

London Universities Purchasing Consortium Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement

Introduction

London Universities Purchasing Consortium (LUPC) is a non-profit professional buying organisation owned by its Members, for its Members. LUPC exists to generate savings and better value for our Members through the collaborative procurement of goods and services.

LUPC is committed to acquiring goods and services for its Members in the higher and further education, arts, sciences, health and cultural sectors without causing harm to others. In so doing, LUPC is committed to supporting the UK Government's [Action Plan](#) to implement the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

LUPC is a member of Procurement England Limited (PEL), the shared vehicle by which English HE purchasing consortia manage joint developmental and improvement projects for collaborative procurement in our sector. Together we have published our shared [Sustainability Policy](#), to which all PEL member consortia are committed.

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

Although, as a business, LUPC turns over far less than the threshold for businesses required to publish a statement under the Act, LUPC's Board considers that our Members' spend (around £200m annually) through its supply agreements warrants a statement on the risks inherent in our supply chains and the steps we are taking to address them, in line with LUPC's pioneering practices in sustainable and responsible procurement.

Our categories

LUPC's supply chains mainly fall under five 'super-categories', which are:

- Laboratory Consumables and Equipment
- Library Resources
- Professional Services
- ICT Equipment and Services
- Estates Goods and Services

The principal categories which carry material risks are office supplies, laboratory consumables, ICT equipment and some estates services, such as cleaning and security services.

Office supplies and laboratory consumables

LUPC leads in the procurement of office supplies for UK higher education institutions and other Members. A wide range of products are supplied, many of which are sourced by our distributors from producers in low-cost countries in south and south-east Asia, Africa and South America,

countries where modern forms of slavery are prevalent. The UK agreement for laboratory consumables is led by our sister consortium, Southern Universities Purchasing Consortium (SUPC).

Many of our suppliers in these higher-risk categories have committed to the [Base Code](#) of the [Ethical Trading Initiative](#) (ETI) and we are working to persuade our remaining suppliers in these categories to join them. The ETI Base Code is founded on the conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and is an internationally recognised code of labour practice, requiring that:

1. Employment is freely chosen;
2. Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining are respected;
3. Working conditions are safe and hygienic;
4. Child labour shall not be used;
5. Living wages are paid;
6. Working hours are not excessive;
7. No discrimination is practised;
8. Regular employment is provided; and
9. No harsh or inhumane treatment is allowed.

ICT Equipment

LUPC leads in the procurement of desktop and notebook personal computers for UK higher education institutions and other Members. We also play an active part in the management of supply agreements led by our sister consortia for Apple products, servers, storage and other ICT equipment.

In 2014, LUPC became a founding member of [Electronics Watch](#), an independent monitoring organisation working to achieve respect for labour rights in the global electronics industry through socially responsible public purchasing in Europe.

Public sector buyers like LUPC with a will to act on labour rights issues do not have an effective way to do so as they have insufficient leverage over brands, companies and manufacturers. With Electronics Watch, LUPC is seeking to work with suppliers of ICT equipment to commit to new monitoring regimes where corporate codes of conduct and social auditing policies and practices are failing in their transparency and effectiveness. Currently there is no comprehensive, credible and independent monitoring system for the electronics industry that involves workers and local civil society organisations.

LUPC is pressing for the inclusion of new monitoring clauses in new supply agreements for Apple products to be awarded in 2016, and will include them in the next iteration of the National Desktop and Notebook Agreement, to be tendered in 2017.

Cleaning and Security Services

LUPC offers a supply agreement for cleaning and security services to its Members in London and south-east England. These are recognised as spend categories where operatives are traditionally among the lower paid and LUPC perceives a medium-level risk to workers in these supply chains.

Our supply agreement is due to be re-tendered in 2016 and, under new clauses to be introduced into our contracts, suppliers will be required to demonstrate their ongoing commitment to the [ETI Base Code](#), the [International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers \(ICOC\)](#) and to ensuring that they take steps on our behalf to guard against modern slavery, human trafficking, forced and bonded labour and labour rights violations in this supply chain.

Our partnership with the BHRE

LUPC has partnered with academics at the [Business, Human Rights and the Environment Research Group \(BHRE\)](#) in the School of Law at the University of Greenwich, led by Dr Olga Martin-Ortega, who was elected to the LUPC Board in 2015. Together we are organising stakeholder events, initially to sensitise and promote awareness of the risks of the electronics supply chain among public procurement professionals.

In November 2015, LUPC and the BHRE together attended the UN Annual Forum on Business and Human Rights in Geneva and the first Learning Lab on Public Procurement and Human Rights, organised by the International Corporate Accountability Roundtable (ICAR), the Danish Institute for Human Rights (DIHR), the Harrison Institute at Georgetown University Law Center, and the Public Procurement Research Group at the University of Nottingham's School of Law.

In December 2015, LUPC and the BHRE jointly organised the Socially Responsible Public Procurement of Electronics Goods Symposium at Greenwich.

Our plans for the future

As part of this reporting exercise in this and the coming years, LUPC expresses its commitment to better understanding its supply chains and working towards greater transparency and responsibility towards people working on them.

We will work with our suppliers in our product supply chains (such as office supplies and laboratory consumables) to encourage more of them to commit to the ETI Base Code. Working with our suppliers and with groups like Electronics Watch and People and Planet, we plan to map out all those supply chains which represent a medium- to high-risk of modern slavery, human trafficking, forced and bonded labour and labour rights violations.

This Statement has been approved and published by the LUPC Board and will be reviewed at least once annually.