



Birkbeck
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

SUSTAINABLE PURCHASING GUIDE



Goods and services we procure can have a huge impact on the environment and the natural resources. We can reduce our environmental impact and carbon footprint by changing our purchasing practices and taking more informed purchasing decisions. Purchasing is a good way of communicating our preference for environmentally friendly products to suppliers, manufacturers and the wider community. The [Environmental Policy](#) endorsed by the Bloomsbury Colleges commits Birkbeck to “adopt sustainable purchasing and the use of environmentally sound goods and services”.

The information on the following pages contain sustainability criteria and associated verification mark or ‘proof’ to look out for when making some common purchases.

But, First Steps;

1. Follow the Institution's Procurement Policies ([Birkbeck Finance Regs](#))
2. For advice on some of the recommendations in this document please contact the Sustainability Team
3. REUSE – unwanted furniture and other equipment should be donated for reuse. Surplus furniture can be donated to local charities and lab equipment can be donated to the [UniGreenScheme](#) who specializes in reusing lab equipment. Contact the [Sustainability Team](#) for more information

Stationery and office supplies reuse

1

Paper

Sustainability Criteria

Below are the key environmental criteria to consider for paper:

- The paper must be at least Elementary Chlorine Free (ECF). Totally Chlorine Free (TCF) will also be desirable
- Use paper that is not only 100% recycled but have a very low environmental impact – the 'Steinbeis Classic paper' meets this requirement and is the recommended paper for general use. This paper uses over 80% less water, 50% less energy and does not use any chemicals or bleach.
- Follow this '[Link to Paper Reduction Tips](#)'

Verification

Appropriate proof from the supplier or ask for the [EU Ecolabel](#) or [paper-by-nature](#) Ecolabel






Furniture

2

Sustainability Criteria

Firstly please check with the estates team if there is any spare furniture that you can use before buying anything new. For any surplus furniture please contact the [Sustainability Team](#) to help you arrange a charity collection. If you do have to buy new furniture purchase items produced through environmentally friendly processes and materials. See environmental criteria for furniture below:

Sustainability Criteria		Verification
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wood or wood based materials – should come from legally sourced timber. 		<p>Check for FSC, PEFC certification or equivalent means of proof, including technical dossier or test report from an independent body. Also check for furniture made from reclaimed materials</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plastic parts – should be marked for recycling and not contain other materials that may hinder their recycling 		<p>Products carrying a 'type I Ecolabel' would fulfil this category. Other appropriate means of proof like technical dossier or test report from an independent body. (Type I Ecolabels are multi criteria based, third party certified environmental labeling programme – e.g. EU Ecolabel & EPEAT).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface-coating of wood, plastic or metal part of the furniture – should not contain hazardous substances 		<p>Furniture carrying a 'type I Ecolabel' will be deemed to comply. Other appropriate means of proof like technical dossier or test report from an independent body.</p>

Laboratory Equipment

3

Sustainability Criteria

The first steps to reducing environmental impact in Labs is through sustainable purchasing

- Use approved suppliers for lab equipment and always choose energy efficient options,
- Consider whole life costing and end of life disposal,
- Fume cupboards should be low-flow VAV, unless otherwise justified,
- Consider buying products that have water conservation features,
- Follow existing guidance on 'freezer' procurement and refer to the 'Freezer Policy' guidance for more information

For advice on lab equipment procurement please contact o.bankole@bbk.ac.uk

Verification

This link [Sustainability Criteria for Lab Equipment](#) contains guidance on the efficiency features and models to look for when procuring the following lab equipment;

1. Drying Cabinets
2. Centrifuges
3. -80 ULT Freezers
4. Incubators
5. Autoclaves
6. Microbiological Safety Cabinets


This document will be updated regularly as new information and technologies become available.

ICT Equipment

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Sustainability Criteria

This guidance applies to all ICT equipment (computing, telephony, printing and smartphones). It is advisable for staff to contact the IT and/or procurement for their ICT equipment needs.

Sustainability Criteria	Verification
<p>Environmentally Sustainable ICT should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have low energy consumption, • Be longer lasting and deigned to be reusable and recyclable at end of life, • Avoid environmentally harmful components, and ensure the WEEE Regulations for responsible disposal of ICT equipment are observed • Imaging equipment must have performance properties like duplex printing and power saving, • We can consider 'Greening our Electronics Purchasing' with EPEAT 	<p>Look for the Energy Star label for energy efficient office equipment.</p>  <p>Also look out for suppliers who are EPEAT and/or TCO Certified. This ensures that equipment manufactured have been considered for both environmental and social impacts of its product life cycle.</p>

Catering

5 Sustainability Criteria	Verification
<p>Catering is a very important activity at Birkbeck with a corresponding high carbon footprint and environmental impact. Birkbeck has 'Fairtrade University Status' and is committed to promoting Fairtrade products and increasing the range of Fairtrade items on offer. The points below are already considered for in-house catering providers/contractors, but should also be considered for when using external caterers;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buy food produced locally as much as practicable, • Reduce packaging, reduce and manage food waste, • Request Fairtrade or similarly certified food produce, • Consider sustainability policies of suppliers 	<p>For the Corporate Catering services as for the 'Food for Life Catering Mark'.</p>



Sustainable Purchasing Guide

For further information please contact:

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