Durham University

Modern Slavery Statement

(Financial Year 2017/18)

This statement responds to S.54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and sets out the steps that Durham University has taken and is continuing to take to ensure that modern slavery or human trafficking is not taking place within our business or supply chain.

Modern slavery encompasses slavery, servitude, human trafficking and forced labour. Durham University has a zero tolerance approach to any form of modern slavery. We are committed to acting ethically and with integrity and transparency in all business dealings and to putting effective systems and controls in place to safeguard against any form of modern slavery taking place within our business or our supply chain.

Our business

Durham University is a legally independent and autonomous institution established by an Act of Parliament in 1832 and Royal Charter (number RC000650). Durham University is an exempt charity under the Charities Act 2011.

Durham University is a higher educational institution based on a collegiate model and is composed of academic departments, research institutes, administrative departments, libraries and museums.

We seek the highest distinction in research and scholarship and as a world-leading research institution we are committed to excellence in all aspects of education, student experience, research, and the transmission of knowledge. The University’s strategy 2017-2027 can be accessed here www.durham.ac.uk/strategy2027

Our policies

We operate a number of internal policies to ensure that we are conducting business in an ethical and transparent manner. These include:

1. Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy: Our Whistleblowing Policy makes clear to all employees that they can raise concerns about how colleagues are being treated, or practices within our business or supply chain, without fear of reprisal. The process is set out here: https://www.dur.ac.uk/university.calendar/volmei/policies_and_strategies/

2. Employee Code of Conduct: This explains the manner in which we behave as an organisation and how we expect our employees and suppliers to act. The relevant guidance is set out here: https://www.dur.ac.uk/hr/realisingpotential/
Our suppliers

The University’s supply chain includes a large number of diverse suppliers including suppliers of goods and services that directly support our teaching, student support and research activity for example, large scale laboratory equipment and laboratory consumables. When considering a supplier, we operate a Supplier Code of Conduct and we also maintain a preferred supplier list. We conduct due diligence on all suppliers before allowing them to become a preferred supplier. This due diligence includes an online search to ensure that particular organisation has never been convicted of offences relating to modern slavery. We require suppliers to demonstrate that they provide safe working conditions. This Supplier Code of Conduct is included in and adhered to by the University when considering new suppliers.

We also require suppliers to conform to our Corporate, Social and Environmental Responsibility Policy which can be accessed here: https://www.dur.ac.uk/procurement/suppliers/sustprocpolicy/

The University is affiliated to Electronics Watch, an independent third party, who provides a monitoring service on supply chains assessing how suppliers are addressing issues and ensuring that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in any part of the University’s business or supply chains.

We are also affiliated to The Workers’ Rights Consortium, an independent labour rights monitoring organisation whose objective is to combat sweatshops and protect workers.

Training

We regularly conduct training for our procurement teams so that they understand the signs of modern slavery and what to do if they suspect that it is taking place within our supply chain.

Future Actions

Work will take place, in 2019, to explore membership with the Slave-Free Alliance for the purpose of understanding if membership in this scheme could support the University further. Slave-Free Alliance is part of the Hope for Justice; a leading global charity where all profits are reinvested into charitable anti-slavery projects.