



Procurement Strategy

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. West Lothian College is one of thirteen college regions in Scotland and serves an area with one of the fastest growing populations in Scotland. The college has been based in Livingston for over 24 years, which offers a wide range of further and higher education courses to over 8,000 students each year. The college's vision is to develop a highly skilled, enterprising and resilient workforce, and a key role still remains ensuring that people get access to relevant qualifications that help them move towards their own goals.
- 1.2. The college provides a wide range of further and higher education courses to support government priorities such as Developing the Young Workforce, the Young Person's Guarantee and widening access to higher education. Hundreds of senior school pupils in West Lothian's secondary schools take part in college courses each year alongside their school qualifications, and the college is the number one choice for school leavers, ahead of all other colleges and universities in Scotland.
- 1.3. West Lothian College plays a critical role in achieving community planning partnership priorities, in particular to address the skills needs of employers and enable people to be better educated with access to quality learning and job opportunities.

2. College Vision and Aspirations

- 2.1. West Lothian College's vision is of a highly skilled, enterprising and resilient workforce, and the four strategic goals that will enable the college to achieve that vision are:
 - 2.1.1. Inspiring and enabling success for all
 - 2.1.2. Supporting economic recovery and growth
 - 2.1.3. Strengthening our communities
 - 2.1.4. Leading with vision and empathy.
- 2.2. The values that underpin that vision and everything the college does are:
 - 2.2.1. Welcoming to All
 - 2.2.2. Students at the Centre of Everything We Do
 - 2.2.3. Always Striving For Better.
- 2.3. Living our values means that we exhibit the following behaviours:
 - 2.3.1. Welcoming to all
 - 2.3.1.1. We are respectful and inclusive, and treat everyone as an individual
 - 2.3.1.2. We listen actively, and communicate in an open and supportive way
 - 2.3.1.3. We are positive role models, engaging with purpose and enthusiasm.
 - 2.3.2. Students at the centre of everything we do
 - 2.3.2.1. We work together and support each other as part of a team
 - 2.3.2.2. We are flexible and accommodating, and act on feedback to make changes
 - 2.3.2.3. We are understanding and responsive, focusing on individual needs.

2.3.3. Always striving for better

2.3.3.1. We evaluate and reflect on our practice to improve and succeed

2.3.3.2. We are open to new ways of working, look outwards and learn from others

2.3.3.3. We are proactive and forward thinking, preparing for what may come next.

3. Strategic and Operational Context

- 3.1. The Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 states that where a contracting authority has expenditure equal to or greater than £5m in its next financial year, it should prepare a Procurement Strategy setting out how it intends to carry out regulated procurements. The college's recurrent non-pay expenditure is in the region of £4m to £5m per annum. Although the college will have expenditure below £5m, the college shall publish a Procurement Strategy in line with best practice.
- 3.2. This Strategy sets out the strategic approach to operational procurement within a challenging economic, legislative and regulatory environment. The Strategy is used in conjunction with the College's Finance Plan 2021-2026. The Action Plan element of the Procurement Strategy translates the strategic objectives and desired outcomes into the detailed actions and processes required to maintain a cost-effective (and legally compliant) procurement operation.
- 3.3. The College conducts procurement processes across a broad range of products and services in line with the Scottish Government Procurement Journey and the college's internal governance procedures. The college has a Procurement Coordinator who manages all procurement within the college.
- 3.4. West Lothian College is a member of APUC Ltd, the Centre of Expertise for procurement for the higher and further education sector in Scotland. APUC Ltd is the key link between the HE/FE sector and Scottish Government in taking forward the Public Procurement in Scotland Programme in ways that are supportive to the priorities and structure of its clients. APUC Ltd enters into collaborative Framework Agreements for its members to access and also provides a procurement resource directly to the college. Through membership of APUC Ltd, and as a Public Sector body, the college has access to National and Sectoral Framework Agreements tendered by other organisations.
- 3.5. The college's is assessed through the Operational Procurement Review (OPR) every 2 to 3 years. The college was last assessed in 2020 and achieved a score of 68%. This was the first year that a score had been applied to the assessment. The next scheduled assessment in 2024 shall be a Pulse Check, an abbreviated version of the OPR.

