



APUC
Advanced Procurement
for Universities & Colleges

2023/24^{v2}

Annual Report

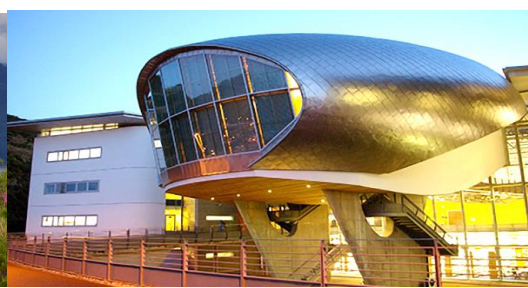
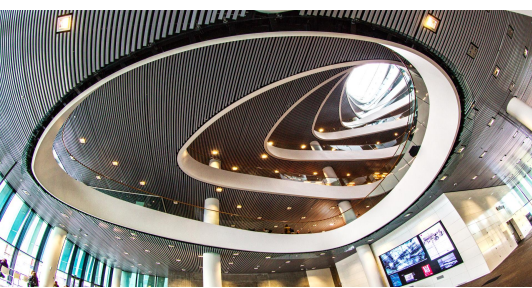




“To maximise the value of Scotland’s investment in further and higher education by working in partnership with institutions to support and enable sustainable innovation in procurement and shared service optimisation”

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Introduction from the Chair of APUC

This report provides an end of Academic Year (AY) 2023/24 summary on APUC Group's activities which focus on delivering an effective and sustainable procurement Centre of Expertise for the Scottish University and College sectors to deliver value for money for its members and wider stakeholders alongside economic and social benefit, aligned to the wider Public Procurement in Scotland programme.

APUC undertook reviews of the structure of its core team during the academic year. The APUC Collaborative Contracting team was remodelled into the more appropriately named Strategic Sourcing Team in order to provide enhanced category support including increased stakeholder dialogue, increased market category knowledge coverage, and also to provide more flexibility and resilience. As well as providing wider support and more resilient services for client institutions, the new approach will improve opportunities for development and succession planning.

APUC's senior management structure has also had responsibilities redefined with each of the main workstream leads now formally taking on Deputy responsibilities for their areas in cases where the CEO is not available.

APUC operates as a major champion and promoter of equality, with the three aims of the 'Equality Duty' embedded as part of the process of decision-making and in business process design. Fair Work is embedded in how the organisation manages its activities and where relevant on its Framework Agreements.

Supply chain volatility continued throughout 2023/24 with impacts from the war in Ukraine, and Brexit continuing to provide supply challenges. Brexit related factors are expected to have a permanent negative impact on supply chains moving forward.

The procurement and supply chain activity across Scotland's Universities and Colleges is addressing the challenges presented by the climate and ecological emergency in their supply chains and is focused around the Scottish University and College Sectors Supply Chain Climate & Ecological Emergency Strategy which was approved by both sector's Principals in the Spring of 2022.

The following pages provide a series of highlights at summary level (with more detail on APUC's operational activities available both within APUC's Annual Procurement Report for 2023/24 AY and the APUC Annual Accounts for 2023/24 AY) on the work taking place across the various themes of the Strategic Plan and include information on the framework agreements led by or facilitated by APUC that are available for client institution use.

APUC has continued to achieve considerable success for the sectors by working closely with its client institutions and consolidating a highly focused collaborative team. I would again this year like to extend my thanks to all institutional staff involved in the procurement activity for their valued co-operation and to all staff in APUC for this outstanding example of sustained and highly productive collaboration.

I should also like to convey my warm thanks to my colleagues on the APUC Board whose guidance and support for the development of APUC has been, and continues to be, extremely valuable.

Jim McGeorge,
Chair of the APUC Board





A new "Strategic Sourcing" model implemented from Q1 2024 to enable alignment with an increasingly constrained financial environment and to provide a more flexible category fluid approach which will bring enhanced resilience and flexibility in meeting dynamic needs and impacts.

Key Enablement & Optimised Methods of Delivery

Regional procurement teams

A review of the long established Edinburgh Region Procurement Team (Edinburgh Napier University, Edinburgh College, and also originally West Lothian College) took place Q3 2023 with a change of approach - these changes were implemented by the beginning of 2024. A review of UHI partnership procurement took place in Spring 2023 in preparation for planned mergers, with the changes being implemented from August 2023.

