



# PROCUREMENT POLICY

October 2023

Version 5

## Table of Contents

# Contents

PROCUREMENT POLICY .....	3
1. Mission, vision and values of the University of Bristol.....	3
2. Purchasing Functions within the University of Bristol .....	3
3. Purpose of the Procurement Team .....	4
4. Current Regulatory Environment .....	4
5. Legislative Environment .....	4
6. Institutional Policies .....	5
<u>7.</u> Scope of the Document .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
8. Governance .....	6
9. Conflict of Interest & Anti-Corruption and Bribery Policy.....	6
10. Confidentiality .....	7
12. Health and Safety.....	7
13. Sustainable Sourcing.....	7
14. Commodity Management.....	8
15. Contract Management.....	9
16. Supplier Relationship Management .....	9
17. Supplier Rationalisation .....	9
17.3. Involvement in the Rationalisation Process .....	10
18. Exemptions (including research specific).....	10
19. Legal Opinion .....	10
20. Continuous Improvement.....	10
21. Procurement Policy Owner.....	11

Procurement Policy authorized by:

Rob Logan  
Director of Procurement  
October 2023



# PROCUREMENT POLICY

## 1. Mission, vision and values of the University of Bristol

1.1. The University of Bristol's vision is to sustain and improve upon our world-leading reputation for research and embrace educational innovation that will nurture skill, adaptable and resilient graduates. More detail can be found at

[Vision and strategy | About the University | University of Bristol](#)

1.2. The mission driving the University's procurement activities is *to support research, education and the civic engagement in the University of Bristol by achieving excellence in procurement.*



## 2. Purchasing Functions within the University of Bristol

1.1. The Procurement Team is responsible for the University's purchasing functions.

1.2. Authorisation must be sought from the Procurement Team for all purchasing above the designated Procurement Threshold.

- It is within the Procurement Team's delegated authority to approve the way in which goods, services and works will be sourced, and to sign the resulting Contract.
- Contracts should not be signed by Budget Holders or Finance Business Partners, even where they have financial delegation to commit the spend involved.
- Contracts executed under hand should be signed by the Procurement Team according to delegated authority:

- Up to the regulated threshold for Goods and Services – Procurement Manager
  - Up to £1m – Senior Procurement Manager
  - Up to £5m – Director of Procurement
  - Above £5m – Chief Financial Officer or Group Finance Director
  - Contracts with a value above £20m should have Board of Trustees approval prior to signature.
- Contracts that require execution as Deeds should be sealed in line with the University’s deed sealing procedure, as maintained by the Secretary’s Office.
- 1.3. Procurement Team is a part of Finance Division. The Team oversees all purchasing activities at the University involving all divisions and schools. Purchases range from office supplies to research equipment, travel and professional services.
- 1.4. It is the responsibility of the Procurement Team to provide guidance to the wider University to ensure no breach in Public Contracts Regulations occur, thus protecting the University’s legal and reputational position.

### **3. Purpose of the Procurement Team**

- 3.1. The Procurement Team works in conjunction with the University’s strategic objectives. The Procurement Team will reflect and support the University’s mission, vision and values by working with staff and suppliers to optimise the procurement of goods and services guided by the Responsible Procurement Plan.
- 3.2. It will provide professional support to the University in obtaining the Goods and Services best suited to the application. This will be underpinned by consideration of:
- Value for Money
  - Whole Life Costs
  - Sustainable environmental, social and economic considerations
  - Ethical considerations
  - Transparency
  - Contractual compliance to UK Laws and Regulations

### **4. Current Regulatory Environment**

- 4.1. This document is designed to assist staff to comply with current legislation, policies and regulations and those relevant to procurement are listed below.

### **5. Legislative Environment**

- [Procurement Policy Notes](#)
- [Public Contract Regulations 2015 as amended](#)

- [Concession Contracts Regulations 2016 as amended](#)
- [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#)
- [The Bribery Act 2010](#)
- [The Data Protection Act 2018 \(incorporating the GDPR\)](#)

The University is aware of the [Procurement Bill 2023](#), which is expected to become law in 2023, and has begun preparations for anticipated changes ahead of the new Regulations being applicable from October 2024.

