



Modern Slavery Act 2015

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement

Introduction

Modern Slavery is a crime and a violation of fundamental human rights. It takes various forms, such as slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labor and human trafficking all of which have in common the deprivation of a person's liberty by another in order to exploit them for personal or commercial gain.

At Ulster University we are committed to our values and apply these in our approach to combating Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking. We are committed to improving our practices to ensure that modern slavery and human trafficking does not occur in any part of our organisation or supply chain.

Organisational Structure

Ulster University is grounded in the heart of the community and strives to make a lasting contribution to society. Renowned for world-class teaching, Ulster aims to transform lives, stretch minds, and develop the skills required by a growing economy. The outcomes of our research have global significance with local relevance, and contribute to the social, economic and culture betterment of our region.

With an annual turnover of £281m, Ulster University is one of the region's largest employers with 2,900 staff.

The University is registered with the Charities Commission for Northern Ireland, and has clear responsibility, as a charity, to act for the public benefit across all its activities.

What we are doing now

Supply Chains

The University has a supplier database of over 9,000 suppliers and our procurements can be either through various consortium framework agreements or through a competitive competition. All procurement activities over £30k are managed through a centrally controlled Procurement department, which sits within the Finance Directorate.

The University purchases a wide range of products and services which adds to the complexities of our supply chain. We are continually collaborating with our suppliers using an online tool, provided by NetPositive Futures, that asks and actively assists all our suppliers

through the tool, to develop an action plan to address Modern Slavery and other key sustainability issues within their business and supply chains. In this way, the University is taking proactive steps to ensure its Supply Chain is aware of all the relevant legislation around Modern Slavery. Training has also been provided to procurement staff to ensure that they are aware of modern slavery and human trafficking issues.

Future Priorities

Procurement

Building on the baseline we have established, we continue to ensure Modern Slavery is considered as a fundamental part of the procurement process, and that we continue to both challenge and support our supply base. More specifically we will:

1. Increase the use of the supplier engagement tool within high-risk modern slavery sectors.
2. Increase the number of practical actions taken by our suppliers when responding to modern slavery.
3. Continue to develop modern slavery awareness amongst the procurement professionals and contact managers with the university.
4. Refresh modern slavery training for the central procurement team, annually.

We will continue to build awareness and knowledge across all areas of the University through information and training initiatives and review all university-wide policies to ensure compliance with the Act. We will examine modern slavery and human trafficking awareness in our student population and explore self-evaluation and assessment techniques to help identify risks. We will look at how we can integrate best practice to improve awareness within our supply chains.

Employment of Staff

We ensure that staff employed directly follow a robust set of employment policies and procedures process. The University understands its responsibilities under immigration law and has robust mechanisms in place to ensure that we only employ people who have lawful entitlement to work in the UK.

We also have a dignity at work and a safeguarding policy to ensure protection of staff, and a whistleblowing policy for staff who wish to report wrongdoing in these areas.

For staff recruited on a temporary basis we only partner with reputable agencies who comply with our supplier policies.

People

Our People and Culture policies are reviewed regularly to ensure that they meet all legislative requirements.

Fundraising and Investment

We are committed to ethical investment standards, and these are reflected in our Ethical Investment Policy Statement. The current review of our Acceptance and Donations Policy will allow us to integrate modern slavery and human trafficking awareness and procedures into this area of our business.

International Partnerships

Strategic international partnering delivers multiple benefits for Ulster. Its services enhance our global position and profile, extend opportunities for staff and students, unlock new initiatives in international teaching, research and delivery and support the University's wider mission.

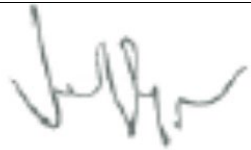
The University, through its Global Engagement strategy has committed to a rigorous approach, identifying high value partnerships, and securing opportunities to work with likeminded institutions, in support of shared objectives, values and challenges.

Global Engagement partnership evaluation is undertaken in line with the Global Partnerships Protocol. This protocol and our Global Engagement Policy demonstrate our commitment to acting ethically and with integrity in developing our growing network of partnerships.

In Summary

Our workplace policies and procedures demonstrate 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 supply chains, or across our services.

This statement is made pursuant to section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes our slavery and human trafficking statement for the financial year ending 31 July 2023.

Date statement approved	
Final Approval by:	Chair of Council
Date of review of statement	March 2024

Jenny Pyper
Chair of Council

For and on behalf of Ulster University

Further information and contact: Clare Egan, Head of Procurement, cm.egan@ulster.ac.uk