

University of Hull

PURCHASING AND THE ENVIRONMENT

The University of Hull has issued an Environmental Purchasing Statement and an **Environmental Purchasing Guide** to assist purchasers throughout the organisation to understand the impact of their procurement decisions on the environment. A copy can be obtained from the Purchasing Office. Useful information can be found from the Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges [EAUC](#).

Environmental Purchasing Statement

Environmental Purchasing is an area that purchasers are increasingly becoming concerned about. Purchasers are looking at the implementation of a sensitive environmental purchasing policy by working with suppliers to reduce the environmental impact of the goods and services used whilst ensuring value for money is still maintained.

The aim of the Environmental Purchasing Statement is to prompt staff involved in the procurement of goods and services to use environmental responsibility as a factor in their purchasing decisions.

Staff involved in the procurement of goods and services should avoid using or purchasing products which are likely to:

- endanger health
- cause significant damage to the environment (e.g. by buying products that are not biodegradable or contain CFCs etc)
- consume a disproportionate amount of energy (e.g. a battery requires 500% more energy to produce than it will ever give out in its life)
- cause unnecessary waste
- use materials derived from threatened species or environments (e.g. tropical hardwoods)
- involve the unnecessary use of or cruelty to animals
- adversely affects other countries.

The following is a checklist for environmentally friendlier purchasing:

- Is it essential that the product is bought?
- How efficiently will the product use resources during its lifetime and have the costs of operating been taken into consideration before purchase?
- How durable is the product? Is it rechargeable, repairable, refillable or reusable?
- Can the product be recycled at the end of its useful life?
- Are recycled materials used in the product?
- Is it made from properly managed, renewable resources?
- Is the product likely to emit toxic or polluting substances during its production, use or disposal?
- Is the product over packaged? Is the packaging made from recycled materials? Can the packaging be recycled after use or reused?

- Have the 'whole life' costs and impacts been considered when assessing equipment for purchase?
- Can suppliers who can demonstrate that they are committed to environmental improvements be favoured?
- Where items are of similar costs, can preference be given to those that are manufactured with a high re-cycled content?

Some issues facing organisations include:

1. ISO 14001

This is the International Standards Organisation's environmental management systems standard.

Compliance with this standard will prepare firms for participation in the EC's eco-management and audit schemes (EMAS).

2. Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) - Cradle to Grave

The assessment looks at a product at every stage from raw material extraction, production through distribution, use and disposal.

Companies use LCA to :

- a) Substantiate green advertising claims
- b) Fend off regulatory pressures
- c) Look for ways to reduce the polluting impacts of products and processes.

3. Green Advertising

Recent legislation has addressed 'green advertising'.

The Committee of Advertising Practice has published revised British Codes of Advertising and Sales Promotion. Previously there were two separate codes, but these are now amalgamated and updated.

The rules came into force on February 01,1995 and apply to printed advertisements and promotions and are extended for the first time to electronic media, including computer games.

Of particular note in the rules introduced is that relating to 'environmentally friendly' products. Claims such as 'environmentally friendly' are only to be allowed if advertisers can provide convincing evidence that their products will cause no environmental damage.

As the University becomes more involved in environmental issues, more information will be available on this subject.