

UKUPC

UK Universities Procurement Consortia

IMPACT STATEMENT

2024 - 2025





UKUPC is a strategic collaboration between the UK's six regional universities purchasing consortia – **APUC**, **HEPCW**, **LUPC**, **NEUPC**, **NWUPC**, and **SUPC** – alongside sector and category-specialist consortia, **TEC** (energy) and **TUCO** (catering).

Together, they form a unified entity dedicated to strengthening collaborative procurement across Higher and Further Education. By combining expertise and working closely with the wider procurement community, UKUPC drives efficiency, maximises value, and supports institutions in achieving their procurement goals.



ABOUT US

We enable universities to buy better, faster and more efficiently through:

- **National and regional frameworks:** Ready-to-use, compliant routes to market across key categories
- **Collaborative procurement expertise:** Specialist teams working on behalf of the sector
- **Aggregation of demand:** Leveraging collective spend to secure better value
- **Market insight and supplier management:** Strengthening competition and improving outcomes
- **Responsible procurement leadership:** Embedding sustainability, social value and ethical supply chains.

UKUPC operates through five dedicated focus groups:

UKUPC Board - Providing strategic leadership and direction.

Strategic Procurement Group (SPG) - Overseeing collaborative procurement frameworks.

Responsible Procurement Group (RPG) - Embedding ethical, sustainable, and socially responsible procurement.

Communications and Training Group - Enhancing engagement and knowledge-sharing.

Digital Enablement Group - Driving procurement technology and process improvements.

Each group is made up of experts from UKUPC partners, ensuring sector-wide alignment, best practice sharing, and efficient working across consortia and their members.

Learn more and explore resources at www.ukupc.ac.uk.

OUR MISSION

To leverage the benefits of collaborative procurement: working across the UK HE consortia community to enhance procurement within HE and across our other members;

- helping deliver savings and efficiencies;
- maximising member benefits;
- embedding responsible, ethical procurement and social value using a sustainable supply chain management approach.



VALUE DELIVERED TO OUR MEMBERS

The eight UK consortia work jointly on procurement activities with the goal of achieving financial and operational efficiencies, as well as sharing best practice. Over the past year, our members spent **£1.7 billion** through our framework agreements.

Highlights of **2024-25** include:



100+

NATIONAL FRAMEWORK
AGREEMENTS AVAILABLE
TO UKUPC MEMBERS



£86M

CASHABLE
SAVINGS**



£1.7BN

TOTAL SPEND
THROUGH
AGREEMENTS*



26

NEW AND RE-TENDERED
FRAMEWORK
AGREEMENTS

*Member spend data reported to UKUPC by
framework agreement suppliers

** Savings calculated using the HEPA Benefits
Methodology



MEMBER BENEFITS

UKUPC members gain access to a comprehensive portfolio of goods and services framework agreements, fully compliant with public contract regulations. As not-for-profit organisations, each consortia maintains framework levy at affordable levels for our members, comparing favourably with similar levies for other public sector procurement organisations.

Beyond procurement frameworks, members also benefit from:

+ Specialist networks and market insights

Engage with local and national commodity, category, and special interest groups, fostering market insight, best practice sharing, and valuable networking opportunities.

+ Exclusive tools and resources

Access a wealth of procurement tools, resources, and documentation, including the quarterly Market Insight report, providing in-depth category and market intelligence.

+ Expert procurement support

Receive guidance from dedicated consortia category teams and leads, ensuring access to specialist knowledge and strategic advice.

+ Ethical and Responsible Procurement

Full members of English (including universities in Northern Ireland and some in Wales where they are members of an English consortium) and Scottish UKUPC consortia receive automatic affiliation to Electronics Watch, funded by their consortia, supporting fair and ethical supply chains.

+ Learning and development opportunities

- Regional conferences and national framework launch events to assist the sector in developing strong networks and help maximise engagement with UKUPC frameworks.
- A diverse programme of free online events covering key sector topics.
- Access to free and low-cost training, including face-to-face sessions, online courses, and e-learning modules.

