



Edge Hill University

**Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking
Statement**

Financial Year 2024/25

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Executive Summary

Edge Hill University is committed to ensuring that modern slavery and human trafficking do not exist within its operations or supply chains. This statement, prepared under Section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, outlines the actions taken during the 2024/25 financial year and planned initiatives for 2025/26.

Key Highlights:

- **Organisational Context:** A UK Higher Education Institution with over 13,000 students and 2,364 staff, procuring goods and services across high-risk categories such as security, catering, IT, cleaning, construction, and clothing.
- **Supply Chain Engagement:** Continued use of the NETpositive Supplier Engagement (HE) Tool to monitor supplier compliance, share best practice, and track progress in addressing modern slavery risks.
- **Actions Taken (2024/25):**
 - Contacted over 3,000 suppliers to confirm compliance with the Modern Slavery Act.
 - Increased supplier registrations on the NETpositive tool and Modern Slavery Statements to 931, including 98% of top one hundred suppliers.
 - Conducted campus-based audits of contractors and agency staff to verify right-to-work checks.
 - Embedded modern slavery awareness into staff induction and procurement processes.
- **Risk Reduction:** Significant improvement in supplier compliance year-on-year, reducing the likelihood of modern slavery within supply chains.
- **Planned Actions (2025/26):**
 - Continue on-campus audits and refresh supplier engagement.
 - Promote policy internally via SharePoint and link modern slavery to sustainability goals.
 - Develop procurement templates with mandatory compliance questions.
 - Deliver training across the University to reinforce best practice.

Edge Hill University remains committed to transparency, collaboration, and continuous improvement to uphold ethical standards and protect human rights across all operations.

Introduction

This statement is made pursuant to section 54 (1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes our Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement for the financial year ending 31st July 2025.

Our organisational structure

We are a UK Higher Education Institution providing a wide range of teaching, research, and related activities. Our main campus is based in Ormskirk, West Lancashire. We have 13,330 students

registered on courses in the UK and overseas. We employ 2,364 people and have an income of £142,797m for the financial year ending 31st July 2025.

More information about us and our activities is available here: <https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/>

Modern slavery is a crime and a violation of fundamental human rights. It takes various forms, such as slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking. All of which have in common the deprivation of a person's liberty by another to exploit them for personal or commercial gain.

We are committed to combatting slavery and human trafficking in our business practices. This statement identifies our status and the actions we are taking, to prevent acquiring goods and services without causing harm to others. In doing so we are supporting the UK Government's action plan to implement the UN guiding principles on business and human rights.

Like most universities we purchase goods, services and works from a wide range of suppliers and from several categories, which have been identified as high risk in terms of the potential for slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour, and human trafficking, referred to as Modern Slavery in this statement. These include but are not limited to:

- Security Services
- Hospitality and Catering
- Information Communication and Technology Equipment and Services (IT)
- Cleaning
- Construction
- Clothing

Our supply chains

Edge Hill University is actively engaged with its responsibilities under the Modern Slavery Act 2015. An initial briefing and regular updates at the Value for Money (VFM) and Procurement Group over the last six years has raised awareness across faculties and departments, and we have continued to engage NETpositive Futures through the NETpositive Supplier Engagement (HE) Tool, to consider our actions under the Modern Slavery Act. We remain committed to better understanding our supply chains, working towards greater transparency and responsibility towards the people working in them. The VFM Group no longer meets so responsibility for this statement and the MSA15 Policy will reside with The Procurement Team with oversight through the Director of Finance and the Chief Operating Officer.

We will be continuing to use the NETpositive Supplier Engagement (HE) Tool to provide a single mechanism to engage contracted and non-contracted suppliers with issues of modern slavery and human trafficking. This Tool was developed by the Northwest Universities Purchasing Consortium (NWUPC), The University Caterers Organisation (TUCO), and the Northeastern University Purchasing Consortia (NEUPC).

The Supplier Engagement (HE) Tool will enable us to:

- collect data on which of our suppliers are aware of, and engaged with, the responsibilities relating to modern slavery and human trafficking, as well as those which are not.

- offer support, guidance, or training to our supply base and to share best practice between them.
- track the actions being taken, and, where required, the progress being made, by our supply chain in addressing aspects of modern slavery.
- have access to this information in real time; and
- build modern slavery into our procurement and contract management processes based on action plans developed by our suppliers.

