Modern Slavery: Annual Statement 2016-17

Introduction
This statement is made pursuant to section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. It informs our students, staff, suppliers, stakeholders and the public about the steps that we have taken, and will take, to mitigate any risk of modern slavery, human trafficking, forced and bonded labour and labour rights violations within our organisation and supply chains.

About the University
The University of Leeds is an independent corporation established by Royal Charter and is globally renowned for the quality of its teaching and research. The University is one of the largest higher education institutions in the UK with more than 32,000 students, over 7,800 staff and a turnover in excess of £630 million. The University is committed to achieving academic excellence within an ethical framework informed by our values of integrity, equality and inclusion, community and professionalism.

Driven by its values, in particular, the University is unswerving in its commitment to meeting the requirements of the Act and we will therefore take all reasonable steps to ensure that modern slavery or human trafficking does not occur in any part of our organisation or supply chains.

Our supply chains

Procurement
The University’s Financial Policy and Guidelines govern the procurement of goods and services. We are committed to sustainable procurement and our approach to delivering this is set out in our Sustainable Procurement Standard. We have developed our approach to sustainable procurement using the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affair’s (DEFRA) Flexible Framework for Sustainable Procurement in Government and have self-assessed to Level 4.

The University has adopted a continual improvement approach to monitoring our supply chains and working with our suppliers to gain a greater understanding of the source of supply. This includes identifying instances of modern slavery within our supply chains and working with suppliers to mitigate any identified issues.

Following the introduction of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, the University updated all procurement documentation and processes to enable more proactive steps to investigate and act upon any indications of Modern Slavery evidenced in the supply chains upon which we rely. Before the University awards contracts of significant value, suppliers are required to confirm compliance with the Act as well as providing confirmation that they will support our ambitions in this regard.

The University takes a category-led approach to procurement. Our categories include:
- Estates & Facilities Management (including construction)
- Catering Services
- IT
- Laboratory Products and Services
- Workshop and Engineering Supplies
- Professional Services
- Office Supplies
- Travel
The University has graded each category in terms of risk against sustainability good practice. As a starting point for our analysis of supply chains in relation to the Act, we have investigated the ‘first tier’ supplier base.

The categories that have been identified as likely to bear the greatest risk in ‘first tier’ supply are construction, catering, cleaning services and waste management services. These are labour-intensive industries which can rely on lower paid workers to deliver the service and are sectors where modern forms of slavery may be more likely to occur. Further areas of risk include IT and Laboratory products, owing to the complexity of the supply chains within these industries and the wide range of hazardous materials used within manufacturing.

Employment of staff

The University’s commitment to securing the rights of our staff is set out in our institutional HR policies and procedures: http://hr.leeds.ac.uk/policies

Key HR policies of relevance to the Modern Slavery Act are:

➢ The Equality and Inclusion Framework 2014-19, which sets out the University’s commitment to promoting equality across campus and also states corporate and individual responsibilities to adhere to the principles of the policy: http://hr.leeds.ac.uk/info/72/equality_and_inclusion/250/equality_and_inclusion

➢ The Code of Practice on Whistleblowing policy, which sets out a process by which concerns can be raised: http://hr.leeds.ac.uk/whistleblowing

➢ The Policy on Dignity and Mutual Respect, which sets out expectations about how everyone should be treated on campus: http://hr.leeds.ac.uk/info/6/support_for_staff/260/dignity_and_mutual_respect

Training

The University is committed to raising awareness of the risks of modern slavery and human trafficking in our organisation and supply chains. A new training programme is being developed for staff in the University’s procurement and sustainability services, focusing on all aspects of sustainable procurement including the Modern Slavery Act and our local processes and procedures. This training will then be rolled out to other members of staff across the University that will benefit from attendance.

Our Plans for the Future

The University will continue to engage with ‘first tier’ suppliers to identify areas at risk of modern slavery. We will build upon the work already carried out in supply chain analysis to ensure it remains up to date and relevant. We are committed to gaining a better understanding and transparency of our supply chains and greater responsibility towards the people working within them.

Signed: 

Pro-Chancellor