
SUSTAINABLE PROCUREMENT GUIDELINE

1.0 Introduction

Property & Facilities Division, Sustainability
Office

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Overview of Sustainable Procurement at UQ

Overview

The development and implementation of Sustainable Procurement Guidelines and Assessment Forms are key deliverables under the [Waste Minimisation Plan](#) (WMP) developed by the Sustainability Office for The University of Queensland. The WMP links its objectives to the University of Queensland's Sustainability Policy and UQ's Carbon objectives which outlines the University's commitment to a sustainable future.

The purpose of the guidelines and forms shown in Table 1.0 is to help university staff to achieve the objectives of sustainable procurement as set out in the Queensland [State Procurement Policy](#). In line with part 6.0 of the policy, The University of Queensland must integrate the practice of sustainability into the procurement of goods, services and construction. (Queensland Government 2010)¹

Table 1.0 Sustainable Procurement Guidelines and Assessment Forms

Guideline No.	Sustainable Procurement Guidelines
1.0	Introduction
2.0	Standards for Suppliers
Assessment Form No.	Sustainable Procurement Assessment Forms
1.0	Sustainable Vendors
2.0	Furniture
3.0	Catering
4.0	Vehicles
5.0	Paper and Printing
6.0	Information & Communication Technology

Note: Guideline 1.0 and 2.0 and Assessment Form 1.0 are currently available on the sustainability website <http://www.uq.edu.au/sustainability/purchasing>. All other guidelines and assessment forms will be developed progressively.

Waste Management in Australia

Procurement is the first stage of waste management and, if executed effectively, can help to reduce the amount of product purchased and disposed of saving natural resources and limiting environmental pollution. According to The Queensland Government, waste generation in Queensland is increasing rapidly. Between 2003-2004 and 2007-2008, waste generation grew by 40%. Over the same period the population increased by 10% and the retail turnover increased by 21% (Queensland Government 2010).² Waste in Australia is growing and products are increasingly complex, often contain hazardous substances, and at end of life place an increasing cost on the general community, rather than those who use or benefit from their use.

¹ Queensland Government Chief Procurement Office, Department of Public Works, *State Procurement Policy 2010* http://www.ggm.qld.gov.au/02_policy/pdfs/state_procurement_policy_april2011.pdf

² Queensland Government, *Queensland's Waste Reduction and Recycling Strategy 2010-2020*, http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/environmental_management/waste/pdf/waste-strategy.pdf

The [National Waste Policy](#) sets the direction for Australia over the next 10 years to produce less waste for disposal and manage waste as a resource to deliver economic, environmental and social benefits. (Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities. 2011)³

In response, The Queensland Government has developed [Queensland's Waste Reduction and Recycling Strategy 2010-2020](#) which outlines a number of strategies to reduce the amount of waste currently sent to landfill. (Queensland Government 2010) ⁴ This includes putting a price on waste and introducing a waste disposal levy in 2011.

Product Stewardship

[The Product Stewardship Bill 2011](#) passed by the Parliament on 22 June 2011 provides the framework to effectively manage the environmental, health and safety impacts of products, and in particular those impacts associated with the disposal of products. (Parliament of Australia 2011)⁵ The framework includes **voluntary, co-regulatory and mandatory product stewardship**. With funding and implementation to come from TV and computer manufacturers and suppliers, Australia is now well on the path to a national collection, recycling and community education initiative for [TV and ICT industries](#). (Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities 2011)⁶

Further Information and Feedback

All office furniture for UQ is required to be ordered and procured through the P&F Furniture Store for Occupational Health and Safety requirements as per the [OH&S Policy](#).

Feedback on the **sustainable procurement guidelines and assessment forms** is welcome and can be emailed to;

sustainability@uq.edu.au

For further information on sustainability initiatives at UQ www.uq.edu.au/sustainability

For advice regarding **procurement procedures** contact [Finance & Business Services](#)

Additional information relating to the integration of sustainable procurement into the procurement process can be found at the [Queensland Government Chief Procurement Office](#) and the [Australasian Procurement and Construction Council](#) (APCC).

³ Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, National Waste Policy <http://www.ephc.gov.au/taxonomy/term/86>.

⁴ Queensland's Waste Reduction and Recycling Strategy 2010-2020, Queensland Government, http://www.derm.qld.gov.au/environmental_management/waste/pdf/waste-strategy.pdf.

⁵ Parliament of Australia, Product Stewardship Bill 2011, <http://parlinfo.aph.gov.au/parlInfo/search/display/display.w3p;query=Id%3A%22legislation%2Fbillhome%2Fs824%22>

⁶ Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, National Waste Policy Fact Sheet -National Television and Computer Product Stewardship Scheme <http://www.environment.gov.au/settlements/waste/ewaste/publications/pubs/fs-local-government.pdf>

Introduction to Sustainable Procurement

1.0 What is Sustainable Procurement?

The definition adopted by the Marrakech [Task Force on Sustainable Public Procurement](#), led by Switzerland is;

“An acquisition process whereby organisations meet their requirements for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieves value for money on a whole of life basis in terms of generating benefits not only to the Organisation, but also to society and the economy, whilst minimising its impact on the environment.” (United Nations Environment Programme n.d.)⁷ To view the full definition

<http://www.unep.fr/scp/procurement/>

2.0 Principles of Sustainable Procurement



Adopt strategies to avoid unnecessary consumption and manage demand;



In the context of whole-of-life value for money, select products and services which have lower environmental impacts across their life cycle when compared with competing products and services;



Foster a viable market for sustainable products and services by supporting businesses that demonstrate innovation in sustainability; and



Support suppliers who are socially responsible and adopt ethical practices.

