

**Modern Slavery Act Statement**

**2024/25**



## 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

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 2023/24. It reflects our progress on actions taken in previous years and outlines our plans for continuous improvement.

Modern slavery is a crime and a violation of fundamental human rights. It includes various forms of slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour, and human trafficking. Lancaster University remains committed to combating modern slavery and human trafficking in all forms within its business operations and supply chains.

### Organisational structure and Staff Activity

Lancaster University is a globally engaged research institution with 17,000 students across four faculties and a turnover of around £400M. The University operates campuses worldwide and collaborates with international teaching and research institutions.

In 2023/24, the University made significant strides in enhancing its sector-leading research on modern slavery. The Pentland Centre for Sustainability continues to conduct research on how businesses can combat modern slavery within their supply chains. It has created the Modern Slavery, Justice and Complex Supply Chains Knowledge and Action Hub bringing together a breadth of interdisciplinary expertise from across Lancaster University. In 2023/24 projects included Tackling Modern Slavery: The Role of Regulation, Data, and AI. This initiative explores how advanced technologies like artificial intelligence, along with better regulatory frameworks, can help detect and reduce modern slavery.

### Our policies on slavery and human trafficking

We have reinforced our commitment to maintaining ethical and transparent business practices. In 2023/24, we reviewed and updated key workplace policies and procedures. This review included a stronger focus on identifying and addressing modern slavery risks, with enhanced reporting mechanisms for employees to raise concerns.

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.

## Understanding our supply chains

Human rights protection remains central to our Procurement Policy, and our commitment to minimizing the risk of modern slavery continues to strengthen. For the 2023/24 period, we have enhanced our control measures, expanding the scope of oversight of our supply chains. This includes regular assessments of high-risk suppliers and commodities through contract management.

In line with our centralised procurement model, we have mandated contracts with modern slavery-specific terms and conditions across a broad range of purchases, particularly focusing on high-value contracts over £25,000. Our targeted activities have shown notable progress across high-risk commodities.

- **ICT:** In 2023/24, 95% of spend in this category is covered by advanced commitments, reflecting our use of collaborative framework agreements with enhanced terms and conditions.
- **Laboratory Equipment and Consumables:** c.70% of spend is on contract, with a high proportion through the sector-wide framework agreements.
- **Maintenance Supplies:** over 70% of spend is now subject to additional commitments, improving oversight on lower-value purchases.
- **Catering (Fish, Seafood, Fruits, Vegetables):** around 60% of spend in this category is subject to additional anti-slavery commitments.
- **Furniture:** 80% of spend is covered by contracts with advanced commitments.
- **Uniforms/Clothing:** 80% of expenditure covered by enhanced modern slavery clauses.

## Due Diligence in Our Processes

To safeguard against forced labour, child labour, and human trafficking, we continue to:

- embed our ethical standards within tenders and contracts;
- use the sector-wide NETPositives Supplier Engagement tool to record and review supplier sustainability measures;
- be active members of Electronics Watch, a not-for-profit organisation that promotes and protects the rights of workers across the globe, including monitoring and remediation activities with partners located in manufacturing and mining production regions globally.

## Training and raising awareness

- Participation in the national Responsible Procurement Group continues to offer us access to best practice and training resources. Over the last 5 years, more than 500 staff involved in purchasing have been trained to raise awareness of the risks of modern slavery in the supply chain. Advanced training through HEPA (Higher Education Procurement Association) is mandated for the central Procurement Team.

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

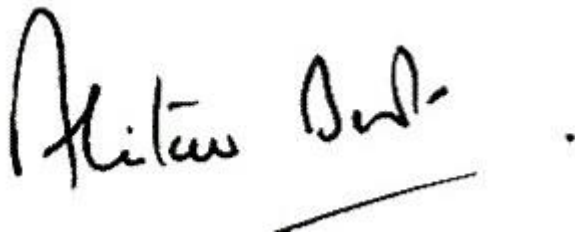
The identification of high-risk areas is now supported by an enhanced risk assessment framework for key suppliers. Annual updates will continue, with supplier engagement streamlined through national platforms including the NETpositives Supplier Engagement tool.

We benefit from a well-established, centralised procurement model and the ability to mandate appropriate Modern Slavery clauses in a high proportion of contracts. In addition, high value tenders include a Sustainability Checklist which informs the selection/award criteria and becomes part of the ongoing contract management process. We will continue to focus efforts in this area in the coming year.

We have well-established compliance checks in place to ensure our suppliers adhere to the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act. In 2024/25, we will continue to expand these checks, having already extended them to selected Tier 2 suppliers.

In the coming year, we are continuing with our training sessions face to face and online to reach a wider audience across the institution.

For 2024/25, the University will expand its research focus on modern slavery, aiming to influence policy and promote ethical practices in industries most affected by forced labour.



Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council

22 November 2024