



# UK Further & Higher Education Responsible Procurement Group (FHE RPG)

## UPDATE 2025-26

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## About the RPG

### Purpose

The FHE RPG identifies, shares and promotes best practice on Responsible Procurement throughout the sector and stimulates the development of resources, principles and guidance to support members on Responsible Procurement.

It has a **Steering Group** comprised of representatives from the subgroups of the RPG and the wider sector and is chaired by [Helen Baker](#), Director of Procurement at UWE.

### Steering Group

| Name                                    | Job Title                                                                     | Institution                             |
|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| <a href="#">Helen Baker</a> (RPG Chair) | Director of Procurement                                                       | University of the West of England (UWE) |
| <a href="#">Harriet Wallace</a>         | Director Sustainability Strategy                                              | Imperial College London                 |
| <a href="#">Jo Dainton</a>              | Head of Circular Economy & Responsible Consumption                            | University of the West of England (UWE) |
| <a href="#">Siôn Pickering</a>          | Climate, Biodiversity and Sustainability in Supply Chains – Programme Manager | University of Edinburgh                 |
| <a href="#">Fiona Goodwin</a>           | Deputy CEO                                                                    | EAUC                                    |
| <a href="#">Charlotte Wood</a>          | Sustainability Manager                                                        | Nottingham Trent University             |
| <a href="#">Sarah Dye</a>               | Operational Procurement Manager                                               | NWUPC                                   |
| <a href="#">Angus Warren</a>            | CEO                                                                           | APUC                                    |
| <a href="#">Claire Davies</a>           | Sustainable Procurement Project Manager                                       | Nottingham Trent University             |
| <a href="#">Adam Clarke</a>             | Managing Director                                                             | The Energy Consortium (TEC)             |
| <a href="#">Rosalind Farrow</a>         | Carbon Data Manager                                                           | University of Sheffield                 |
| <a href="#">Martin Farley</a>           | Associate Director of Environmental Sustainability                            | UKRI                                    |
| <a href="#">Amina Imam</a>              | Procurement Manager                                                           | University of Cambridge                 |
| <a href="#">Andrew Waggott</a>          | Environmental Sustainability Programme Director                               | MRC UKRI                                |

## Terms of Reference

The work of the RPG is governed by these [Responsible Procurement Group Terms of Reference](#).

## How to get involved

The RPG welcomes BUFDG and EAUC members with an interest in responsible procurement to participate in its work. Each subgroup of the FHE RPG focuses on a particular RP area or can be a Task and Finish group working on a specific defined project. If you would like to find out more about joining a sub-group, please contact the relevant chair (details below).

## RP Sub-Groups and Activity

| Circular economy & waste reduction                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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| <b>Co-Chairs:</b> <a href="#">Jo Dainton</a> , Head of Circular Economy & Responsible Consumption, UWE; <a href="#">Siôn Pickering</a> , Climate, Biodiversity and Sustainability in Supply Chains – Programme Manager; and <a href="#">Amina Imam</a> , Procurement Manager University of Cambridge.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Aspirations for/purpose of the group</b><br>To discuss challenges and highlight opportunities related to introducing circular economy initiatives within Further and Higher Education (FHE) Institutions, with a particular focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reducing the purchasing of new items;</li><li>• Extending the lifespan of existing items;</li><li>• Reducing associated packaging waste;</li><li>• Increasing the availability of circular items from suppliers; and</li></ul> Increasing the purchase of items which can be used in a circular manner in future.                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Activity completed in 2025-26</b><br>The subgroup focused on building awareness, sharing good practice and identifying practical approaches on how to reduce the purchase of new items and extend the useful life of existing ones.<br><br>Key sessions completed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 October 2025 : 10-11.30am - Including accurate carbon cost for items at point of purchase (for end users).</li><li>• 3 December 2025:10-11.30am - Developing a reuse hub for items from student accommodation.<br/><a href="#">Case study: Sustainability Hub for Responsible Procurement Group</a></li><li>• 18 February 2026 :10-11.30am - “Bring and share” of our institutions’ circular economy projects / priorities for 2026.</li></ul> |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 29 April 2026 :10-11.30am - Circular Economy: Drivers of Change in Circular Furniture Solutions</li> <li>• 24 June 2026 :10-11.30am – Keeping products in use &amp; order efficiency</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Current Activity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Researching opportunities and awareness on take back schemes</li> <li>• November/December- Introducing a sustainable procurement hierarchy / decision tree</li> <li>• 2027 - Introducing circular economy solutions for single use plastics in high impact frameworks</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <p><b>These sessions are open to any RPG member with an interest in the topic – contact <a href="#">Siôn Pickering</a> or <a href="#">Amina Imam</a>, to receive a calendar invite for selected sessions.</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>GHG (Greenhouse Gas) Measurement and Reporting</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <p><b>Co-Chairs:</b> <a href="#">Harriet Wallace</a>, Director Sustainability Strategy, Imperial College and <a href="#">Charlotte Wood</a> from NTU)</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <p><b>Aspirations for/purpose of the group</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research and increase awareness of GHG reporting tools that could support the HE sector to undertake robust calculation of carbon emissions from purchased goods and services.</li> <li>• Understand user experiences of these GHG reporting tools, identifying and recommending improvements.</li> <li>• Share good practices for calculating and reporting emissions from purchased goods and services, both within the sector and beyond.</li> <li>• Enable the provision of annually updated GHG data tool(s) in a timely manner to UKUPC and institutions.</li> </ul>                           |
| <p><b>Activity in 2025-26</b></p> <p>Since April 2025, this group has been working on implementing improvements to the Higher Education Supply Chain Emissions Tool (HESCET). The aim is to improve the tool such that the emission estimates can be more accurate and representative to the higher education sector in the UK. The primary improvement that has been made to the tool is to apply Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) instead of Classification of Individual Consumption according to Purpose (COICOP) based emission factors, as SIC is more representative of higher education spending. For more detail on SIC, COICOP and this project <a href="#">click here</a></p> |
| <p><b>Current Activity</b></p> <p>The Technical Review Team are approaching the final stages of their work as they look to release the updated HESCET in autumn 2026.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>UKUPC Risk Matrix alignment with Supply Chain Code of Conduct (SCCoC) (Task and Finish Group)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <p><b>Chair:</b> <a href="#">Sarah Dye</a>, Operational Procurement Manager, NWUPC</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <p><b>Aspirations for/purpose of the group</b></p> <p>This is a task and finish collaboration between representatives of the UKUPC Responsible Procurement Network (RPN) and the UK FHE Responsible</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

