

Procurement Strategy

For the attention of: All Staff
Produced by: Deputy CEO/ Head of Finance
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Vision, Purpose & Values

Our Vision

Our students will be recognised locally & nationally for their positive impact on the communities and industries in which they choose to work.

Our Purpose

To inspire our students to gain the skills, knowledge and behaviours they need to be resilient and thrive in an ever-changing world.

Our Values

Excellence: A culture of creativity, high expectations, ambition and aspiration

Respect: Showing fairness, courtesy and mutual respect to each other and our environment

Integrity: Honesty, openness and trust at the heart of College life

Diversity: Celebrating diversity and inclusivity as a key to our success

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Windsor Forest Colleges Group recognises that a strong and effective procurement function is needed and this in turn requires appropriate resources and expertise. The College will seek to achieve best practice, where resources permit, in this area.
- 1.2. For the purposes of this strategy, procurement is defined as the process of acquiring goods and services. This strategy outlines the objectives and approach to be taken by The Windsor Forest Colleges Group in order to ensure it obtains maximum value for money.

2. Purpose

- 2.1. This strategy aims to ensure that procurement planning reflects the College's corporate aims and priorities.
- 2.2. This will provide an opportunity to co-ordinate current processes and also provide a clear pathway for identifying and acting on improvements to ensure that best value is being obtained consistently when procuring goods and services.
- 2.3. It should be noted that this strategy is not a procurement manual. College procurement regulations and procedures are included in the College's Financial Regulations and detailed guidance and best practice is also included in the various documents, including the LSC Procurement Guide for FE Colleges (2005).
- 2.4. This strategy will be reviewed bi-annually.

3. Vision

- 3.1. A holistic approach to procurement which embraces not only the need to ensure value for money, quality and whole-life cost (best value) but also considers; the impact of acquiring goods, services and works in supporting local economy; support the EU principals and aims of equal treatment, non-discrimination, mutual recognition, proportionality and transparency.

4. Scope and Strategic Objectives

- 4.1. The following objectives set out the role of procurement in the delivery of the College's aims and priorities.
- 4.2. To promote value for money, quality and whole-life cost through good procurement practice.
- 4.3. To facilitate an effective, robust and co-ordinated purchasing function within the College.

- 4.4. To systematically analyse and review the College's non-staff expenditure and apply appropriate procurement strategies and procedures to optimise value for money and reduce commercial risk.
- 4.5. To embed sound ethical, social and environmental policies within the College's procurement function, subject to resource considerations and to comply with all relevant UK legislation in all aspects of College purchasing.
- 4.6. To consider collaborative opportunities, where available and innovative approaches, both public and private sector, in order to widen the scope for maximising purchasing power and seeking best value.

5. Best Value

- 5.1. The College is fully committed to improving the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of all its activities. All procurement of goods, works and services will be based on best value principles, having due regard to propriety, regularity and the College's legal obligations.
- 5.2. The College will consider all reasonable procurement options and any suitable hybrid alternatives to ensure best value is secured from all procurement of goods and services.
- 5.3. Goods and services will be purchased in a mixed economy of suppliers from the public, private and voluntary and community sectors, according to which supplier offers best value. The College will give appropriate local suppliers every reasonable opportunity to bid for its business.

6. Diversity

- 6.1. The College is committed to review services and policies to remove any discrimination and to ensure that the College fulfils its duties in relation to diversity. Procurement practice will reflect this commitment by encouraging relationships with contractors and service providers who are equally committed to diversity.

7. Sustainability

- 7.1. Efficiency is an essential feature of the college spending. College money must be well spent and not wasted. Better purchasing and delivery of better services are an essential feature of achieving efficiency gains in economic, environmental and social terms. Where ever possible, goods and services will be purchased that support the local economy and local employment, that can be manufactured, used and disposed of in an environmentally responsible way and will avoid contracting with suppliers that wilfully and avoidable damage the environment or local economy. With regard to the environment, College purchasing choices will favour products showing clear environmental advantages unless there are significant reasons for not doing so. Specifications should meet and where appropriate exceed the standards required by legislation.

- 7.2. Improving the professionalism of purchasing activity across the college and the more widespread use of whole-life costing will go some way to achieving this. The College needs to examine ways to stimulate and enable whole-life accounting – where expenditure looks to achieve the best outcome for the college overall, irrespective of when or where costs and benefits fall. Sustainable procurement – embedding sustainable development considerations into spending and investing decision across the college – offers many opportunities including:
- avoiding adverse environmental impacts arising on the college estate and in the supply-chain by, for example, reducing waste and emissions;
 - making more efficient use of the college resources, for example through reduced energy consumption and reduced packaging;
 - stimulating the market to innovate and to produce more cost effective and sustainable options, and;
 - setting an example for the local community and demonstrating that the college is serious about sustainable development.

8. Health & Safety

- 8.1. The College recognises and accepts its responsibility as an employer for providing a safe and healthy work place and working environment for all its employees.
- 8.2. College staff need to be mindful of the health and safety issues to be considered when procuring goods and services.

9. Financial Regulations & Purchasing Practice

- 9.1. Staff responsible for purchasing will need to be familiar with the relevant sections of the College's Financial Regulations, as included on the College's Intranet.
- 9.2. The College's Senior Procurement Officer should have the opportunity to be involved in all key procurement decisions within the College, with a view to advising on the purchasing decision.

10. Strategy, Implementation, Monitoring & Reporting

- 10.1. The Deputy CEO and the Head of Finance will lead on the procurement strategy and the Head of Finance, working with the Finance Team and the contracted Procurement Management Service partner will manage and monitor the implementation of the strategy. The Senior Procurement Management Service includes a dedicated part-time Procurement Officer.
- 10.2. The Procurement partner will set a plan to systematically review all of the College's non-pay costs with clear financial targets and will produce a quarterly review report on progress.

- 10.3. Progress will also be reported periodically to the SLT.
- 10.4. The College will monitor the performance of the Procurement contract via KPIs and similarly the College's other key service contracts.

11. Risk Analysis

- 11.1. The risk of not having this policy in place and it not being adhered to could be anything from the College not gaining best value to the risk of legal action being taken against the College for not following the strict EU Public Sector Procurement Regulations.
- 11.2. Failure to adhere to sound procurement principles and ethics would leave the College and/or individuals open to potential accusations of wrong doing.

12. Data Protection

- 12.1. The data protection issues in relation to this policy relate to the need to keep tender documents and written quotations for possible audit purposes. The detailed requirements are included in the College's Retention & Destruction of Documents Policy.