

Procurement Policy

Introduction

Middlesex University purchasing has annual influenceable spend on capital and revenue goods and services which currently totals around £50 million. The purchasing activities of the University therefore have significant budgetary implications. The Procurement Policy aims to ensure that the benefits of University purchasing are maximised.

Compliance with this Policy is a requirement of the University's Financial Regulations.

Statement of Intent

The University has identified a number of priorities through the strategic objectives and outcomes of the Strategic Plan. Schools and Services must seek to use their purchasing activities to advance University priorities while achieving value for money with probity and accountability. Each School and Service should use its best endeavours to ensure that competitive local firms that comply with relevant legislation are given a full, fair and reasonable opportunity to supply the University.

Policy Objectives

The Policy has three equally ranking objectives:

- advance University priorities in support of the Strategy Plan;
- achieve optimum value for money; and
- ensure probity and accountability for outcomes.

University Priorities

Each School and Service must seek to advance the University's priorities as set out in the current Strategic Plan for Middlesex University.

Value for Money

Each School and Service must seek to obtain value for money in its purchasing of goods and services. The concept of value for money is not restricted to price alone. The value for money assessment must include consideration of:

- contribution to the advancement of University priorities;
- factors such as fitness for purpose, quality, service and support; and
- cost related factors including whole-life costs and transaction costs associated with acquisition, use, storage, maintenance and disposal.

Probity and Accountability

Each School and Service must conduct its purchasing activities with the utmost probity ensuring that purchasing is carried out in accordance with such obligations as may be placed upon it by the:

- University's Financial Regulations;
- UK Public Procurement Directives and
- Any other legislative, government or other industry regulatory policy obligations as may from time to time apply to the purchasing activities of the University.

The concepts and intentions of this Policy are supported by the University's "Purchasing Guidelines" to assist Schools and Services to understand good purchasing practice. All staff involved in purchasing need to be familiar with the University's Procurement Policy and the associated purchasing procedures.

Policy Implementation

The University Procurement Office (UPO) provides a range of support with implementation of the University's Procurement Policy including:

- assistance with securing the necessary management information to undertake procurement planning;
- advice regarding training and development programs for staff involved in purchasing to ensure they have the appropriate skills to implement the Policy;
- organising workshops on key aspects of the Policy for staff with purchasing responsibility;
- monitoring implementation of the Policy.

Policy Operation

Procurement Planning

An important first step towards the process of achieving the objectives of this Policy is procurement planning. Procurement planning facilitates a structured and considered approach to purchasing.

Procurement plans set out:

- the objectives to be achieved through the University's purchasing activities consistent with the objectives of this Policy;
- how the University will meet its specified objectives; and
- mechanisms through which achievement of the University's purchasing objectives will be measured.

Procurement planning must be based on an analysis of the University's purchasing patterns and supply markets. Supply market analysis can be used to help identify possible opportunities for local suppliers.

Planning must be undertaken at the corporate level and in relation to significant purchases by individual Schools and Services. The University must prepare procurement plans when purchasing goods and services that have been identified as being of high relative expenditure and/or for which supply is difficult to secure (i.e. significant purchases).

Each School and Service must publish a forward procurement schedule outlining anticipated significant purchases on an annual basis in line with the budget preparation process.

Procedures and Regulations

Each Budget Holder must ensure that their local purchasing procedures are consistent with this Policy and that the systems and practices followed by staff are based on the information provided in the University's "Purchasing Guidelines". Where it is not possible to achieve compliance with the University's formal procedures and regulations then matters must be referred to the University Procurement Office (UPO). Any breach of the regulations must also be referred to the UPO or an appropriate senior manager.

Policy Administration

The Deputy CEO is responsible for the University's Procurement Policy. The University Procurement Office is responsible for the monitoring and development of issues relevant to the policy.