

Anti-slavery and Human Trafficking Statement



Introduction

1. This statement is issued in accordance with section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and represents Bedford College's statement on slavery and human trafficking for the financial year ending 31 July 2024.
2. Bedford College is committed to preventing modern slavery and human trafficking in its supply chains and throughout its operations.
3. This statement outlines the proactive measures the college has undertaken and plans to continue, to mitigate the risk of modern slavery within its operations and supply chains.

Organisational structure

4. Bedford College is a further education institution employing approximately 1,600 staff and operating within the United Kingdom. It serves a learner base of approximately 18,000 students (Academic Year 2023-24).
5. The college's annual turnover is £87 million (Financial Year 2023-24), with around £27 million allocated for procuring essential goods and services, including IT equipment, facilities management, and educational resources.

Due diligence processes

6. To identify and mitigate the risks of modern slavery, the college implements proportionate due diligence processes, tailored to identified risk areas and subject to continuous evaluation and refinement.
7. The college has in place systems to:
 - Identify and assess potential risks in our supply chains.
 - Mitigate the risk of slavery and human trafficking within our supply chains.
 - Protect whistle-blowers.

Supply chains

8. The college encourages prospective suppliers to demonstrate their commitment to high standards of corporate social responsibility as part of the tendering and selection process.
9. If a supplier is found to be non-compliant with the Modern Slavery Act 2015 or the college's policies, they will be asked to provide proof of compliance before they can continue supplying goods or services to the college.

Training

10. The college aims to raise awareness among staff about the risks of modern slavery and human trafficking in its supply chains and operations, providing guidance as appropriate.

Recruitment practices

11. Temporary staff and staff recruited indirectly by the college are recruited through agreed, reputable recruitment agencies. To mitigate the risk of any potential occurrences of modern slavery, the college conducts check on such agencies before they are approved.
12. Through its recruitment processes, the college ensures that all approved recruitment agencies conduct all relevant pre-recruitment checks and provide evidence that all such checks have been conducted.

College

13. Bedford College has implemented the following policies to support good practice and offer protective measures for individuals concerned about modern slavery.
14. The college operates the following policies:
 - **Grievance and raising concerns policies** – allow employees, students, and others to report concerns, including potential modern slavery cases, without fear of retaliation.
 - **Staffing policy** – outlines the expected actions and behaviours of staff, emphasising ethical conduct in supply chain management
 - **Anti-bribery and corruption policy** – reinforces the college's commitment to ethical business practices and zero tolerance for bribery or corruption
 - **Financial regulations** – reflects the commitment to ethical procurement and the implementation of effective safeguards.
 - **Safer Recruitment policy** – ensures transparent recruitment practices, compliance with statutory requirements, and prevention of illegal working.

Managing risk

15. Identified risks relating to modern slavery are recorded in the corporate risk register, with progress monitored as appropriate. Risk considerations include:
 - Encouraging use of grievance and whistleblowing procedures to report any concerns of modern slavery.
 - Raising staff awareness to support effective risk management and timely action.
 - Oversight of third-party suppliers in high-risk supply chains

Accessibility and Awareness

16. This statement is published on the college's website for staff, stakeholders, and public access. The college also aims to increase awareness through induction discussions and additional measures where appropriate
17. Training and awareness initiatives will be developed with consideration for the needs of specific staff groups and may involve collaboration with external specialists as appropriate.

Approval and Review

18. This statement has been approved by the college's governing body and will be reviewed at least once annually, incorporating feedback from relevant committees and stakeholders to ensure its ongoing relevance and effectiveness.

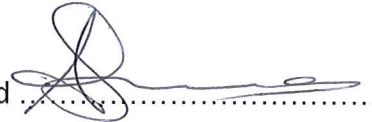
Signed



Yiannis Koursis OBE
Chief Executive Officer

Date: 17/12/24

Signed



Alasdair Simmons
Chair of Governors

Date: 17/12/24