

PROCUREMENT POLICY

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1. Introduction

The University purchases circa £85m worth of goods, services and works from external providers each year. The University Finance Committee requires the institution to be fully compliant to the Procurement policy and associated guidance and procedures.

The Procurement policy is an integral part of the University's Finance Regulations which are approved by the University Council.

The Procurement team is responsible for procurement of all goods, services and works required from external suppliers ethically and in compliance with legislation and regulations.

2. Procurement's Role

To provide professional and qualified procurement expertise, advice and services for all non-pay expenditure. This includes capital expenditure and funding obtained through research grant bids.

All procurement activity shall be carried out in accordance with the [Public Procurement \(Amendment etc.\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2020](#), [Public Contracts Regulations 2015](#), and from 24 February 2025 the [Procurement Act 2023](#), as well as the University Financial Regulations and this Procurement Policy.

As part of our role we will:

- Develop, promote and implement an appropriate procurement strategy, category procurement strategies, and relevant policies and procedures across the University in consultation with stakeholders.
- Deliver maximum value for money (VFM) through a whole life costing approach
- Work closely with a preferred supplier to implement a sustainability tool which enables all our suppliers to develop a sustainability action plan in line with our environmental, sustainability and institutional objectives. The data from the tool can be used to report on impact in respect of supporting our Modern Slavery commitments and working towards achieving level 4 on the UK government and business-led Flexible Framework and/or achieving the ISO20400 Sustainable Procurement standard.
- Procure all goods and services with high ethical standards and focus on social, economic and environmental considerations by applying principles of sustainable procurement.
- Have regard to the priorities set out in the National Procurement Policy Statement when undertaking procurements.
- Measure and actively monitor that modern slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in any areas of operation within the University and its supply chain.
- Advertise all open tender opportunities greater than £25,000 on the UK government Contracts Finder/Find a Tender online portals.

- Develop and promote the adoption and use of relevant technology solutions to minimise purchase to pay costs.
- Build relationships external to the University to encourage cross public sector working and gain benefit via wider value for money reviews and added value for future contracts and procurement activities.
- Act as a central point of contact for University staff and provide training activities/workshops where appropriate.
- Provide contract information and promote national framework agreement availability to all stakeholders.
- Work closely with colleagues around the University to ensure there is an understanding of their requirements, to support and enable what they do.
- Establish a comprehensive contract register for all non-pay expenditure over £25,000. This will also be published on Contracts Finder.
- Constantly review processes and policies to understand and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Procurement team.
- Fully support the internal audit of the devolved responsibility for spends of less than £25,000 to departments and schools, and the external audit of suppliers for compliance to contract, as well as audits of the Procurement team by internal auditors.

3. Procurement's Vision and Mission

Vision

We aspire to be a first-class Procurement team and embed a category management approach across all areas of non-pay expenditure.

To be the central point within the University for all Procurement guidance and support, ensuring a value for money approach is entrenched in all procurement activity.

To ensure all procurement activity is compliant and conducted ethically.

Mission

Procurement will provide a high standard of professional expertise and actively apply the principles of sustainable procurement.

4. Purpose and Application

The purpose of the Procurement Policy is to set out the principles, policies and procedures on which procurement activity within the University will be based.

This policy will apply to all non-pay expenditure, irrespective of the source of funds or who is authorised to make commitments on behalf of the University.

Our legal and contracting entity name is Royal Holloway and Bedford New College. This name is only used on all legal and procurement documentation.

The University is required to be fully compliant with the [Public Procurement \(Amendment etc.\) \(EU Exit\) Regulations 2020](#), [Public Contracts Regulations 2015](#) and from 24 February 2025 the [Procurement Act 2023](#), as well as this procurement policy.

There is a requirement to deliver best value for money across all spends in accordance to agreed budgets, to ensure misappropriation of funds is eliminated.

The Procurement team are responsible for providing guidance and support across all areas of University.

