

ETHICAL PURCHASING POLICY

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1 STATEMENT OF INTENT/POLICY

1.1 University of Manchester Students' Union's policy is to seek to purchase goods and services that:

- Are produced and delivered under labour conditions that meet the Ethical Trade Initiative Code of Conduct (ETI) and therefore do not involve the abuse or exploitation of any person
- Have the least negative impact on climate change and the environment

1.2 Such considerations will form part of the evaluation and selection criteria for all goods and services purchased by the Union.

1.3 The purpose of the policy is to:

- Promote good Labour, Green House Gas Emission Reduction and Environmental Standards in the Suppliers and Supply Chain of the Union
- Protect and enhance the Union's reputation as an active campaigner on Labour and Climate Change issues

1.4 The Union has signed up to the Ethical Trading Initiative Code of Conduct (Appendix A) to guide its purchasing decisions. In addition, the Union will seek alternative sources where the conduct of suppliers demonstrably violates the Code, and there is no willingness to address the situation within a reasonable time period, or where companies in the supply chain are involved in the manufacture or sale of arms in ways that are unacceptable to the Union.

1.5 The Union commits to joining the Ethical Training Initiative and SEDEX. These two organisations will enable the Union to properly evaluate their supplier's compliance with the values and ethos that the Union wishes to operate. In addition the Union will participate in the NUSSL E&E opt-in group to ensure that it is purchasing in the most ethical way that it can via the collective purchasing consortium.

2 THE UNIONS CODE OF CONDUCT FOR SUPPLIERS

2.1 Suppliers should commit to continuous improvement towards compliance with the labour and environmental standards specified, both in their own companies and those of their suppliers. Suppliers are expected to meet the obligations outlined in the Operating Principles section of this policy.

3 LABOUR STANDARDS

3.1 The Union has adopted the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) Base Code outlined below for

labour standards in this Code of Conduct. The ETI is an alliance of companies, non-governmental organisations and trade unions committed to working together to identify and promote good practice in the implementation of Codes of labour practice, which are based on the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions.

EMPLOYMENT IS FREELY CHOSEN:

- There is no forced, bonded or involuntary prison labour.
- Workers are not required to lodge 'deposits' or their identity papers with the employer and are free to leave their employer after reasonable notice.

FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND THE RIGHT TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING ARE

RESPECTED:

- Workers, without distinction, have the right to join or form trade unions of their own choosing and to bargain collectively.
- The employer adopts an open attitude towards the legitimate activities of trade unions.
- Workers representatives are not discriminated against and have access to carry out their representative functions in the workplace.
- Where the right to freedom of association and collective bargaining is restricted under law, the employer facilitates, and does not hinder, the development of parallel means for independent and free association and bargaining.

WORKING CONDITIONS ARE SAFE AND HYGIENIC:

- A safe and hygienic working environment shall be provided, bearing in mind the prevailing knowledge of the industry and of any specific hazards. Adequate steps shall be taken to prevent accidents and injury to health arising out of, associated with, or occurring in the course of work, by minimising, so far as is reasonably practicable, the causes of hazards inherent in the working environment.
- Workers shall receive regular and recorded health and safety training, and such training shall be repeated for new or reassigned workers.
- Access to clean toilet facilities and potable water, and, if appropriate, sanitary facilities for food storage shall be provided.
- Accommodation, where provided, shall be clean, safe, and meet the basic needs of the workers.

- The company observing the standards shall assign responsibility for health and safety to a senior management representative.

CHILD LABOUR SHALL NOT BE USED:

- There shall be no new recruitment of child labour.
- Companies shall develop or participate in and contribute to policies and programmes, which provide for the transition of any child found to be performing child labour to enable her/him to attend and remain in quality education until no longer a child.
- Children and young people under 18 years of age shall not be employed at night or in hazardous conditions.
- These policies and procedures shall conform to the provisions of the relevant International Labour Organisation (ILO) standards.

LIVING WAGES ARE PAID:

- Wages and benefits paid for a standard working week meet, at a minimum, national legal standards or industry benchmarks, whichever is higher. In any event wages should always be high enough to meet basic needs and to provide some discretionary income.
- All workers shall be provided with written and understandable information about their employment conditions in respect to wages before they enter employment, and about the particulars of their wages for the pay period concerned each time that they are paid.
- Deductions from wages as a disciplinary measure shall not be permitted nor shall any deductions from wages not provided for by national law be permitted without the express and informed permission of the worker concerned. All disciplinary measures should be recorded.

