

RESPONSIBLE PROCUREMENT @ BOURNEMOUTH UNIVERSITY

Sustainable Procurement

Sustainable Procurement is considering both environmental and social factors when making a purchasing decision. The aim is to minimise the environmental and social impact that the items we purchase have.

Traditionally purchasing considerations went no further than the initial purchase price. Today we know that this initial outlay may not be the largest element of cost. Whole life costs include this initial outlay but we should also consider the operational and disposal costs of the product. Cost savings that might seem marginal at today's prices could well increase considerably as energy prices continue to rise.

Nearly every item we buy has a greener alternative whether it is for our homes or business. The 'green supply' market is expanding rapidly due to the increased demand for sustainable goods. This guide aims to provide the information needed to make informed decisions when buying 'green'.

The procurement process includes consideration of how the product is sourced. This consideration may result in a decision not to acquire anything or a decision to re-use an existing resource. The sustainable procurement process is not merely about products that are "purchased".

Considerations when making sustainable purchases

- Is the purchase absolutely necessary? – can the existing product be repaired or upgraded? Is your existing appliance upgradeable? can we achieve the need without a new purchase?
- Is the product from renewable resources or made from material that comes from a sustainable source? Check certification and labelling of products. Try and source from providers that demonstrate a policy commitment to sustainability, and/or reports on their environmental and social performance.
- Is the product made in part or wholly from recycled material? Is the product made from a material that can be recycled after use? Can it be recycled easily or disposed of in ways that are not environmentally damaging?
- Use life cycle analysis and whole-life costing; this reflects the total life-time costs of the product "from cradle to grave". Consider manufacture, transport and installation; operating costs including

energy, water use and maintenance; end of life costs including decommissioning and disposal.

- Consider how the product to be purchased operates – is it energy and water efficient. Green alternatives can be more energy efficient. Initial outlay may be marginally more but the average payback periods for such alternatives can be measured in months, not years.
- Avoid excessive packaging – some suppliers will recover packaging
- Does the purchase take account of ethical, social and environmental issues? This will include the conditions of people living and working in or near any land or factory where the product is sourced, manufactured or transported and other related environmental impacts

Use the table below as a check sheet when considering alternative products:

Justify – do you need to purchase ?	
Source from renewable resources	
Recycled material ?	
Whole Life costing	
Energy & Water efficient ?	
Packaging and delivery methods	
Ethical, Social and Environmental issues	