

University of Bath Procurement Policy

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1 General

1.1 Introduction

This Procurement Policy states the rules which apply to the acquisition of all supplies, services and works, including rental, lease or hire agreements, by or on behalf of the University of Bath and applies irrespective of the source of funding for a purchase.

This Policy must be read in conjunction with the [University of Bath Financial Regulations](#).

All quoted thresholds are inclusive of VAT.

For advice on any part of the Procurement Policy please contact a member of the [Procurement team](#).

1.2 Objectives

All procurement activity should be undertaken with the over-riding objectives of:

- Delivery of value for money. Value for money being the process of securing optimum economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- Management of the risks associated with the University's procurement activity
- Clear accountability for all procurement decisions
- Support for the [University Carbon Action Framework principles](#)
- Support for combating slavery and human trafficking in supply chains in accordance with the University's [Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement](#)
- [Support for the University's Equality Objectives and promotion of social value through University's procurement activity.](#)

1.3 Principles

All procurement activity must comply with this Policy, the Financial Regulations of the University of Bath, and English law.

The University has opted out of mandatory compliance with the UK Procurement Act 2023 providing the University with greater control over its procurement processes. This position will be reviewed annually, and this Policy updated as required.

The University recognises that the UK Procurement Act is developed with the overarching principles of being fair, open and transparent and that adoption of these principles within procurement practice promotes effective engagement with the external market to meet the University's requirements. As such, all procurement activity shall be conducted in accordance with the UK Procurement Act principles.

Any individual authorised to incur expenditure on behalf of the University of Bath is responsible for ensuring compliance with this Policy and the Financial Regulations.

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No member of the University nor employee shall take an active part in any discussions, negotiations or transactions involving the University in which they or their spouse, partner or any family member has an existing or potential, financial, or other beneficial interest. If any circumstances arise where this may be the case, the member of staff shall be obliged to report to their Head of Department in accordance with the [Conflicts of Interest section of the Financial Regulations](#).

In addition to the Conflicts of Interest section of the Financial Regulations, a Code of Conduct for Procurement Practitioners must be followed which sets out values and clear guidance on expected behaviour for all those involved in the process of procuring on behalf of the University.

The Code of Conduct for Procurement Practitioners confirms that all those involved in making procurement decisions on behalf of the University should act in a fair and equitable manner, without being affected by bias or personal prejudice, taking into account only the merits of the matter, and that any interests in existing or potential suppliers, whether the connection is a private, social, domestic or professional relationship, must be declared and managed appropriately. Failure to do so would constitute non-compliance with this Procurement Policy and the University Financial Regulations.

For all new requirements that will involve the sharing of University data with a prospective supplier/s, the University's Information Security team must be consulted. Appropriate measures must be included within the resulting contractual arrangement as deemed necessary by the Information Security team.

1.4 Responsibilities

The Director of Finance:

The Director of Finance is responsible to the Vice Chancellor for the financial administration of the University, including regular review of the Procurement Policy. This Policy is kept under constant review by the Head of Procurement and alterations are recommended to the Director of Finance as necessary.

The Procurement Team:

The Procurement Team is responsible for:

- The provision of a professional resource for the delivery of all major procurement activity.
- Management of all tenders with a total spend greater than £40,000.
- Ownership of the University's Procurement Policy including its development, maintenance and on-going monitoring for compliance.
- Ownership of the Purchase to Pay process for the acquisition of all supplies, services and works.
- The payment of all invoices for bought in goods, services and works.
- The collation of plans for all procurement activity.

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- The development of guidance, tools and templates for operational procurement needs that reflect current best practice.
- The procurement and management of strategic and transactional tools to improve the efficiency of procurement activity, including the use of e-procurement technologies.
- The development and delivery of all procurement related training to internal stakeholders.
- The management and monitoring of a defined range of contracts and supplier relationships.
- The management of the University's relationship with external purchasing consortia and collaborative procurement partners.
- The provision of professional advice and support on all matters relating to procurement.

Heads of Department¹:

Heads of Department as budget holders have the authority to incur expenditure on behalf of the University, or provide written authorisation to other members of staff as defined in the [Financial Regulations](#). Heads of Department have day to day responsibility and accountability for:

- Ensuring that this Procurement Policy is applied to all purchases of supplies and services within their defined authority.
- Ensuring that staff engaged in procurement activity within their respective area adhere to this Procurement Policy.
- Ensuring that all staff engaged in procurement activity within their respective area are adequately trained in the relevant procurement processes and systems.
- That any potential procurement greater than £10,000 in total value is brought to the attention of the Procurement team at the earliest opportunity.