Hunter

The new web-enabled version of Hunter tool was available on plan and rolled out to the sector. APUC is engaging with institutions to improve data quality and develop enhanced forward contracting plans. Continuous development continues in liaison with the client community with more (originally) separate functions being integrated into the Hunter tool including the Buyers Portal from Summer 2024.

Value for Money & Resilience

Sector Collaboration

Agreements

178 collaborative Framework Agreements were available to the sector throughout the year with high levels of utilisation across active categories

Savings*

During the 2023/24 year, savings for the 2022/23 AY were confirmed as:

- **BT1: £13.1m**
- **BT2: £35m**

**These are reported against the Scottish Publicly Funded Sectors Benefits Reporting Methodology. Figures for the 2023/24 AY will be available mid-way through the 2024/25 AY when institutions and collaborative partners have finalised their financial data and validated relevant spend reports. Newly adopted savings type "BT7" is now being used to gather many of these savings.*

Market Insights

APUC now undertakes resilience reviews within the Strategic Sourcing Team. Due to increasing volatility, Market Insights reporting has been increased in frequency to quarterly.

IPS

The Institutional Procurement Services team now consists of circa 54 staff providing a procurement shared service to 29 institutions across Scotland. Early in 2024/25 AY, a further two organisations are due to join this model where APUC will manage the procurement service on their behalf.



Climate & Ecological Emergency and Responsible Supply Chains

Environmental and Ethical Assessments

APUC agreed an approach to undertake supply chain environmental and ethical deep-dive assessments with a multi-sector-serving assessment organisation that is being utilised as an alternative to undertaking the resource intensive process inhouse. Over 240 have now been completed as of end of July 2024. Outcomes and actions have been incorporated into the contract management process.

GHG Reporting & Net Zero

All frameworks now have net-zero / reduced GHG options where possible / practical. Significant change will be required in relation to the culture of consumption and handling of demand management within institutions to make comprehensive net-zero / lower GHG options practical for utilisation from 2026 etc. Dialogue is occurring across various sector forums to assist in this including the planned session at the November 2024 Procurement Leaders Workshop.

Ethical Public Procurement

APUC has joined the International Working Group on Ethical Public Procurement to explore how approaches similar to Electronics Watch could be established to cover the other higher risk supply chains we have, combined with wider international development of the sustainable procurement agenda. This work is developing throughout 2024.

Electronics Watch

APUC continued its membership of Electronics Watch throughout 2023/24 and actively engaged with them in the promotion of human rights and equality in our electronic supply chains.



Fair Work & Economic Wellbeing

Equality

APUC operates as a major champion and promoter of equality, with the three aims of the 'Equality Duty' embedded as part of the process of decision-making and in business process design. Fair Work is embedded in how the organisation manages its activities and this has a significant relevance on several Framework Agreements.

Fair Work

Fair Work principles are integrated into relevant templates etc. and considered wherever relevant in tendering and contract management activity.

A Staff Representative and Consultation Group was established and now meets regularly to discuss and make recommendations for ongoing work improvements across APUC's internal operations.

SCM Section 1

SCM Section 1 was established to monitor Fair Work aspects across the supply base. This functionality is also now being used by institutions for use with local suppliers. A periodic review of SCM Section One was undertaken 2024, with changes integrated into the eSolutions workplan scheduled for end 2024 / early 2025.

APUC continues to utilise approaches to ensure that potential business is available and accessible to SMEs wherever there are appropriate supply chains. This includes tailored regional and technical lotting strategies and consideration of flexible specifications in tenders, all assisting in sustainable local economic development across Scotland.



Capability and Continuous Improvement

Procurement Capability Assessments

The 2023/24 PCIP and Pulse Check Programme commenced in October 2023 and continued to run through to summer 2024. This was intended to be a lighter touch, interim assessment pending decisions on the long-term approach. The number of questions has been reduced with a greater focus on policy and continuous improvement. APUC provided individual support meetings to all institutions ahead of the Pulse Check assessments. Institutions have also been offered the opportunity to be reassessed on the 2019 PCIP Question set (plus the new climate questions) as an alternative, if they wish to demonstrate an improvement since the last round of PCIP. Results were positive and indicated a continuation of improvement of procurement practice across the sector.