+ Tailored services and support

Each UKUPC consortium offers additional services and bespoke solutions designed to meet the unique needs of its members.

+ Influence procurement decisions

Play an active role in shaping agreements by participating in national Tender Working Parties.



UKUPC BOARD

The UKUPC Board provides strategic leadership, guiding the UKUPC Focus Groups to foster collaboration, share knowledge, and ensure alignment across consortia. By driving best practices and supporting the wider Higher Education procurement community, the Board plays a key role in delivering the UKUPC Strategy 2020-2025 ensuring efficiency, innovation, and impact.



BOARD UPDATE

UKUPC has published its new **Strategy for 2026-2029**, setting out a clear and ambitious plan to strengthen collaborative procurement across UK higher education.

Strengthening UKUPC's role as the sector's trusted procurement partner

The strategy reaffirms UKUPC's role as a **trusted, member-owned strategic procurement partner**, focused on delivering long-term value through innovation, collaboration and deep understanding of the sector.

At a time of continued financial pressure, regulatory complexity and increasing sustainability expectations, the strategy positions procurement as a **lever for transformation**, not simply a transactional function. Through its shared services model, UKUPC will support institutions to build resilience, realise value and respond effectively to a rapidly changing procurement environment.

A clear strategic ambition

The 2026-2029 strategy is underpinned by three core themes:

- **Value creation** – demonstrating the commercial, strategic and societal value of collaborative framework agreements and partnerships
- **Sector understanding** – leveraging UKUPC's member-owned model and deep experience across higher education to reflect the realities institutions face
- **Future focus** – developing partnerships and services that deliver measurable outcomes, from cost savings and risk mitigation to sustainability and student benefit

Over the next three years, UKUPC will focus on increasing the proportion of non-pay spend routed through collaborative frameworks, expanding its collaborative service offering, and accelerating the benefits of strategic partnerships that support members' long-term objectives.

STRATEGIC PROCUREMENT GROUP (SPG)

The Strategic Procurement Group (SPG) was renamed during this period to better reflect its broader remit beyond contracting activity alone. The group now provides both tactical and strategic oversight of the National Joint Contracting Programme, with a continued focus on delivering value and wider benefits for members.

Collaboration remains central to our approach, both across UKUPC and with member institutions. We continue to work collectively to reduce duplication where possible, while aggregating demand and usage in areas where members see value in a coordinated approach. Alongside this, we remain committed to ensuring that UKUPC frameworks effectively meet member needs and support a strong and sustainable higher education supply chain.

This year also marked the implementation of the new public procurement legislation across the sector. Like all public sector organisations, higher education institutions have needed to adapt to and embed these significant legislative changes within their procurement practices.

KEY SPG ACTIVITIES IN 2024-25

Changes to ways of working

The group met strategically at the start of this period and agreed that changes to ways of working were needed to encourage broader engagement in discussions and streamline core operational activity. This was intended to create greater focus on the key procurement priorities and emerging issues affecting the sector.

Following approval from the UKUPC Board, the group was renamed, membership was reviewed, and two distinct groups were established under the Strategic Procurement Group structure. One group focuses on quarterly strategic matters and longer-term sector priorities, while the second meets monthly to consider tactical issues relating to contracting, contract planning, and wider procurement-related operational matters.

Enhanced and improved reporting

The group continues to actively monitor the sector-wide project portfolio and, to support more effective oversight, additional milestone stages have been introduced within the Hunter Contract and Supplier Management System.

Previously, project leads reported activity under a broad 'In Progress' status, which often covered extended periods of delivery. To improve visibility and tracking, four additional reporting stages have now been implemented: Strategy & Document Development, Tender Published, Evaluation, and In Standstill.

These enhanced milestones provide clearer insight into project progression and strengthen overall reporting across the project delivery programme.

Following further developments this year, we have also ensured that all our live Frameworks are correctly labelled under their corresponding legislation. This information will become so important as our members continue to call off under 2 regulations covering the old and new procurement world.