Our effectiveness in combating slavery and human trafficking

The NETpositive Supplier Engagement (HE) Tool allows us to access data created by our suppliers to enable us to ascertain the percentage of our suppliers:

- who are **aware** of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.
- who **publish** a Modern Slavery Statement (Section 54 Modern Slavery Act 2015).
- who have **discovered and recorded** incidents of Modern Slavery in the last 3 years.
- who in the past 12 months have conducted an **analysis of their supply chain** to identify risks of Modern Slavery.
- who has a **formal agreement or process** with your suppliers to respond to potential incidences of Modern Slavery, and;
- who has a **mechanism to report incidents** or suspected incidences of Modern Slavery and is this communicated to staff.

The Tool will also provide **examples and evidence** shared by our suppliers about their activities in relation to modern slavery and human trafficking. The data from the Tool will enable us to differentiate responses by business type so we can identify progress in priority risk areas such as construction, hospitality, and clothing.

Actions from August 2024 to July 2025

Supply Chain Review and Supplier Awareness

- a. We have undertaken a comprehensive review of our supply chain to ensure that, where required, suppliers are aware of their obligations under the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (MSA15). This has been achieved through direct communication, including:
 - i. Email engagement with suppliers.
 - ii. Requesting confirmation of their registration with NETpositive Futures and completion of the online assessment tool.
 - iii. Asking for evidence such as a Modern Slavery Statement, policy, or other documentation demonstrating awareness of MSA15 and active measures to prevent modern slavery within their supply chain.

We expect that suppliers work proactively to ensure modern slavery does not exist within their operations and that robust measures are in place to reduce the likelihood of it entering their supply chain.

b. Dedicated Communication Channel

We have established a dedicated email address to manage and monitor all Modern Slavery-related communications, ensuring a clear and consistent point of contact.

c. Supplier Engagement

Between August 2024 and July 2025, we contacted over 3,000 suppliers who have been active with Edge Hill University within the last two years. Suppliers are ranked by spend (high to low), and we identified those who:

- i. Are not currently using the NETpositive Supplier Engagement (HE) Tool.
- ii. Have not provided evidence of a Modern Slavery Statement and/or policy.

d. Monitoring and Reporting

When contacting suppliers, we requested their engagement with the NETpositive tool. Below, two tables present a comparison of results from June 2024 and June 2025. Additional monitoring is conducted through October and February to track progress and maintain compliance.

NPF and have Statements

June 2024	No of suppliers (top to bottom)	1	50	100	150	200	250	300	400	500	600	700	800	900	1000	1500	2000	2500	3000	3500	3887
	In NPF or have statements	1	48	90	131	168	204	238	304	351	391	436	458	488	512	615	681	716	744	758	760
	%	100	96	90	87	84	82	79	76	70	65	62	57	54	51	41	34	29	25	22	20
	Improvement since last report	0	0	0	0	1	1	4	13	15	17	25	29	36	44	67	90	85	98	101	103

NPF and have Statements

June 2025	No of suppliers (top to bottom)	1	50	100	150	200	250	300	400	500	600	700	800	900	1000	1500	2000	2500	3000	3500	3808
	In NPF or have statements	1	49	93	134	171	206	241	309	359	405	437	475	512	542	670	752	800	854	912	931
	%	100	98	93	89	86	82	80	77	72	68	62	59	57	54	45	38	32	28	26	24
	Improvement since last report	0	1	3	3	3	2	3	5	8	14	1	17	24	30	55	71	84	110	154	171

e. Supplier Progress and Compliance

Between June 2024 and June 2025, the number of suppliers registered on the NETpositive Supplier Engagement (HE) Tool or confirmed as having a Modern Slavery Act 2015 (MSA15) statement increased by 171, following an increase of 126 in the previous year.

In total, 931 suppliers are now either registered on the tool or have provided a statement. This demonstrates that these suppliers are aware of their obligations under MSA15 and are actively working to ensure their supply chains are free from modern slavery.

f. Driving Improvement

This progress reflects our continued commitment to:

- i. Regular email engagement with suppliers.
- ii. Direct discussions during supplier reviews.

