

# SOAS University of London

## Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement

This statement is made pursuant to Section 54, Part 6 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes the institutions' slavery and human trafficking statement for the financial year beginning 1 August 2023 and ending 31 July 2024.

It sets out the steps the University has taken in relation to slavery and human trafficking in our supply chains and within our own organisation. It also details our plans for the next financial year and beyond.

### About SOAS

SOAS challenges perspectives, broaches debate and empowers students to question the global status quo to find solutions to the issues facing the world today.

Our programmes are taught by respected international academics with inter-disciplinary expertise who are engaged in fieldwork and research that influences governments, industries and communities across the world.

Here at SOAS we unite a diverse spectrum of backgrounds and talents to produce meaningful change.

- SOAS Employs approximately 1100 staff
- SOAS has approximately 6000 Students
- Our turnover in the 2023/2024 financial year was approximately £110m

### Our policies and practices

SOAS has core values which demonstrate its commitment to the fair and equitable treatment of its staff, students and supply chain, these are:

#### Promoting equality & celebrating diversity

SOAS is a community that celebrates diversity with our diverse population as one of our greatest strengths. Equality of opportunity is at the core of all the SOAS activities.

#### Promoting cultural understanding

SOAS is committed to fostering broad cultural understanding in the UK and in the world at large. SOAS will strive for the highest ethical standards in all its dealings and foster the values of openness, honesty, tolerance, fairness and responsibility in all areas.

#### Community

SOAS recognises that its greatest assets are its staff and students. We will strive to create an atmosphere of community, collegiality and cooperation for all staff and students.

#### Transparency & accountability

Decisions at SOAS are made based on the best available evidence and quality information is shared. We aspire to exemplary standards of governance in all that we do.

## Our Supply chains

Procurement at SOAS is devolved to department level and spans a broad range of products and services. We work with a variety of organisations from individuals to large complex worldwide businesses in both the public and private sector. We recognise that our supply chains are global, and risk varies both in location and industry.

Our largest spend areas are in

- Estates (Property Maintenance and Facilities management)
- IT Infrastructure, goods and services
- Professional services

### Affiliation

SOAS is an affiliate of Electronics Watch, an organisation that works to monitor working conditions in factories producing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) goods bought by public sector members. Electronics Watch works with civil society organisations in the countries where the factories are located to monitor working conditions.

### The use of framework agreements

SOAS is a member of the London Universities Purchasing Consortium LUPC and makes use of a range of their framework agreements in order to purchase goods and services. These framework suppliers have been through a due diligence process and evaluation includes consideration of their responsible procurement practices.

All suppliers on LUPC framework agreements have signed the same, sector developed, Sustain Code of Conduct that SOAS utilises.

### Collaboration

SOAS is a member of the Higher Education Procurement Association (HEPA), responsible procurement group. This national group meets quarterly to address all aspects of responsible procurement, including modern slavery. Task and finish working groups are actively attended and contributed to by the Head of procurement where information is shared and gained.

SOAS is also a member of the EAUC, the leading body for sustainability in the post-16 education sector in the UK and Ireland. SOAS staff regularly make use of resources and events provided by the EAUC to ensure they remain aware of current information.

## Our progress

During 2023 – 2024 the SOAS Senior Management Team received training in the risks surrounding modern slavery. This training was delivered in person by specialist agency Unseen.

SOAS also purchased and has promoted an accessible e learning module for all staff. The training covers:

- What Modern Slavery is
- The legislative framework
- The different types of Modern Slavery
- Who can be affected by it
- What the signs of Modern Slavery might be
- What you can do about it?

Whilst currently the online e learning module is not mandatory, 21 members of staff have already completed the training.

A new procurement policy was approved by the Executive Board; The policy requires that all suppliers be asked to respond to appropriate and proportionate questions regarding modern slavery during the procurement process.

The Head of Procurement developed a full suite of documents to ensure colleagues procuring goods and services can do so in a consistent way. As part of this work new quotation and tender documents were launched, these documents request as mandatory the provision of a copy of the Modern Slavery Statement (for organisations captured by the legislation) and introduce the requirement to sign our Supply Chain Code of Conduct.

A bank of sustainability questions is now available to all staff, via our Intranet. These questions (and model answers), linked to the SDGs, are required to be used in quote and Tender processes and enable persons to easily seek information on specific points including modern slavery in the supply chain.

The Head of procurement was part of a sustainable procurement focus group. The group consisting of 5 Universities in London, contributed to a research project to address the climate change impact on modern slavery risks in public sector's supply chains. The findings of this project [were published in January 2024](#) and are being used to inform how procurement and contract management practices at SOAS can be developed to be more effective in the future with respect to this topic.

In 2024 SOAS purchased a new contract management system. This system allows the procurement team to hold a repository of contracts, including copies of modern slavery statements, signed code of conduct documents, and contract management plans. This is allowing us to proactively work with our suppliers and understand, mitigate and manage risks in our supply chain.

We are proud to have maintained our status as a Living Wage Employer.

## Our plans

During the financial year August 2024 – July 2025, the Head of Procurement or the appropriate departmental lead, will address the below elements to ensure the University has a more robust approach to its due diligence and risk management process regarding Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking in its supply chains.

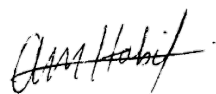
We will:

- Ensure that where possible, contracts for ICT equipment include reference to the Electronics Watch terms and conditions and will provide information to Electronics watch when requested. Electronics Watch coordinates industry-independent supply chain monitoring and facilitates the remediation of human rights abuses in public procurement electronics hardware and Low Emission Vehicle (LEV) supply chains.
- Investigate our food supply chain and work towards understanding our use of Fairtrade suppliers
- Review our contractor induction process and include information on how to report concerns of modern slavery.
- Develop a set of KPI's and targets to enable us to more formally demonstrate our progress against our work in this area.
- Add to our procurement intranet site the details of the Unseen helpline to ensure that it is clear how members of staff with concerns can report them appropriately.
- Add our Modern Slavery Statement to the Government Registry

Date Statement approved 28 October 2024....

Approved by: .....Executive Board.....

Date signed .....1 November 2024.....



Signed by Professor Adam Habib, Vice Chancellor of SOAS