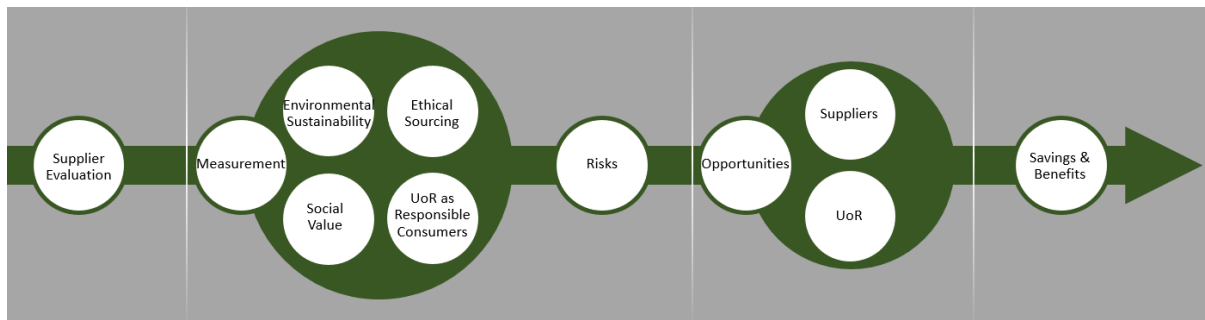


Responsible Procurement Group @ UoR Areas of Focus for 2022/23



Overview

Responsible Procurement is a very broad and our work in this area risks becoming unwieldy and difficult to measure without some structure. There is already a great deal of work being carried out by various University teams and boards so we do not want to duplicate that work on the Responsible Procurement Group. Therefore, the Responsible Procurement Group has established clear areas of procurement-related focus for each academic year, with SMART (*Specific Measurable Achievable Relevant Time-bound*) objectives that we can report on to the Procurement Board.

This paper outlines the areas of focus which will help us carry on the valuable work we have done in 2021/22 and streamline the work of the Responsible Procurement Group for the 2022/23 Academic year. Each area has SMART objectives (*Specific Measurable Achievable Relevant Time-bound*) to ensure that year-on-year progress is clear.

Updates on the progress that has been made on our RP Areas of Focus, as of June 2023, have been provided below in green / italics.

AREAS OF FOCUS FOR 2022/23

FOCUS AREA RP1 – ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY & SCOPE 3

RP1 will focus on the environment impact of our supply chain and the measurement of our Scope 3 emissions. The Sustainability and Procurement teams are already doing a great deal of work to reduce our Scope 1 and 2 emissions which contribute to the University's Environmental Sustainability goals.

Any successes in reducing our Scope 3 emissions will contribute to the UoR Environmental and Energy Policies and the University's Net Zero 2030 Carbon Plan. An explanation of Scope 1, 2, 3 emissions is included in the table below:

Scope 1	Scope 2	Scope 3
Direct emissions that come from an organisations operations and are under their control, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fuel combustion on site such as gas boilers ▪ Fleet vehicles ▪ Air Conditioning 	Indirect emissions generated by the purchase of electricity, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Steam ▪ Heating and cooling consumed by an organisation 	Indirect emissions, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Purchased goods and services ▪ Business travel ▪ Employee commuting ▪ Waste disposal ▪ Transportation and distribution ▪ Investments ▪ Leased assets and franchises ▪ Use of sold products

RP1 SMART Objectives

We will use the following tools and initiatives to deliver in this area of focus:

- a) Scope 3 emissions calculation and reduction will be part of the ongoing organisation-wide discussions on the new University Sustainable Travel Policy lead by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Academic Planning and Resources.

Progress Update: A great deal of progress has been made on the Sustainable Travel Policy in 22/23 which will contribute to a reduction in our Scope 3 emissions. The Sustainable Travel Principles were launched in autumn 2022 and the new Travel Policy was launched with effect from August 1 2023 by the University Executive Board, the most senior University management team. Schools and Functions are already making efforts to keep their business travel down to pre-2019 levels. This will be an area of focus for 23/24.

