Modern Slavery Act Statement
Lancaster University
Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement

Introduction

Organisational Structure

Lancaster University is a research intensive Higher Education institution in North West England, which operates on a global scale both in terms of student recruitment and research collaborations. Established by Royal Charter in 1964, Lancaster University currently has a turnover of around £270m, with an international student body of more than 12,000 students across four Faculties.

In addition to the main campus at Lancaster, the University has significant international teaching partnerships, and works in many other countries through research and exchange programmes.

Lancaster University is committed to the highest standards of human respect, as detailed in the values and behaviours set out in the University Strategy. Lancaster University staff are encouraged to engage actively to change the world through teaching and research, and by leading on economic and social improvement.

We have identified the following main areas of risk to our activities from a modern slavery perspective: staff activities, mitigated by appropriate training, and supply chain procurement. These areas are addressed separately below, with reference to the steps being taken during the current financial year to manage these risks.

1) Supply Chain

Other than payroll costs, Lancaster University has an expenditure of around £80m annually plus a varying capital projects budget. The University applies robust Financial Regulations and operates a centralised procurement model to manage this expenditure appropriately.

Lancaster University’s supply chain falls broadly into the following categories of expenditure, which are:

- Estates-related
- Office Solutions
- Laboratory Consumables and Equipment
- Library
- Professional Services
- ICT Equipment and Services
- Catering
- Travel

We recognise that some of our suppliers will be at greater risk of slavery and human trafficking and have updated our terms and conditions to mandate compliance to the Modern Slavery Act 2015.
Due diligence is carried out during all our tender processes. Potential bidders are required to declare their compliance with the Act before their bid is considered.

Across our supply chain we use an online tool for recording supplier sustainability activities. All our contracted suppliers are invited to sign up to this HE Sector wide tool called NETPositive Supplier Engagement.

To allow us to target our activity where it can have the most impact, an exercise to identify our areas of higher risk has been undertaken. Laboratory consumables, ICT equipment, some parts of Estates-related spend and Catering have been identified.

A large proportion of our expenditure in high-risk areas is via HE Sector Framework Agreements. Many Framework suppliers have signed up to the Base code of the Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI), a code of good labour practice set out by the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

2) Staff Activities and policies

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking have both been areas of research for the University. The Pentland Centre, a University Research Centre that promotes sustainability in business, focuses aspects of its research on the realities of global supply chains, and attempts to identify key success factors and the roots of ongoing systemic problems, including modern slavery. Similarly, the Violence & Society UNESCO Centre, a coalition of researchers based in eight departments across three faculties at Lancaster University, has a key research focus on human trafficking. The University will continue to research these areas and work to influence key policy and decision-makers.

The University sees a natural synergy between its actions in relation to the Modern Slavery Act and others related to human dignity, liberation and respect. The University has a number of policies in place to support and promote equality of opportunity, diversity and human rights. These include an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy that sets out how we apply our policies so that we are a fair and equitable employer.

Lancaster University also has established and robust complaints and whistle-blowing procedures, enabling staff and students to raise issues relating to modern slavery and labour rights violations through appropriate channels.

Our policies are available to all staff via our intranet site, and training in equality and diversity is mandatory for all new staff.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee oversees this area and reports to Council.

3) Effectiveness of the steps we have taken and our plans for the future

We have reviewed the work undertaken and set out next steps.

- We have completed an exercise to map the high-risk areas within our Tier 1 supply chain to meet our commitment of better understanding our suppliers.

- All contracted suppliers have signed up to our revised terms and conditions that include commitments relating to the Modern Slavery Act 2015.
For tenders awarded in 17/18 all contractors self-certified their compliance with their obligations under the Act.

We have continued to promote the use of framework suppliers internally. In the high-risk areas of Labs and ICT over 75% of our expenditure is via framework suppliers.

The number of suppliers using NET positive Supplier Engagement tool has increased.

The Head of Procurement is named as the contact point for any member of staff wishing to raise concerns about a supplier and this information appears on our Sustainable Procurement webpages.

Procurement staff have undertaken further training in this area and we have rolled out training to other relevant staff in the institution.

For the coming year we intend to take the following further steps to combat slavery and human trafficking.

- Work with suppliers in areas identified as high risk to understand the steps they are taking to mitigate this risk.

- Continue to actively participate in sector-wide management of framework suppliers and lobby to ensure all suppliers have stated anti-slavery and anti-trafficking policies.

- Request that suppliers provide a copy of their Modern Slavery Act Statement, where it is required, before contracts are awarded.

- Continue to roll out training to staff outside the procurement team who interact with suppliers.

This Statement will be communicated to all staff and placed in a prominent location on the University website.

This Statement has been approved and published by Council, the governing body of Lancaster University, and will be reviewed annually. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, which is a joint committee of Council and Senate, will have responsibility for the oversight of the University’s activities and compliance in this area.

Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council

23 November 2018