## 6. Institutional Policies

- [Equality and Diversity Policy](#)
- [The Policy & Strategy for Sustainability](#)
- [Conflicts of Interest Policy](#)
- [Anti-corruption and Bribery Policy](#)
- [Counter Fraud Policy](#)
- [Financial Regulations](#)

## 7. Procurement Thresholds

7.1. Purchases by the University of Bristol must adopt the following decision hierarchy:

- Purchases <£25,000 where no Electronic Catalogue exists – Faculties and Divisions may make their own purchasing decisions, and are recommended to seek 3 quotes if appropriate.
- Purchases <£25,000 where an Electronic Catalogue exist – Faculties and Divisions should utilise the Electronic Catalogue for the purchase of common goods, if these meet need.
- Purchases >25,000 and below a statutory threshold – Faculties and Divisions must propose all purchases to the Procurement Team prior to making a commitment. The Procurement Team will assess the request, agree the most appropriate route to market taking a number of aspects into consideration, including social value, risk and legal procedures, approve the procurement option as per delegations. The Procurement team will seek to conduct competitions wherever possible, other alternative routes to market may be approved in accordance to UOB procedures, applicable law and UOB financial regulations. The Procurement Team ensure that the required statutory notifications are published. All purchasing decisions will be documented in line with University procedures and national regulations
- Purchases above a statutory threshold – Faculties and Divisions must propose all purchases to the Procurement Team prior to making a commitment, the Procurement Team will assess the request, agree the most appropriate route to market taking a number of aspects into consideration, including social value, risk and legal procedures, approve the procurement option as per delegations. The Procurement team will seek to conduct competitions wherever

possible, other alternative routes to market may be approved in accordance to UOB procedures, applicable law and UOB financial regulations. The Procurement Team will ensure that the required statutory notifications are published All purchasing decisions will be documented in line with University procedures and national Regulations.

- 7.2. Electronic Catalogue – The Procurement Team maintain the University’s eMarketplace, and may require that all products from a particular product type be purchased from the eMarketplace (for purchases of any value). If an eMarketplace is in place for a particular goods or services, Faculties and Divisions must use it providing the items meet the requirements
- 7.3. Special Approval – Additional approvals may be imposed on individual commodities in order to ensure that purchases are only made following advice from designated professional leads. This may include purchases of radiological material, live animals, IT equipment and Facilities Management services among others. The list will be controlled via the MyERP approval rules.
- 7.4. Principal Investigators need to be aware of any requirements from external funding bodies that may have different financial thresholds to those specified in the University’s Financial Regulation of statutory Public Contract Regulations.

## **8. Governance**

- 8.1. The Public Contracts Regulations set out the law on public procurement. Their purpose is to open up the public procurement market and to ensure the free movement of goods and services, ensuring equal treatment, non-discrimination, mutual recognition, proportionality and transparency. The Regulations reflect and reinforce the value for money focus of the government’s procurement policy. To achieve value for money (VFM) for the taxpayer, effectively managed procurements, which are properly planned and executed, are essential.
- 8.2. As a Contracting Authority the University of Bristol is governed by Public Contracting Regulations 2015.
- 8.3. The purpose of the Procurement policy is to drive behaviour towards achieving the strategic objectives of the University and public sector procurement principles.
- 8.4. Different departments across the University of Bristol, have various specialist needs for contractual compliance, variations could include;
  - Controlled medicines/chemicals
  - Radiological equipment
  - Live animals for the purposes of research
  - Specialist software services
  - Equipment that includes joint partnership working for research and development
- 8.5. In all of these examples above, it is important that in order to protect the University’s reputation, we have the right structure, processes and people in place to allow us to focus on meeting our aims and objectives while operating in a regulated environment that is auditable.

## **9. Conflict of Interest & Anti-Corruption and Bribery Policy**

9.1. In case there is a conflict of interest in any procurement undertaken, it is expected that members of staff specify the relationship with vendor and this should immediately be brought to the written notice of the Director of Procurement or Senior Procurement Manager. The situation shall be reviewed and the next course of action shall be advised.

9.2. A comprehensive guidance on the University's conflict of interest policy is available at;  
<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/legal/conflict>

9.3. The Anti-corruption and Bribery policy can be found at the following link;  
<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/legal/bribery/>

## 10. Confidentiality

10.1. Procurement staff and the university staff part of any procurement project are always advised to maintain confidentiality as commercially valuable information is contained in tenders, contracts and related material.

10.2. However under the Freedom of Information Act the University may be obliged to provide this information following a request under the Act.

## 11. Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDA) and Confidentiality Disclosure Agreements (CDAs)

11.1. The University of Bristol prides itself over the research undertaken at the University. For some research and industry sensitive projects, a Non-Disclosure form (NDA) or Confidentiality Disclosure Agreement (CDA)

11.2. A comprehensive guidance on NDAs and CDAs is available at the following link;

11.3. During the tender process you may be required to sign Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDA) and Confidentiality Disclosure Agreements. Your procurement lead will be able to advise you.

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/red/research-commercial/ndasandcdas.html>

## 12. Health and Safety

12.1. The University's health and Safety policy can be found at the following link;  
<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/safety/policies/>

## 13. Sustainable Sourcing

13.1. The University has a Responsible Procurement Plan to guide all elements of responsible sourcing, notably sustainable procurement, Social Value and ethical sourcing.