- b) Meeting will be held with the Southern Universities Purchasing Consortium (SUPC) to better understand how they calculate the annual Scope 3 supplier emissions report for consortium members and is used as part of our overall Scope 3 measurement.

Progress Update: SUPC clarified how they calculate the Scope 3 emissions to help with our internal measurement and reporting. Procurement identified ways with the Financial Systems team, who generate the reports which are used to calculate Scope 3, of improving the data that we provide to SUPC for FY23/24.

- c) As part of supplier review meetings, we will survey our suppliers to collect more details about how they are improving their own emissions thus reducing our Scope 3 emissions.

Progress Update: General discussions are taking place as part of tender, supplier review and contract renewal discussions about how our suppliers are reducing their own emissions and therefore This task has not been completed and will be carried over to 23/24.

- d) We have contacted the Carbon Trust to gain a better understanding of where our emissions are coming from so we can better manage them and make significant reductions.

Progress Update: The Chair of the Responsible Procurement group contacted the Carbon Trust for more information about how they could potentially assist us in our efforts to reduce scope 3 emissions. The following provides a summary of information provided:

- *The Carbon Trust cities and regions team have a wealth of experience in supporting a wide range of public bodies to measure, manage and reduce their carbon footprint and have worked with a significant proportion of the UK Public sector organisations on strategic plans and feasibility studies targeting reductions in carbon emissions across their estates and operations.*
- *Their team provides a detailed approach to Climate Action Planning outlined below, which starts with the assessment of our baseline carbon emissions.*



- *In regards to costs, unfortunately their consultancy services are bespoke and depending on the boundaries of the project, the complexity of the data and the number of days required, to develop a Climate Action Plan the cost would likely be £25k upwards. This cost was probative given our Sustainability team are carrying out a great deal of their own work in this area.*
 - *The Chair has registered for the Carbon Trust public sector network, which has been a useful forum for learning, sharing best practice ideas and getting information about various energy efficiency publications and webinars.*
- e) We will work with our Technical Services team to use the Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework (LEAF) to save plastic, water, energy and other resources to reduce their carbon emissions and ensure we have the appropriate waste suppliers in place and to consider buying alternative brands of supplies or equipment based on their sustainability impact, such as energy use, packaging, or ease of waste disposal and therefore reduce our Scope emissions.

Progress Update: UoR Technical Services team has achieved Bronze LEAF awards for 13 labs by May 2023 and many more are working towards the certification. The labs have made adaptations that could see them save around 2.9 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year and could save the University around £3,700 per lab each year. More information can be found about the LEAF implementation can be found here:

[LEAF reducing laborating carbon emissions - University of Reading](#)

[A new LEAF in laboratory sustainability at the university - Sustainability \(reading.ac.uk\)](#)

[LEAF Project: Reading University Technical Services Details Their Sustainability Journey - National Technician Centre \(nationaltechnicianscentre.ac.uk\)](#)

- f) We will report on progress of objectives a and b at the autumn term Procurement board meeting. We will report on objectives c and d at the spring term Procurement board meeting.

Progress Update: A written annual report will be provided for the Procurement Board and discussed at the October board meeting.

FOCUS AREA RP2 – ETHICAL WORKFORCE - SDG 8 PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYMENT & DECENT WORK FOR ALL

RP2 focuses on labour in our supply chain. We will delve further into what our suppliers are doing to commit to the elimination of Modern Slavery, the United Nations Guiding Principles for Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) and particularly UNSDG 8 Productive employment and decent work for all.

As much as possible, we will look at the full lifecycle of goods from sourcing components, manufacturing and sale of goods, looking at labour conditions, rights, risks to workers, particularly in food and IT categories. We will send a clear message to our suppliers of our expectations to ensure that our purchases are safely, smartly and ethically sourced.