Procurement Group (RPG). The purpose is to review and update the existing *UKUPC Responsible Procurement Risk Analysis Matrix* to better align the covered risks with the *Sustain Supply Chain Code of Conduct (SCCoC)*. The revised matrix will establish risk by ProCHE Level 2 across the thematic areas within the SCCoC: Social, Compliance; Working Environment and Terms; Ethical Compliance & Economic Development; and Environmental Sustainability. The matrix will broaden the number of classified risks within these thematic areas to align with the SCCoC whilst remaining manageable and will allow users to analyse risk level by thematic area or individual themes within that area.

#### **Activity completed in 2025-26**

The [Responsible Procurement Commodity Mapping Tool](#) was launched in December 2025 supporting the identification of potential responsible procurement risks and opportunities.

An overview of the Tool was provided in the [launch webinar](#) on 15 January 2026 and the [slides are available for download](#).

Once members start using the tool, it would be useful to have feedback on the values applied to specific commodity codes via our dedicated [feedback form](#).

#### **Proposed Activity**

A review of the feedback provided on the Risk Matrix will be carried out in 2026-27 and the matrix updated where appropriate.

### **Sustainable Supply Chain – Common Pathway (Task and Finish Group)**

**Chair:**, Sion Pickering, Climate, Biodiversity and Sustainability in Supply Chains – Programme Manager

#### **Aspirations for/purpose of the group**

- Determine a common approach across UK Further and Higher Education (FHE) institutions & associated research institutes when addressing the climate impacts of their supply chains, using the [Edinburgh Pathway](#) as a route for achieving this
- Progress adoption of a common approach at member institutions, becoming a group of early adopters for this approach within the UK FHE sector & associated research institutes
- Develop resources to support early adopters to continue to build on collaborative approach following the conclusion of this short-term working group
- Determine next steps for increasing uptake of the common approach across UK FHE & associated research institutes, and putting forward recommendations for resourcing requirements to meet these

#### **Activity completed in 2025-26**

- The group agreed to use the Pathway developed by the University of Edinburgh as a common approach to decarbonising our supply chains, with some amendments:
  1. Change of name to reflect broader sectoral use. This new name was agreed as “The Sustainable Supply Chain Pathway for education and research institutions” (The Pathway). Documentation being updated at present to reflect this

