

Procurement strategy – 2025 to 2030

1 Introduction

- 1.1 All universities and colleges with an annual regulated procurement spend of £5 million and above must produce an organisational procurement strategy under section 15 of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014.
- 1.2 Our procurement strategy, which is aligned with our [Strategic Plan 2030](#) and its objectives, established collaborative initiatives and necessary regulatory compliance, was approved by the Finance and General Purposes Committee (FGPC) and published at the start of the 2025-26 academic year. The approved strategy is the culmination of consultation and engagement with different stakeholder groups affected by our institutional approach to procurement, via the Senior Management Team (SMT). By this consultation, our procurement strategy benefits from exposure to internal scrutiny, which strengthens the understanding of this strategy and the achievement of its aims and objectives.
- 1.3 A successful shared strategic focus is built upon an alignment of perceptions and understanding around what we need from a well performing procurement process that is consistent with our [Strategic Plan 2030](#) and its objectives. That focus also needs to take proper cognisance of the environments within which UHI operates to ensure that external drivers and influences for improvement are addressed appropriately.

2 Our procurement mission

- 2.1 We are committed to obtaining value for money in all of our transactions, and in conducting our daily business we must always consider our wider responsibilities in terms of our legal, moral, social, economic and environmental impact. Effective procurement will support our strategic objectives across these important operational dimensions.
- 2.2 This procurement strategy demonstrates how effective procurement can be an exemplar of our core values of collaboration, openness, respect and excellence as detailed in our [Strategic Plan 2030](#).

3 Our strategic aims

3.1 This procurement strategy seeks to achieve the following broad strategic aims:

- To sustain and further develop partnerships within the sector, with other publicly funded bodies, with professional bodies and appropriately with supply markets that will yield intelligence, innovation and deliver value to the users of our procurement service.
- To work with internal budget holders and suppliers to deliver innovation and best value to the learning, research and service support communities through the development of an effective and co-ordinated purchasing effort.
- To promote the delivery of value for money through good procurement practice and optimal use of procurement collaboration opportunities.
- To seek out professional development opportunities to enrich and enhance the experience and capability of procurement practitioners and to work with our supply chain to ensure continued value, managed performance and minimal risk throughout the life of contracts for the benefit of customers and students.
- To develop sound and useful procurement management information in order to measure and improve procurement and supplier performance in support of corporate planning conducted through fair and transparent processes.
- To embed sound ethical, social and environmental policies within the our procurement function. This will seek to respond to the global climate emergency, promote Fair Work First and comply with relevant Scottish and UK legislation in performance of the sustainable procurement duty.
- To support the vision of the Public Procurement Strategy for Scotland 2023 to 2028 and delivery of its objectives, namely, to conduct procurement activity in a way which is good for businesses and employees, good for society, good for places and communities, open and connected.

4 Our strategic objectives

4.1 Our strategic aims set out what we intend to achieve from our procurement strategy, whereas our strategic objectives specify how we will demonstrate that these aims have been achieved.

4.2 Each of our strategic objectives links the requirements of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 as summarised on the following page.

1. The use of community benefit requirements.
| [Objective 1](#) |
2. Consulting and engaging with those affected by our procurements.
| [Objective 4](#) |
3. The payment of a living wage to persons involved in producing, providing or constructing the subject matter of regulated procurements.
| [Objective 2](#) |
4. Promoting compliance by contractors and sub-contractors with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (c.37) and any provision made under that Act.
| [Objective 5](#) |
5. Fairly and ethically traded goods and services.
| [Objective 2](#) |
6. The provision of food to improve the health, wellbeing and education of communities in our area; and promoting the highest standards of animal welfare.
| [Objective 7](#) |
7. Payments being made no later than 30 days after the invoice (or similar claim) to contractors, their sub-contractors, and the sub-contractor's sub-contractor.
| [Objective 2](#) |
8. Compliance with the sustainable procurement duty.
| [Objective 3](#) |
9. The global climate emergency response and report progress in our annual procurement reports.
| [Objective 3](#) |
10. How regulated procurements will contribute to the carrying out of our functions and achievements of its purpose.
| [Objective 1](#) | [Objective 2](#) | [Objective 4](#) | [Objective 5](#) | [Objective 6](#) |
11. Delivering value for money.
| [Objective 1](#) | [Objective 2](#) | [Objective 4](#) | [Objective 5](#) | [Objective 6](#) |
12. Treating relevant economic operators equally and without discrimination.
| [Objective 1](#) | [Objective 2](#) | [Objective 4](#) | [Objective 5](#) | [Objective 6](#) |
13. Acting in a transparent and proportionate manner.
| [Objective 1](#) | [Objective 2](#) | [Objective 4](#) | [Objective 5](#) | [Objective 6](#) |

- 4.3 Each of our strategic objectives has also been aligned with our core values of collaboration, openness, respect and excellence as detailed in our [Strategic Plan 2030](#) as follows:

Objective 1 – *Respect* for our local community

For every procurement over £500,000, we will consider how we can improve the economic social or environmental wellbeing of our local area through the inclusion of community benefit clauses. Such improvements could be implemented through mandated delivery of training opportunities or subcontracting opportunities within our local area. Where possible and proportionate, such clauses may be included in procurements below £500,000. The monitoring of outputs of such measures may be assessed through a range of measures, including contract management or standardised benefits reporting.

We will take steps to make it easier for smaller businesses to bid for contracts. Legislative constraints preclude preferences for only local suppliers, but the local dimension can be addressed through the structure of tenders, the use of Public Contracts Scotland and Quick Quotes, training and information to build capacity and publishing a contracts register to highlight contracts for which local organisations may be interested in bidding.