Heads of Department may enter into contracts for the supply of supplies and services only where:

- A centrally negotiated contract does not exist, and;
- the total value of the contemplated purchase is less than £40,000, and;
- Procurement team advice has been sought before any contract is placed.

All contracts must comply with this Procurement Policy. A written record and copy of all contracts and agreements entered into must be maintained within the department for audit purposes and in case of contractual challenge.

The Information Security Team:

The Information Security Team is responsible for:

¹ Does not include Faculty Deans.

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- Providing guidelines on the types of contracts which require security assessment (those involving access to internal or confidential data of the University or its partners; information storage or processing; integration of technologies which rely on such data; sub-contracting/outourcing of these responsibilities; etc).
- Security review of contracting third-parties.
- Advising on suitable wording of contractual terms to ensure supply chain integrity of information.
- Periodic engagement (including audits where required) with key suppliers engaging with information Periodic review of supply chain information security risks.

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2 Procurement Procedure

2.1 Using Internal service providers

Where an internal service provider (ISP) exists, they must be used in preference to an external supplier and in accordance with the respective conditions below. Details of how to order from an internal service provider can be viewed on the [Agresso web pages](#). Internal service providers include:

Imaging, Design and Print Services (IDPS):

IDPS provide the following services: graphic design, printing, copying, photography, print finishing, paper, thesis and project binding. For a comprehensive and up to date list of IDPS services please visit the [IDPS web pages](#).

All requirements for IDPS services must be sent to IDPS requesting a quotation.

An internal requisition must be raised to confirm acceptance of the quotation.

IDPS will meet the requirement with internal resources where the necessary capability and capacity is available and where this is the most cost-effective means of delivering the requirement. Where IDPS cannot meet the requirement with internal resources, IDPS will manage the outsourcing process in accordance with this Procurement Policy.

Catering:

The internal Hospitality team provide a range of catering services for meetings and University events. For further details on the services available please visit the [food and drink web pages](#).

All requirements for catering services must be booked directly via the [Food Direct web pages](#), or sent to the catering team requesting a quotation.

If the catering team advise that they cannot meet the requirement, an external catering supplier can be sourced in accordance with this Procurement Policy.

Once a preferred catering supplier has been identified it is important to confirm that they are registered with the relevant Local Authority as a Food Business. The most recent score achieved under the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme should also be confirmed. If a score of two or below has been achieved, then caution is advised, and a copy of the most recent food hygiene inspection report should be obtained from the relevant Local Authority to determine any specific risks to the service being procured.

Confirmation of adequate professional indemnity and public and product liability insurance must be obtained in all cases.

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IT Purchasing (ITP):

The purchase of all IT hardware (including audio visual equipment and IT accessories), software, digital/online platforms and mobile telephony must be made from a University of Bath contracted supplier. Details of contracted suppliers and their products/services can be found on the [Procurement web page](#).

In the event that it is not possible to purchase from a contracted supplier, approval must be obtained from the Chief Digital & Information Officer, or Deputy Director of DDAT for all IT purchases prior to placing an order from a non-contracted supplier. [Please visit the DDAT ITP web pages](#) for further information on requesting approval.

The purchase of any IT products or services outside of this Policy (i.e. via individual expenses) is not permitted and any costs incurred by an individual will not be reimbursed by the University.

For more information on IT purchasing please visit the [Computing Services ITP web pages](#).

2.2 Using existing call off contracts²

Where a call off contract has been established, this contract must be used. The contract will already have been subject to the necessary level of competition and therefore it is not necessary to obtain further competitive quotations and orders may be placed directly with the supplier. Details of available call off contracts are listed on the [Procurement web page](#).

2.3 Procurement thresholds

The procurement method to be used is dependent on the estimated aggregate value of the supplies, services, or works to be procured. The estimated value is the total value of the contract over its full duration including any extensions. Where the contract term is indeterminate or indefinite the estimated value will be calculated as 48 times the monthly cost.

When estimating the total value of a contract over its term, including extensions, all elements of cost must be considered. This may include, but is not limited to costs for delivery, postage, packaging, maintenance, any guarantee/warranty, and rental, lease or hire arrangements.

The splitting of common requirements to avoid any threshold is not permissible.

² An arrangement with a provider of goods, works or services with pre-agreed terms under which contracts subsequently can be entered into or called off (within the limits of the agreement) when relevant requirements arise.

