

Modern Slavery and human trafficking statement for the financial year 2022/23

Introduction

This statement is made pursuant to section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (the “MSA”) and constitutes the slavery and human trafficking statement of the University of East Anglia.

Modern slavery is a crime and a violation of fundamental human rights. It takes various forms, such as slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking, all of which have in common the deprivation of a person's liberty by another in order to exploit them for personal or commercial gain.

We are committed to improving our practices to combat slavery and human trafficking and are committed to ensuring that they are not taking place in our supply chains or in any parts of our business.

Structure and Business of the Organisation

The University is a UK based Higher Education Institution which accepted its first cohort of students in 1963. The University’s Charter can be found here:

<https://www.uea.ac.uk/web/about/university-information/governance/charities-information>

The University’s governing body sets and monitors the University’s strategic direction and monitors the effectiveness of the institution’s management.

The University is structured into four academic faculties (Arts and Humanities, Medicine and Health Sciences, Science, Social Sciences), along with a range of Professional Services Divisions including Estates (EBD), Finance, Planning and Governance (FPG), People and Culture (PCD) Admissions, Recruitment and Marketing (ARM) and IT and Computing Services (ITCS).

The Procurement Service sits within FPG, and operates devolved procurement for the University Supply Chain, providing advice and guidance across the full scope of non-pay expenditure, and directly controlling core, University Wide Contracts.

Further information regarding the University’s governance arrangements and financial performance can be found here:

Financial Statements:

<https://www.uea.ac.uk/about/university-information/finance-and-procurement/financial-statements>

Committee Office:

<https://www.uea.ac.uk/about/university-information/university-governance/committees>

Due Diligence and Compliance

The statement sets out the steps taken in the financial year 2022/23 to prevent slavery and human trafficking in our supply chain, our own operations and through involvement with our business partners. In line with Home Office guidance we aim to make progress over a period of time across a broad range of potential exposure.

The University’s supply chains mainly fall under five categories, which are:

- Science, Technical, Engineering and Medical goods and services
- Professional services

- IT and digital equipment and services
- Estates goods and services
- Catering and Retail supplies and other commercial services

The principal areas which carry material risks in our supply chain are office supplies, laboratory consumables, IT, digital and AV equipment, catering supplies and uniform, and some estates services, such as facilities management alongside construction activities. Where these are procured directly we ensure we evaluate the environmental, social and economic impacts of the procurement.

The University is a member of a number of purchasing consortia including the Southern Universities Procurement Consortium (SUPC). Their most recent statement and further information on how they ensure compliance with the Act can be found via the link below:

<https://www.supc.ac.uk/about-us/sustainability>

The University Procurement policy 2021-2023 strongly reflects our commitment to act ethically and with integrity in all our business relationships and to implement and enforce effective systems and controls, including in relation to combatting modern slavery and human trafficking in our supply chains.

In addition, the university recognises that there is a risk of modern slavery occurring within our workforce, both permanent and temporary. The People and Culture Division (PCD) seeks through its recruitment and selection policies and its ongoing training and support to reduce the risks of modern slavery in our workforce.

Actions to prevent slavery and human trafficking:

The University has taken the following actions through 2021/22 that continued through 2022/23:

- We include in all of our tendering exercises that are managed through our Central Procurement Team questions to suppliers related to slavery and human trafficking;
- Our Catering outlets provide Fairtrade/Rain Forest Alliance certification tea and coffee as standard offerings;
- Risk Assessment is undertaken using an Environmental, Social and Economic impacts evaluation in all of our direct procurement activity;
- Directly employed staff are recruited following the University's robust Recruitment and Selection policies, including all posts being advertised in an open environment either internally or externally;
- An Agency Manager controls a centralised temporary staffing service to ensure that where agency workers are required, our recruiting managers are directed to reliable agencies that have been vetted through the University's procurement process;
- Rigorous pre-employment checks including right to work checks are carried out on all new appointments, both fixed term and permanent including student workers and international researchers prior to employment. A new Compliance Team was formed in summer 2021 to provide the University with a centralised specialist service for managing all pre-employment checks;
- The University holds an Athena Swan Silver Award at institutional level with all its Schools holding Bronze and Silver Awards;
- There is a Whistleblowing Policy in place for staff to raise concerns about wrongdoing by the University in relation to employment, as well as a method for whistleblowing related to modern slavery in our supply chain.

Actions Undertaken in the 2022/23 year, which positively impacted on modern slavery:

- Implemented a Cross Divisional working group, incorporating key colleagues from recruitment, Organisational Development, Procurement and Supply chain, to better develop our education, identification, and mitigation of Modern Slavery Risks;
- UEA ensures new staff complete Diversity in the Workplace training on appointment which is refreshed every 2 years. This covers the principles of the Equality Act 2010;

- The EDI and Wellbeing Team created collection of LinkedIn Learning pathways are available to staff and students covering a range of specific. In addition, an EDI resources webpage covers age, race, sex, religion and beliefs, intersectionality, disability, and LGBTQ+ so staff and students can gain a broader understanding of these areas. Some of these aspects are useful training when considering Modern Slavery warning signs.
- UEA has created specific content on our webpages around Modern Slavery in our EDI and Procurement areas, linking to eLearning, designed to support requisitioners in making informed, sustainable purchasing decisions.

Future Actions

In addition to the above ongoing actions, the University has identified the following opportunities to improve on our commitment to eliminate modern slavery from areas under our control:

- Make our commitment to anti-slavery and human trafficking clear in a defined University Policy, that aligns to changes to procurement law in October 2024, and anticipates how we can best drive social value and reduce modern slavery risk in our procurement activity, to be adopted by the University's Executive Team. To be supported by a robust training and communication plan;
- Agree and use a suitable alternative approach to the Worker's Rights Consortium to ensure we maintain our obligations to workers, in particular in garment manufacture;
- Further advertise the training and support available through our EDI and Procurement teams to engage with and educate our workforce;
- Through review and improvement of our finance system, seek to better enable identification of modern slavery risks;
- Share positive outcomes from our Modern Slavery work with the University as a whole via corporate communications channels;
- A second round of detailed category strategy review to take place to commence in conjunction with the changes in Procurement Law, which evaluate modern slavery risks in our key supply chain areas. This will continue on an annual cycle;
- Implement an automated end to end recruitment system to streamline and standardise the recruitment process across the University;
- Develop a Preferred Supplier List of recruitment agencies that have been vetted through the University's procurement process and assessed for their adherence to Modern Slavery principles, to support where necessary the internal recruitment team of the University;
- Review all our EDI Policies and Codes of Practice and where relevant include links to modern slavery;
- Establish a Race Equality Working Group to help us determine our ongoing approach and strategy for race equality, signpost the group to current areas of work across the University that evidence the University's commitment to race equality, consider our strengths, gaps and priorities and help consider and select our guiding principles and the most appropriate frameworks to support this important work.

Statement Approval

This statement has been approved and published by **Ian Callaghan - Chief Resource Officer and University Secretary** and will be reviewed at least once annually. Any queries concerning the statement should be directed to **Jason Brown - Director of Finance**.



Ian Callaghan

Chief Resource Officer and University Secretary
University of East Anglia