4. Strategic Procurement Objectives

4.1. The College Procurement Strategy has identified our key strategic objectives:

- 4.1.1. To work with internal curriculum budget holders, professional support service colleagues and suppliers to deliver innovation and best value through the development of an effective and co-ordinated purchasing effort;
- 4.1.2. To analyse the college's non-pay expenditure and apply appropriate procurement strategies to deliver value for money and reduce commercial risk;
- 4.1.3. To develop appropriate management information through optimal use of procurement systems in order to measure procurement and supplier performance including value for money achieved by the college;
- 4.1.4. To embed sound, ethical, social and environmental policies within the college's procurement function, respond to the global climate emergency and to comply with relevant Scottish and UK legislation in performance of the Sustainable Procurement Duty.

5. Compliance with the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014

5.1. The inclusion of the following statements in West Lothian College's Procurement Strategy is included to demonstrate how the college will deliver the requirements of the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014.

5.2. Statement on the College's general policy on the use of community benefit requirements

- 5.2.1. For every relevant procurement over £4m, the college will consider community benefits in all of its tenders on a proportionate basis. This will include, whenever feasible, where the value is below £4m and where the college carries out a mini competition under a framework agreement.

5.3. Statement on the College's general policy on consulting and engaging with those affected by its procurements

- 5.3.1. For each relevant procurement, the college will consider the community affected by the resultant contract and ensure any affected organisations/persons are consulted (e.g. impact on service for students, or a local contract that could be combined with other similar institution's needs). Such consultation will always be on a scale and approach relevant to the procurement in question. All the above will be embedded in the college's procurement practice.

5.4. Statement on the College's general policy on the payment of a living wage to persons involved in producing, providing or constructing the subject matter of regulated procurements

5.4.1. West Lothian College is an accredited Living Wage Employer. In compliance with the Act the college will consider, before undertaking a procurement, whether it is relevant and proportionate to make the Real Living Wage a condition of contract or include a question on fair work practices along with the other relevant criteria, whilst ensuring the appropriate balance between quality and cost of the contract, paying regard to the statutory guidance on Fair Work First.

5.5. Statement on the College's general policy on promoting compliance by contractors and sub-contractors with the Health & Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974 (c.37) and any provision made under that Act

5.5.1. The college is committed to contracting only with suppliers that comply with all appropriate and relevant legislation, including the Health & Safety legislation. Where appropriate, and on a contract by contract basis, the college will assess the legislation applicable to the procurement and take steps to ensure bidders comply with such legislation. Where appropriate, the college will also seek to assess the compliance of subcontractors.

5.6. Statement on the college's general policy on the procurement of fairly and ethically traded goods and services

5.6.1. The college supports the sourcing of goods that are fairly and ethically traded. Where relevant and possible, it shall make use of appropriate standards and labels in its procurements to take account of fair and ethical trading considerations as well as considering equivalent offerings from suppliers that can demonstrate they can meet the specified criteria without necessarily having the specific certification. The college will also encourage use of terms and conditions that provide assurances on fair and ethical supply chains.

5.7. Statement on the college's general policy on how it intends its approach to regulated procurements involving the provision of food to improve the health, wellbeing and education of communities in the organisation's area; and promote the highest standards of animal welfare

5.7.1. The college aims to facilitate the supply healthy, fresh, seasonal, and sustainable grown food which represents value for money whilst improving the health, wellbeing and education of our teaching and learning communities, coupled with promoting the highest standards of animal welfare. The college will work with its catering provider and/or catering suppliers to ensure products meet the nutritional requirements for food for all users of our catering services and will use available good practice and guidance such as "Catering for Change – Buying food sustainably in the public sector".

5.8. Statement on the college's general policy on how it intends to ensure that, so far as is reasonably practicable, the following payments are made no later than 30 days after the invoice (or similar claim) relating to the payment is presented

- Payments due by the authority to a contractor
- Payments due by a contractor to a sub-contractor
- Payments due by a sub-contractor to a sub-contractor.

5.8.1. The college recognises the importance of paying suppliers promptly once a service has been performed or goods delivered and that late payment is particularly detrimental to SMEs, third sector bodies and supported businesses.

5.8.2. The college complies with the Late Payment requirements and will review on a contract by contract basis whether such obligations are relevant and should be enforced and monitored further down its supply chain.