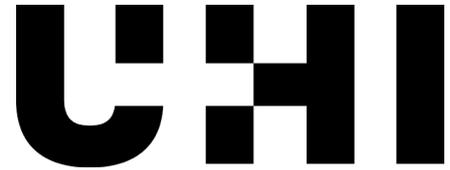
Objective 2 – *Respect* for our suppliers and their workforce

We will conduct all regulated procurements in compliance with the principles of equal treatment, non-discrimination, transparency, proportionality and mutual recognition.

We recognise the value of a well-motivated and dedicated workforce both within our own organisation and in those of our suppliers. Where relevant and proportionate, we will consider the fair work practices of suppliers in its procurements, including the application of the Living Wage.

We have developed internal procedures so that Fair Work First is incorporated in all relevant procurement processes from strategy through to the evaluation of tenders and monitoring of outcomes.

We support the sourcing of goods that are fairly and ethically traded. Where relevant we shall make use of appropriate standards and labels in our procurements to take account of fair and ethical trading considerations, we will consider equivalent offerings from suppliers in our tenders and consider the use of lifecycle costing. We will also consider the use of contract conditions that provide assurances on fair and ethical supply chains.



We will comply with the Late Payment legislation and will review on a contract by contract basis whether such obligations should be enforced and monitored further down our supply chain.

Objective 3 – *Respect* for our environment

We will undertake regulated procurements in compliance with the sustainable procurement duty. We will also seek to take account of climate and circular economy in our procurement activity. Consideration of environmental, social and economic issues and how benefits can be delivered through the procurement will be made, where appropriate and on a contract by contract basis. We will utilise available tools and systems such as Prioritisation, Life Cycle Impact Mapping, the Sustainability Test, the Flexible Framework, APUC's Code of Conduct, Sustain and Electronics Watch where relevant and proportionate to the scope of the procurement.

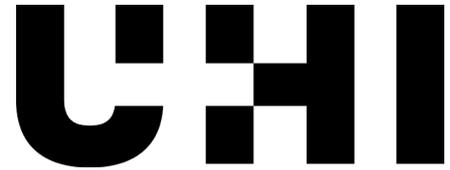
In response to the global climate emergency we will align corporate commitments to work towards net zero greenhouse gas emissions framework agreements wherever possible. We will seek to monitor and report progress through the annual procurement report and Public Bodies Climate Change Duties (PBCCD) Annual Report.

We have a strong focus on supporting responsible procurement, in particular on the climate and circular economy. We will seek to support the circular economy and promote strategic decisions on demand management and procuring for re-use, re-design and remanufacture. We will prioritise where the greatest impact can be made.

Objective 4 – *Collaboration* and *openness* in working with others

For each procurement, we will consider the community affected by the resultant contract and ensure any affected organisations/persons are consulted (e.g. impact on service for students, or a local contract that could be combined with other similar institutions' needs). Such consultation will always be on a scale and approach relevant to the procurement in question.

We will make appropriate use of collaborative contracting arrangements (e.g. national, sectoral or local framework agreements or contracts) to deliver improved contract terms, contract and supplier management, sustainable procurement outcomes and value for money.



Objective 5 – *Excellence* in our supply chain

We are committed to contracting only with suppliers that comply with all appropriate and relevant legislation, including Health and Safety legislation. Where appropriate, and on a contract by contract basis, we will assess the legislation applicable to a procurement and take steps to ensure suppliers comply with such legislation. Where proportionate, we may assess such compliance of subcontractors also.

We will ensure that we award regulated procurements only to suppliers (and their subcontractors) that are capable, reliable and, where relevant, that can demonstrate that they meet high ethical standards and values in the conduct of their business.

In making regulated procurement contract awards, quality, risk and sustainability factors will be considered along with cost according to declared score weightings on a contract by contract basis.

Objective 6 – *Openness* and *excellence* in our processes and performance

We will analyse non-pay spend data and identify 'GPA/OJEU regulated procurements' and 'lower value regulated procurements' (goods and services worth more than £50,000, works worth more than £2 million), and sort these into procurement categories. How these goods, services and works are bought - joint purchasing, use of local, regional and national framework agreements, consolidated contracting – will be subject to annual review with APUC and through user consultation, optimal category strategies agreed, sensible aggregation opportunities exploited, category and commodity strategies developed, recorded and the most appropriate procurement routes to market chosen.

We will utilise portals including PCS to publish our procurement opportunities and shall strive to ensure appropriate use of lotting, output based specifications and clear evaluation criteria to ensure the procurement is accessible to as many bidders as possible.



Objective 7 – *Respect* for the health and wellbeing of people and animals

UHI does not currently procure food. However, if and when we do, we will find practical ways to supply healthy, fresh, seasonal, and sustainably grown food which represents value for money whilst improving the health, wellbeing and education of our teaching and learning communities, coupled with promoting the highest standards of animal welfare. UHI will work to put in place affordable contracts, which meet the nutritional requirements for food for all users of our catering services.

- 4.4 We will produce a report on our progress against these objectives annually and publish this on our website. This report, produced as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year (by calendar year end at the latest), will describe how we have discharged our obligations under the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 and how we have exercised discretion and judgement as permitted by the public procurement rules to secure our strategic objectives in compliance with the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014.
- 4.5 The annual procurement report will include a commentary on each of the requirements of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 as summarised in section 4.2 above. That narrative will be supplemented by the data required by the annual procurement report template provided by APUC together with a summary of the regulated procurements that we expect to commence in the next two financial years.