

PURCHASING AT STAFFORDSHIRE UNIVERSITY

GUIDELINES ON BEST PRACTICE

Background

Staffordshire University spends over £20 million each year on acquiring goods, services and utilities. As a Public Sector body it is governed by strict rules on the expenditure of public funds. Financial Regulations are in place to guide and protect:

- Tax payers
- University
- Individuals

To support Financial Regulations, the Purchasing Officer acts to:

- Guide on compliance
- Advise on nominated suppliers
- Advise on procedures
- Process purchase orders

Purchasing within Staffordshire University is subject to current legislation and regulation from both the European Union and UK government. This requires compliance to the strict rules on the purchase of goods and services to allow for open competition throughout EU member states.

Central contracts for goods and services have been set up for the University and are to be used at all times. The benefits include:

- Continuity of supply
- Agreed levels of service
- Fixed prices
- Reduced administration in sourcing alternatives

To assist in ensuring compliance to University Financial Regulations, the guidance of the University Purchasing Officer is always available - good practice recommends his/her involvement at all stages of major projects to ensure that the business interests of the University are considered. In addition to establishing central agreements, contracts may also be required for specialist services or purchase orders for goods to be used within a single Faculty or Service.

Best Practice Guidelines

High value expenditure – value at or above EU compliance (£140,000)

- Purchasing Officer invited to assist to ensure full compliance to strict EU and UK legislation on public sector purchasing,
- Full invitation to tender prepared – specification, award criteria, commercial aspects, terms and conditions, payment terms,
- Schedule of offers made and formal adjudication agreed,
- Award notification to EU requirements,
- Contracts exchanged

Medium level expenditure (£25,000 to £140,000), a single purchase of goods within this amount or a contract for services

- Purchasing Officer invited to assist,
- Suppliers identified from Government and/or H.E. framework agreements or University approved suppliers,
- Invitation to tender prepared, covering specification, commercial aspects and payment terms,
- Adjudication criteria considered,
- Contract awarded or order raised following comparison of offers received

Low level of expenditure, up to £25,000

- Purchasing Officer advised and assistance sought,
- Suppliers identified to allow competitive offers to be made,
- University standard abridged invitation to tender prepared, covering requirements, quantity and delivery,
- Offers from suppliers compared,
- Purchase order raised from approved requisition

David Glover
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