The APUC face to face training programme for the 2023/24 AY maintained the high volume of offerings of the previous year with a mix of in person and virtual events.

APUC eLearning modules were also available during the year via the APUC Buyers Portal / Collaboration Site (SharePoint)

APUC's successful long running graduate training programme in its original form concluded in the 2023/24 AY as with funding cuts it is no longer affordable.

APUC are however now developing alternative ways to bring accelerated development for junior staff with the first pilots of this due to commence early in the 2024/25 AY

Future leaders

In addition to the Graduate Trainee Program, APUC and the institutional Heads of Procurement jointly established a Future Leaders Development Program. This was then developed, commissioned and managed by APUC on behalf of the University and College sectors and aimed to identify and develop existing employees in the sectors' procurement arena who were felt to have leadership potential and develop them to be future Heads of Procurement. The programme was deemed to have been extremely successful by both attendees and their managers. Small adjustments to the programme have been made for the future. The latest cohort commenced October 2023, running through to successful completion in June 2024.





APUC

Advanced Procurement
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Corporate Services

APUC Corporate Services supports all of APUC's client facing functions as well as delivering some services directly to member institutions. It encompasses People & Operations, Governance, and Finance. It provides its services not just for APUC but also for fellow HE/FE sector shared service HEFESTIS Ltd (also co-owned by Scotland's HE/FE sector institutions).

- ✓ The People & Operations Team continues to provide the professional HR services for the company, as well as managing general administration, facilities management and communications management for the company.
- ✓ This team also manages the APUC Graduate Trainee Scheme, the sector's procurement training programme for member institutions and the Future Leaders Programme.
- ✓ Full Finance support to the business, for staff and external stakeholders, was provided by the highly effective Finance Team, with clean Audits received for APUC Group (and HEFESTIS) during the year.
- ✓ The 2023-24 Financial Statements and associated reports are available on the [corporate information page](#) on the APUC website.
- ✓ The APUC Governance Manager ensured that all APUC's governance arrangements operated smoothly throughout the year and that all statutory reporting was completed in line with relevant requirements.

APUC's regional offices are now well established in:

Stirling - Stirling Business Centre (Registered Office)

Edinburgh - Edinburgh College, Sighthill Campus

Glasgow - Glasgow Caledonian University.

Fig 1a - Collaborative Framework Agreements available with Buyers' Guides

ESTATES	• Automatic Doors and Roller Shutters	• Facilities Supplies
• Waste Management	• Road Surfacing & Minor Civil Engineering Works	• Photographic Equipment and Consumables
• Furniture (Supply, Delivery & Installation of)	• Fitness & Sports Equipment	• Engineering & Technical Consultancy SXL 0820
• Laundry Services	• Construction Works and Associated Services (RM6088)	• Fire Safety Products (Supply & Service)
• Water Quality Management	• Construction Professional Services RM6165	• Domestic Furniture and Furnishings (SXL 20-19)
• Floor Coverings	• Estates Management Services (RM6168)	• Catering Sundries (1919 Scotland Excel) Supply & Delivery
• Electrical Sundries	• Vehicle Purchase (CCS Ref RM6244)	• Building & Construction Consultancy SXL0920
• Plumbing Consumables and Commercial Heating Products	• Vehicle Lease (CCS REF RM6268)	• EV Charging Infrastructure (SXL 2119)
• Franking Machines	• Catering Outsourced Services	• Construction Materials (SXL 1422)
• Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), Work & Sports Wear	• Sustainable Furniture Solutions	• Asbestos related Works & Services (SXL 0722)
• Lift Maintenance, Installation & Refurbishment Services	• Courier Services	• Water Coolers (20-21)
• Fresh Dairy Products	• Signs and Wayfinding Solutions	• Washroom Solutions and Sanitary Products (0122)
• Fresh Fish & Seafood	• Scottish Minor Building Works	• Cleaning Equipment (SXL 0523)
• Fresh Fruit & Vegetables	• White Goods & Associated Electrical Appliances	• Security Services and Cash Collection (SXL 2322)
• Fresh Butcher Meat	• Washroom Services & Associated Products & Services	• Energy Efficiency Contractors Framework
• Cleaning & Janitorial Products	• Fleet Solutions - Sustainable	• Natural Gas
• Fresh Bakery Products	• Facilities Services	• Postal Services
• Timber Products and Materials	• Residential Textiles, Student Starter Packs and Window Coverings	• National Electricity Framework

