



Arab Open University

Sustainable Procurement/ Purchasing Policy

Policy Title:	Arab Open University Sustainable Procurement/ Purchasing Policy
Version Number:	1
Executive Owner:	University Council
Approving Authority	
Policy Review:	QAAAIS Committee
Policy Implementation:	AOU HQ and Branches
Policy Monitoring and Compliance:	Quality Assurance and Accreditation Departments at HQ and AOU Branches
Next Review Date	2025

Policy Aim

The aim of this policy is to establish a common interpretation of what Sustainable Procurement encompasses and to ensure University personnel consider social and environmental responsibility as factors in their purchasing decisions, aiming to guide University procurement in ways that advance social responsibility and environmental sustainability. This involves using, maintaining, and disposing of goods and services which: improve energy, water, and material efficiency; utilize renewable materials; advance the University toward renewable energy production; eliminate waste, especially hazardous materials; enhance the physical campus environment; protect and enhance the health of the campus community; encourage AOU employees to adopt sustainability practices; offer additional consideration to vendors with sustainable production, and support locally produced goods and services.

Policy Scope

The policy provides guidelines, information and resources for developing sustainable purchasing practices, contractors working on site, design of new buildings, renovation, maintenance of buildings and landscape management and cleaning.

Key Responsibilities

All staff involved in the procurement of goods and services within the University will strive to achieve the aim of this policy through:

- Enquiring whether a purchase is necessary, with a view to reducing consumption, and explore options for reusing and sharing existing assets.
- Liaising with procurement staff for advice on environmental issues relating to purchasing.
- Embedding sustainable procurement within the University's procurement procedures, practices and policies.
- Encouraging suppliers to actively promote good environmental awareness and practices.
- Educating staff concerning the University's sustainable objectives, which include:
 - ensuring Compliance;
 - preventing pollution;
 - minimizing waste;
 - preserving natural resources
 - Promoting resource efficiency by eliminating, reducing, reusing and recycling.

Policy Statement

Purchasing decisions have major socio-economic and environmental implications, both locally and globally, and so the Arab Open University is committed to delivering a sustainable procurement function that can demonstrate value for money. The University aims to embed the principles of sustainable procurement into its business practices and ethos to ensure that its activities and services meet the diverse needs of its stakeholders through:

Environmental Responsibility:

Prioritizing the procurement of environmentally friendly products that minimize negative impacts on the environment, including products made from recycled materials, energy-efficient appliances, and eco-friendly cleaning supplies.

Social Responsibility:

Ensuring that suppliers adhere to fair labor practices and respect human rights, including compliance with local labor laws, non-discrimination policies, and fair wages.

Local and Sustainable Products:

Prioritizing the procurement of locally produced and sustainable products to support the local economy and reduce carbon emissions associated with transportation.

Supplier Engagement and Collaboration:

Engaging with suppliers to promote sustainability and encourage continuous improvement in environmental and social performance. Collaboration with suppliers includes sharing best practices, setting sustainability goals, and addressing sustainability challenges throughout the supply chain.

Reporting and Transparency:

Maintaining transparency in procurement processes and reporting on sustainable procurement practices annually.

Key performance indicators related to sustainable procurement, such as the percentage of sustainable products purchased and supplier compliance with sustainability criteria will be tracked and reported publicly.

Review of policy

The policy shall be reviewed periodically to ascertain the effectiveness of the implementation of sustainability practices.

Regular reviews and updates of this policy will be conducted to ensure its effectiveness and relevance in addressing evolving environmental challenges.

Acknowledgements

In developing this policy, the relevant literature was consulted. The policy is informed by the following sources:

- Harvard University Sustainable Procurement Policy: https://sustainable.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Harvard-Sustainable-Purchasing-Guide_2023.pdf
- University of British Columbia Sustainable Purchasing Policy : <https://sustain.ubc.ca/smart-purchasing#:~:text=Making%20sustainable%20choices%20%E2%80%93%20ones%20that,and%20local%20leader%20in%20sustainability.>
- University of California, Berkeley Sustainable Procurement Policy: <https://ucop.edu/procurement-services/for-suppliers/sustainable-procurement/sustainable-procurement-working-group.html#:~:text=Sustainable%20procurement%20focuses%20on%20planning,to%20campus%20and%20local%20communities.>