes.

Sustainable Public Procurement Tool

The Scottish Government recently revised their Sustainability Tools for public sector Procurement, which was highlighted in SPPN 6/2020. The University has adopted the use of the new Sustainable Procurement Tools ([Sustainable Procurement \(sustainableprocurementtools.scot\)](#)) in order to understand the spend categories across the whole of the University and to provide a standard structured approach to:

- Prioritise categories/sub-categories according to sustainability risks and opportunities and actions;
- Develop a better understanding of the categories where particular risks and opportunities are relevant;
- Identify how category strategies may seek to mitigate relevant risks or capture opportunities;
- Highlight a relevant focus on market engagement;
- Support the development of contracts and frameworks, through the Scottish Government's Sustainability Test; and
- Ensure that category strategies and contract requirements are evidence based.

The results of the assessment are being used to understand where resources need to be focussed that enable generating benefits such as value for money, reduce emissions and waste, community benefits and identifying areas for innovation.

SPD Standardised Statements

The Scottish Government has updated the standardised statements to SPD question 4C.7- Environmental Management criteria to advance the inclusion of climate change commitments at the selection stage of a procurement. The updated statements have been drafted to give smaller suppliers time to prepare, allowing all suppliers to actively participate in the collective effort towards net zero. The University's procurement team will be able to consider the relevance of this requirement at the strategy stage and evaluate suppliers' efforts to incorporate environmental management measures and sustainability as a qualification for the tender process.

The Sustainability Test

The Sustainability Test is currently embedded in the contract strategy template used for individual procurements at a contract level. The Sustainability Test is enabling the application of a lighter touch assessment to identify risks and opportunities relevant to individual procurements. This can be found in the Scottish Government's Sustainability Tools platform which can be accessed via: [Sustainable Procurement \(sustainableprocurementtools.scot\)](https://sustainableprocurementtools.scot).

Eco- Vadis

The Procurement team are rolling out the use of Eco-Vadis platform to monitor and identify the sustainability efforts of suppliers within the University and the HE/FE Sector's supply chain. The platform will support the monitoring of Sustainability in the supply chain where suppliers that have signed up to the platform. The suppliers committed to Eco-Vadis are able to update the platform with their progress and efforts to function sustainably, contributing to their overall sustainability rating. This rating can then be monitored by the University and highlighted at the strategy stage and award stages of the tender process. It should be noted, the University will not mandate use of the platform, but encourage its use through the University's [Supplier Code of Conduct](#) at tender stage, this will be beneficial to suppliers who are also looking to commit to Sustainability goals. Strong encouragement will be focused on those suppliers who have high risk / high value contracts with the University. The Eco-Vadis portal can be viewed via the link provided: [EcoVadis](#).

Life Cycle Impact Mapping

The University's procurement processes have adopted the life cycle mapping approach to consider the risks and opportunities for raw materials, manufacturing and logistics, use and disposal or end of life management. Where practicable, suppliers are encouraged to provide details on the impacts of their goods and services under these categories and provide options for improving the sustainability of goods and services (end of life takeback, alternate products etc). Data on lifecycle carbon, energy, water or material use should be provided where such information exists. The standard and consistent approach supports the identification of economic, social and environmental impacts at each stage in the product or service that are then addressed as part of the contract strategy development process.

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

In line with the Modern Slavery Act 2015, the University is committed to measuring and actively monitoring modern slavery and human trafficking to ensure it is not taking place in any part of its supply chain. The University's [Modern slavery and human trafficking statement | University of Strathclyde](#) is included within the Supplier Code of Conduct, whereby suppliers declare they will adhere to its provisions when tendering and throughout the Term of the contract.

Fair Work First

The University aims to promote fair working practices in all areas and the procurement team adheres to the Scottish Government's Fair Work First policy. The University is an accredited Real Living Wage employer and expects that the suppliers they work with also pay the real living wage to its staff. Suppliers are encouraged to pay the real living wage for University Contracts by committing to it in the Form of Tender documentation. The document detailing guidance on best practice in procurement can be found here: [Fair Work First: Guidance to support implementation - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/guidance-to-support-implementation-fair-work-first)

The Scottish Government also hosts a toolkit with resources which the procurement team within the University utilise to supplement its fair work practices. The toolkit can be accessed here: [Fair work practices in procurement: toolkit - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/guidance-to-support-implementation-fair-work-first)

Considering economic wellbeing

The University is committed to facilitating the involvement of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), third sector bodies and supported businesses in line with the fundamental principles of equal treatment and proportionality. Costs associated with submitting a tender are therefore kept to a minimum, and barriers to participation by small firms, self-employed and the third sector are removed. Moreover, consideration is given to the Qualification process in a tender and if areas can be altered to encourage SME engagement.

Sustainable procurement is actively promoted and articulated across supply chain partners through tendering activities and contract management. Community Benefits within tendering processes are considered in line with legislative requirements and beyond where it is appropriate and proportionate to do so. The University has contracts with Supported Businesses and reports this activity in the University's Annual Procurement report, of which, all reports can be located at [Procurement - University of Strathclyde](https://www.strath.ac.uk/procurement/).

Collaboration with Sustainability Team

In spirit of the University's key value of Collaboration, when appropriate to do so the procurement team will consult with the University's Sustainability & Environmental Management team when commencing a procurement project. The sustainability team provide insights and expertise regarding the strategy for particular areas that can be influenced at the procurement stage, helping to collectively reduce the University's carbon footprint and strategise for a more environmentally sustainable future.

5 Continuous Improvement and Reporting

As a contracting authority the University will continue to evolve and improve its procured contracts, by actively applying and monitoring the use of sustainability measures and tools to ensure sustainable outcomes are embedded at an early stage in the tendering process. In order, to achieve the University's goals of Net Zero by 2040 or sooner, goods and services will become a greater focus of sustainability efforts moving forward. Assessing the carbon impact of procurement will be vital to achieving this goal and the University aims to work with suppliers to identify and develop opportunities to reduce the carbon footprint of procured goods and services. This may be through use of substitute materials and delivery methods and identification of alternate supplier products that meet specifications but also minimise environmental impacts. Suppliers are encouraged to suggest alternatives and new delivery methods to assist in achieving this aim.

The University Procurement team will utilise the Scottish Government Sustainability Tool to inform the Procurement Strategy, individual contract strategies and to prioritise a forward planning to help inform subsequent strategies. The Procurement team will also introduce and engage the use of the Eco-Vadis platform to monitor the sustainability of University's supply chains.

The University will build on what has been achieved by working in partnership with private, public and voluntary sector organisations and commercial operators to support facilitating access to the University's contract opportunities by SMEs, third sector organisations and supported businesses. Progress on sustainable procurement is now embedded in the University's senior governance structure, whereby set task groups have been established by the Executive lead of Sustainability and reported to the Executive team of the University. The University's efforts and developments on sustainable procurement will continue to be reported on as an integral part of the Procurement Strategy and Annual Procurement Report, as required.