

## **Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement – 2020/2021**

This statement sets out the steps the University of Reading has undertaken and is continuing to take to ensure that modern slavery or human trafficking is not taking place within our organisation or supply chain.

The University of Reading is committed to improving our practices to combat slavery and human trafficking.

### **Organisational structure**

The University of Reading is an independent chartered corporation with charitable status. It is based in the United Kingdom. The objects of the University, as set out in its Charter of Incorporation, are for the public benefit to advance education, learning and research through the provision, support, and maintenance of a University.

The University of Reading has a number of subsidiary companies, which constitute our Group. Our subsidiary companies are as set out in the University's Ordinances, and they operate in the United Kingdom, Malaysia, South Africa, and Germany. The Group has over 4200 employees worldwide.

We have a global annual turnover of £313K

### **Our policies**

We are committed to protecting and respecting human rights and ensuring that there is no modern slavery or human trafficking in our supply chains or in any part of our business.

We have robust recruitment and employment practices in relation to both employees and workers including rigorous checking of immigration and right to work documents and ensuring that anyone undertaking work at the University is engaged correctly and in line with legislative requirements and University procedures.

Our Policies continues to reflect our commitment to acting ethically and with integrity in all our business relationships and to implementing and enforcing effective systems and controls to ensure slavery and human trafficking is not taking place anywhere in our business.

The University has a Supplier Code of Conduct that it promotes to all its suppliers. The code of conduct sets out the matching behaviors that we expect of suppliers who are delivering goods, services and works to the University. These behaviors include - social responsibility, environmental compliance, working conditions and diversity and inclusion.

The Procurement Policy and Supplier Code of Conduct can be found here:

<http://www.reading.ac.uk/procurement/information-for-suppliers/proc-policytandc.aspx>

The University of Reading is committed to conducting its business with honesty and integrity and in a responsible manner, taking into account the requirements of the funding bodies and the standards in public life set out in the report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life. We expect all staff to maintain high standards, including in accordance with the University's Instruments of Governance and its policies and procedures. The Public Interest Disclosure ('Whistleblowing') Policy and Procedures can be found here:

<https://www.reading.ac.uk/about/governance/governance-zone.aspx>

### **Our supply chains**

The University procures works, goods, and services in excess of £100 million per year. We work with a number of suppliers based in the UK and globally.

The University has a zero-tolerance approach to modern slavery and human trafficking. It is committed to acting ethically and with integrity in all its business dealings and relationships. It seeks to ensure modern slavery and human trafficking are not taking place anywhere within the organisation or in any of its supply chains.

### **Due Diligence**

As part of our initiative to identify and mitigate risk, we have the following systems in place:

- Strict procurement processes, requiring our suppliers to abide by all the required legislation and regulations that relate to the relevant jurisdiction in which the suppliers operate and/or supply.
- Our tender documents are based on the government standard selection questionnaire.
- Undertake a review of our suppliers including specific questions relating to the Modern Slavery Act on the agenda for contract review meetings.
- We have included appropriate terms in our contractual documentation with our suppliers and that these obligations are flowed down to the sub-contractors of suppliers

We have a dedicated compliance team, which consists of involvement from the following departments:

- Legal Services;
- Internal Audit;
- Human Resources;
- Research and Development
- Procurement; and
- Governance

## Training and awareness

To ensure an appropriate level of understanding of the risks of modern slavery and human trafficking in our supply chains and our business, we continue to identify suitable training and have provide applicable information to relevant staff.

All staff involved in procurement activity are asked to carry out the training provided by Higher Education Procurement Academy.

The Procurement Board review and approve the Procurement Policy.

## 2020/2021 Activity

During 2020/2021 we have carried out the following activity:

- Procurement Board reviewed and signed off a new Procurement Strategy which embeds Responsible Procurement within it
- The Supplier code of conduct is issued out to all suppliers and included in the tender documentation
- The University of Reading continues to work with Electronics Watch and monitor our supply chains. This has included attending the webinars and providing details on spend and supply chain activity.
- Procurement staff carried out training on Protecting Human Rights in the Supply chain
- University continues to work with its Investment Manager to divesting from fossil fuels, as well as the introduction of the sustainably sourced Fair phone and sustainably sourced stationary products.
- Developed the terms of reference for the Responsible Procurement Group and identified the membership
- Join the LUPC/SUPC Responsible Procurement Group

## 2021/2022 Activity


During 2021/2022, the University intends to take the following further steps to combat slavery and human trafficking:

- a) Set up the Responsible Procurement Group and set objectives
- b) Consistently include Modern Slavery questions as scored evaluation criteria in all tenders (and other responsible procurement areas too)
- c) Focus on specific high-risk categories like lab consumables, electronics, construction, maintenance where Modern Slavery is common to ensure our supply chains are safe
- d) Use of tools to assess and manage risk in our supply chain such as:
  - o the CHRB Core UNGP Indicator Assessment
  - o the Modern Slavery Registry's FTSE 100 Scoring Methodology
  - o the KnowTheChain Benchmark Methodology
  - o the Marks & Spencer's Supplier Modern Slavery Toolkit

- e) Involvement of other groups from across the University in Modern Slavery discussions (e.g. HR, Legal, Estates)
- f) Work with Research Enterprise Services, Fundraising, the Knowledge Transfer Centre to ensure that Modern Slavery is considered when deciding who to work with in partnerships, donors, etc.
- g) Provide information for University staff on Modern Slavery and the impacts on them, responsibilities they have as consumer via the Procurement newsletter
- h) Include in our Responsible Procurement discussions, alumni who are working in organisations that have a strong stance on Modern Slavery like M&S
- i) Send out a Supplier questionnaire with Responsible Procurement questions including Modern Slavery
- j) Look at the new BSI standard on modern slavery that is coming out in Feb 2022
- k) undertake a thorough review of the University's due diligence processes, with a view to strengthening and standardizing them

### **Approval of the statement**

This statement is made pursuant to s.54 (1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes the University of Reading's Groups slavery and human trafficking statement for the financial year ending 31 July 2021.

  
24.11.2021