

Union of UEA Students Procurement Policy

Proposed: Andrew Taylor, (People and Planet)
Seconded: William Lacey , (Environment Officer)

Union Notes:

1. The Union has been campaigning for the University to adopt a sustainable purchasing policy.
2. A significant amount of the Unions expenditure is spent on purchasing goods, utilities, works and services. The intention of the Policy is to use this spending power to reduce the Unions impact on the areas listed:
 - the protection of human health
 - the promotion of fair working conditions
 - the promotion of social enterprise and improving local skills
 - the promotion of the local economy and employment
 - reducing soil, water and air pollution
 - reducing energy consumption and climate change
 - reducing water consumption
 - reducing the consumption of raw materials, including packaging and waste
 - the protection of habitats and biodiversity
3. Student union support for workers in Honduras has ended with the re employment of Honduras workers, who were sacked for trying to unionise.
4. The Worker Rights Consortium (WRC) is an independent labor rights monitoring organization, conducting investigations of working conditions in factories around the globe. Their primary focus is the labor practices of factories that make apparel and other goods bearing university logos.
5. 186 universities and colleges worldwide are affiliated to the worker rights consortium.

Union Believes:

1. That the union should apply the following principles and definitions, throughout our supply chain:
 - Protecting human health including minimising our use of products that, in themselves or in their manufacture or disposal cause pollution; promoting healthy eating in our catering provision; and encouraging exercise in the design of our buildings and transport arrangements.
 - Promoting fair working conditions including dealing with suppliers (or those who purchase from other companies) who do not use forced or child labour; pay overtime above a maximum 48 hour week; provide a 'living'

wage; provide freedom from bullying, racial or sexual harassment, a healthy working environment and the right to unionise.

- Promotion of social enterprise and improving local skills including encouraging local suppliers (including 'not-for-profit' community projects) to bid for appropriate supplies, works and services by advertising locally, minimising 'red-tape, and encouraging main contractors to use local sub-contractors.
- Promotion of the local economy and employment although under EU legislation it is anti-competitive to favour local suppliers directly, local business can be encouraged by specifying minimum response times in service contracts and fresh produce, where appropriate.
- Reducing soil, water and air pollution by buying products which cause less pollution in their manufacture, use and disposal.
- Reducing energy consumption and climate change by buying products that use less energy to produce and use, and avoid products and processes that generate greenhouse gases such as methane, HFCs, PFCs SF6, N2O and low-level ozone.
- Reducing water consumption by avoiding products that are water intensive in their production or use.
- Reducing the consumption of raw materials, including packaging and waste by choosing products that have a higher recycled content and/or which can be easily recycled. Minimise packaging or ensure that it is reused or recycled or, at the very least is biodegradable.
- Protection of habitats and biodiversity so avoiding products that have been produced at the expense of vulnerable habitats or species including land clearance, industrialised farming, unsustainable harvesting, etc

2. There will always be a desire from consumers for cheaper products, which will lead to factories exploiting workers.

3. The most effective way that workers can protect their rights is through collective negotiations by forming Unions.

4. The students union and university are unable to monitor to whole of their supply chains, so the most effective way for us to support workers right in our supply chains is to work with the WRC to stop anti-union activity.

Union Resolves:

1. All staff with purchasing responsibilities should to consider whether a purchase:

- Is necessary; can existing items be used or purchases be shared with other potential users, can the product be rented, or the service outsourced.

- Will use resources efficiently during its lifetime, including whilst in use and upon disposal; have recycled products been used in its manufacture.
- Is made using properly managed, renewable resources.
- Is durable; can it be recharged, repaired, upgraded or reused.
- Can be recycled at the end of its useful life.
- Is likely to emit toxic or polluting substances during its production, use or disposal.
- Includes excessive packaging: can any packaging be reused/recycled or is made from recycled material.
- Can be purchased from suppliers who demonstrate a commitment to improving their sustainability performance.
- Should the specification include sustainability issues such as a minimum energy efficiency rating, prohibition of HFCs, removal/reuse of packaging, etc.

2. The Finance Officer will:

- Develop and maintain an action plan, based on an analysis of the Union spending, to identify priority product areas for further investigation and improvement.
- Consider environmental, social and economic factors when appointing preferred suppliers.
- Encourage preferred, and other key, suppliers to produce, distribute and dispose of products, packaging and waste in a more sustainable manner.
- Provide guidance, including the use of whole life costing, to encourage staff involved in purchasing to adopt more sustainable purchasing practices particularly in respect of products which have a high impact on sustainability.
- Develop and record appropriate performance indicators to measure sustainable purchasing targets.
- Work with other HE bodies and the wider public sector to share experiences and circulate best practice.
- Communicate this policy within the University community and to suppliers so that all staff and students are aware of the impact they have on the environment and society and help them minimise these impacts.

3. To lobby UEA to affiliate to the WRC.

4. To commit to contributing £500 to the affiliation of the WRC to cover monitoring of the unions supply chains.

Passed 29/04/10