The Procurement team ensures:

- **Compliance** – Compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and any other Directives, monitoring compliance when Framework Agreements are utilised. We will publish information on public sector contract opportunities in the UK on the Find a Tender Service (FTS).
- **Effectiveness & Efficiency** – Value for money (VFM), whole life costing and quality to meet the end user's requirement, cash savings to the University, effective collaboration with London Universities Purchasing Consortium (LUPC), other Higher Education (HE) institutions and public bodies.
- **Risk Management** – Supplier due diligence, continuous financial monitoring, fit for purpose contract terms & conditions and supply chain risk assessment.
- **Sustainable Procurement** – Corporate Social Responsibility, Fair Trade, Community benefits, Sustainability Code of Conduct, Anti-bribery & Corruption, Environment, Labour & Human Rights, Ethics and sustainable procurement considerations.
- **Stakeholder Engagement** – Supporting our stakeholders and collaboratively driving excellent academic and student experience. Providing training and guidance to stakeholders across the University. Positive and proactive engagement with LUPC, other HE institutions and public sector entities.

The Procurement team is the central strategic procurement team, which supports the University in achieving its objectives and strategic vision.

To support University, the Procurement team has developed this policy document along with procedures, forms, templates and guidance through the key policies below.

The Procurement Policy document and all relating documents will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Head of Procurement.

5. Key Policies & Procedures

Title	Description	Link
Agresso Hub	Guidance and Useful Information for users of Agresso	Agresso - Royal Holloway Staff Intranet
Anti-money Laundering, Counter Fraud, Anti-Bribery, Criminal Finances Act	Guidance relating to the policies listed	Fraud, Bribery, Donations & Gifts - Royal Holloway Staff Intranet
Brand Guidance	University Brand guidance and overview	Marketing and Communications - Royal Holloway Staff Intranet
Conflict of Interests Policy and Procedure	Safeguards which the University is obliged to put in place to protect both individual and University reputation and to limit the risk of exposure to bribery, fraud and other malpractice as much as possible	Governance and Legal - Royal Holloway Staff Intranet
Preferred Suppliers, Contracts & Framework Agreements	List of University contracts with preferred suppliers that schools and departments should use where possible. Link to HE collaborative framework agreements	Preferred Suppliers, Contracts & Agreements - Royal Holloway Staff Intranet
Contracts Legal Review Procedure	Procedure to ensure that contractual risks are effectively managed on behalf of the individual procurer and the University	Governance and Legal - Royal Holloway Staff Intranet
Data Protection Policy	Policy that serves as the core of the University's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliance practices	Governance and Legal - Royal Holloway Staff Intranet
Document Retention	Guidance on the retention periods for the different types of documentation produced during the procurement and contract management processes	Being Developed
Environmental Policy	All procurement activity to be conducted in line with the University Environmental Policy	Environmental Policy
Financial Regulations	University Council approved Financial Regulations	Finance - Royal Holloway Staff Intranet
Guidance for less than £25,000	Guidance to assist individuals procuring non-framework goods and services with a total value of less than £25,000	Being Developed
Health & Safety Policies and Procedures	Working in a safe environment, mitigation of risk. Information, instruction, supervision, training aligned with the University's Health, Safety & Wellbeing policies	H&S Policies and Procedures - Royal Holloway Staff Intranet

Title	Description	Link
Information Technology Procurement Policy	To provide a framework for the purchasing of Information Technology (IT) hardware, software and externally hosted applications, services or consultancy for the University	Information Technology and Library - Royal Holloway Staff Intranet
New Supplier Request	Guidance to support the new supplier(s) request process outside of Agresso?	Being Developed
Payments Team	Useful information and guidance for making supplier payments and invoice queries	Payments Team (Accounts Payable) - Royal Holloway Staff Intranet
Purchasing cards	Guidance to facilitate the purchase of low value and/or obscure and irregular items.	Purchasing Card - Royal Holloway Staff Intranet
Single Tender Action (STA)	For all purchases where exception from normal Procurement policy is proposed.	Single Tender Action (STA) - Royal Holloway Staff Intranet
Spend Thresholds	University spend thresholds for the purchase of goods, services and works	Tender Process - Royal Holloway Staff Intranet
Supplier Portal	Information for all suppliers of works, goods and services to University	Supplier Portal - Royal Holloway Staff Intranet
Sustainable Procurement	Guidance to support the conduct of tenders in an environmentally, socially, ethically and economically responsible manner. Sustainable procurement programme. Supply chain code of conduct. Promotion of the HE/public sector Electronic Watch Policy where applicable.	Being Developed
Travel, Subsistence and Personal Expenses Policy	Guidance and policy relating to travelling on University business	Finance - Royal Holloway Staff Intranet

6. Modern Slavery Act 2015 Statement

The University is committed to measuring and actively monitoring that modern slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in any parts of its operation and its supply chain. For further information relating to the Modern Slavery Act statement, see <https://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/modern-slavery/>.