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2.4 Supplies & Services procurement

The table below defines the thresholds that apply when procuring all supplies and services. All thresholds are inclusive of VAT.

Estimated Spend Value £	Quote/Tender	Quote Type	Action
£0 - £1,999	Single Quote	Written	
£2,000 - £9,999	3 Quotes	Written	
£10,000 - £39,999	3 Quotes	Written	Bid Evaluation Document or Single Action Waiver Form submitted to Procurement team.
£40,000 +	Tender	Tender	Refer to Procurement team to design the appropriate procurement process.

2.5 Requesting quotations for supplies and services less than £10,000

£0 - £1,999:

Obtain a written supplier quotation.

£2,000 - £9,999:

Obtain a minimum of 3 separate written supplier quotations.

2.6 Bid evaluation for supplies and services between £10,000 and £39,999

Obtain a minimum of 3 separate written quotations and complete a [Bid Evaluation Document \(BED\)](#) and submit to the Procurement team.

2.7 Tender level procurements for supplies and services greater than £40,000

All procurement activity with an estimated value greater than £40,000 over the full contract period must be formally tendered by the Procurement team using an e-tendering system and following the documented procedures for tendering unless written authorisation not to do so is provided by the Head of Procurement or Deputy Head of Procurement.

The documented procedures for obtaining tenders will be held, regularly reviewed and updated by the Procurement team.

2.8 Works Procurement

The Department of Campus Infrastructure is responsible for the procurement of all construction works and associated services on behalf of the University. This includes the establishment of all construction related works and services frameworks, any further

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competition conducted, or work called off from under those frameworks, and the management of any resulting contracts or supplier relationships.

All Purchase Orders and contracts for building works involving construction, repair or maintenance must be processed through the Department of Campus Infrastructure. For information on Campus Infrastructure related works and services please visit the [Department of Campus Infrastructure web pages](#).

There are several purchasing consortia/bodies that prepare framework arrangements for use by other organisations. Use of these frameworks will be subject to the approval by the Department of Campus Infrastructure and the Procurement team.

The section below defines the thresholds that apply when procuring all works. All thresholds are inclusive of VAT.

For details of the thresholds that apply to service contracts required to maintain the estate please see sections 2.4 and 2.14.

Estimated Spend Value £	Quote/Tender	Quote Type	Action
£0 - £9,999	Single Quote	Written	
£10,000 - £99,999	3 Quotes	Written	Document reason for selection on a Bid Evaluation Document
£100,000 +	Tender	Tender	Refer to Procurement team

2.9 Requesting quotations for works less than £10,000

2.10 Obtain a written supplier quotation. Requesting quotations for works between £10,000 - £99,999

Obtain a minimum of 3 separate written quotations and complete a [Bid Evaluation Document \(BED\)](#) and submit to the Procurement team.

2.11 Tender level procurements for works above £100,000

Notify the Procurement team as soon as the requirement is identified and in any event prior to formal market engagement.

Contracts above £100,000 must be conducted using the University's e-tendering facility and follow the documented procedures for tendering wherever possible, unless written authorisation not to do so is provided by the Head of Procurement or Deputy head of Procurement. A report identifying tender returns and making a recommendation on the acceptance of individual tenders must be prepared.

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2.12 Procurement of Retail products / Goods for Resale

Products that are purchased solely for direct resale within University operated outlets are subject to the thresholds and processes detailed below. These are considerate of the need for products that carry certain branding as a major factor that affects customer choice. The values are based on predicted annual expenditure as opposed to total contract value to recognise that products may change frequently to meet customer demand and may not be subject to a defined contract period.

Notwithstanding the processes outlined below, wherever possible the principles of open, fair and transparent procurement should be maintained.

Estimated annual value	Action
£0 - £4,999	Single written quotation
£5,000 - £9,999	Minimum 2 written quotations, or a single quotation if trialling a new product or product range.
£10,000 - £39,999	Minimum 3 written quotations, or a single quotation of trialling a new product or product range. Document reason for selection on a Bid Evaluation Document or Single Action Waiver.
£40,000 +	Refer to the Procurement team for the most appropriate procurement process.

Where implemented, the purchase of goods for resale within retail outlets may be purchased via a dedicated stock system or automated purchase system. However, Agresso should still be used for all other requirements within the retail operation.

2.13 Mandatory evaluation criteria and minimum weightings

All tendering activity must include the following criteria and weightings when selecting a successful supplier:

Price – minimum of 40%. Where relevant this should be assessed as whole life, or life cycle costing taking into consideration all costs associated with the purchase and use of the product / service over its expected life. More information on whole life costing can be found [here](#).

