

Ethical Purchasing – Top Tips

1. Do I need to buy?

- Think carefully about whether a purchase is really necessary.
- It might be possible to borrow or reuse a piece of kit from a colleague. We know it is not always straightforward but it is worth asking the question!

2. Make purchases based on the 'whole life cost' not just lowest price.

- There can be hidden costs associated with some products, especially equipment which uses energy or other resources when it is in use.
- Try to choose the most efficient models which are likely to have lower running costs, even if they are more expensive up front.

3. Choose products with minimal packaging.

- Remember that we also pay for the packaging- at some stage!
- Products with less packaging help reduce the amount of waste we produce and the associated cost of its disposal. They can also be more efficiently transported which also reduces emissions and creates less noise and disruption on campus.

4. Consider end-of-life before you buy.

- Most of the things we buy will end up as waste.
- Think about how easy it will be to dispose of the product you are buying responsibly? Considering whether a product (and its packaging) can be reused or recycled before buying it helps us to be mindful of the waste we create as a University.

5. Always buy recycled.

- Helping to create a market for products with recycled content is as important as recycling the waste we create.
- The University uses tonnes of paper every month and this is a good example of a product that has a high quality recycled version easily available. You can look for recycled content in other products too and help us use our spending power more responsibly.

6. Understand the labels.

- It is easier than ever to find responsibly sourced products- but it can be confusing!
- As more products chose to become accredited for their social or environmental credentials there are more labels to help the consumers identify them.

7. Can you use an approved supplier?

- The University assesses sustainability as part of its tender processes to ensure that approved suppliers deliver in as sustainable a manner as possible so the work has already been done for you.

8. Check your supplier's credentials.

- Do the suppliers you want to use (or already use) have high environmental or social standards? Have a look at their website or speak to us if they are already a supplier to the university.

9. Avoid disposable products.

- Unless they are biodegradable or can be recycled!
- Disposables add to the accumulation of waste to landfill so should only be used where there are no alternatives.

10. Talk to us about innovation.

- We are open to supporting new ways of purchasing responsibly. Speak to us if you have an idea.