⁸ (APCC n.d.)

3.0 UQ's Sustainable Procurement Objectives

The University of Queensland has an obligation to meet the objectives of the QLD State Procurement Policy. In meeting these requirements the university will work towards;

1. The development and implementation of procurement practices which lead to improved social, environmental and economic outcomes;
2. The development and implementation of procurement practices which ensure that the value of goods and services procured with a reduced environmental impact is increased each year (baseline 2011/2012).

⁷ United Nations Environment Program, Division of Industry, Technology and Economics, Sustainable Consumption and Production Branch, <http://www.unep.fr/scp/procurement/>.

⁸ Australasian Procurement & Construction Council, Australian and New Zealand Government Framework for Sustainable Procurement, 2007, <http://www.apcc.gov.au/Publications/Procurement/tabid/127/Default.aspx>

4.0 Benefits of Sustainable Procurement

The relationships between products and their impacts can be complex. The sustainable procurement guidelines are designed to remove confusion by identifying high risk products and services and provide guidance so that purchases are based on least environmental impact in the context of value for money within the QLD State Procurement Policy. Impacts can occur at any stage of a products life cycle. Table 2.0 shows how procurement decisions can impact the environment and communities.

Table 2.0 Impacts associated with procurement decisions

	
Impacts of Unsustainable Procurement	Benefits of Sustainable Procurement
Loss of biodiversity, soil erosion and degradation as a result of unsustainable forest management and illegal logging. (Products to be aware of include paper and timber products and products with timber components, agricultural products, mined resources)	Provides markets for new environmentally preferable products and more options for reuse which in turn reduces consumption of natural and processed resources.
Depletion of resources due to the use of non-renewable resources such as metals and oil/natural gas for plastics. (Look for products which use recycled content)	Improves resource use efficiency.
Emissions to land, air and water causing climate change both from logging and manufacturing. (Ask your supplier and/or service provider how they are reducing their environmental impacts)	Reduces greenhouse gases and other emissions to air, land and water.
Eutrophication of surface and ground waters from the use of hazardous substances that can be released during production or disposal.	Encourages industry to adopt cleaner technologies and produce products with lower environmental impacts.
VOC emissions as a result of the use of organic solvents. (Products to be aware of include furniture using MDF, carpets, glues etc)	Reduces health impacts associated with products and services.
Waste due to packaging and early replacement of products due to lack of repairability options, low durability or not fit for purpose. (Products to be aware of include IT, furniture, flooring, equipment)	Reduces waste to landfill and improves the viability of recycling. This in turn reduces the costs associated with disposal and land area required for landfill.
Displacement of peoples, loss of livelihoods and quality of life related to logging and forest destruction. (Products to be aware of include paper and timber products and products with timber components, agricultural products, mined resources)	Improves Fair Trade opportunities for developing countries.
Species Extinction caused by deforestation. (Products to be aware of include paper and timber products and products with timber components, agricultural products, mined resources)	Ensures fair wages and working conditions.

5.0 Implementing the Principles of Sustainable Procurement

Listed below are actions to help embed the principles of sustainable procurement into current practices. Refer to the [Sustainable Procurement Guidelines](#) for further information on the use of specific criteria to assess a sustainable vendor and/or product and to the [Financial Services Practice Manual](#) for information on evaluating sustainability in the context of value for money.

- Assess the need and reduce consumption through demand management.
- Consider alternatives such as reuse or recycling.
- Consider introducing service options to meet needs.
- Ensure that decisions on sustainable values of products are evidence based.
- Consider Environmental Management Practices of your supplier/manufacturer.
- Give preference to products which are reusable, recyclable and/or contain recycled content where such products fit the purpose, provide environmental benefits and are of comparable cost and quality to alternative products.
- Support and stimulate long-term relationships with suppliers that adopt sustainable practices.
- Require suppliers to demonstrate a commitment to ethical behaviour and sound governance structures and processes and to comply with all applicable regulatory and legislative requirements of Occupational Health & Safety. (Australasian Procurement and Construction Council 2010)⁹

6.0 How to use the Guidelines and Assessment Forms

The guidelines and assessment forms shown in *Table 1.0 Sustainable Procurement Guidelines and Assessment Forms* set out what should be considered minimum sustainability criteria for vendors and products where contracts are being entered into or significant purchases or purchases which show a high environmental or social risk are taking place.

Procurement Officers are responsible for determining the level of detail required as part of the procurement process within their own organisational unit. See *Further Information and Feedback* for links to more information.

Once the need for sustainability information has been decided, a copy of [Sustainable Procurement Guideline 1.0 Introduction](#), [2.0 Standards for Suppliers](#) and the relevant [Sustainable Procurement Assessment Forms](#) should be included in the procurement documentation. The Guidelines are for information only, whilst the assessment forms are required to be completed and returned to the procurement officer.

Receiving Evidence and Documentation from Vendors

A vendor must supply evidence when they submit their assessment form. The type of evidence required is listed in the Explanatory Notes attached to the form. For assistance in assessing the sustainability criteria contact sustainability@uq.edu.au.

⁹ Australasian Procurement & Construction Council, Australian and New Zealand Government Framework for Sustainable Procurement, 2007, <http://www.apcc.gov.au/Publications/Procurement/tabid/127/Default.aspx>

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