5.9. Statement on the college's general policy on how it intends to ensure that its regulated procurements will be carried out in compliance with the Sustainable Procurement Duty

5.9.1. In compliance with the Act, the college will consider the environmental, social and economic issues relating to all regulated procurements and how benefits can be accrued, on a contract-by-contract basis by taking proportionate actions.

5.9.2. The college will seek to take account of climate impacts and the circular economy in its procurement activity contributing to the college's pledge to join the United Nations' climate change campaign in the Race to Net Zero, the Scottish Colleges Statement of Commitment on the Climate Emergency and the college's Net Zero Plan 2023. It will also seek to involve SMEs, third sector bodies and supported businesses in our procurement activities. In so doing, these areas shall benefit not only the college but the wider West Lothian region as well as contribute to the wider global climate agenda.

5.9.3. The college has held meetings with West Lothian Council to discuss where there may be potential synergies in procurement and potential opportunities for local suppliers to engage in procurement activities at both college contract level and the wider APUC Ltd Framework Agreement tender level.

5.9.4. With regards to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act 2010, the college (as a Public Authority) will, within its procurement practices, give due regard to the need to:

5.9.4.1. Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by the Act;

5.9.4.2. Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

5.9.4.3. Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

5.9.5. The college will manage procurement in ways that will promote equality and fairness, by embedding equality considerations in its Procurement Policy and Procedures.

5.9.6. To support compliance with the Sustainable Procurement Duty the college will endeavour to make use of available tools and systems such as the Scottish Public Procurement Prioritisation Tool, the Sustainability Test, Life Cycle Impact Mapping, the Scottish Flexible Framework, the Sustain Supply Chain Code of Conduct, Supply Chain Management (SCM) Tool, and EcoVadis, where these are relevant and proportionate to the scope of the procurement. The college is an affiliated member of Electronics Watch, an independent monitoring organisation of the electronics industry which monitors ethical issues in the first, second and third tier supply chains.

5.10. Statement on the college's policy on how it intends to ensure that its regulated procurements will contribute to the carrying out of its functions and achievements of its purpose.

5.10.1. The college will analyse its third party expenditure to identify the requirement for regulated Procurements, the regulated limits are as detailed below:

- 'Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA) regulated procurements' [Goods and Services worth more than £179,087(ex vat) and works worth more than £4,477,174 (ex vat) (GPA Thresholds that apply to the college as an "other public sector contracting authority")]
- 'Lower Value Regulated Procurements' [Goods and Services worth more than £50,000 and Works worth more than £2 million (Procurement Reform Act 2014)].
- These values are excluding VAT.

5.10.2. In addition, the college will sort regulated procurements into procurement categories and give consideration to appropriate and effective consultation that aligns individual procurement strategies, with the college's own aims and objectives, and in turn their contribution to the National Outcomes.

5.10.3. Finally, the college will consider where appropriate the effective use of contract and supplier management to monitor and further improve the regulated procurement outcomes.

5.11. Statement on the college's policy on how it intends to ensure that its regulated procurements will deliver value for money.

5.11.1. The college through its Procurement Policy and practice will seek to consistently deliver value for money by applying the principle of balancing cost and quality. This will vary for a regulated procurement depending on the particular commodity, category and market.

5.11.2. The college shall seek to optimise the use of National and Sectoral framework agreements where they deliver improved contract terms, contract and supplier management, responsible procurement outcomes and value for money.

5.11.3. The college will consider the whole-life cost of what is being procured and when applying the above principle of value for money, ensure that it does so in a clear, transparent and proportionate manner in compliance with all legal and internal governance obligations.

5.12. Statement on the college's policy on how it intends to ensure that its regulated procurements will be carried out in compliance with its duty to treat relevant economic operators equally and without discrimination.

5.12.1. The college will conduct all regulated procurements in compliance with the Regulations demonstrating equal treatment, non-discrimination, transparency, proportionality and mutual recognition. The college will utilise portals including PCS and PCS-T to publish its procurement opportunities and shall strive to ensure appropriate use of lotting, output based specifications and clear evaluation criteria to ensure the procurement is accessible to as many bidders as possible.