Towards the end of this period, the group agreed, in partnership with systems colleagues and with support from APUC, our Hunter service provider, to develop and adapt a desktop reporting tool to support the Strategic Procurement Group.

The tool is designed to provide regular data insights and clearer collective oversight of contracting progress across the portfolio.

Development work is ongoing, but we look forward to introducing a solution that will significantly improve visibility, reporting, and member awareness of progress across the framework portfolio.

Launch of four National UKUPC Category Groups

The group agreed to establish a stronger national platform for several of our key category spend areas through the creation and relaunch of National Category Groups. These networks are intended to strengthen collaboration, share expertise, and provide greater strategic alignment across the sector.

To support this approach, Strategic Procurement Group sponsors were appointed to work alongside each Group Chair and provide wider national support and coordination. During this period, all groups held their inaugural meetings and have since begun progressing nationally driven priorities within their respective specialist areas.

The next phase will focus on closer collaboration and reporting between the groups and the Strategic Procurement Group, alongside the development of National Category Strategies. These strategies will help ensure that our frameworks and category activities continue to evolve in line with member needs, while also strengthening supply chain engagement and delivering benefits that extend beyond individual institutional or regional activity.

Quarterly Market Insight Report

The Market Insight Report remains an invaluable and highly regarded resource for UKUPC members. It continued to be driven by SPG and was supported by our expert category managers with input from key stakeholders.

The report provides:

- In-depth market intelligence on supply chains within the HE framework portfolio.
- Regular supplier updates gathered through contract management meetings.
- A high-level summary highlighting key issues affecting each category.

Towards the end of this period, SPG plan to review the current format and approach to ensure members continue to receive the most timely and informed information from key markets & events as we continue to look ahead.

RESPONSIBLE PROCUREMENT GROUP

The UKUPC Responsible Procurement Group (RPG) drives collaboration across UKUPC to embed responsible procurement at every level. By reviewing best practices, developing resources, and supporting both consortia procurement professionals and institutional members, RPG ensures that responsible procurement is consistently applied across the sector.

The group took forward four strategic themes in 2024-25 to ensure consistent, ambitious responsible procurement practice across the consortia:

1. Social value and community benefit

Work is focused on adopting a standardised methodology for identifying community benefit opportunities within framework tenders, developing common question sets, and supporting delivery at call-off level.

2. MSMEs and the 3rd sector

The group is reviewing legislative and policy requirements affecting small and third-sector organisations and mapping existing good practice across the UK. This work supports the development of a UKUPC-wide strategy to maximise market access for MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) and VCSEs (Voluntary, Community or Social Enterprises).

3. Carbon reduction

UKUPC is developing a comprehensive supplier template and guidance for producing Carbon Reduction Plans in line with national requirements. Additional guidance is being produced to help consortia and members evaluate supplier plans consistently.

4. Circular economy

The group is conducting baseline research into current circular economy practices, including a gap analysis and early exploration of sector and market readiness.

Risk Matrix Review

UKUPC, HEPA, and the EAUC National Responsible Procurement Group are jointly developing a new tool to help identify responsible procurement risks and opportunities at ProcHE Level 2, aligned to the Sustain Supply Chain Code of Conduct. The tool will launch in 2025-26.

Work also began on reviewing **HESCET (Higher Education Supply Chain Emissions Tool)** and **Scope 3 reporting** across the sector to ensure consistency and improved clarity for members in future emissions reporting.



UKUPC COMMUNICATIONS AND TRAINING GROUP

The UKUPC Communications and Training Group has played a key role in supporting members through a year of significant sector change, particularly in response to the Procurement Act 2023 and wider financial pressures across higher education. Its focus has been on delivering timely, practical communications that enable procurement professionals to respond confidently to emerging policy, market, and operational challenges.

A central priority has been the coordination of a targeted webinar programme and regular member updates, ensuring consistent access to expert insight, tools, and guidance. Communications activity has remained closely aligned with UKUPC's wider governance structure, with representation across the Strategic Procurement Group (SPG), Responsible Procurement Group (RPG), and Digital Enablement Group (DEG), sharing consistent and coordinated information across all consortia.