Fig 1b - Collaborative Framework Agreements available with Buyers' Guides (continued)

ESTATES CONTINUED	ICT	
		• Telecommunications Framework, Jisc
• Liquid Fuels	• Similarity Detection Systems and Associated Services	• Desktop & Notebook (NDNA)
• Water & Wastewater Billing Services	• Pecos Integration Support	• Mobile Phones - Ethically Sourced
• Supported Businesses DPS	• Library Management Systems & Associated Services (SCURL)	• Printers and Managed Print Services (NEPA2)
• Disposable Products, Kitchen Chemicals, Allergen Labelling and Associated Products and Services	• Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and Associated Services	• eMarketplace for Tail End Spend
• Vending Services	• Online Streaming and Online Training Services	• Networking - HE, Supply & Services (HENSS2)
• EPOS Hardware and Software Systems	• Student Information Management Systems and Associated Services	• Data Centre Equipment & Infrastructure 2024
• Delivery App	• Student Accommodation, Conference/Event, Delivered Catering & Hotel Management System(s) & Associated Services	• Office, Computer & Library Supplies
• Catering Innovation and Concept Solutions (CICS)	• Finance, HR/Payroll Systems and Associated Services	• Paper - Print & Specialist
• Sandwiches and Associated Products (Supply and Distribution of)	• Alumni & Fundraising CRM	• Apple Equipment and Services Framework Agreement - National
• Soft Drinks and Associated Products and Services	• Engagement (Business to Business) CRM Systems	• Broadcasting Equipment and Integration Services
• Design and Installation for the Customer Experience (Catering and Social Spaces)	• The Supply and Installation of Audio-Visual Equipment & Associated Services	• Apple Equipment and Services Framework Agreement - Individual
• Catering Light and Heavy Equipment	• CCS Network Services 3	• Professional Buying Tools - PCS Tender
• Alcohol	• Technology Products and Associated Services 2	• Internet of Things (IoT) - Dynamic Procurement System (DPS)
• Convenience Retail 2024	• Shared Data Centre, Jisc	• Mobile Client Devices (National Framework for)
• Grocery, Frozen and Chilled	• Network Equipment, Jisc	• General Office Supplies
• Hot Beverage	• Telephony Purchasing Services, Jisc	• Managed Print Solutions
• Kitchen Equipment Maintenance, Deep Cleaning & Ventilation Ducting Services	• Jisc Text Short Message Service (SMS)	• Technology Peripherals and Infrastructure

Fig 1c - Collaborative Framework Agreements available with Buyers' Guides (continued)

ICT CONTINUED	Lasers and Associated Equipment, Supply of	• Arts and Craft Materials
• Telephony and Communication Services Dynamic Purchasing System	• Laboratory Equipment and Associated Post Installation Services	• Supply and Delivery of Library Books and Textbooks
• Desktop Client Devices (National Framework for)	• Life Sciences Equipment, Materials & Services	• Digital Publications and Services (Supply of)
• Digital Technology and Cyber Services Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS)	• Healthcare Student Uniforms	
• Software Value Added Reseller (SVAR)	• Multi-Modality Imaging Equipment and Maintenance	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES _ GENERAL
• Web Based and Proprietary Client Device Framework (National Framework for)	• Electronic Components	• Insurance Services
• Cloud and Hosting Services Framework	• High Value Laboratory Equipment (HVLE)	• Intellectual Property Services
• Procurement - mobile voice and data services framework	• IUPC Lab Gases	• Office & Special Moving Services
• IT Related Accessories and Parts (ITRAP)		• Audit and Tax Services
• Software Licence Resellers Agreement (SLRA)	LIBRARIES	• Legal Services
• Servers, Storage and Solutions National Agreement (SSSNA)	• Periodicals and Associated Services (The supply of)	• Student Assistance and Support Services
	• eBooks, eBook Collections and eTextbooks	• Hair & Beauty
LABORATORIES	• Print Books & Standing Orders	• Teaching Qualification Further Education
• Laboratory Consumables and Chemicals, Supply of	• SHEDL eBook Collections - Springer Nature	• Procurement Cards
• 3D Printers, 3D Scanners and Associated Equipment, DPS	• SHEDL eBook Collections - Oxford University Press (OUP)	• Vertical Application Solutions (Electoral Services)
• Microscopy & Imaging Equipment	• Library Equipment, Software & Maintenance	• Management Consultancy Framework 3
• Mass Spectrometry & Chromatography Equipment	• SHEDL eBook Collections - Elsevier	• Payment Solutions 2
• Veterinary Supplies	• Digital Preservation DPS	• Payment Acceptance 2

