

Procurement Strategy

2021-24



Approved by	Mike McCall, Director of Finance & Vicki Nairn, Vice Principal, Corporate Operations		
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Policy Owner	Rod Strachan	Impact	
Version	2	Date of next review	January 2024

Version Number	Purpose/Change	Date
1	Creation of Strategy	August 2016
2	<p>Updated with regard to current University vision and strategy map, removing reference to A Clear Future</p> <p>Incorporated elements of the recently published Scottish Government Public Procurement Priorities</p> <p>Inclusion of a summary statement on RGU Net Zero project</p> <p>Specified the Procurement functions that support current strategic aims concerning Sustainability and Infrastructure</p> <p>Additional objectives concerning climate change actions and ambitions, improving and managing sustainable supply chains, and developing staff capability in this area</p> <p>Inserted a link to the current Procurement Policy, replacing need for Annex</p>	August 2021

PROCUREMENT STRATEGY 2021-24

1. Background and Purpose

The purpose of the Robert Gordon University is to be recognised as an innovative, inclusive, impactful, professionally-focused university; with a mission statement to transform people and communities by providing demand-led teaching and research to contribute to economic, social and cultural development regionally, nationally and internationally.

It will achieve its goals in partnership with academic, voluntary, public and business organisations that share its ideals and aspirations, and this will require the support of a large number of external suppliers. In 2019/20 the University's non-pay spend was £36m, utilising the services of around 1000 suppliers.

The University's Procurement Department promotes purchasing professionalism to support the University in engaging with suppliers; the department is responsible for establishing and managing effective commercial arrangements to deliver the University's purchasing requirements at best value for money (to time, quality and budget). Value for money, now more than ever, also includes consideration of sustainability objectives (economic, social and environmental) in support of common societal goals to ensure that the collective spending power of the public sector is used to deliver value-adding collaborative procurement services, while enabling sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

The University Procurement Strategy takes cognisance of the environments within which the institution operates to ensure that external drivers and influences for improvement are addressed appropriately. In the HE sector in Scotland, significant external drivers of strategy planning and formulation are the procurement reform agenda, the implementation of the Procurement Reform Act, and the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations. Mandatory legislative compliance is coupled with an awareness of how our procurement processes may be used to support wider public policy strategic aims and desired outcomes such as those identified by the

Scottish Government, in their Public Procurement Priorities document, to take into account the impacts felt by us all since early 2020 of Brexit and the Covid-19 pandemic, address short term needs and support a robust, greener economic recovery, whilst developing leadership and wider capacity, capability and systems to future-proof procurement in Scotland. These strands of legislative change and programmes of improvement and reform come together in what is known as the 'Scottish Model of Procurement'.

RGU is committed to supporting the Scottish Government's ambition to achieve net zero emissions by 2045. RGU Net Zero is the university's framework to deliver its commitment through its operations, academic offer and its thriving innovation environment. Working in collaboration with students and staff, RGU aims to significantly reduce RGU's emissions from energy, transport and consumables, while factoring recycling and building sustainability into all our future decisions, with an increased focus on carbon footprint in each of our contracts.

In addition, the University Procurement Strategy will contribute to the University's published Strategy Map through alignment to a number of the University's key objectives and values; it is a statement of strategic intent and a commitment to direction for procurement activities at Robert Gordon University for 2021-2024.

The purpose is to set out a medium-term strategy for the delivery of procurement arrangements across the University and objectives for success. The overarching objective is to help deliver to the University maximum value, minimum risk and appropriate supplier relationships through fair, efficient and effective processes.

The strategy will be reviewed and updated to take account of developments and initiatives in purchasing and supply management. The Procurement Office will be responsible to the Director of Finance for the implementation of the Procurement Strategy.

2. Robert Gordon University's Strategic Plan

RGU is committed to obtaining value for money in all of its transactions, and in conducting its daily business staff must always consider the University's wider responsibilities in terms of legal, moral, social, economic and environmental impact. Effective procurement will support the key institutional objectives across these important operational dimensions.

The current University strategy acknowledges that this is a time of considerable change for higher education within the country and the strategy was written to rise to the challenges and opportunities that these changes may present to the university.

RGU has a strategic mission to transform individuals and communities by providing demand-led teaching and research to contribute to economic, social and cultural development. To achieve this the university has established a strategy map which reflects its significant strengths in higher education.