RP2 SMART Objectives (*Specific Measurable Achievable Relevant Time-bound*)

We will use the following tools and initiatives to deliver in this area of focus:

- a) We will, as required under the Modern Slavery Act 2015, ensure that any IT and catering organisations in our top 100 suppliers (based on spend and highest number of purchase orders raised in 2021/22) have provided an annual statement on the steps that they are taking to ensure that they have a statement on their website or in their annual report.
- b) We will use the tools below to achieve objective a above, so as to externally benchmark, assess and manage the risk in our supply chain:
 - a. [CHRB Core UNGP Indicator Assessment](#)
 - b. [UK Government Modern Slavery Statement Registry](#)
 - c. [Know The Chain Benchmark Methodology](#)
 - d. [Marks & Spencer's Supplier Modern Slavery Toolkit](#)
- c) We commit to work with organisations such as Electronics Watch and the Fairtrade Foundation to help evaluate our IT and catering supply chains and identify any risks.
- d) We commit to work with other University of Reading teams including HR, Legal, Estates, DTS, RES, Fundraising, KTC to ensure that Modern Slavery is considered when engaging in partnerships and fundraising.
- e) We will report on progress of objectives a and b at the autumn term Procurement board meeting. We will report on objectives c and d at the spring term Procurement board meeting.

Progress Update: Due to resource shortages, this work was started but not completed in 22/23. We hope to carry it out in 23/24 with the help of the new Procurement Administrator and some student assistance.

FOCUS AREA RP3 – SOCIAL VALUE – LOCAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

RP3 will look the role of the University and our suppliers in our community. As a large consumer in Reading, we will evaluate how we can increase our use of and development of local suppliers, improve our local supplier relationships, increase use of small and medium enterprises and increase the amount of local goods and services we purchase – whether those are within our community, county, or our country as opposed to further afield.

RP3 SMART Objectives (*Specific Measurable Achievable Relevant Time-bound*)

We will use the following tools and initiatives to deliver in this area of focus:

- a) We will continue regular meetings with the Reading Business Network and Federation of Small Business to foster new relationships, find out about new suppliers and share information about our upcoming tenders.
- b) We will survey our catering SME suppliers using the B-Corp Impact Assessment tool to assess what certifications they hold and what efforts and innovations they are making to win new business.

Progress Update: The planning and discussions with B-Corp to use their Impact Assessment tool began in 22/23 and will continue in 23/24 with the help of the new Procurement Administrator and possibly a junior buyer in Catering.

- c) RP3 will look beyond price when awarding contracts and look at what the community benefits of a contract could be for us and our community e.g. will we generate fewer food miles by purchasing from a local supplier despite their prices being slightly higher.
- d) We will try to allocate a portion of tenders to local or SME suppliers who may not be able to provide the same value for money that larger national or international suppliers can provide but can offer more social and community value.
- e) We will report on progress of objectives a and b at the autumn term Procurement board meeting. We will report on objectives c and d at the spring term Procurement board meeting.

Progress Update: The Procurement team ran a House Lager tender in 22/23 which was closed, and allowed submissions from breweries in the Berkshire CAMRA area only to encourage local business and reduce our carbon miles. All production process must be conducted In LocAle Area - A local brewery to UoR is defined by Reading & Mid Berks CAMRA's LocAle Area.

FOCUS AREA RP4 – UoR AS RESPONSIBLE CONSUMERS

RP4 will focus on our role as buyers and consumers as opposed our suppliers. We will look at what we buy, are there better alternatives, what can we do differently, what can we do without, are goods disposed of responsibly. We already implement circular procurement principles - the use of purchasing power to achieve maximum positive ecological, social, and economic impact throughout the life span of products and services – in some of our purchases such as:

- **Farms to kitchens** - Use of eggs and beef from University farms in on-campus cafes
- **IT Equipment** - Laptops have a four-year renewal cycle and then equipment is managed by an organisation that prioritises the re-use of devices and components, aims to reduce the carbon emissions associated with recycling the component metals and plastics and refurbishes unwanted IT equipment, finding a secondary use for it, therefore reducing the number of new devices being manufactured and the raw material mining associated with this process.
- **Labs** - Working with laboratory suppliers to increase the amount of take-back schemes, re-use and recycling of materials and equipment.
- **Ethical Consumption** - Recently took out a University subscription to the Ethical Consumer publication through the University Library which will be used by Procurement as part of our Responsible Procurement work to make more informed choices about manufacturing, purchasing and supplier choices and will be used by the Careers and Employability team and students to inform their career research and ethical consumption.