13.2. All procurements undertaken at the University of Bristol are not only selected for Value for Money but in all cases a balanced consideration of social, ethical, environmental and economic impacts are undertaken throughout the procurement process. This involves;

- Considering a basic life cycle analysis of products to minimise the adverse effects on the environment resulting directly or indirectly from goods and services having a cradle to grave approach.
- Giving a preference to Fairtrade, or equivalent, and ethically sourced and produced goods and services applying international terms as appropriate to minimize reputational risk to the University.
- Working more effectively with diverse and SME suppliers in line with EU public procurement regulations.
- Ensuring all procurement tenders contain sustainability specifications as appropriate to the product or service being procured in line with the industry standards.
- Ensuring all contracts have fair terms for suppliers to account for supply chain activity, logistics, insurances and payment terms.
- Promoting key institutional values, such as accreditation to the Living Wage Foundation and Universities of Sanctuary
- Maintaining accreditation with the CIPS Ethical Procurement Standard.

13.3. The University will comply with all UK statutory regulations and legislation and ensuring our suppliers do the same to contractually protect the University of Bristol's reputation.

#### **14. Commodity Management**

- 14.1. All purchase areas are categorized as procurement categories managed and monitored by Procurement. Products and services are grouped together based on the ability of the market to supply.
- 14.2. The Procurement Team continuously works on a strategic approach for all categories with the engagement of internal and external stakeholders and taking into account the governance process at the University.
- 14.3. This is a continuous process with category specific knowledge and expertise along with the use of planning and analytical tools aiding this analysis.





## 15. Contract Management

- 15.1. All Procurement led contracts are held centrally by the Procurement Team who will work with internal stakeholders in the management of these contracts against the key performance indicators (KPIs).
- 15.2. However any instance of non-performance from suppliers, the school/faculty/department may seek advice from the Procurement Team to enable the management of the contract.
- 15.3. Procurement shall initiate a formal dialogue and meeting with the school/faculty/department and the supplier to address these grievances appropriately in line with the terms and conditions of the contract.

## 16. Supplier Relationship Management

- 16.1. It is part of Procurement's strategic plan to develop close and collaborative working relationships with key suppliers across all commodities. This shall enable more organisational efficiencies for the University by working together with both internal and external customers at the University.

## 17. Supplier Rationalisation

- 17.1. Procurement Team shall regularly review the supplier lists and contracts within each commodity area and rationalise the supplier base, working together with the end users.

17.2. Supplier rationalisation is, therefore, any systematic ordering of the supplier base. Procurement Team shall use this process in order to discern the optimum number of suppliers needed to fulfil the University's business objectives. This may be either an increase or decrease in the number of suppliers currently being used, depending on the nature of existing supplier relationships and the conditions of the market (together with anticipated demand patterns and identified risks) in which they are operating.

### 17.3. **Involvement in the Rationalisation Process**

17.3.1. Due to the potential risks associated with the practice of supplier rationalisation, the decision-making unit shall consist of a cross-functional team of stakeholders within the organisation. The cross-functional team will be responsible for agreeing the specification for each category. The team shall primarily comprise of the following members;

- Director of Procurement and Senior Procurement Managers
- Budget holders
- Internal customers

## 18. **Other Grounds for Procurement Approval (including research specific)**

18.1. Certain procurements may be regarded as exempt from the Procurement Regulations or due to UOB procedures requiring Procurement Approval. This may be due to payment of rent and rates for property or specific NHS medical training etc. The list is maintained by Procurement Team approval to be added to this list can only be by the Director or Senior SPM and is held confidentially and is privileged.

## 19. **Legal Opinion**

19.1. Procurement maintains close coordination and collaboration with the University Secretary's Office as well as commercial law firms to provide legal guidance on public procurement aspects under case law and industry standard and practices.

19.2. Procurement reserve the right to consult with the Secretary's Office/External lawyers as appropriate for any high-risk project.

## 20. **Continuous Improvement**

20.1. The Procurement Team is made up of a team of professionally qualified Procurement staff. The Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply (CIPS) is the international standard for both public and private sector procurement departments.

20.2. In line with the CIPS, continuous improvement consists of making continual small

improvements at irregular intervals, requiring close monitoring and control and ideally inbuilt in the organisation's culture.

- 20.3. The Procurement Team of the University of Bristol strives towards the best CIPS industry standards in procurement practice through continuous improvement, benchmarking of industry and market standards and through business process re-engineering and demonstrating value for money and savings.

## **21. Procurement Policy Owner**

- 21.1. The Director of Procurement owns the Procurement policy and manages the change control. Any changes to the policy shall be authorised in writing by the Director of Procurement.