

Leeds Beckett University's fifth Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2019/20

Introduction

Leeds Beckett University is a modern, professional University with ambition. We are proud of our history of education, which began with the founding of the Leeds Mechanics Institute in 1824.

The year 2020 marks 50 years since Leeds Polytechnic was established. The polytechnic brought together a number of specialist colleges to meet an increasing demand for professional and technical education in the city. It was the largest polytechnic in Yorkshire with 3,000 full-time students and 4,000 part-time students, with around 450 full-time teaching colleagues.

Our University has 2,218 dedicated and talented members of staff who are based across the University's two campuses; the city campus in the civic quarter of Leeds and its leafy Headingley campus.

Leeds Beckett University is a community of more than 24,000 students. With an annual turnover of £213m, we contribute an estimated £500m to the regional economy. Around two thirds of our graduates stay in the region contributing their skills and talent to the regional economy.

Our vision is to be an excellent, accessible and globally engaged University contributing positively to a thriving Northern economy and our mission is to ensure that its knowledge and resources are used to make a decisive and positive difference to people, communities and organisations.

We aspire to create graduates who will become exceptional employees, dynamic citizens and enterprising leaders. We work closely with employers and partners to ensure that our graduates are ready for work, ready for life, and ready to seize the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

Policies

We have an Ethics Policy Framework which sets out the context, values and associated policy framework through which we seek to apply the highest standards of ethical conduct and behaviour in all aspects of our business.

We are committed to high standards of openness, probity and accountability and have a Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure in place to promote that culture.

We are committed to providing a vibrant, ethical and sustainable working and learning environment that values equality and diversity.

We have signed up to the Leeds Social Value Charter which includes being sustainable, fair and ethical in all that we do as one of its guiding principles, including paying suppliers on time, paying our staff the living wage, paying a fair share of taxes and being open, transparent and fair in all of our working relationships.

We are part of the Leeds Anchors Network, working in partnership with the biggest organisations in the City to maximise the local benefits from our spending, services and recruitment.

This is our fifth Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement, providing an update on the steps we have taken over the last 12 months to continue to support the aims of the Modern Slavery Act.

Action taken over the last 12 months

The key risks to the University are in our supply chains, therefore the Head of Procurement is the lead on our action plan. This year we made the following progress in line with the commitments made in our 2018/19 statement:

- promoting awareness and training to all key stakeholders including delivering a lecture to over 400 students on sustainable procurement and Modern Slavery. We also promoted a supplier webinar on our webpages covering key sustainability drivers in HE and reminding suppliers of their obligations under The Modern Slavery Act. Procurement staff attended a number of training events including “The importance of Modern Slavery statements in Higher Education”;
- increasing the number of suppliers on our NETpositives sustainability tool to 586. 98% are aware of Modern Slavery and have action plans (The Modern Slavery Act does not apply to the remaining 2%), 48% of suppliers with action plans confirm they engage with their own suppliers on Modern Slavery and 42% engage in Modern Slavery training within their organisations;
- working in collaboration with the NEUPC Responsible Procurement Group to scope a supply chain mapping exercise for high risk suppliers, producing a sustainability question bank for tenders with targeted Modern Slavery questions and mandating supplier registration on the NETpositives tool.

Future plans

We will continue to work through our action plan including:

- promoting awareness and training to our stakeholders including a targeted communication on Anti Slavery Day;
- supporting key suppliers with their action plans through contract management to satisfy ourselves that they share our objective to prevent modern slavery in their organisations and in their supply chains;
- working collaboratively with the NEUPC to map the ethical and modern slavery risks in the supply base and develop due diligence and supply chain mapping methodology for Tier 1 suppliers;
- refresh responsible procurement policies to enhance social value focus, in particular Skills and Employment, Diverse Supply Chains, Environment and Safe Supply Chains

This statement was approved by our University’s Governance and Nominations Committee on the 16th October 2020, will be reviewed at least once annually in the future and is available from our public information pages here:

<https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/-/media/files/our-university/governance/slaveryandhumantraffickingstatement.pdf>



Signed on behalf of the Board of Governors by Professor Peter Slee, Vice Chancellor
26th October 2020