7. Threshold Overview

All Professional Services and Schools excluding Estates

Estimated value of expenditure* (excluding VAT)	Procedure (Public Procurement (Amendment etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020 and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 & University Procurement Policy)
Handled by the Budget Holder/originator; preferred suppliers should be used where possible; quotes & decisions should be retained for audit purposes if a preferred supplier is not used).	
£0 to £4,999	Demonstrate best value
£5,000 to £24,999	Minimum of three written quotes
Refer to the Procurement Team:	
£25,000 to £49,999 (services and goods)	Two Options: a) Closed Competition - Minimum of three quotes approved by Procurement b) Formal Tender
£50,000 to £179,000 (services and goods)	Formal Tender
£179,000 or above (services and goods)	PCR 2015 compliant tender / Procurement Act 2023

Estates only:

Estimated value of expenditure* (excluding VAT)	Procedure (Public Procurement (Amendment etc.) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020 and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 & University Procurement Policy)
Handled by the Budget Holder/originator; preferred suppliers should be used where possible; quotes & decisions should be retained for audit purposes if a preferred supplier is not used).	
£0 to £4,999	Demonstrate best value
£5,000 to £24,999	Minimum of three written quotes
Refer to the Procurement Team:	
£25,000 to £49,999 (services and goods) £25,000 to £99,999 (works)	Two Options: a) Closed Competition - Minimum of three quotes approved by Procurement b) Formal Tender
£50,000 to £179,000 (services and goods) £100,000 to £4,477,174 (works)	Formal Tender
£179,000 or above (services and goods) £4,477,174 or above (works)	PCR 2015 compliant tender / Procurement Act 2023

* Estimated Value of expenditure (Whole Life Cost) – For the purpose of thresholds, the estimated value of expenditure must include all contractual considerations over the lifetime of the contract, excluding VAT. This includes any contractual costs e.g. delivery, service/maintenance, and even the value of potential options to renew or extend the contract.

The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (including VAT)

Supplies & Services - £214,904

Works - £5,372,609

Light Touch Regime for Services - £663,540

The Concession Contracts Regulations 2016 (including VAT)

Concession contracts - £5,372,609

Below Threshold Procurements (including VAT)

Publishing on Contracts Finder - £30,000

8. Value for Money

Value for money is defined as purchasing the most appropriate quality standard to meet the needs of the University, taking into account whole life costs.

It also involves getting the right product, of the right quality, in the right quantity, at the right place, at the right time, and at the right price. Also ensuring the right and appropriate contract terms are put in place.

Where appropriate this will include social, economic, technical and environmental issues.

The National Audit Office (NAO) uses three criteria to assess the value for money of government spending i.e. the optimal use of resources to achieve the intended outcomes:

- Economy: minimising the cost of resources used or required (inputs) – spending less;
- Efficiency: the relationship between the output from goods or services and the resources to produce them – spending well; and
- Effectiveness: the relationship between the intended and actual results of public spending (outcomes) – spending wisely.

9. P2P Responsibilities

Task	Stakeholder / Department / School	Procurement	Finance	Legal
Under £20,000 (excluding VAT)				
Spend/Budget Approval				
Quotation Comparison Form	AR	I (Over £5,000)		C (If standard T&C not used)
Financial / Budget approval	AR	I (Over £5,000)		
Over £20,000 (excluding VAT)				
Procurement/Sourcing Strategy (Pre-Market Engagement)				
Compliance	I	AR	C	C
Opportunities	C	R	I	
Intelligence/Data	CRA	AR	I	
Tender Pack				
Specifications/Requirement	AR	C	I	
Technical Questions	AR	C		
Commercial Questions	CR	AR	I	
Terms & Conditions	CI	AR		AR
Instructions to Tender	C	AR		
Evaluation & Award				
Independent Evaluation	AR	I		
Consensus Evaluation Meeting	AR	C		
Clarification Process	CR	AR	I	C
Creation of Award Report & Approvals	CR	AR	C	I
Contract Management				
Contract Preparation	CR	AR	C	R
Contract Negotiation/Variation	CR	AR	I	C
Contract Award	CR	AR	I	I
Purchase Order	AR	I	I	
Contract & Supplier Management				
Contract Management Meetings including Performance assessments	AR	C	I	I
Payment Process				
Goods Receipt & Coding Tasks	AR	I	I	

