

Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement – 2023/2024

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, India and Germany. The Group has over 4000 academic and support staff worldwide.

We had a global annual turnover of £354m for the financial year 2023/24.

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 continue 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 behaviours that we expect of suppliers who are delivering goods, services and works to the University. These behaviours include - social responsibility, environmental compliance, safe and equitable working conditions and diversity and inclusion.

The Procurement Policy and Supplier Code of Conduct can be found [here](#).

The Procurement Board review and approve this document regularly.

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](#).

Our supply chains

The University procured works, goods and services in excess of £127m in 2023/24. 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 a standardised approach which include evaluation criteria relating to modern slavery.
- 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 team involved in due diligence, which involves the following departments:

- Legal Services
- Internal Audit
- Human Resources
- Research and Development
- Procurement
- 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 provide applicable information to relevant staff. All staff involved in procurement activity are asked to carry out the training provided by Higher Education Procurement Association (HEPA). The majority of our Procurement category staff have the Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply (CIPS) professional qualifications, which also cover modern slavery in depth.

2023/2024 Activity

During 2023/2024 we have carried out the following activity:

- We carried out our annual supplier check programme to include reviewing our supplier's modern slavery statements.
- We maintained our affiliate membership of Electronics Watch, a monitoring organisation to audit the supply chain of technology components.
- We continued our work with the procurement consortia such as Southern Universities Purchasing Consortium (SUPC) to collectively develop tools to monitor our supply chains through collaborative Responsible Procurement group meetings, webinars and providing details on spend and monitoring reports on the activity of suppliers/manufacturers in our supply chain.
- We have continued work to maintain our Two Star University & Colleges Fairtrade Foundation Award, underlining our commitment to sell Fairtrade products and support, promote and improve staff and student understanding of Fairtrade.

2024/2025 Activity

During 2024/2025, the University intends to take the following further steps to combat slavery and human trafficking:

- Consistently include modern slavery questions as scored evaluation criteria in all tenders requiring evidence of supplier efforts and risk mitigations in this area.
- Work with the procurement consortia to centrally gather information from suppliers on modern slavery to reduce duplication of effort, save time and focus more specifically on high-risk categories like lab consumables, electronics, construction, facilities management, where modern slavery is common.
- Liaise further with other groups from across the University in Modern Slavery discussions (e.g. Diversity & Inclusion, HR, Legal, Estates, IT) and sign-post training for departments overseeing high risk area suppliers to raise further awareness.
- Provide information for University staff on Modern Slavery and the impacts on them, responsibilities they have as consumer via the Procurement newsletter.

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 2024.

Name of Signatory and Date



Helen Gordon
President of Council
11 November 2024