WORKING HOURS ARE NOT EXCESSIVE:

- Working hours comply with national laws and benchmark industry standards, whichever affords greater protection.
- In any event, workers shall not on a regular basis be required to work in excess of 48 hours per week and shall be provided with at least one day off for every 7 day period on average. Overtime shall be voluntary, shall not exceed 12 hours per week, shall not be demanded on a regular basis and shall always be compensated at a premium rate.

NO DISCRIMINATION IS PRACTISED:

- There is no discrimination in hiring, compensation, access to training, promotion, termination or retirement based on race, caste, national origin, religion, age, disability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, union membership or political affiliation.

REGULAR EMPLOYMENT IS PROVIDED:

- To every extent possible work performed must be on the basis of a recognised employment relationship established through national law and practice.
- Obligations to employees under labour or social security laws and regulations arising from the regular employment relationship shall not be avoided through the use of labour-only contracting, sub-contracting or home-working arrangements, or through apprenticeship schemes where there is no real intent to impart skills or provide regular employment, nor shall any such obligations be avoided through the excessive use of fixed-term contracts of employment.

NO HARSH OR INHUMANE TREATMENT IS ALLOWED:

- Physical abuse or discipline, the threat of physical abuse, sexual or other harassment and verbal abuse or other forms of intimidation shall be prohibited.

4 ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS

- The Union is committed to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in its supply chains and will not knowingly purchase goods or services from companies that actively lobby to undermine progressive climate change policy or push for continued expansion of fossil fuel use.
- Suppliers are expected to not only meet all statutory and other legal requirements relating to the environmental impacts of their business, but also address the following:

CLIMATE CHANGE:

- Not actively lobby to undermine public policies to tackle climate change or push for continued expansion of fossil fuel use.
- Companies must measure, set targets, reduce (in absolute terms) and report publicly on the direct and indirect greenhouse gas emissions from their business. They must actively research and introduce low carbon, materials, transport, packaging and energy sources into their business processes and activities.
- Companies which supply products to the Union must where practical research the life cycle carbon footprint of their products and advise the Union on the use of lower carbon alternatives.

SUSTAINABLE PAPER AND WOOD SOURCING:

- All suppliers must never knowingly become involved in, collude with or purchase timber from illegal logging operations. Work with supply chains to ensure that all forest products purchased are as a minimum legal in origin.

WASTE MANAGEMENT:

- Waste is minimised and items recycled whenever this is practicable. Effective controls of waste in respect of ground, air, and water pollution are adopted. In the case of hazardous materials, emergency response plans are in place. Products made for the Union will where possible use recycled materials and be recyclable.

PACKAGING:

- Undue and unnecessary use of materials is avoided, and recycled materials used whenever appropriate.

CONSERVATION:

- Processes and activities are monitored and modified as necessary to ensure conservation of scarce resources, including water, flora and fauna and productive land in certain situations.

5 BUSINESS BEHAVIOUR

The supplier or parent company should not be involved in any of the following activities:

- Arms manufacture
- The sale or export of arms or strategic services to governments which systematically violate the human rights of their citizens, or where there is internal armed conflict or major tensions, or where the sale of arms may jeopardise regional peace and security
- The sale of baby milks outside the WHO Code of Conduct
- Pesticide sales outside the FAO guidelines for pesticide retailing
- Extractive industries
- Production or publication or broadcast of adult entertainment
- Seen to be political

5.1 This policy sets out some of the ways in which decisions should be made. This list is not exhaustive but should be used as a guide to ensure that purchasing and procurement decisions are made within the spirit of this policy.

5.2 Before anything is purchased, the service manager or budget holder is responsible for making an impact assessment. The Procurement Policy must also be referred to and the impact assessment must include the following:

- Is the item, service or good required to further the aims of the organisation or service?
- Can this item, good or service be sourced from another part of the organisation?
- Can this item, good or service be sourced from within the University or re-use centres?
- In general, when procuring anything, the options with the least environmental impact should be considered favourably.
- If a new item, good or service is required, the following must be followed:
 - the ethical record of the source of the item good or services must be considered
 - the full life –cycle cost of the item, good or service must be calculated and information used in selecting the most appropriate option
 - Where it relates to a furniture item, this must be made from sustainable material and timber should be from a certified sustainable source.

5.3 Where a service is being provided in relation to re-developments or capital investment, the full energy efficiency of the programme of works or development must be assessed as a whole before embarking on any work.

5.4 Energy consumption will be monitored on a monthly and annual basis.

5.4.1 Where any savings are made from a reduction on energy consumption, this money will be ring-fenced to invest in new environmental projects.

6 IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 The Students' Union has appointed an Environmental Steering Group who are responsible for steering the organisation towards environmental and ethical best practice.

6.2 It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that the choices they make on behalf of the organisation meet the requirements of this policy. This will be monitored by the Environmental Steering Group, Operations Director and the Union Director.