

## **Modern Slavery Statement**

### **Introduction**

Modern slavery is a crime and a violation of fundamental human rights. It takes various forms, such as slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking - all of which have in common the deprivation of a person's liberty by another, in order to exploit them for personal or commercial gain.

Queen's University Belfast (Queen's) is committed to improving practices to combat slavery and human trafficking.

This statement is made pursuant to section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes Queen's slavery and human trafficking statement for the financial year ended 31 July 2024.

### **Overview**

Queen's University is one of the leading universities in the UK and Ireland, with a distinguished heritage and history. The University is registered with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland.

Queen's is a member of the Russell Group, with an annual turnover of £472 million, over 25,000 students and 4,600 staff, the university plays a unique role in Northern Ireland and is a key partner within the Belfast Region City Deal.

The University's Annual Report sets out that sustainability is at the cornerstone of Strategy 2030 and Queen's is a signatory to the UN Accord.

Queen's Strategy 2030 is centered around four Strategic Priorities — Education and Skills; Research and Innovation; Global Reputation and Partnerships; Social and Civic Responsibility and Economic Prosperity — which build on a rich heritage of innovation, both economic and social, and focus on the global challenges aligned to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Modern slavery risks are considered in relation to people working on campuses, supply chains, fundraising and investments, overseas employment and international partnerships.

### **Supply chain**

Queen's supply chain is diverse with a wide range of direct and indirect goods, services and works procured. Where appropriate, procurement frameworks utilised are established by collaborative consortia who assess and monitor risk.

Given the global reach of the supply chains, it is recognised that there is the potential risk of modern slavery occurring, especially in specific areas that are identified as high risk such as electronics, building materials and construction, facilities management, laboratory consumables, clothing, catering/food and office supplies. As such there are procurement processes and policy in place to address this alongside due diligence measures.

Well-established procurement policies and procedures demonstrate commitment to acting ethically, and with integrity and are enhanced with each tender exercise to include direct reference to slavery and human trafficking. Modern Slavery is included as a supplier response question for high-risk areas and included in the Invitation to Tender, when relevant. Furthermore, incident response plans are required from high-risk suppliers.

Modern slavery is a standard contract clause in all procurement contracts that are on Queen's terms; this requires ethical sourcing of supplies and Queen's actively contributes to the sectoral Purchasing Consortium, of which we are a member, to ensure that Modern Slavery is considered in areas that have known risks. As part of identifying and mitigating risk, Queen's works with sectoral Purchasing Consortium to review available risk assessment tools and techniques which can assist in the management of supply chain risk and have committed to the use of such tools. Queen's supports and has signed up to membership of Electronics Watch in September 2019.

Since February 2021, the University has endorsed a [Supply Chain Code of Conduct](#). This code is applicable to all suppliers and links directly to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The purpose of the Code is to create awareness across Queen's suppliers of social, ethical, economic and environmental issues. The Code helps suppliers understand the behaviours and standards that are expected of them and their supply chains when working on University contracts.

Queen's adopts a zero-tolerance approach to slavery and human trafficking. To ensure those in the supply chain comply with Queen's Code of Conduct, contracts with suppliers in risk areas are reviewed to ensure compliance with anti-slavery measures. Queen's has ensured that the matter has been highlighted on the Queen's website under the section that deals with information for suppliers and have enhanced minimum standards to include a section on Modern Slavery. Queen's support and contribute to the development of a free supplier planning tool enabling suppliers to track and report on actions taken on Modern Slavery.

The Code was reviewed during the financial year with recommendations for update made, and supplier compliance with the code was tracked and monitored. In the forthcoming period it is intended that an updated Code will be released.

To ensure a high level of understanding of the risks of modern slavery and human trafficking in supply chains, awareness training, delivered by the charity Unseen, is available as part of the procurement easy to access training. Procurement guidance and procedures keep internal staff apprised of the issue of Modern Slavery. All Procurement Office staff are also required to undertake annual training on Modern Slavery through the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply or by utilising the training provided by the Higher Education Procurement Association (HEPA).

### **Reporting victims of Modern Slavery**

In a University context, if you think someone may be a victim of Modern Slavery or if there is a risk of it occurring please report this without delay to the Chancellery using the e- mail address [chancellery@qub.ac.uk](mailto:chancellery@qub.ac.uk)

Suppliers, staff or students may also use the [Whistleblowing process](#) which is available on the University Website and / or the confidential Modern Slavery Helpline on 08000 121 700.

The Registrar  
31 January 2025