Sustainability – minimum of 10%. Sustainability may include a range of factors such as carbon reduction or social value. The appropriate considerations for each procurement exercise should be used as part of the overall sustainability criteria. All or part of the 10% may be allocated to the Price criteria where appropriate and where a whole life costing approach has been taken. Where this is used, the mandatory minimum weighting for 'Price' may remain at 40%. More information on sustainable procurement can be found [here](#).

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Under exceptional circumstances the required minimum weightings stated above may not be appropriate, in which case approval must be sought from the respective approver based on the estimated contract value as per section 2.14 Tender Governance.

Where external framework agreements are used to run a competitive procurement exercise the framework criteria and weightings will take precedent.

Please contact the Procurement team for further advice on selecting appropriate evaluation criteria and weightings

2.14 Tender Governance

There are three key decision points within a typical procurement process which will have a significant influence on the outcome of the successful contractor and resulting value of the goods/services/works, these are:

- Specification
- Evaluation Criteria and associated weightings
- Contract Award

Approval must be obtained at each key decision point in order to proceed with the tender process and contract award. The level of approval is determined by the estimated value of the total contract inclusive of VAT as per the table below.

Goods and Services	
£40,000 - £249,000	Procurement Category Manager or Deputy Head of Procurement
£250,000 - £999,999	Head of Procurement
£1,000,000 - £1,999,999	Director of Finance
>£2,000,000 or meets additional criteria below	University Executive Board

Works	
£100,000 - £1,999,999	Director of Campus Infrastructure and the Procurement Category Manager
>£2,000,000	The respective Project Control Group

All recommendations will be reviewed by the designated approvers at each of the lower levels and supporting information provided to the ultimate approver. For example, a procurement project with an estimated total contract value of greater than £2m would require recommendations passed through the relevant Procurement Category Manager, the Head of Procurement and the Director of Finance before requiring the University Executive Board to make the final decision.

It should be noted that beyond the tender governance approvals as stated within this section, the relevant financial approvals are also necessary as per the University's [financial](#)

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[scheme of delegation](#). Financial approval must be obtained prior to creating a contractual commitment following the contract award decision.

Irrespective of value, approval is required from the University Executive Board where the planned procurement activity meets one or more of the following additional criteria:

- Outsourcing a service currently provided by University employees.
- Insourcing a service currently provided by an appointed external contractor/s that will require the employment of new University staff to deliver the future service.
- The procurement of goods/services/works that carry significant risk or importance to the University.
- The Procurement of goods/services/works that require or would benefit from a new mandate from the University Executive Board to ensure contractual compliance.

Advice should be sought from the Procurement team to determine if any of the above criteria apply.

2.15 Receiving and opening tenders

All electronically submitted tenders must be received via the e-tendering system.

Where paper copies are required they must be clearly marked 'Tender for [insert title of tender]' and sent to the following address where they will be securely held until the advertised closing time and date has elapsed:

For the attention of the Head of Procurement, University of Bath, Procurement team,
The Virgil Building, Manvers Street, Bath, BA1 1JW

2.16 Awarding contracts

In accordance with the University's Financial Regulations only duly authorised members of staff may enter into contracts.

Such authority to commit the University to a contract creating a financial commitment is disclosed in the authority for signing contracts <https://www.bath.ac.uk/corporate-information/authority-for-signing-contracts/>

All purchase orders with a value greater than £10,000 will require authorisation from the Director of Finance, the respective Head of Department and the Procurement team.

Prior to any contract award, or release of a purchase order, the authorised individual responsible for the procurement process must ensure that the University has the funds available to meet all its financial obligations under the contract.

2.17 Using new suppliers

All new suppliers to the University must be appointed in accordance with this Policy and will be subject to approval from the Procurement team.

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The Procurement team will be responsible for checking the financial viability of all requested new suppliers and the establishment of the new supplier details on the University's financial and purchasing system. All amendments to supplier records must be made by the Procurement team.

For detailed guidance on how to request the approval of a new supplier please visit the [Procurement web page](#).

2.18 Adherence to the requirements of a grant funding body

Where the procurement requirements of a grant funding body are more restrictive than those stated within this Procurement Policy, the requirements of the grant funding body will take precedence over this Procurement Policy.