RGU is committed to the growth and development of the people and economy of the North East of Scotland and is actively engaged with the region's ambitious transformation. A key part of this is stimulating innovation and economic development by harnessing its expertise and strengthening its partnerships with industry. Building on this, the university is fostering innovation and entrepreneurship to support company creation and growth, and the development of products and services.

Specific aims from within RGU's Strategic Plan are supported by good procurement practice as follows;

Concerning Sustainability, the Procurement function shall help to:

- Achieve the university's purpose through efficient and focused sustainable operations
- Fulfil the university's responsibility to reduce the environmental impact of its operations

Concerning Infrastructure, the Procurement function shall help to:

- Maintain and enhance high quality facilities on the Garthdee campus
- Create an excellent digital infrastructure for users both on and off campus
- Provide high quality services on and off campus

The University also takes cognisance of the wider Scottish Policy context, with particular regard to the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework.

Section 15(5) of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 requires that public sector bodies must indicate in their Procurement Strategy how they intend to meet certain requirements concerning regulated procurements, and confirm certain general statements of policy. These statements have been incorporated into Section 2 of the RGU Procurement Policy

3. RGU Procurement Strategic Objectives

Leadership & Governance

- To work with internal academic budget holders, professional support service colleagues and suppliers to deliver innovation and best value to the learning, research and service support communities through the development of an effective and co-ordinated purchasing effort within the University.
- To develop policies and procedures that are based on national and sectoral strategies and policies, as promoted by Scottish Procurement and APUC.
- To ensure that the most appropriate, efficient and effective procurement systems and processes are utilised.
- To increase the visibility of procurement, improving our communications and ensuring that all stakeholders understand their role in driving and enabling impactful procurement.

Value for Money: Category Management

- To analyse the University's non-staff expenditure and apply appropriate measures to identify contract opportunities and deliver value for money.

Value for Money: Collaborative Procurement

- To sustain and further develop partnerships within the sector, with other publicly funded bodies, with professional bodies and appropriately with supply markets that will yield intelligence, innovation and deliver value to users of procurement services.
- To promote the delivery of value for money through good procurement practice and optimal use of available collaboration opportunities.
- To promote cooperative procurement within the University and contribute to sectoral, regional and national initiatives.
- To identify opportunities to target, create or grow sustainable supply chains through collaborative working.

Value for Money: Contract & Supplier Management

- To develop and implement a contract management approach within the University, to ensure that anticipated benefits are delivered and service levels are met.
- To work with the supply chains to ensure continued value, managed performance and minimal risk throughout the life of contracts for the benefit of customers and students.
- To integrate climate action in contract and supplier management activities.

Responsible Procurement

- To embed sound ethical, social and environmental policies within the Institution's procurement function, including action to address Modern Slavery and the inclusion of Fair Work Practices in our contracts
- To comply with relevant Scottish, UK and EC legislation in performance of the sustainable procurement duty.
- To embed climate and circular economy considerations when addressing University procurement requirements, in line with Scottish Procurement Policy Note (SPPN 1/2021).

Developing People

- To seek out professional development opportunities to enrich and enhance experience and capability of procurement practitioners.
- To ensure that all staff involved in procurement continue to improve knowledge, competence and skills relevant to their role.
- To develop buyer capability to influence a green recovery and wider climate and circular economy ambitions.

4. Annual Procurement Report

RGU Procurement will produce a report on progress against its objectives annually and publish this on the University website. This report, produced as soon as practicable after the end of the financial year, will describe how the University has discharged its obligations under the Procurement Reform Act and how it has exercised discretion and judgement as permitted by the public procurement rules to secure strategic objectives in compliance with the Act.

The Annual Report will include –

- a summary of the regulated procurements that have been completed during the year covered by the report
- a review of whether those procurements complied with the University's procurement strategy
- to the extent that any regulated procurements did not comply, a statement of how the University intends to ensure that future regulated procurements do comply
- a summary of any community benefit requirements imposed as part of a regulated procurement that were fulfilled during the year covered by the report
- a summary of any steps taken to facilitate the involvement of supported businesses in regulated procurements during the year covered by the report
- a summary of the regulated procurements the University expects to commence in the next two financial years,
- such other information as the Scottish Ministers may by order specify.



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