

Modern Slavery Act Statement

2023/24



Lancaster University Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement

This Statement is designed to satisfy the requirements of Part 6 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, by informing our students, staff, campaigners and the public about Lancaster University and its policy with respect to modern slavery, human trafficking, forced and bonded labour and labour rights violations in its supply chains.

Introduction

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.

This statement is made pursuant to section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes Lancaster University's slavery and human trafficking statement for the financial year 2022/23

Organisational structure and Staff Activity

Lancaster University is a research-intensive Higher Education institution in North West England, which operates on a global scale both in terms of student recruitment and research collaborations. Established by Royal Charter in 1964, Lancaster University has a turnover of around £380M, with an international student body of more than 17,000 students from over 120 countries across four Faculties.

In addition to the main campus at Lancaster, the University has four other campuses worldwide, significant international teaching partnerships, and works in many other countries through research and exchange programmes.

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking have remained areas of research for the University. The Pentland Centre, a University Research Centre that promotes sustainability in business, focuses aspects of its research on the realities of global supply chains, and attempts to identify key success factors and the roots of ongoing systemic problems. Our sector-leading research on Modern Slavery has been presented to influential parliamentary policy-makers and business leaders. The University is part of research consortium with six other universities and Public Health Wales investigating issues relating to Violence, Health and Society. The University will continue to research these areas and work to influence key policy and decision-makers.

Our policies on slavery and human trafficking

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

In light of the obligation to report on measures to ensure that all parts of our business and supply chain are slavery free we have reviewed our workplace policies and procedures to assess their effectiveness in identifying and tackling modern slavery issues.

Our workplace policies and procedures demonstrate 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 supply chains.

The University sees a natural synergy between its actions in relation to the Modern Slavery Act and others related to human dignity, liberation and respect.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee oversees this area and reports to Council.

Understanding our supply chains

The safeguarding of Human Rights in the supply chain forms part of our Procurement Policy and we manage expenditure robustly in line with this policy. We purchase a wide range of goods, works and services every year and are committed to enforcing effective controls to minimise the risk of Modern Slavery taking place.

Annually, we undertake an assessment of our expenditure to identify higher-risk commodities and suppliers. We use this assessment to target activity where it can have most impact. Our centralised procurement model allows us to widely implement terms and conditions which specifically reference the Modern Slavery Act. Further commitments are imposed on higher value expenditure, typically at values above £25,000. Year on year, we aim to increase the expenditure managed in this way. The expenditure areas judged to be at higher risk are summarised below:

- ICT: PCs, Laptops, Storage, Peripherals, Mobile Phones, Tablets, Audio Visual Equipment. In 2022/23 over 90% of spend in this area is subject to further commitments. A high proportion is sourced via HE-sector framework agreements which are also managed at a national level;
- Laboratory Equipment and Consumables. Over 75% of spend is subject to further commitments with a high proportion purchase via national framework agreements;
- Maintenance Supplies. Over 50% of spend is subject to additional commitments leaving a significant amount of low value spend on standard terms.
- Catering: Fish and seafood, Fruit and Vegetables. Over 70% of expenditure subject to additional commitments;

- Furniture. Around 70% of spend subject to additional commitments;
- Uniforms/Clothing. Additional commitments on around 50% of expenditure.

Due diligence in our processes

Modern Slavery can take many forms including forced labour, child labour and human trafficking. The procurement team take the following actions to mitigate these in higher-risk areas:

- Include our standards in tender documents and contracts;
- Ensure that key suppliers have anti-Modern Slavery policies in place;
- Make use of expert insight of Electronics Watch, an organisation that audits manufacturing sites across the world;
- Collaborate within the HE Sector via the NETpositives Supplier Engagement tool to record supplier sustainability activities.

Training and raising awareness

We participate in a national Responsible Procurement Group to access best practice resources and training for procurement professionals and other members of staff involved in purchasing. All procurement staff must complete training on Protecting Human Rights in the supply. In addition, we have delivered training to over 450 other staff involved in the purchasing process. The Head of Procurement is the named contact point for any member of staff wishing to raise concerns about a supplier.

Effectiveness of the steps we have taken this year and our plans for the future

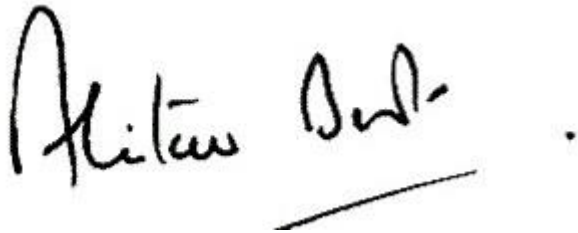
We have a long-established compliance check to provide assurance that the suppliers we work with comply with the Modern Slavery Act. In 2022/23, we extended this to key Tier 2 suppliers and will extend this further in 2023/24.

Having identified our higher-risk areas some years ago, we update this annually and agree which areas and suppliers are subject to additional review. We use the sector-wide tool to engage with suppliers and collect this information.

Sustainability Checklists are mandated for all tenders in high-risk commodity areas. The checklists are used to inform selection and award criteria and as part of the ongoing contract review process.

In 2022/23 we returned to face-to-face training of staff involved in purchasing in addition to the online training delivered in recent years. Raising awareness through training is a core part of our operations and will continue through 2023/24. Regular advanced training is mandated for the central Procurement team.

We continue to play an active role in the management of sector-wide frameworks agreements and to promote them within our institution. These contracts contain specific human rights protection and anti-trafficking obligations on suppliers and leverage the expenditure of the entire sector.



Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council

24 November 2023