RP4 SMART Objectives (*Specific Measurable Achievable Relevant Time-bound*)

We will use the following tools and initiatives to deliver in this area of focus:

- a) We will amend our [Supplier Code of Conduct](#) to make very clear our expectations of suppliers in helping us improve our role as responsible consumers.

Progress Update: The University of Reading Supplier Code of Conduct was updated to include additional detail in the Human Rights & Modern Slavery and the Environmental Compliance sections to set out expectations of suppliers.

- b) We will ensure through supplier review meetings and contract renewal negotiations, that suppliers are accountable and deliver on contractual commitments they made when the contract was awarded.

Progress Update: Taking place as part of Procurement and Stakeholder review and renewal discussions.

- c) We will look for more opportunities, in addition to those above, where we can incorporate Circular Procurement principles into our purchasing ethos.

Progress Update: In 2022/23, the Digital Technology Services team appointed a Director of Digital Operations and Service Delivery. As part of his initial priorities, he reviewed the processes carried out by the disposal and e-waste management company used by UoR.

UoR publicly endorses sustainability as a key strategic factor and this, in turn, is mirrored within the recently launched Digital Strategy which proposes sustainability as one of five core drivers of enabling the success of our strategic ambitions. The current process of shredding of data handling components by this supplier, which was required by the UoR IT

Equipment Disposal Policy, stands in contrast to our sustainability approach. The Cyber & Information Security Group has recently agreed a proposal to collaborate with Charterhouse-Muller for reuse and resale of equipment, thus incorporating a circular approach. This option allows UoR to retain more oversight over the device lifecycle and apply the reuse to support digital accessibility for our community. The option furthermore enables a financial net benefit from equipment processing, something the current status cannot achieve.

- d) We will look at spend patterns to see if any of our Schools and Functions are leading the way in the way that they purchase.

Progress Update: Two schools have stood out relating to sustainable travel since the Sustainable Travel Principles were introduced in autumn 2022. The School of Archaeology, Geography and Environmental Science (SAGES) has made a concerted effort to run field trips in the UK and the School of Mathematical, Physical and Computational Sciences has had leadership from the Head of School to support sustainable travel in his very large school

The Campus Commerce Catering team have also been leading the way as responsible buyers and consumers in a number of ways including:

- Menus of Change - working to realise a long-term, practical vision integrating optimal nutrition and public health, environmental stewardship and restoration, and social responsibility concerns within our catering operations.*
- House Lager tender was closed for submissions from breweries in the Berkshire CAMRA area only to encourage local. All production process must be conducted in LocAle Area - A local brewery to UoR is defined by Reading & Mid Berks CAMRA's LocAle Area.*
- The University is working to incorporate many different accreditations and sustainable products and services into our catering offering such as Organic, RSPCA Approved, Red Tractor, Free Range, Locally Sourced, Rainforest Alliance, UTZ, Cocoa Life, B-Corp, ISO 14001, People & Planet, UN Sustainable Development Goals.*

- e) We will report on progress of objectives a and b at the autumn term Procurement board meeting. We will report on objectives c and d at the spring term Procurement board meeting.

Progress Update: A written annual report will be provided for the Procurement Board and discussed at the October board meeting.

NEXT STEPS

To make progress in each area of focus, smaller groups will be convened for termly meetings to achieve the SMART objectives outlined above. Progress reports on each area will be provided to the Responsible Procurement Group and the Procurement Board at our termly meetings.

In addition to those Responsible Procurement areas of focus above that will continue into 23/24 we will also work on the following additional SMART objectives in the coming year.

- 1. Sustainable Travel - Implementation of the new Sustainable Travel Policy and Carbon budgets.*
- 2. Fairtrade - Implementation of the Fairtrade Award areas for improvement.*
- 3. Social Value – Work more closely with the Social Value network, SUPC and other HEIs to increase the amount of work that we are doing in Social Value.*

Updated June 2023