Fig 1d - Collaborative Framework Agreements available with Buyers' Guides (continued)

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES _ GENERAL CONTINUED	• Employee Benefits and Services		
• Debt Recovery Services	• Occupational Health Services		
• Graduation and Ceremonial Gowns, Photography and Event Services	• Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) and Welfare Services		
• Global Workforce Mobility Services	• Temp Interim Professional – National		
• Promotional Merchandise	• Temp Interim IT – National		
• Gift Cards & Vouchers	• Temp Admin, Catering & Manual - South		
• Publishing Print Design & Associated Services	• Temp Admin, Catering & Manual - North		
• Media Services Framework	• Recruitment Advertising and PINs		
• Banking Services	• Temporary and Permanent Recruitment		
• Marketing Services	• Education Recruitment Advertising and Resourcing Services (National) NERARS 2022		
• Interpreting, Translation and Transcription Services	Temporary & Permanent Staff		
• Print & Associated Services Framework 2023			
• Media Planning, Buying & Associated Services			
• Travel Management Services			
PROFESSIONAL SERVICES _ HR			
• Executive and Senior Specialist Search and Associated Recruitment Services			
• Staff Engagement Surveys			

Annex A

Full members - HE Institutions and Other Full Member Bodies (20)

Abertay University
Edinburgh Napier University
Glasgow Caledonian University
Glasgow School of Art
Heriot-Watt University
Queen Margaret University
Robert Gordon University
Royal Conservatoire of Scotland
Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS)
Scotland's Rural College (SRUC)
The Scottish Funding Council
University of Aberdeen
University of Dundee
University of Edinburgh
University of Glasgow
University of St Andrews
University of Stirling
University of Strathclyde
University of the Highlands and Islands
University of the West of Scotland

Full members – FE Institutions (21)

Ayrshire College
Borders College
City of Glasgow College
Dumfries and Galloway College
Dundee and Angus College
Edinburgh College
Fife College
Forth Valley College
Glasgow Clyde College
Glasgow Kelvin College
UHI Inverness
UHI Moray
New College Lanarkshire
Newbattle Abbey College
North East Scotland College
UHI North, West and Hebrides
UHI Perth
Sabhal Mor Ostaig
South Lanarkshire College
West College Scotland
West Lothian College

Associate members (9)

UHI Argyll
Fraunhofer UK Research Ltd
UHI Orkney
UHI Shetland (including NAFC Marine The James Hutton Institute
The Highland Theological College
University of Sussex
NHS Highland
NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde

Associated bodies (14)

College Development Network
Colleges Scotland
David MacBrayne Ltd / Group
East Lothian Council
Glasgow City Council
Glasgow Life
HEFESTIS Limited
Royal Botanical Gardens Edinburgh
Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)
Scottish Police Authority
The Scottish Government
Universities Scotland
Visit Scotland
National Library of Scotland

Annex B

Directors for the year ended 31 July 2024

Jim McGeorge, *University Secretary & COO, University of Dundee*

Lee Hamill, *Director of Finance, The University of Edinburgh*

Tracy Elliott, *Interim Vice Principal – Resources and College Development, Glasgow Clyde College¹*

Pete Smith, *Principal, Borders College*

Margaret Cook, *Principal, Perth College*

Gemma Lines, *non-sector director*

Phil McNaull, *non-sector director*

Harpreet Paul, *non-sector director*

Veronica Strachan, *University Secretary and Vice Principal Corporate Services, Robert Gordon University*

Angus Warren, *Chief Executive, APUC Ltd*

1. Tracy Elliott joined the Board in October 2023 replacing Janet Thomson who resigned in August 2023.

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Incorporated in Scotland (No. SC314764)
VAT Registration Number 974 9816 54

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