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Adapting timelines for actions completed in 2026 to be “from 2026” to allow additional Pathway adoptees to undertake these going forward</li> <li>3. Additional clarification on some steps to make clear where there is flexibility. For example, where an adopting institution uses their own methodology to determine “high-sustainability-impact spend categories” rather than the two methodologies set out in the guidance documentation</li> <li>4. Develop brand guidelines for the Pathway, supporting consistency across adopting institutions</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreement to develop a Community of Practice to build on existing momentum for increasing uptake of the common approach, with membership open to institutions actively adopting the Pathway or supporting the development of the Pathway.</li> <li>• Development of the following resources to support early adopters continue to build on collaborative approach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Document outlining the “guiding principles” behind the development of the Pathway timescales</li> <li>2. Brief documents outlining the pathway and the benefits for buying organisations and suppliers</li> <li>3. Case studies from institutions that have adopted the Pathway. Notably for institutions of varying sizes, geographical location, or organisational structures.</li> <li>4. Pathway “Readiness Tracker”, to support buying organisations understand their current position in relation to the steps required within the pathway.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Proposed Activity</b></p> <p>This Group ran from November 2025 to March 2026, with a final report provided to the UKFHE RPG steering group in May 2026. At the May steering group meeting, there was an agreement in principle to support this approach, following further consultation with key stakeholders (to take place over the summer).</p> <p>In addition, an informal Community of Practice has been developed to bring together FHE and research organisations who are working to adopt the common pathway approach. <b>Please contact <a href="#">Sion</a> if you would like to join this Community of Practice.</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <p><b>Laboratory supply chain working group</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <p><b>Chair:</b> <a href="#">Harriet Wallace</a>, Director Sustainability Strategy, Imperial College</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <p><b>Aspirations for/purpose of the group</b></p> <p>This group is seeking to facilitate more sustainable procurement for laboratories, by gathering insights and tools for the HE sector in conversation with suppliers.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <p><b>Activity completed in 2025-26</b></p> <p>There has been no activity by this group in 2025-26 and a decision will be made imminently as to whether this group will close for now.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

## Upcoming new sub-groups and call for participation

Two new sub-groups are being introduced and we would **welcome participation** from across the sector.

### Exploring the Biodiversity Impact of our Supply Chains

We are aware that the indirect impact of the FHE sector on Biodiversity is a growing area of concern, with methods also emerging to quantify and report against this impact. If there is interest from the wider RPG, we will form a short-term group to explore the biodiversity impact of our supply chains in more detail.

**Chair:** [Siôn Pickering](#), Climate, Biodiversity and Sustainability in Supply Chains – Programme Manager

#### **Aspirations for/purpose of the group**

**Aim:** To examine existing methods to calculate and report on the biodiversity impacts of our supply chains

**Output:** A written report to the RPG steering group outlining key findings, with potential to form longer term group which trials agreed methodologies

**Get involved:** Please contact [Sion](#) at the University of Edinburgh

### Social Value: Review of the sustainability question set and HE TOMs (Task and Finish Group)

**Chair:** [Steven Hogg](#), Deputy Chair of the UKUPC Responsible Procurement Group

#### **Aspirations for/purpose of the group**

To look at how different institutions are engaging with the HE TOMs and consider:

1. Other systems/methodologies
2. Whether we need to develop some sector-specific TOMs aligned to student value
3. How we can align with the BUFDG benefits methodology
4. A recommended updated approach for evaluating, measuring and recording Social Value

**Get involved:** We are looking for more participants in this group. Please contact [Steven](#) at NEUPC

We share all tools, resources and outputs across HEPA and EAUC memberships, via [BUFDG](#) and [EAUC](#) websites.

## Join Us for Responsible Procurement Live – Turning Commitment into Action

**When:** 8 October 2026, 9.00–15.30 (exact timetable to be confirmed)

**Where:** Stadium Room, Scale Space White City, 58 Wood Lane, London, W12 7RZ

**Format:** In-Person and Online (view-only)

**Who:** Limited to 100 attendees. Open to procurement and sustainability professionals across BUFDG and EAUC

### **About the event**

An in-person event continuing the sector-wide conversation on how to embed sustainability across research operations, procurement, and supply chains.

Each session will include short presentations from institutional representatives, followed by structured discussions designed to share good practice, identify common challenges, and explore opportunities to develop new tools and frameworks that support progress across the sector.

Topics include:

- Translating sustainability strategies into operational and procurement actions.
- Engaging high-emission suppliers and improving data transparency.
- Designing procurement approaches that reduce environmental and social impacts.
- Exploring innovative demand management approaches across estates, ICT, and laboratories.
- Identifying collaborative opportunities to accelerate sustainability across the research sector.

**Invites** have been sent out to colleagues and stakeholders across the further and higher education (FHE) sector who play an active role in responsible procurement within their institution or organisation.

If you would like more information, please email:

[mrc.eventsandcommitteesteam@mrc.ukri.org](mailto:mrc.eventsandcommitteesteam@mrc.ukri.org)