

Power of the Purse: How to purchase responsibly to support sustainability



This Top Tips brief is for any member of staff involved in purchasing or interested in how to use University spending power to benefit sustainability. It has pointers from the guidance tools developed for our Sustainable Procurement Project led by Robin Hare and Sustainability, which won Highly Commended in the UK Green Gown Awards in 2017.

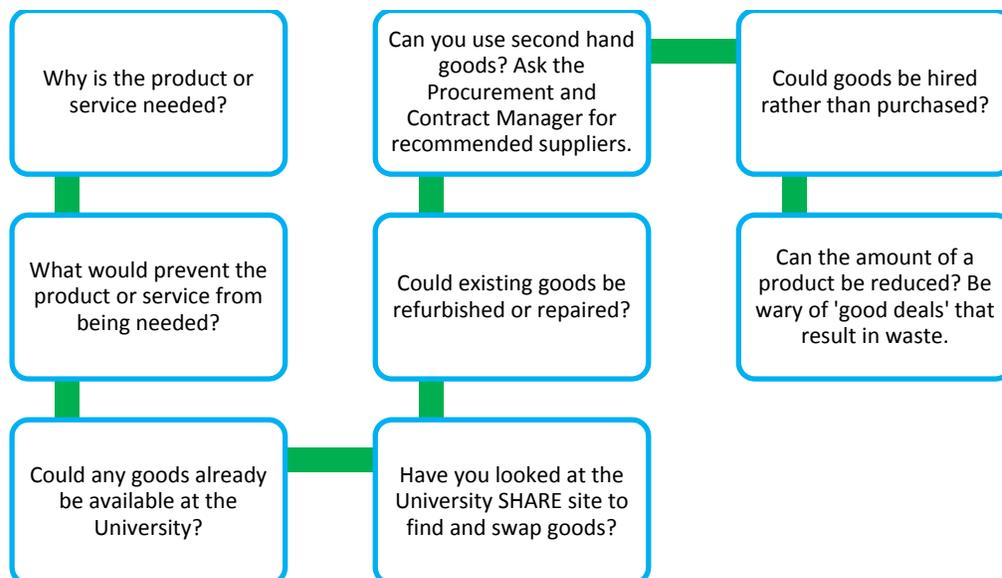
Sustainability Principles in Purchasing – what to consider:

Responsible buying means thinking through the financial, environmental and social impacts of sourcing and buying goods, services and works. A purchasing activity can be considered ‘sustainable’ when:

- Purchasing needs have been assessed to reduce overall consumption and achieve best value for money
- Key environmental and social impacts are understood and negative impacts reduced as far as possible:
 - **Environmental impacts** result from the use of resources, generation of waste, use of energy and pollution
 - **Social impacts** include the protection of worker’s rights, community protection and wider ethical issues
- Opportunities to enhance positive reputation and promote understanding have been factored in – so that we are setting expectations in our business relationships and for students, staff, visitors and partners.

Suppliers need to meet legal requirements and University tender processes take account of specific legal compliances related to products and services. Contact Robin Hare for specific advice you may need to specify on tenders.

Reducing Consumption – steps to take for an initial needs review:

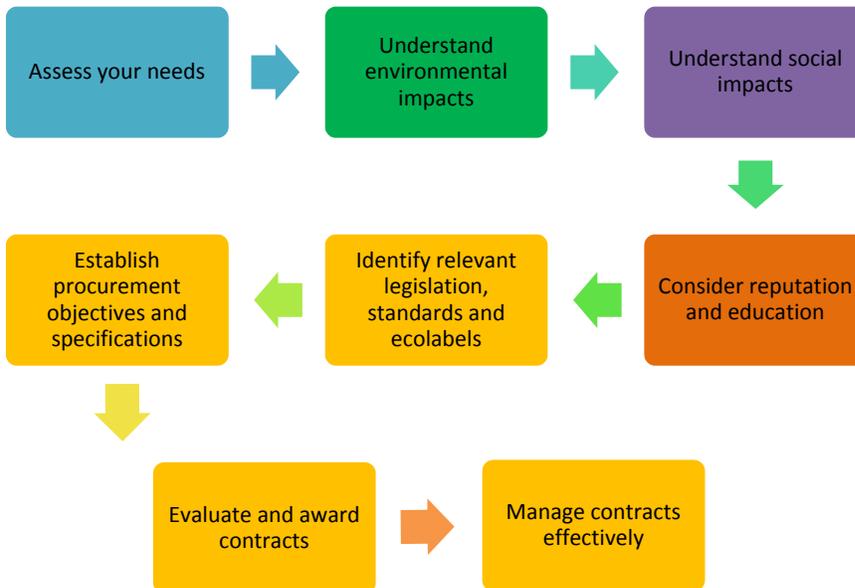


SHARE - SEARCH HERE AND RE-USE EQUIPMENT! Try the UoG equipment swap and reuse site where you can find office furniture and equipment including specialist items. Let’s do more with our SHARE site – find it [HERE](#)

Putting it into Practice – simple steps for spending sustainably:

In essence, responsible purchasing means:

- Thinking carefully about what you actually need and in what quantity
- Mapping out possible environmental and social impacts of the product or service
- Spotting opportunities to increase reputation and educate people who encounter your purchases
- Asking suppliers relevant questions and setting appropriate objectives, standards and specifications
- Building sustainability into tenders, contract awards and contract management and reporting.



To understand ecolabels better, both at University and in your own life, see our quick guide [HERE](#)

EXAMPLE: SUSTAINABILITY TEAM FURNITURE

The Sustainability Team is walking the talk - having rejected the choice to buy new office furniture for their office meeting space and instead opted for recycled tub chairs and coffee table from a second hand supplier.

This move saved £2,200 in purchase costs and avoided carbon emissions of 1.1 tonnes, which would have arisen from manufacture and transport.

It also provides a highly visible demonstration for staff, students and visitors who come to the office, of how we put policy into practice.



The University of Gloucestershire is an acknowledged sector leader in sustainability and is proud of its progressive approach to improving sustainability in practice and enabling staff and students to contribute to global sustainability goals. Responsible procurement is critical to increase our positive impact, maximise value for money and send business-to-business signals to suppliers and partners about our priorities and our approach to responsible trade.

To see more information in UoG's broader guidance resource on responsible procurement click [HERE](#)