

Criminal Finance Act 2017

Corporate Criminal Offence

Tackling the facilitation of Tax Evasion

This statement has been published in accordance with the Criminal Finance Act 2017. It sets out the commitment of the University of Essex to preventing persons associated with the University and its subsidiaries from engaging in the criminal facilitation of tax evasion.

Tax evasion is when individuals and/or organisations take deliberate action to omit, conceal, or misrepresent information to reduce their tax liabilities. There is a risk that University could be used by associated persons (such as staff) or organisations (such as agents or representatives) to facilitate the evasion of tax in the UK or overseas.

The University of Essex is committed to preventing the facilitation of tax evasion by associated persons and/or organisations in any part of its operations. This is achieved by:

- developing reasonable controls and procedures;
- undertaking regular due diligence checks and risk assessments of our activities; and
- creating a culture of awareness and compliance throughout the university.

The University's strategic planning processes are used to identify possible future risks and changes in compliance requirements as a result of new or amended legislation.

The University of Essex is committed to embedding processes which help eliminate opportunities that could facilitate the evasion of tax through an associated person or organisations.

The University maintains a risk register in relation to opportunities for the facilitation of the evasion of tax, detailing the possible types of risks and measures in place to mitigate and deter such actions. Regular training and communication is disseminated to ensure staff are aware of risks and any criminal activity is dealt with appropriately.

Supplier and customer due diligence is undertaken by the University and its subsidiaries to mitigate opportunities for associated persons and/or organisations from facilitating the evasion of tax. The due diligence is proportionate to the identified risk.

The University's Tax Management team maintains up to date knowledge of relevant developments with regard to the prevention of criminal facilitation of tax evasion. The University's Tax Accountant with support from Tax & Insurance Assistant is the key officer responsible for information and queries on Criminal Finance Act 2017. The University works in collaboration with other universities and relevant sector, regulatory and statutory bodies (BUFDG, HMRC, and HEFCE) to share and develop best practice in due diligence, prevention procedures and elimination of the opportunities for the facilitation of tax evasion by associated persons.

University staff are encouraged to contact the Tax Accountant with any queries or concerns regarding the facilitation of tax evasion. Where a staff member suspects the criminal facilitation of tax evasion by an associated person or organisation, they must immediately report this to the Tax Accountant. If they believe it to be inappropriate to contact the Tax Accountant, the Director of Finance must be notified.

The University and its subsidiaries take a zero tolerance approach to the criminal facilitation of tax evasion by a related person or organisation. Any staff member who takes action which is inconsistent with the commitment of the University and its subsidiaries commitment in relation to the criminal facilitation of tax evasion will be subject to disciplinary action. The University will notify the statutory authority of instances where the criminal facilitation of tax evasion has been identified..

Due diligence and risk assessment is undertaken on suppliers used by the University and its subsidiaries to ensure that they meet the University's standards in relation to preventing opportunities for the criminal facilitation of tax evasion. The University's supplier selection process requires adherence and compliance to University procurement policies. Those suppliers who do not sign up to our standards or maintain poor supply chain practices will be assisted by the University to improve their procedures. Where engagement and improvements are not forthcoming, the University maintains the right to terminate the business relationship.