2.19 Exceptions to these rules and the use of Single Action Waivers

This Policy applies to all supplies, services and works purchased by the University. However, under specific circumstances it may not be possible to comply in full with the requirements of this Policy. Where this is the case and the total value of procurement exceeds £10,000 a [Single Action Waiver \(SAW\) form](#) must be completed and submitted to the Head of Procurement.

Any subsequent purchase orders will not be released until the Single Action Waiver has been authorised by the Head of Procurement.

For Single Actions Waivers with a value greater than £100k, authorisation must be obtained by the Head of Procurement and the Director of Finance. For further information on the Single Action Waiver process please visit the [Procurement web pages](#).

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3 Contract Administration, Monitoring and Maintenance

3.1 Raising a purchase order

Where a purchase is made using the University's financial and purchasing system the respective system procedures current at the time of making the purchase must be followed.

For more information on raising an order with an internal supplier please visit the internal [Agresso web pages](#).

A University of Bath purchase order must be raised for all purchases, other than those detailed on the list of purchases exempt from the requirement to raise a Purchase Order. This list is maintained by the Procurement team and is available on the [Procurement web page](#).

3.2 Payments to suppliers

Payment terms must be agreed prior to a contract being signed and must be commensurate with the requirement. The standard payment terms for routine purchases are 30 days from the receipt of a valid invoice. All supplier invoices must be sent directly to the [Payments office](#).

The payment of all supplier invoices are subject to the University's [No Purchase Order – No Pay Policy](#).

All negotiations regarding payment terms with external suppliers, including amending the standard 30 days, must be referred to the Procurement team.

Unless payment is made on a purchase card or other pre-agreed method, all payments to suppliers will be made through the University's financial system.

For further information regarding the payments process please visit [Payments Office web page](#).

3.3 Using a purchase card

All purchases made using a University of Bath Purchase Card must remain the responsibility of the named card holder, in particular the card holder is responsible for ensuring the necessary budgetary approval is granted prior to making a purchase with their purchase card.

All card holders must have received training on the appropriate use of purchase cards and returned a signed copy of the University of Bath Purchase Card Individual Agreement prior to making any purchases via the purchase card.

All purchases made using a University of Bath purchase card are subject to this Procurement Policy.

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For more information on requesting a purchase card or the use of purchase cards please visit the [Procurement web page](#).

3.4 Extensions to contracts or framework agreements

Where a contract extension will cause the total contract value to exceed £10,000, or where an extension is proposed to a contract that originally exceeded £10,000 (i.e. a BED form has previously been submitted and authorised), then prior approval from the Procurement team must be obtained.

3.5 Variations to contract

In any case where a variation represents more than 50% of the value of the original contract, or where there is any material change to the contract, the contract should be treated as a new Procurement under this Policy. A material change is one which:

- introduces conditions which would have made the contract more attractive to tenderers during the initial award procedure;
- would have allowed for the admission of alternative tenderers, or would have allowed for the acceptance of a different tender;
- extends the scope of the contract to encompass services not initially covered; or
- .

3.6 On-going Supplier Management

Periodic engagement, such as contract performance reviews, with key suppliers, will be undertaken by appropriate University staff.

Additional measures for contracts requiring information security review may be necessary. This may include, but not restricted to, notification of events or incidents, or any other changes in the risk profile arising from changes in information processing, including that of subcontractors. Where necessary, advice must be obtained from the Information Security Team.

3.7 Recording Contracts

Details of all signed contracts along with an electronic copy of the contract document signed by all parties must be recorded on the University's Central Contracts Repository.

All amendments to contracts including but not limited to, new expiry dates, contract values, additional terms and conditions, must be recorded on the University's Central Contracts Repository.

3.8 Document retention

All documents related to the procurement process must be retained in accordance with the [Procurement Document Retention Policy](#).

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3.9 Consequences of non-compliance

In the first instance, failure to comply with any part of this Procurement Policy may result in an initial warning in writing that a breach of University Procurement Policy has occurred. Depending on the individual circumstances and severity of the breach, disciplinary action may be taken in accordance with the University's [Disciplinary Policy and Procedure](#).

In the second instance, it will result in disciplinary action and the withdrawal of authority to incur expenditure.

Where purchases of supplies and services which are the subject of centrally negotiated contracts are made via personal expenditure and this expenditure is subsequently reclaimed from the University, an investigation into the nature and reasons for the purchase and a comparison against the cost of purchase through the centrally negotiated contract will be made. This may result in a delay before a refund of expenditure can be made. At the discretion of the Director of Finance, any refund may be made at the rate that would have been paid had the centrally negotiated contract been used.