

# Sustainable purchasing

## Furniture 2024

### 1. Reduce, reuse and recycle

Is the furniture you require already available elsewhere in the University and not currently in use? Have a look on the University's **Warpl** site before buying new, you may be able to get it second-hand.

If you have unwanted furniture that is still functional, upload it onto the **Warpl** site, maybe another staff member can make use of it. If it can't be reused here at the university, ensure the removalists take it to a recycling facility or a charity, rather than landfill.



### 2. Buy Sustainable

Wherever possible CHOOSE products that employ a combination of characteristics listed below.



#### ✓ Choose recycled timber

Recycling wood products not only reduce the amount of waste going to landfill, they also help alleviate demand on sources of virgin material, thereby helping to conserve the world's forests.

Post-consumer recycled wood has been reclaimed from a product after that product has been used for its intended purpose, whereas post-industrial recycled wood is made from the waste produced in the wood processing and manufacturing process.

#### ✓ Choose wood products that come from a sustainable source

Forest certification demonstrates the implementation of sustainable forest management practices. Look out for any one, or a combination of the following:

- **Forest Stewardship Council** (FSC) certified timber
- **Responsible Wood Certification Scheme** (AFCS) certified timber
- Chain of custody certification under an equivalent standard, such as those recognised by the **Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification Schemes (PEFC)** Council



#### ✓ Choose furniture with non-hazardous finishes and glues

The paints, finishes and glues used in furniture can have high volatile organic compounds (VOCs) which off-gas into the office environment and can be associated with health problems. Ask if the finishes or glues used in manufacturing the product were solvent-free, formaldehyde-free and have low VOC emissions.



## ✓ Choose products with independent certifications

- An independently certified ecolabel identifies furniture products that meet specified environmental performance criteria including VOC emission limits and ensure timber products are certified by a forest certification scheme.

There are many established ecolabels for furniture including:

- ◆ **Good Environmental Choice Australia** (GECA)
- ◆ **Global GreenTag**
- ◆ The Australasian Furnishing Research and Development Institute Sustainability Standard (AFRDI) **Green Tick**
- ◆ NSI/BIFMA **e3 Furniture Sustainability Standard**
- ◆ **Environmental Choice New Zealand** (ECNZ)



## ✓ Choose products with reduced and/or post-consumer recycled content packaging

The production of packaging products utilises significant resources and generates environmental impacts. Consider giving preference to products that have end-of-life take-back programs for packaging. If no options are available, start a dialogue with suppliers encouraging them to provide such programs.

As a minimum the products procured should have:

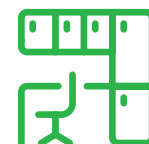
- reduced volume of packaging
- recyclable packaging
- packaging material that contains a high percentage of recycled content



## ✓ Choose products designed for disassembly

Choose furniture that has been designed to be reconditioned at the end of its life, or which can be easily disassembled for easier maintenance, repair, and reuse of components/materials.

Some retailers offer take back programs that let you sell used furniture back to them and they resell it at a discounted rate. Check with your supplier to see if this is an option.



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See the **Buyer's guide for furniture** for a step-by-step process on buying furniture at UQ using the Queensland Government approved supply arrangement. Suppliers in this arrangement have been assessed and have a high level of environmental and ethical standards.