

PROCUREMENT POLICY

1. Aim

1.1. The procurement of goods, services and works is a key process within the College. The aim of the Procurement Policy is to ensure that the College achieves value for money in the purchase of all goods and services. This should be undertaken in a transparent, efficient and effective manner to support the College's strategic priorities and objectives.

1.2. To achieve this aim, College procurement is required to:

- Understand the College's business needs and to respond to constantly changing market conditions and procurement methodology.
- Establish and maintain supplier relationship to add value to the services it receives.
- Improve procurement processes, including fully utilising the new automated purchase order system and any epurchase opportunities.
- Act in a fully transparent manner for all procurement activities, ensuring compliance with college financial regulations.
- Follow all external procurement regulations, including any imposed follow reclassification of colleges into the public sector.
- Ensure compliance with all college procurement procedures.

2. Purchasing Strategy

2.1. The Purchasing Strategy comprises the following key elements:

- The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the development of best practice across the College including arrangement of training for staff involved in the purchasing process.
- Budget holders are responsible for their purchases and for ensuring they have followed college procedures and can show that they have achieved value for money in the purchase of all their goods and services from approved suppliers.
- The Symmetry finance system will continue to be developed to support the process of achieving value for money, and specialist procurement support staff will be utilised to support all budget holders.
- Value for money includes an assessment of whole life costing, to ensure quality and economy over time. Relationships with suppliers will combine competition

with co-operation and contracts with suppliers will be designed, wherever practical, to promote continuous improvement and benefit sharing

- The supplier base will be actively managed with contracts arranged for a limited number of key commodities and services which represent the major part of purchasing in value terms and approved suppliers identified. The approved supplier list will be updated regularly and reviewed annually.
- The development of purchasing consortia as a means of combining purchasing power and expertise to provide purchasing contracts of optimum value will be utilised.
- To follow best practice within the further and higher education sectors.
- To follow any new guidelines introduced to the FE sector following reclassification.

3. Role of the Chief Financial Officer

3.1. The Chief Financial Officer is responsible for:

- ensuring that the College's purchasing policy is known and observed by all involved in purchasing for the College
- advising on matters of the College's purchasing policy and practice
- all college tenders
- developing appropriate standing supply arrangements on behalf of the College
- vetting all orders above £10,000 before they leave the College
- engaging in the finalisation of all large-scale purchase contracts (generally in excess of £10,000) undertaken by the College, in collaboration with the responsible department
- ensuring that the College complies with all regulations on public purchasing policy
- providing an Annual Procurement Report to Corporation.

4. Role of the Head of Finance

4.1 The Head of Finance is responsible for:

- supervising the role of the Procurement Officer
- supporting the Chief Financial Officer develop the procurement strategy and ensure compliance with all regulatory requirements
- advising and assisting curriculum areas and support departments where required on departmental purchases.

5. Role of the Procurement Officer

5.1. The College Procurement Officer is responsible for:

- the negotiating RFQs, tendering exercises and contracting with suppliers in support of the relevant budget holder

- establishing and maintaining a preferred supplier base where appropriate.
- ensuring all College procedures are followed when ordering goods and services
- advising on purchasing frameworks available and their suitability
- to provide an annual procurement report to the Chief Financial Officer.

6. Application of the Policy

- 6.1. All purchases of goods and services require an approved budget to proceed.
- 6.2. The College requires all budget holders, irrespective of the source of funds, to obtain supplies, equipment and services at the lowest possible cost consistent with quality, delivery requirements and sustainability and in accordance with sound business practice.
- 6.3. Purchases should only be made under contracts with approved suppliers and purchasing consortia. The use of suppliers not on the approved supplier list is not allowed.
- 6.4. Meeting and/or demonstrations with any potential suppliers of goods and services (including software) should be with the budget holder and the Procurement Officer.

7. Tendering and Quotations

- 7.1. Details of the limits above which tenders or written quotations are required are included in the Financial Regulations. All tenders must follow the agreed guidelines and procedures. A record of the three tenders or quotes received must be kept.

8. Post-Tender Negotiations

- 8.1. Post-tender negotiations (i.e. after receipt of formal tenders but before signing of contracts) with a view to improving price, delivery or other tender terms can be entered into provided:
 - it would not put other tenders at a disadvantage, and
 - it would not affect their confidence and trust in the College's tendering process.

9. Conflicts of Interest

- 9.1. A conflict of interest arises where an individual has the ability to influence the decision-making process. It is everyone's responsibility to identify any actual, potential or perceived instances of conflicts of interest in the procurement process. All interests must be declared, in all circumstances, in writing, at the earliest possible time, to the Principal or Chief Financial Officer of the College. Any interest declared will be maintained in a register of interest held by the Clerk to the Corporation. The aim is to manage, mitigate or remove the interest from the decision-making process in a way which is fair and transparent.

9.2. In the event that an employee has an interest in an organisation providing goods or services to the College that interest must be declared in writing at the earliest possible time and maintained in a Register of Interest held by the Clerk to the Corporation.

10. Procedures

10.1. The ordering of goods and services shall be in accordance with the arrangements detailed in the Financial Procedures Manual. Official College order forms must be used for the purchase of all goods and services except those made using Petty Cash.

10.2. The college terms of purchase must be included in all orders or contracts.

11. Method of Monitoring

11.1. Policy to be reviewed annually.

11.2. **Authorship:** Chief Financial Officer

11.3. **Date:** September 2023

11.4. **Reviewing Officers:** Chief Financial Officer

This document is available in a variety of formats. Main Reception will supply guidance on the range

Policy Approval

Approval By: Corporation	<u>Date:</u> 17 October 2023
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