



**University of
Sunderland**

Modern Slavery Act 2015 Statement

Introduction

In accordance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015, the University of Sunderland makes the following statement regarding the steps it has taken in the financial year 2015/2016 to ensure that no modern slavery or human trafficking is taking place in any part of the organisation or its supply chain. This statement sets out the actions taken by the University of Sunderland to understand potential modern slavery and human trafficking risks and to implement effective systems and controls.

Organisational Structure

The University of Sunderland is a Higher Education Corporation established by Order of the Secretary of State under Section 121 of the Education Reform Act 1988. Under the 1988 Act, the statutory purpose of the University is “to provide higher education and further education, and to carry out research, and to publish the results of the research or any other material arising out of or connected with it in such a manner as the corporation shall think fit”.

The University, and all other Higher Education Corporations created by the 1998 Act, were granted the status of ‘Exempt Charities’ (as now defined in the Charities Act 2011, Section 22). The Trustees of the exempt charity, the University of Sunderland, are the Member of the Board of Governors, which includes the Vice-Chancellor and staff and student members. They have oversight of the management of the University and ensure that in achieving its charitable objects the University establishes strategic aims and objectives and performs such aims and objectives in ways which are consistent with the Charity Commission’s guidance on the general principles of public benefit.

The University also has eleven subsidiary companies all of which are wholly owned or effectively controlled by the University.

Due Diligence

To ensure that the University’s suppliers and partner institutions comply with our values, we have incorporated a contractual obligation to raise any concerns about the issue or suspicion of modern slavery in any parts of the institution or supply chain with the University’s Director of Legal and Governance. We require our partners to agree to, and to ensure that its sub-contractors and supply chain agree to comply with the Ethical Trading Initiative Base Code (‘ETI Base Code’), an internationally recognised code of labour practice, together with any anti-slavery measures notified by the University.

The ETI Base Code requires that;

1. Employment is freely chosen;
2. Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining are respected;

3. Working conditions are safe and hygienic;
4. Child labour shall not be used;
5. Living wages are paid;
6. Working hours are not excessive;
7. No discrimination is practised;
8. Regular employment is provided; and
9. No harsh or inhumane treatment is allowed.

In furtherance of the enforceable obligation, the University may, acting by itself or through its audit agents, assess compliance with the implementation of these anti-slavery measures. Where the obligation is breached, the University may consider terminating its relationship with individuals or organisations if it reasonably believes that they are linked to modern slavery or human trafficking activities.

Training

To ensure a high level of understanding of the risks of modern slavery and human trafficking in our international supply chain, training has been undertaken with our international managers.

Further Steps

Following a review of the effectiveness of the steps we have taken this year to ensure that there is no slavery or human trafficking in our supply chain we intend to take the following further steps to combat slavery and human trafficking;

- We will map out all those supply chains which represent a risk of modern slavery and human trafficking;
- We will require our business partners to provide training to their staff, suppliers and providers;
- We will work with our partners to encourage them to commit to the ETI Base Code;
- We will require an annual partner declaration regarding compliance; and
- We will require tenderers to submit evidence of their Modern Slavery Act compliance as part of all formal tender processes.



Shirley Atkinson

Vice-Chancellor & Chief Executive

University of Sunderland