5.12.2. The college will ensure that it awards regulated procurements only to businesses (and sub-contractors) that are capable, reliable and, where relevant, that can demonstrate that they meet high ethical standards and values in the conduct of their business.

5.12.3. The college takes steps to make it easier for smaller businesses to bid for Contracts. Legislative constraints preclude preferences for only local suppliers but the local dimension can be addressed through the structure of tenders, the use of Public Contracts Scotland and training.

5.13. Statement on the college's policy on how it intends to ensure that its regulated procurements will be carried out in compliance with its duty to act in a transparent and proportionate manner.

5.13.1. The college will actively take steps to make it easier for small and local businesses to bid for contracts through the use of Public Contracts Scotland and Quick Quotes, the provision of training and/or provide information on third party training opportunities to build suppliers capacity to better navigate the public

tender process and by publishing a contracts register to highlight contracts that local suppliers may be interested in bidding for. In making regulated procurement contract awards, quality, risk and sustainability factors will be considered along with cost according to declared score weightings on a contract-by-contract basis.

6. Annual Reporting

6.1. The college will produce an annual report on progress against its procurement objectives and publish this on the college's website. This report, produced as soon as practicable after the end of each academic year, will describe how the college has discharged its obligations under the Act and how it has exercised discretion and judgement as permitted by the public procurement rules to secure strategic objectives in compliance with the Act.

6.2. The Annual Report will include:

- 6.2.1. a summary of the regulated procurements that have been completed during the year covered by the report;
- 6.2.2. a review of whether those procurements complied with the college's Operational Procurement strategy;
- 6.2.3. to the extent that any regulated procurements did not comply, a statement of how the college intends to ensure that future regulated procurements do comply;
- 6.2.4. a summary of any community benefit requirements imposed as part of a regulated procurement that were fulfilled during the year covered by the report;
- 6.2.5. a summary of any steps taken to facilitate the involvement of supported businesses in regulated procurements during the year covered by the report;
- 6.2.6. a summary of the regulated procurements the college expects to commence in the next two financial years;
- 6.2.7. a summary of the work the college is doing on addressing climate change impacts in our supply chain;
- 6.2.8. such other information as the Scottish Ministers may by order specify.

7. Strategy Ownership and Contact Details

Jennifer McLaren, Vice-Principal Finance and Estates, West Lothian College

8. Links to related documents/websites

- 8.1. [Agreement on Government Procurement \(GPA\)](#)
- 8.2. [APUC Ltd](#)
- 8.3. [Catering for Change – Buying Food sustainably in the factor](#)
- 8.4. [Net Zero Plan 2023](#)
- 8.5. [Community Benefits](#)
- 8.6. [EcoVadis](#)
- 8.7. [Electronics Watch](#)
- 8.8. [Equality Act 2010](#)
- 8.9. [Fair Work First](#)
- 8.10. [Framework Agreements](#)
- 8.11. [Health & Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974](#)
- 8.12. [Late Payment of Commercial Debts \(Interest\) Act 1998](#)
- 8.13. [Life Cycle Impact Mapping](#)
- 8.14. [National Outcomes](#)
- 8.15. [Other Public Sector Contracting Authority](#)
- 8.16. [Procurement Reform \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#)
- 8.17. [Public Contracts Scotland \(PCS\)](#)
- 8.18. [Public Contracts Scotland-Tender \(PCS-T\)](#)
- 8.19. [Public Procurement in Scotland](#)
- 8.20. [Public Sector Equality Duty](#)
- 8.21. [Race to Net Zero](#)
- 8.22. [Real Living Wage](#)
- 8.23. [Scottish Colleges Statement of Commitment on the Climate Emergency](#)
- 8.24. [Scottish Flexible Framework](#)
- 8.25. [Scottish Government Procurement Journey](#)
- 8.26. [Scottish Public Procurement Prioritisation Tool](#)
- 8.27. [Strategic Plan 2021-2025](#)
- 8.28. [Supply Chain Management Tool](#)
- 8.29. [Sustain Supply Chain Code of Conduct](#)
- 8.30. [Sustainability Test](#)
- 8.31. [Sustainable Procurement Duty](#)

