

**UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX
COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT**

University of Essex
Wivenhoe Park
Colchester
CO4 3SQ



Period covered by this Communication on Engagement:

From academic year beginning October 2016 to academic year ending July 2018.

Statement of Continued Support by the Vice-Chancellor

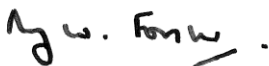
The University of Essex reaffirms its commitment to sustainability and to responsible business practices and to participating in the United Nations Global Compact. In addition to participating as a successful international business, as an academic institution we can contribute through our research and educational resources, through helping to increase understanding and awareness of responsible citizenship, and contributing towards shaping the business leaders of the future.

We are committed to embracing, supporting and enacting within our sphere of influence the UN Global Compact core values in the areas of human rights, labour standards, the environment and anti-corruption:

1. To support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights;
2. To ensure that business is not complicit in human rights abuses;
3. To uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right of collective bargaining;
4. To support the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;
5. To support the effective abolition of child labour;
6. To support the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation;
7. To support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;
8. To undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility;
9. To encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies;
10. To work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

In taking part in the programme, we are committed to continuing to align our operations and strategies with the principles of the Global Compact programme.

In this Communication of Engagement, we describe the actions that we have taken to support the UN Global Compact and its Principles. We also commit to sharing this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.



Professor Anthony Forster
Vice-Chancellor
University of Essex

Description of Actions

Human rights:

- Held two multi-stakeholder consultation workshops on human rights responsibilities in supply chain management.
- Produced a publication on [“Improving Paths to Accountability for Human Rights Abuses in the Global Supply Chain,”](#) examining different means of accountability and responsibility within supply chain management.
- Distributed the publication on supply chains through our networks to partnering organisations, NGOs, states, and businesses.
- Organized panels at the 2016 and 2017 UN Forum on Business and Human Rights, addressing issues of big data and technology’s impact on human rights.
- Collaborating with the UK Law Society on four meetings concerned with data management, human rights and business.
- Submitted arguments to the UK Supreme Court in a key case concerned with parent company responsibility for damage by subsidiary to communities (Okpabi v Royal Dutch Shell).
- Organised two seminars as part of the Human Rights, Big Data and Technology Project (HRBDT), in collaboration with the UK Law Society.
- Actively engaged in the development of Guidelines on human rights and the evolution of the supply chain in business.
- Developing possible elements for a Treaty on Business and Human Rights for the International Commission of Jurists.
- Developing a partnership on the right to water with Aguaconsult, a UK based organization working on sustainable services for a developing world.

Labour:

- Used the two multi-stakeholder consultations workshops to address the responsibilities within supply chains to address labour rights and to protect workers’ interests.
- Produced a publication on [“Improving Paths to Accountability for Human Rights Abuses in the Global Supply Chain,”](#) examining different means of accountability and responsibility within supply chain management.
- There are a number of policies in place to ensure non-discrimination amongst our labour force and in hiring:
 - Our Essential Training Policy (published in 2017) requires all employees, regardless of role or responsibility (including graduate teaching roles) to complete Equality and Diversity Essentials training. All reporting managers must also complete Managing Diversity training and Recruitment and Selection training. All Chairs of recruitment panels and members of University committees must complete unconscious bias training.
 - Our Resourcing Guidance (published in 2017) sets out our principles for recruitment and selection: inclusivity, values-based, fairness and consistency. We integrate these principles in a number of ways including – using positive action statement to seek to address imbalances in our workforce; ensuring recruitment literature is appealing to people with as wide a range of backgrounds, cultures, skills and experiences as possible, identifying candidates whose individual values and behaviours align with those of the University; ensure selection panels are as diverse as possible in their composition.
 - We are just about to launch a revision of our ‘guidelines for dealing with harassment and bullying’ – this has become ‘our zero tolerance approach to harassment and bullying’ and sets out the behaviours we expect all members of the community to display and also what is not acceptable. At the same time we are launching a new complaints of harassment and bullying procedure for staff.

- We have also recently purchased a reporting system to allow staff, students and visitors to easily report harassment, bullying or hate crime and seek advice on how to deal with it. This was launched on 30 April.
- We have completely reviewed our Harassment Advisory Network and are re-launching it as the Harassment Report and Support Service (to coincide with the launch of the reporting system).
- We also put on a range of awareness-raising activities, often in conjunction with one of our equality-related staff networks (e.g. the Essex LGBT Alliance, the Access Forum, the Women's Network). These include: our Motivational, Empowering, Inspirational Women Awards to mark International Women's Day in 2016, 2017 and 2018; an event in conjunction with the Multi-faith Chaplaincy entitled 'Perspectives on Prayer'; an event in conjunction with our LGBT+ Allies group entitled 'Trans equality from a queer studies perspective'.
- Equal pay – in October 2016 we implemented a one-off uplift in the salary of our female professors in order to eliminate the pay gap identified to exist at that grade.

Environment:

- Our new Essex Business School building includes smart technology intended to lower the carbon emissions from the School.
- We have instituted a campus wide recycling programme. The University provides separate bins for dry mixed recycling, food waste and general waste, as well as glass recycling bins in some locations. Waste is also sorted off site by our contractor, with recyclable materials separated out as much as possible.
- We undertake research and provide advice in cases involving environmental pollution by multinational oil companies.

Anti-corruption:

- Have reviewed and revised anti-corruption/anti-bribery guidance for staff in [November 2017](#). The guidance makes clear that the University has a zero-tolerance approach towards corrupt activities. It applies to all employee, including consultants, contractors, trainees, volunteers, agents, agency staff, sponsors, or any other person or persons associated with us (including third parties), or any of our subsidiaries or their employees, no matter where they are located (within or outside of the UK).

Measurements of Outcomes:

Human rights:

- Our panels at the UN Forum had an attendance in excess of 75 people each from different stakeholders.
- We were thanked by members of the Ugandan Parliament for our training in methods of monitoring contracts between government and multinational oil companies. Thanked as well by Amnesty Senegal for our work on social impacts of mining operation.

Labour:

- We have trained 13 new Harassment Support Workers to ensure we have the capacity to deal with those who report.
- We are an Athena SWAN Bronze institution award holder, recognising the steps we are taking to promote gender equality. 4 of our departments also hold Athena SWAN awards and we have committed all departments to applying for an award by the end of 2019-20.
- We have been named a Stonewall Top 100 Employer in both 2016 and 2018 recognising our work to ensure an inclusive environment for our LGBT+ staff.

Environment:

- Our new Essex Business School includes smart technology intended to improve on the baseline carbon emissions by being “lean” (reducing carbon emissions from the baseline by 18% via energy efficient measures), being “green” (offsetting carbon emissions by over 20% through renewable technologies and being Clean by utilising CHP).
- Our recycling rate is currently around 40%, though this can fluctuate depending on the time of year etc.

Anti-corruption:

- All staff of the University and all budget holders (any member of staff who has been given delegated budgetary authority or funds to manage) are required to comply with the anti-corruption regulation.