

## SOAS University of London

### Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement

Founded in 1916, SOAS uses our expertise in Africa, Asia and the Middle East as a lens through which to interrogate the planetary questions of our time.

SOAS is home to the leading research and expertise on the global issues of today. Our students engage with our academics on these issues throughout their study. We are uniquely placed to inform and shape current thinking about the economic, political, cultural, security and religious challenges of our world.

Our decolonial outlook on education allows us to strive for a more equal and just world through our teaching and research. We are committed to building bridges within the global communities and forging equitable global partnerships.

#### **Our Commitment**

SOAS is committed to respecting and protecting human rights.

This statement is made pursuant to Section 54, Part 6 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes the institutions' slavery and human trafficking statement for the financial year beginning 1 August 2022 and ending 31 July 2023. It sets out the steps the University has taken in relation to slavery and human trafficking in our supply chains and within our own organisation. It also details our plans for the next financial year and beyond.

#### **Our policies and practices**

SOAS has core values which demonstrate its commitment to the fair and equitable treatment of its staff, students and suppliers, these are:

##### ***Promoting equality & celebrating diversity***

SOAS is a community that celebrates diversity with our diverse population as one of our greatest strengths. Equality of opportunity is at the core of all the SOAS activities.

##### ***Promoting cultural understanding***

SOAS is committed to fostering broad cultural understanding in the UK and in the world at large. SOAS will strive for the highest ethical standards in all its dealings and foster the values of openness, honesty, tolerance, fairness and responsibility in all areas.

##### ***Community***

SOAS recognises that its greatest assets are its staff and students. We will strive to create an atmosphere of community, collegiality and cooperation for all staff and students.

### ***Transparency & accountability***

Decisions at SOAS are made based on the best available evidence and quality information is shared. We aspire to exemplary standards of governance in all that we do.

## **Our Supply chains**

Procurement at SOAS is across a broad range of products and services; we work with a variety of organisations from individuals to large complex worldwide businesses in both the public and private sector.

Our largest spend areas are in Information Technology, Estates and Professional services.

## **Our progress**

### **Recruitment**

During 2022 - 23 SOAS invested in the establishment of a permanent procurement team.

A Head of Procurement, and a Buyer were both recruited and work began to review all current procurement processes, documentation and terms and conditions of purchase. Consideration was made in relation to best practice procurement as well as how the organisation undertakes due diligence with respect to Modern Slavery in its supply chain.

### **Affiliation**

SOAS is an affiliate of Electronics Watch, an organisation that works to monitor working conditions in factories producing Information and Communication Technology (ICT) goods bought by public sector members. Electronics Watch works with civil society organisations in the countries where the factories are located to monitor working conditions.

### **The use of framework agreements**

SOAS is a member of the London Universities Purchasing Consortium LUPC and makes use of a range of their framework agreements in order to purchase goods and services. These framework suppliers have been through a due diligence process and evaluation includes consideration of their responsible procurement practices.

All suppliers on LUPC framework agreements have signed the Sustain Code of Conduct. The code sets out social, environmental and ethical standards that suppliers are expected to comply with, including no use of forced, involuntary or underage labour.

LUPC also has a dedicated Responsible Procurement Lead and a Responsible Procurement Advisor who work to improve LUPC's activity in the area, and provide professional support and guidance to its members.

### **Collaboration**

The Head of procurement is part of a sustainable procurement focus group. The group consisting of 5 Universities in London, contributed to a [research project](#) to address the climate change impact on modern slavery risks in public sector's supply chains. The findings of this project will be used to inform how procurement and contract management

SOAS Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2023 (for Financial Year 2022-2023).  
Next review date July 2024.

practices at SOAS can be developed to be more effective in the future with respect to this topic.

SOAS is a member of the Higher Education Procurement Association (HEPA), responsible procurement group. This national group meets quarterly to address all aspects of responsible procurement, including modern slavery. Task and finish working groups are actively attended and contributed to by the Head of procurement where information is shared and gained.

## Our plans

During the financial year August 2023 – July 2024 work, led by the Head of Procurement, will address the below elements to ensure the University has a more robust approach to its due diligence and risk management process regarding Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

- Update our Terms and Conditions of purchase to formally reflect the contractual expectations of SOAS for its suppliers with respect to Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking and ethical behaviour.
- Update our tender and quotation templates, specifically with regards to Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking, ethical behaviour and equality and diversity to ensure the organisation is consistent in our approach when working with our suppliers and the supply chain. As part of this work, we will require also that all in scope suppliers to SOAS must have their own published Modern Slavery statement.
- Introduce the requirement for suppliers to sign the Sustain Code of Conduct in all formal tenders.
- Create a specific page on our intranet site with the aim to educate staff responsible for procurement throughout the institution in the topic of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking
- Develop and deliver training for staff on Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking

Date Statement approved ...24<sup>th</sup> July 2023.....

Approved by: .....Executive Board.....

Date signed .....1<sup>st</sup> August 2023.....

Signed by Professor Adam Habib, Director of SOAS