KEY COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES IN 2024-25

Supporting implementation of the Procurement Act 2023

The group delivered a structured webinar series, working with legal and sector experts to address key elements of the new legislation, including transparency requirements, contract management, and social value. Following strong engagement but clear feedback on capacity constraints, the series was paused in December 2024, reflecting a responsive, member-led approach.

Delivering targeted insight and training

Beyond PA23, the webinar programme expanded to cover priority topics such as supply chain risk management, AI in procurement, Scope 3 carbon measurement, and forthcoming legislation including Martyn's Law. This ensured members received both strategic context and practical guidance across a rapidly evolving landscape.

Providing market intelligence to inform decision-making

Quarterly Market Insight Reports remained a core output, offering both detailed analysis and concise summaries of national and global supply chain trends. Developed collaboratively across the consortia, these reports supported more informed and resilient procurement strategies at institutional level.

Strengthening UKUPC's identity and member communications

A rebrand was delivered to improve recognition, clarity and consistency across UKUPC communications, including a new name (UK Universities Procurement Consortia) and refreshed visual identity. Alongside this, the group maintained regular member updates and digital engagement, ensuring timely sharing of key information, promoting cross-consortia activity, and sustaining visibility of UKUPC's collective work across the sector, including presence at sector events such as Procurex 2025.

UKUPC DIGITAL ENABLEMENT GROUP (DEG)

The UKUPC Digital Enablement Group (DEG) plays a key role in enhancing digital systems and data-driven procurement strategies across the higher education sector. By developing innovative tools and streamlining processes, the group ensures that UKUPC members can access accurate, actionable insights to support smarter decision-making.

DEG meetings serve as a collaborative forum, bringing together representatives from across the UKUPC network to discuss emerging technologies, future initiatives, and strategic priorities. These discussions help shape the digital landscape of procurement, ensuring that the systems in place remain efficient, effective, and aligned with members' needs.

By staying at the forefront of technological advancements and evolving sector requirements, DEG continues to drive innovation and digital transformation, delivering impactful solutions that strengthen the UKUPC community.

KEY DEG ACTIVITIES IN 2024-25

Hunter CSM Portal implementation

A major DEG priority in 2024-25 was ensuring a smooth transition from the HE Contracts database to the new UK wide Hunter Contract and Supplier Management (CSM) Portal for all the UKUPC members in England and Wales. The launch of the Hunter Buyers portal was carried out w/c 28th Oct & w/c 4th Nov.

The Hunter System

- Seamlessly integrates with UKUPC partner websites.
- Offers improved functionality and user experience.
- Is a single portal for members spend categorisation and GHG reporting.
- Optimise access to framework agreements and other reporting tools.

The HEC system continued to run until the end of 2024 providing a period of cross over and continued access for all members.

The conclusion of this project marks over a year of significant work and effort from the group and has been a positive step forward for collaborative data provision.

Scope 3 reporting and data accuracy

DEG has collaborated with HEPA, EAUC, and the Scope 3 Working Group to advance Scope 3 carbon reporting. By aligning with these key sector initiatives, CISSG is enabling members to better assess and reduce their supply chain emissions, reinforcing UKUPC's commitment to sustainability and responsible procurement. Work continues to review and enhance the reporting carried out with a full rebuild of the HESCET tool and conversion factors used in 25/26.

Spend Analysis

The spend analysis work conducted by the APUC on behalf of all consortia has now been concluded with reports now available through the Hunter Buyers Portal for members that submitted data.

AI

Plans to form an AI working group are in place to monitor and investigate use of AI in procurement taking into account ways of working, risks and potential benefits.

Group Management

With the end of some significant projects Andy Hughes of NEUPC will be stepping down with Maggie Bryant of NWUPC taking the role of Chair moving forward supported by Jess Tuthill of SUPC as Deputy Chair.