APPENDIX 1 – ACTION PLAN

Objective	Relevant College Strategic Goal(s)	Outcomes	Main Actions & Commitments
<p>To work with internal curriculum budget holders, professional support service colleagues and suppliers to deliver innovation and best value through the development of an effective and co-ordinated purchasing effort</p>	<p>Supporting economic recovery and growth</p> <p>Strengthening our communities</p>	<p>Efficient and robust procurement processes in place for purchase of goods, services and works including tendering, quotations, requisitions, approvals, ordering and invoicing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review current processes to ensure robust internal control process for procurement processes and systems. ▪ Procurement policy, procedures, tender template and terms and conditions in place reflecting current legislation and best practice including Fair Work First, community benefits, late payment, health and safety, fair and ethical trading, Sustainable Procurement Duty, promotion of equality and fairness, circular economy, consideration of whole life costing. ▪ Develop and maintain procurement section of Sharepoint to host policies, procedures and guidance documents.
		<p>Procurement information routinely issued to those who need to know.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Co-ordinate procurement initiatives and disseminate procurement information from external sources e.g. APUC contract and advisory information. Optimise use of all relevant communication channels.
		<p>All staff with procurement responsibilities receive appropriate procurement training.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Procurement staff to attend regular CPD Training to ensure all skills remain relevant and up-to-date. ▪ Procurement training and/or guidance systematically applied to points of needs. Optimise use of Sharepoint for procurement awareness training/initiatives. ▪ Investigate procurement training options for new staff at point of college induction. To be agreed with HR on this and given limited procurement resource look at how this can be done without a 1 to 1 with every new recruit (example training video) ▪ Develop and maintain a training register. To be agreed with HR approach on this.
<p>To analyse the college's non pay expenditure and apply appropriate procurement strategies to deliver value for money and reduce commercial risk</p>	<p>Supporting economic recovery and growth</p>	<p>Optimise expenditure through compliant procurement routes.</p> <p>Increase use of collaborative framework agreements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete annual spend analysis. ▪ Identify appropriate routes to market and develop forward contracting plan. ▪ Identify collaborative spend opportunities and, where appropriate, move spend to framework agreements. ▪ Increase contracted spend and minimise maverick spend. ▪ Maintain a Contracts Register. ▪ Develop and maintain a Procurement Risk Register.

Objective	Relevant College Strategic Goal(s)	Outcomes	Main Actions & Commitments
To develop appropriate management information through optimal use of procurement systems in order to measure procurement and supplier performance including value for money achieved by the college	Supporting economic recovery and growth	Robust expenditure data, efficiency measurement model demonstrating value for money and procurement systems in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use PCS/PCS-T and PCS Quick Quote system to advertise opportunities appropriate to value. ▪ Use contract uptake system for expenditure analysis, benefits statement and contracts planning. ▪ Use Hunter to record contracts and savings. ▪ Identify high value / high risk expenditure and develop appropriate contract management procedure. ▪ Use Pecos as the purchase order system for the college. ▪ Conduct procurement and supplier surveys to measure procurement and supplier performance. ▪ Produce an Annual Procurement Report.
To embed sound, ethical, social and environmental policies within the college's procurement function, respond to the global climate emergency and to comply with relevant Scottish and UK legislation in performance of the Sustainable Procurement Duty.	<p>Inspiring and enabling success for all</p> <p>Strengthening our communities</p> <p>Leading with vision and empathy</p>	<p>Achieve social, economic and environmental benefits through procurement.</p> <p>Contribute to the Climate Emergency agenda. Take account of climate and circular economy in procurement activity where appropriate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Embed social and environmental criteria in mini competitions and local contracts. Use tools available to identify relevant criteria. ▪ Supply Chain Code of Conduct included and signed by appointed Contractor(s). ▪ Investigate use of local suppliers, SMEs, supported businesses and social enterprises for relevant contracts. ▪ Consider tendering approaches, such as Lotting, to maximise accessibility to SMEs ▪ Provide guidance via the internet on how to do business with the college. ▪ Consider innovation in each local tender considering new approaches where appropriate. ▪ Consider community benefits where relevant, including working with local projects and organisations. ▪ Work with APUC and college stakeholders to develop a category plan to reduce climate impact through the supply chain in line with From Now To 2030 (FNT2030). ▪ Review the Flexible Framework.