- iii. Integration of modern slavery requirements into procurement processes and new supplier onboarding within Facilities Management during 2024/25.

g. **Risk Reduction**

These actions significantly reduce the risk of supplier non-compliance or failure in relation to modern slavery obligations.

h. **Top Supplier Compliance**

Among our **top one hundred suppliers**, **98%** have either signed up to the NETpositive Supplier Engagement (HE) Tool or published a Modern Slavery Statement (available online or on request). This marks a substantial improvement compared to 90% in 2023/24, **81% in 2022/23** and **71% in 2021/22**, demonstrating strong year-on-year progress.

Promoting Frameworks with Embedded Modern Slavery Considerations

As a University, we actively encourage the use of frameworks provided by the Northwest Universities Purchasing Consortium (NWUPC) and The Universities Catering Organisation (TUCO). These frameworks incorporate Modern Slavery Act requirements within their procurement processes.

To support this, our Financial Regulations direct staff to consider these frameworks as a preferred option when procuring goods and services, ensuring compliance and ethical sourcing.

Driving Awareness Across the University

The Modern Slavery Policy has been led by the Procurement Team and communicated widely across the University during 2024/25. To embed awareness into the culture of the institution:

- **Staff Induction** now includes information on modern slavery, with clear signposts to the University's Modern Slavery Statement and Policy.

More information including tool kits and guidance can be found on the links below.

- [Resources & Tools | NWUPC](#)
- [NETpositive Futures – The home of NETpositive](#)

Supplier Engagement and Development

We continue to prioritise engagement with our top one hundred suppliers by value. As of June 2025, 98% of these suppliers are registered with NETpositive Futures or have a Modern Slavery Statement available on their website. This represents a year-on-year improvement and demonstrates strong supplier commitment.

Suppliers using the NETpositive tool have completed a comprehensive sustainability assessment, including Modern Slavery considerations, and developed action plans to mitigate supply chain risks. We have maintained proactive communication with a wide range of suppliers, requesting their engagement with the tool, and this work will continue throughout 2025/26.

Campus-Based Modern Slavery Audits

Since December 2019, we have conducted Modern Slavery audits across campus. These audits involve:

- Approaching contractors and agency staff on site to confirm their name, company, and purpose of visit.
- Contacting their head office to verify that appropriate Right to Work in the UK checks have been completed.

In the last financial year, we challenged **fifty-nine** contractors and agency staff from **twenty-seven** companies. This practical measure ensures contractors and agencies demonstrate due diligence and reinforces that Edge Hill University takes Modern Slavery risks seriously.

This approach is particularly relevant for suppliers bidding for ongoing work, as they are aware that we monitor compliance on site. We believe this acts as a deterrent to poor practices or potential breaches of the Act.

Sector Collaboration

We continue to work closely with sector colleagues through **Purchasing Consortia** to share best practice and stay informed on emerging risks and actions within supply chains.

Planned Actions: August 2025 – July 2026

We remain committed to ensuring that modern slavery and human trafficking do not exist within our supply chains or any part of our business. To strengthen this commitment, we will take the following actions:

Continue Contractor On Campus Audits

- Maintain regular audits of contractors and agency staff to ensure compliance with Modern Slavery requirements.

Refresh Supplier List and continue to Monitor Engagement

- Update our top supplier list and identify suppliers—within the top one hundred and beyond—who are not engaging with the NETpositive Supplier Engagement (HE) Tool.
- Request engagement with the tool or confirmation of an existing Modern Slavery Statement and/or policy.

Promote Policy Internally

- Actively display and promote the Modern Slavery Policy and Statement on our internal SharePoint platform, within finance and procurement pages.

Link Modern Slavery to Sustainability Goals

- Explore ways to integrate the NETpositive tool into our sustainability objectives.
- Evidence gathered will help us target suppliers who are unaware of modern slavery risks or are not taking proactive steps to address them. This will establish a baseline for engagement in priority supplier categories.

Develop Procurement Templates

- Create standard procurement templates for all University departments and faculties that include mandatory Modern Slavery questions:
 - At RFQ level, include high-level compliance questions.
 - At ITT level, require detailed responses on MSA15 compliance to assess suppliers thoroughly.

Provide Training

- Deliver training on procurement and contract management across the University to reinforce compliance and best practice.
- Head of Procurement will be speaking to cost centre groups as part of the centralisation of procurement, around the importance of MSA15 compliance and the tools available to ensure we take actions to prevent issues around MSA15.

Signed

Lynn Hill
Chief Operating Officer (COO)

31st January 2026