R Responsible (performs the activity)

A Accountable (ultimately accountable)

C Consulted (needs to feedback and contribute)

I Informed (needs to know of the decision)

10. Signing Contracts for Goods, Services and Works

A contract is an agreement whereby an offer to supply services, goods or works is accepted. A framework is an overarching agreement with a group of suppliers to establish terms governing the award of contracts to individual suppliers during the life of the agreement. Staff should not agree nor sign any contract or framework nor verbally commit to any contract over £25,000 until they have consulted the Procurement team. The Executive Director of Finance is required to sign all contracts over £25,000 which will be co-ordinated by the Procurement team. For contracts under £25,000 the Contracts Legal Review Procedure should be followed and can only be signed by authorised signatories which can be found on the P2P Approval Register by value limits.

The use of Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDA), Letters of Intent (LOI) and Memorandum of Understandings (MOU) for the purchase of goods, services or works are strictly prohibited without written approval from the Procurement team.

Students are strictly prohibited from signing any contract or framework or making verbal commitment to any contract on behalf of the University.

The relevant School, Department will hold the official signed Agreement, with an electronic copy held by the Procurement team for contracts over £25,000 on a contracts register. The responsibility for Contract Management will remain with the budget holder.

11. How we pay

No PO, No Pay - Purchase orders must be raised on the Finance System (Agresso) for all requirements when a Purchasing Card has not been used.

All invoices should be emailed to AccountsPayableInvoicesNoReply@rhul.ac.uk. All queries should be emailed to Finance-Payments@rhul.ac.uk.

Accurate and timely invoices in PDF or Word should contain the following to avoid any delays in paying suppliers:

- Valid Agresso Purchase Order number on each invoice (starting with a 6)
- Clear description of the goods/services
- Quantity & pricing units match or lower than the PO
- Display the VAT amount if applicable
- Total value excluding VAT
- Grand total

HMRC guidelines for information that supplier invoices should include:

<https://www.gov.uk/invoicing-and-taking-payment-from-customers/invoices-what-they-must-include>

Invoices without all relevant information will not be processed. Further information can be found here along with additional invoicing options: [Payments Team \(Accounts Payable\) - Royal Holloway Staff Intranet](#)

Suppliers should not submit an invoice without a valid PO number. Invoices may be rejected if a valid purchase order number is not stated within the invoice document.

Payment terms

The University's standard payment terms are within 30 days of receipt of a valid invoice. It is our policy to pay all suppliers in accordance with agreed payment terms as set out in their contractual agreement.

Request to deviate from the standard payment terms should be emailed to procurement@rhul.ac.uk.

Payment of invoices is made via the Banks Automated Clearing System (BACS). Payment to overseas suppliers is made by bank transfer or foreign draft. Our weekly BACS run is carried out each Wednesday and funds clear in our supplier's bank accounts on the Friday.

This is the standard process and any requests to pay by alternative methods (e.g. direct debit) should be emailed to procurement@rhul.ac.uk.

Pro-Forma Invoices

The University are unable to pay pro-forma invoices. The pro-forma is not an invoice and cannot be used for accounting purposes. If you receive a pro-forma invoice, you should check the information is correct and then request an invoice from the supplier.

If the supplier is unable to produce an invoice then payment will need to be made with a purchasing card. Please contact procurement@rhul.ac.uk if you are unable to carry out the above process.

Payment in Advance

The University's normal policy is to pay in arrears, however it is recognised that in a small number of cases the University will be required to pay in advance, except by Purchasing Card

All such Payments must be authorised and any such requests need to be made via the Procurement Office.

Where the advanced payment is below £25,000 the payment must be agreed by Procurement and Executive Dean (ED) or Director of Professional Service (DoP). Where the advanced payment is above £25,000 the payment must be agreed by the ED or DoP, the Head of Procurement and Executive Director of Finance.

12. Training

The Procurement team will run drop-in sessions and in-house training for all staff around regulation, the Procurement Policy and best practice.

The Procurement team is available to provide guidance and advice as and when required.

13. Further Information

For further information about the Procurement Policy, please contact the Procurement team at:

procurement@rhul.ac.uk.